

CHAPTER 12

THE ORIGIN OF LEARNING PROBLEMS

1. INTRODUCTION

It is not always possible to show what factors give rise to learning problems. Ekwall and Shanker [in English] say, "there are many factors that seem to have a close relationship to reading disability but cannot be established as having direct causal relationships" (1985: 2). It also is not possible to exclude a single origin. "It should be stressed, however, that seldom is any child's reading disability a result of any single factor" (Ekwall and Shanker [in English], 1985: 23). Also, Jules Abrams (1970: 299) [in English] says, "There is no single etiology for all learning disabilities. Rather, learning problems can be caused by any number of a multiplicity of factors all of which might be highly interrelated".

More often, the deficient actualization of becoming and learning arise simultaneously with learning problems and, thus, there are correlates of learning problems rather than causes. Balow (1971: 523) [in English] states, "... while motor and perceptual skill weaknesses are frequently found in learning disabled pupils, there is great likelihood that these are most often simply concomitants without causal reference; thus the argument cannot depend upon assumed etiologies for learning disabilities". Also, Kirk et al. (1978) say that, instead of giving too much attention to possible causes, it is preferable to view these factors as correlates of a child's learning problem.

A child with a learning problem is in a disharmonious teaching situation, but also it is possible that constituents of teaching (the disharmonious **learning** and/or **teaching of contents**) can contribute to the origin of a learning problem. The following is a consideration of the defective actualization of learning (or disharmonious learning) as possibly giving rise to a learning problem.

2. DEFECTIVE ACTUALIZATION OF LEARNING

2.1 Introduction

Actualizing learning is an event which influences the quality of the learning outcome. When a child shows a deficiency in any of his/her learning proficiencies, this can be attributed to a deficient actualization of them (Van Niekerk and Sonnekus, 1979: 10). In using this notion, a distinction is made between the inadequate or disharmonious actualization of the modes of learning, on the one hand, and the inadequate actualization of their respective modalities, on the other hand. In diagnosing a child's learning problem, it is not always possible to make this distinction, and it should be avoided, since the distinguishable components mutually influence each other. An attempt to arbitrarily separate underlying causes also can lead to a segmentation of the problem. Rather, one should strive for an understanding of a child in his/her distressful situation, as an integrated unity, so he/she can be helped in the most effective way. The most accountable way of trying to understand is by continually changing focus from various perspectives as possible origins of the learning problem (see Van Niekerk and Sonnekus, 1979: 2-16).

However, recent literature indicates a skepticism about adequate perception as a prerequisite for acquiring learning proficiencies. Reid Lyon (1977: 564-572) says there is insufficient evidence that intact auditory perception is necessary for the adequate development of learning proficiencies; this holds equally for visual perception. On the other hand, some research has indicated a positive correlation between auditory (and possibly visual) perceptual development and future success in reading (Ekwall and Shanker, 1985: 297). The most acceptable procedure seems to be to consider perceptual disturbances when they are related to a learning problem, and to consider them in remediation or teaching.

What is increasingly met with more approval is to determine a child's cognitive learning style—his/her ways of thinking and acting--and the role this plays in influencing the learning outcome (Ekwall and Shanker, 1985: 359). Although there can be many types of inadequate individual learning styles, the **impulsive** style is the most general typification (Ekwall and Shanker, 1985: 359).

With reference to the above, the possibility is posed that children with learning problems do not necessarily need to show deficiencies regarding the actualization of learning modalities, but that they ae

an unable to implement an adequate cognitive learning style to then actualize their learning (see Kotze, 1985).

It seems, however, that the collective disharmonious actualization of the modes of learning and perceptual modalities, as well as the cognitive style which also plays a role, can give rise to deficiencies in learning outcomes which, in the next chapter are interpreted as the symptom of a problem. Thus, it is necessary to have knowledge of the components of actualizing learning and how they contribute to the origin of a learning problem. This topic is discussed next.

