

## CHAPTER 12 EXEMPLARY TEACHING

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The exemplary, as a didactic ground-form, was dealt with synoptically in a previous chapter. With respect to didactic theory, an important concern is that the exemplary (as a didactic ground-form) presumes a fundamental decision by a teacher about the course (presenting, designing) and type of a lesson. In this sense, the concept “exemplary” is relevant to planning teaching.

It might already be obvious that the activity of exemplifying, as a ground-form, shows an important difference from the other ground-forms of conversation, play and assignment. These last three concepts have a verbal or action meaning. For example, with respect to conversation there is the verb “talking”. Play, as a ground-form, implies that teaching will take its course on the basis of “playing”. Such a direct verb or activity linkage apparently is absent in the case of the example. Indeed there is no recognized verb such as “examplifying” or any other such related form. This apparent difference represents a very important insight regarding the exemplary.

There is little doubt that the concept “exemplary” is attuned to the contents that arise in teaching. Any exemplar introduced into the teaching situation is a matter of contents. Also, it is immediately obvious that the two important themes of any theory of teaching, namely form and contents, in the case of the exemplary are intertwined if not identical. The reason for this important connection between teaching form and contents is that the teaching activities of a teacher and the learning activities of the pupils are planned from the same ground or soil. Therefore, in evaluating the exemplar, as a didactic ground-form, it is not possible to find a definitive, clear distinction among teaching form, methodological principles, principles of ordering and even the implementation of teaching and learning aids within the context of the lesson structure. Briefly: The application or *implementation* of the exemplar by a teacher, the selection and ordering of it, to the extent

that it is a matter of contents, and the focus on the contemplated modes of learning and everything related in the lesson modalities, in fact, is one event. The central and underlying view here involves the selection of purposeful exemplars with an eye to the lesson problem and its solution by pupils' acquiring a clearly defined, generally valid perspective.

If one takes all of this into account, the entire