2.2 The disharmonious actualization of learning

2.2.1 Introduction

Although learning is actualized as a unitary activity, different modes can be distinguished (see Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1979: 107-130) (once again emphasizing their inseparability), namely, attending, perceiving, thinking, visualizing, remembering, and memorizing.* Because learning is an individual activity, it differs from person to person, and since there are so many factors which can influence and restrain it (see Lerner, 1981; Hallahan, Kauffman and Lloyd, 1985; and Ekwall and Shanker, (1985), it is possible that the modes of learning are actualized inadequately. For each child with a learning problem, it must be determined on what level he/she actualizes his/her learning, viewed against the background of his/her age, intellectual abilities, and the actualization of his/her becoming.

2.2.2 Disharmonious attending

Attending is an accompanying or concomitant mode of learning (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1979: 109-114) and is carried by a stable sensing. Lability leads to under actualized attending (see Van Niekerk, 1981, 24-27).

Well-directed attending is necessary for acquiring information, but there are various forms of deviancy in this respect. A child with scattered attending is easily influenced by what occurs around him/her, while a child with a fluctuating attention span cannot

* In fact, according to Sonnekus and Ferreira, the modes of learning are sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing and remembering

direct him/herself to one thing at a time. Perseverations can be manifested when a child finds it difficult to change his/her actions or stream of thought, and in this way, e.g., provides stereotypic responses to various appeals, or can't control his/her writing movements and then, e.g., writes an "m" instead of an "n".

For a further discussion of the attention deficit disorder, the reader is referred to the DSM III of the American Psychiatric Association. It also is discussed in Chapter 13, as a symptom of learning problems. At present, the concept "attention deficit disorder" is used for a neurologically impeded, brain-damaged, brain-dysfunctional, hyperactive child, one with MBD (Minimum Brain Dysfunction) (see DSM III).

A child with defective attending finds it difficult to limit his/her attending to what is important. This leads to an inability to selectively focus and maintain it. What is relevant to the learning task, thus, eludes him/her. His/her sensitivity to visual, auditory, and tactile sensory stimuli makes him/her excessively scattered.

Thus, the quality and stability of attending determines the quality of perceiving, thinking, and remembering (see Van Niekerk, 1981: 24-27). Because of being scattered and impulsive, a child with deficient attending shows an unwillingness and inability to remain involved with the learning content. His/her weakened intention to learn contributes to his/her not penetrating to the essence of the matter (see Van Niekerk, 1981: 28). His/her inability to master the learning task increases his/her hyperkinesis and a labile pathic lived experience of his/her own bodiliness. His/her inability to selectively attend intensifies his/her inclination to be impulsive and scattered. Because of his/her disturbed attending, a child with an attention deficit disorder has difficulty reliably perceiving reality.

2.2.3 Disharmonious perceiving

When a child has difficulty interpreting a perceived object, it doesn't have meaning for him/her and doesn't lead to a concept which he/she can recognize as such, everywhere. In this connection, Ekwall and Shanker (1985: 281) refer to **vision**, the ability to interpret information by means of the eyes (visually) and **sight**, the ability to see detail. Vision is a cognitive event and sight is a mechanistic process. Thus, perception is the result of vision and sight. "Perception is the end result of sight and vision. This is the

output. Reading ability seems to be dependent not only on visual perception, but also on auditory perception and tactual perception" [in English].

Among others, characteristic learning problems are dissociation, where learning contents are not seen, heard, or felt as a whole. Where there is difficulty in selectively directing attention, visual and auditory aspects are difficult to distinguish from background data. A consequence of aimless and nonproductive activities can be to disturb a child's ability to differentiate so undifferentiated perceiving, as a defective ability to distinguish, name, and select results (see Du Toit, 1980: 61). Perceptual disturbances which lead to inadequate perception are discussed below.

2.2.4 Disharmonious thinking

Insight into a person's habitual manner of thinking can be acquired by an analysis of his/her conversations, written work, and his/her performance in a test situation. A trial-and-error method or way of acting directed to problem solving, therefore, are manifestations of his/her way of thinking. Thinking can occur on different levels, e.g., logical and ordered in contrast to chaotic and unordered, concrete or abstract, clumsy and rigid or flexible and fluent, and stereotypic in contrast to creative, original and individual (Van Niekerk, 1986: 88-92). Also, a child with an attention deficit disorder can find it difficult to structure and order a variety of sensory stimuli into a unity so that analyzing, synthesizing, schematizing, comparing and classifying can occur (see Du Toit, 1980: 71).

2.2.5 Disharmonious visualizing

It is only possible to form a thought-image or visualization from what has already been perceived sensorily (see Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1979: 122-126). Thus, the ability to visualize is clearly dependent on adequate remembering. Often a child with a spelling problem experiences problems in this regard.

2.2.6 Disharmonious remembering or memorizing

Here there is a distinction between memorizing or imprinting and remembering or recalling (Van Niekerk, 1986: 88). Thus, adequate memorizing is a precondition for adequate recalling, and the quality of remembering is again determined by adequate attending. A child

with a deficient attending has difficulties with this. A distinction also is made between short-term and long-term memory, and it mostly is the case that children with learning problems experience difficulties here as well as with their ability to remember facts in relation to each other, and in the correct order.

2.3 Inadequate actualization of sensory-motor modalities

2.3.1 Introduction

Since the proper actualization of the modalities of perception is related to the development of motor, tactile, and kinesthetic experience, it is necessary that an orthodidactician have knowledge of this and how movement, perception, and learning proficiencies are integrated (see Hallahan et al., 1985: 69-74).

2.3.2 Inadequate motor, tactile, and kinesthetic experience

The body is a person's center of reference for space. A body scheme is the totality of knowledge regarding one's own bodily motor, tactile, and kinesthetic movements (see Erwee, 1980: 56-59 and Hallahan, et al., 1985: 39-44). Motor activity includes all muscle movement, and there is a distinction between gross motor movement (e.g., walking, running, jumping climbing, distinct arm and leg movements), and fine motor movement (e.g., moving separate fingers and the act of writing).

Tactile movement includes the sensation of touching which gives rise to knowledge of texture and temperature.

Kinesthetic refers to an awareness of one's own bodily movements and bodily position in space, and thus it includes the ability to change position.

Laterality refers to an awareness of the two sides of the body. Knowledge of the body scheme is a precondition for developing body-knowledge or a **body-concept**--the cognitive knowledge of the body parts and their movements. On the other hand, **body-image** is the affective meaning which one has attributed to one's own body (see Van Niekerk, 1982: 141-150). From the body scheme develops the ability to project this knowledge onto objects in space and to understand that objects have the same characteristics as the body does: sides, top, and bottom, left and right, mobility, dimensionality,

manipulability (see Erwee, 1980: 56-59). In this way, knowledge is developed of spatial position, orientation, and relationship. It is here that sensory-motor coordination arises. What is perceived through the senses must be coordinated with appropriate movements which simultaneously are carried out, e.g., clap hands; throw, catch or hit an object; balance on one foot. Failures here can be attributed to incorrectly estimating time or inappropriate bodily movements. Coordination mostly involves gross muscle movements.

On the other hand, sensory-motor integration embraces the interpretation of a perception to carry out an appropriate action, e.g., copying a pattern correctly. Estimating time does not play a role here. A failure in this case can be attributed to an erroneous interpretation or a faulty execution of the activity by means of a fine-motor act.

2.3.3 Inadequate visual-spatial perception

2.3.3.1 Form constancy

A figure of the same type, but in another surrounding, space, size, content or time, ought to be recognized as such. A child with a problem in this regard, e.g., has little success recognizing a typed "a", a written "a" and a capital "A" as symbols with the same meaning.

2.3.3.2 Figure-ground perception

This is the ability to recognize a particular form against a background of distractions, e.g., to find a particular word in a written paragraph.

2.3.3.3 Analysis-synthesis

This is the ability to divide a unity into its sub-parts or to assemble a meaningful whole from parts. In most cases, a reading problem can be attributed to inadequate analysis or synthesis. A child with such a problem then will have great difficulty differentiating a whole word into its letters or syllables, or uniting separate syllables into a word.

2.3.3.4 Sequence

This is the ability to recognize the logical spatial sequence of the parts of a whole. An inability in this regard can give rise to shifting the sequence of letters during reading and writing, e.g., "lap" can be written or read as "pla" or "pal".

2.3.3.5 Discrimination

This is the ability to differentiate among symbols which resemble each other such as a/e/o, m/n, v/w, h/k, etc. A deviation here will lead to substituting letters which look nearly the same during reading, e.g., "tan" instead of "ton", "now" instead of "mow", "wane" instead of "vane", and trouble reading or writing the word "peace".

2.3.3.6 Spatial orientation

Phenomena in written and read work such as the substitution of an "f" with a "j", a "b" with a "d", etc. is attributed to an inability to recognize a symbol in its correct orientation and to interpret it on a two-dimensional level. It is clear how the development of this ability progresses to a three-dimensional level and is a precondition for transferring it to a two-dimensional level.

2.3.3.7 Memory

This embraces the correct memory of a unity which can be reproduced in reading or writing. Inadequate memory can give rise to spelling errors such as "chaise" instead of "chase"; "thot" instead of "thought"; etc.

2.3.3.8 Completion

This is related to memory and is the ability to recognize and correctly reproduce an incomplete whole, e.g., recognizing "ca...ch" as "catch".

2.3.4 Inadequate auditory-vocal perception

The same modalities of visual perception are applicable here as are relevant to sound. Form constancy and spatial orientation, however, are not applicable to auditory perception.

3. TEACHING DEFICIENCIES

3.1 Introduction

In chapter 11 (section 3) it is indicated that a teacher can teach ineffectively by making mistakes in selecting and reducing the learning contents, stating the lesson problem, systematically unlocking (presenting) the contents, determining skills, proficiencies and techniques, meaningfully verifying the effects of teaching and learning, the functionalizing aspect and the evaluation steps such that the learning contents are unlocked inadequately and it is not possible for a child to learn them effectively. Attention now is given to a teacher's inadequate participation in teaching in a lesson situation.

Above it is noted that learning problems are a disharmonious component in a child's self-actualization of his/her learning initiative which result in disharmonious possessed experience and an under-actualization of the modes of learning (Sonnekus, 1975: 80). Because of the complementary relation between teaching and learning (Van der Stoep, 1973: 25), it is possible that teaching problems can give rise to learning problems. Disharmony between teaching and learning, manifested as teaching and learning problems, results in lesson or content problems (Sonnekus, 1975: 80). The possibility of inadequacy in the disharmonious dynamics of teaching embraces the whole of the teaching event from which the teacher, as a person, cannot be eliminated (Meyer, 1982: 33). According to Van Dyk (1977: Chapter 6), a several planning and performance functions constitute the task of a teacher in a lesson situation and, thus, a functional analysis to disclose possible teaching deficiencies is a meaningful place to start to try to harmonize the dynamics of teaching.

3.2 Inadequate reduction of contents

When a teacher does not reduce the contents to their essentials and necessary factual cores (elementals), which sharpen a child's insights and clarify relations, this can give rise to superficial, process-like learning, meaningless memorization and an attribution of negative meaning to the contents so that they quickly fade away. A child can be disturbed affectively by being flooded with contents which show little structure or order, and which he/she cannot grasp.

Dednam and Bouwer (1985: 44-45) indicate that a teacher errs when, in reducing the contents, he/she does not thoroughly take into account such matters as the syllabus content, to avoid gaps in knowledge, leaves out of consideration the level of the pupils' learning, does not consider the possibilities of differentiation appropriate for the pupils and acts injudiciously with respect to the society and environment in which the pupils grow up and within which the learning contents must be meaningful.

3.3 Inadequately planned aims

The **teaching aim** is attuned to support a child to acquire learning contents on his/her way to proper adulthood (Landman, 1981: 4). Learning aims which do not serve a child to functionalize his/her acquired proficiencies and skills on continually higher levels leave him/her defenseless in a world of demands. The formulation of a **learning aim** must indicate what learning contents are going to be selected which will lead to an insight into and understanding of the lesson theme. The teacher can make a teaching mistake when, e.g., he/she selects contents which do not correspond with a child's learning abilities, such as his/her abilities to make discriminations or his/her motor skills. The **instructional (lesson) aim** determines how the teacher will implement the learning aim. Vagueness regarding the methods he/she aims to use, the positions he/she is going to take with respect to the pupils and the learning contents, and the examples he/she is going to implement can lead to the course of the lesson occurring haphazardly, or the teacher falling into a drill pattern or stereotyped handbook method, and the principles of the lesson contents then are not disclosed.

3.4 Inadequately planned lesson form

Regarding planning the form of a lesson, the teacher can contribute to negative learning experiences when his/her choice of a ground form is unaccountable. Thus, **conversation**, as a ground form, might be extremely confusing for a child who has trouble with auditory figure-ground discrimination; or if instructions are not given clearly, the progress of a lesson with **assignment** as a lesson form might be uncertain and aimless. The **methodological principles**, as organizational procedures, which the teacher uses during a lesson to bring home insights to the pupils by allowing them to work inductively or deductively also might confuse the pupils if he/she does not consider the demands which they make.

Inductive learning requires ordered contents while **deductive** learning requires a thorough command of the principles.

3.5 Inadequately designed lesson phases

3.5.1 Inadequately guided learning during actualizing foreknowledge

When the new contents are not linked up with relevant foreknowledge, which serves as meaningful points of contact and basic insights, a child who already has a history of learning failures might have a negative emotional experience of the teacher and the contents, and this can completely neutralize his/her readiness to learn. A teaching mistake in this respect occurs when a teacher does not determine the pupils' cognitive foreknowledge and functional skills beforehand (Dednam and Bouwer, 1985: 56).

3.5.2 Inadequately guided learning during stating the problem

Stating the problem is the focal point of a lesson and, as such, it is a precondition for formulating the lesson aim (Van der Stoep, 1973: 53). In so far as a child is learning adequately in his/her involvement during a lesson, the meaning of the lesson contents is found in the problem the teacher has formulated. His/her learning intention is directed to solving the problem in terms of the teacher's presentation of a lesson and similar ones which might arise from the lesson. The teacher can dampen this learning intention when a problem is formulated which is irrelevant, vague, too difficult or too removed from a child's experience, which then confronts him/her with his/her ignorance and learning impotence. Because of his/her disturbed volitional and emotional life, a child with learning problems might experience a confrontation with an unaccountably posed problem as a tense situation which only contributes further to his/her task shyness, learning indifference, blunted learning disposition and even aversion for learning (Meyer, 1982: 214).

3.5.3 Inadequately guided learning during exposing the new contents

A lack of logical and systematic progress with the lesson contents can lead to confusion and uncertainty, and for a child who already experiences learning problems, this can disturb his/her attending. Presentation, which is marred by factors such as poor articulation,

boredom and poor language skills, lack of clarity, succinctness and animation can cause the pupils to not understand the contents and merely participate in the lesson perfunctorily.

3.5.4 Inadequately guided learning during actualizing (controlling) the new contents

During this phase, opportunities must be provided for controlling the insights, reviewing, summarizing, surveying, schematizing and practicing the acquired insights. When there is hasty, poor planning or a deluge of contents in this phase, this intensifies in a child with learning problems a superficial, trial-and-error and impulsive learning involvement which leads to an inadequate learning effect and an inability to functionalize or use the contents.

3.5.5 Inadequately guided learning during functionalizing the contents

Among other things, functionalizing means intensified, deeper understanding, application and novel creations (Van der Stoep and Van Dyk, 1977: 200). The teacher can impair functionalizing when meaningless, too many or too difficult assignments or exercises are given. As a result, the child does not lived experience and experience that what he/she has learned is applicable and useful, and the meaning of the learning task for him/her will be lost.

3.5.6 Inadequately guided learning during evaluating

Evaluating a child's work with the aim of his/her advancement and improvement means that the teacher and the child must be accountable for the quality of their normative participation in the lesson (Meyer, 1982: 221).

This phase clearly provides an opportunity for intercepting learning problems. Punishing mistakes, destructive criticism, warnings and berating in front of others can discourage a child and weaken his/her learning intention so that he/she even becomes alienated and can develop an attitude of resistance against school tasks.

3.6 Inadequate affective, cognitive and normative accompaniment by the teacher during the lesson

Affective accompaniment is the basis for effective learning (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1979: 35). If a teacher appeals only to a child's intellectual potentialities, and in his/her lesson giving activities does not allow room for concern, interest and positive encouragement, and is thereby over-critical, this can so unnerve a child who experiences learning problems that it impedes his/her effective learning. A teacher, by his/her behavior (restlessness or excessive passivity), disposition (aloofness, lack of interest, dejection, fault-finding, irritability, restlessness) and even tone of speaking (unsympathetic, restless) can allow a class atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety to arise which can lead to fluctuations in attending (Dednam and Bouwer, 1985: 61-63).

Appropriate **cognitive accompaniment** by the teacher leads to a cognitively ordered actualization of a child's psychic life (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1979: 386). The following deficiencies in the quality of his/her cognitive accompaniment, however, can lay the foundation for a child's learning problems:

- * Neglecting the demand to properly design a lesson might lead to a confused presentation which can hinder a child in acquiring proper insight into the lesson contents;
- * neglecting the principle of differentiation might lead to overlooking individual differences among the pupils so that the same learning achievement is expected by all. For a child who experiences learning problems and who masters the contents more slowly and "differently", this misunderstanding of being different perhaps can lead to an intense experience of impotence; and
- * failing to verify, during all phases of a lesson, whether the pupils have an ordered grasp of the learning contents can result in a child, whose learning problem can retard his/her learning tempo or allow his/her attending to fluctuate, acquiring gaps in his/her possessed knowledge by which important core facts, necessary procedures, basic principles, etc. will be lost. This deficient knowledge can be the origin of a learning problem or worsen an existing one.

When a teacher's cognitive accompaniment is unplanned and unordered, and/or when the class atmosphere is threatening and tense, a pupil will experience the lesson and its contents as meaningless. When a pupil is not accompanied so that he/she discovers the meaning of the contents and readily makes them his/her own, there is inadequate **normative accompaniment or guidance**. By his/her propensities and dispositions, a teacher also

can neglect his/her task of normative accompaniment and directly give rise to the pupil experiencing his/her participation in the lesson as meaningless, and ultimately learning problems will appear (Czerwenka, 1984: 371). Repeated verification is the only way a teacher can ensure if his/her lesson aim continually is attained or not.

4. DEFICIENT CONTENTS

The purposeful teaching of selected contents occurs with the expectation of effective learning which results in a thriving and deepening participation in everyday reality. Without learning dividends, attending school is a meaningless activity (Van der Stoep, 1972: 58). Teaching and learning activities only can lead to adequate learning dividends if they function harmoniously with the learning contents. Although the components teaching, learning and lesson contents do not occur in disharmonious isolation, from the above discussion, it appears that learning derailments can be traced back to deficiencies in the activities of teaching and/or learning. It also is possible that the learning contents can give rise to learning derailments. Van Niekerk and Van Zyl (1984: 55) indicate that the convergence of teaching, learning and contents lies in the fact that a child must be able to **establish a relationship** with the contents which have been uncovered for him/her by the teacher. Even if the contents are unlocked with optimal effectiveness, aspects uniquely inherent to the contents themselves can give rise to inadequately or negatively established relationships with them, and learning problems can arise from this. When the contents are experienced as too difficult or as too much, a child can be labilized so that even his/her sensing, as an initiating mode of learning, cannot be actualized adequately. When the contents are overemphasized at the expense of the unlocking role of the child him/herself in particular subjects, the inadequacy of the lesson becomes conspicuous (Van Niekerk and Van Zyl, 1984: 55).

The **nature** of the subject content might possibly predispose learning derailments: consider, for example, the challenges which learning English spelling presents, such as its inconsistent phonetic structure, non-phonetic ways of spelling, differences between the written symbol and pronunciation and the large number of rules of spelling and exceptions which have to be mastered. Further, it might be difficult to link the subject contents to a child's experiential world. For example, in this regard, think of the

difficulty some rural Afrikaans boys can experience with "A Midsummer Night's Dream". Children who are compelled to take specific subjects not appropriate for their abilities and interests are delivered to the possibility of being squeezed into learning problems. Here the root of the problem often is in the nature of the subject, in the degree which it requires logical thinking, exactness, accuracy, an attunement to language, creativity, etc., all personal qualities which the child of concern simply might not have.

Problems of content also might arise when, because of absences or of changing schools, the logical relationships among the components of the contents are lost to a child, and then the insights on which subsequent steps of thinking and solution strategies are based are lacking.

5. GENETIC-PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS UNDERLYING LEARNING RESTRAINTS

5.1 Turner's syndrome

Turner's syndrome is a chromosomal deviation which occurs in girls and can be diagnosed at birth (Lewandowski, 1985: 177). Girls with this syndrome show physical deviations (short stature, deviations in sexual organs) as well as perceptual, motor and cognitive deficiencies which restrain visual-motor and visual-spatial skills. In most cases, such a child possesses intact language abilities (average verbal IQ score), but problems are experienced with drawing objects and dealing with complicated problems, especially mathematical ones. Neutralizing these problems is possible by occupational and physical therapy and perceptual-motor programs. Adaptations in the curriculum also can enable these children to achieve optimally.

5.2 Prematurely born children with cerebral hemorrhaging

Newly developed techniques make it possible today to identify these children early. At five years, these children manifest the following learning deficiencies (Lewandowski, 1985: 177): motor problems, perceptual defects and mild neurological symptoms. This causes premature babies with cerebral hemorrhaging to be strongly predisposed to learning problems. Since it is possible to diagnose this condition at birth, it is possible to monitor the actualization of their becoming and learning, and to implement early intervention programs.

5.3 Children with deviations in hemisphere connections

If the relation between the two brain hemispheres is not fully developed, a child experiences problems integrating the use of the two halves of his/her body, especially during the years when motor development occurs. Linked with this, perceptual defects also arise. Improved techniques of brain research make it possible to diagnose such deviations at birth, and to implement helping programs (Lewandowski, 1985: 178).

5.4 Children with brain injuries

Children with acquired brain injuries because of accidents, assaults, sport injuries, as well as children who develop brain tumors, undergo a change in brain function which, in most cases, restrains their school achievement (Lewandowski, 1985: 178). They find it difficult to keep up with the pace and the scope of the learning contents, and also show language defects, perceptual and motor problems, and memory difficulties. Since recovery occurs within a year after the injury, timely intervention programs are necessary to avoid learning handicaps.

5.5 The child with poor ability

Children are classified as having poor ability when their IQ falls between 80 and 90. They constitute approximately 15% to 25% of the school population (Du Toit, 1980: 104). Special schools or schools for the intellectually restrained are not provided for them because experience has taught that, to a reasonable degree, most enter an ordinary school. In addition, it seems that the qualifications [achievements] they acquire in an ordinary school are of greater value than what is otherwise the case. However, poor ability inevitably leads to learning problems (Dumont, 1980: 105), mainly because of a slow learning tempo and an inadequate ability to think, which is characterized by poor abstraction regarding overall structuring, classifying, ordering, synthesizing, schematizing, etc. Labialized sensing impedes all of the other modes of learning.

6. SYNTHESIS

From the above, there are restraints which can largely predispose a child to learning problems. In this regard, specific deficiencies in

learning abilities, neurological and other dysfunctions figure very prominently.

In addition, learning problems can be the result of a variety of reasons and can appear in a variety of forms, and it is difficult to determine precisely what is responsible for a particular learning problem. To penetrate to the essence of any learning problem, the learner first must be viewed as a personal actualizer, and as a totality rather than concentrating on isolated modes of learning which are conspicuously under-actualized. The under-actualization of the modes of learning continually must be analyzed, in relation to the disharmonious dynamics of educating and, especially, of teaching. In this regard, there must be an attempt to identify as many correlates as possible.

Three main groups of correlates of the disharmonious dynamics of teaching and, thus, of learning problems distinguished are a **deficient actualization of learning, deficient teaching and deficient learning contents.**

A child's habitual affective learning involvement with the contents, and his/her unique cognitive learning style, must be analyzed. There is reference to the effect of under-actualizing the various modes of learning on the learning outcome.

In addition, the teacher and those who give non-formal and informal instruction can contribute to the appearance and intensification of learning problems of individual pupils when the uniqueness of each pupil's affective and cognitive styles of learning are not adequately considered while the contents are unlocked.

The importance of thoroughly planning a lesson is emphasized, and also indicated are the various relevant aspects which must be considered by the teacher, especially during the phases of a lesson to prevent learning problems from arising.

The necessity for continuous evaluation and control (verification) of the learning effect during each lesson phase, when a teacher is involved with teaching, cannot be overemphasized. An insecure child generally must be given sufficient emotional support to strengthen his/her learning-directed intention and be guided effectively to actualize his/her cognitive modes of learning.

7. REFERENCES

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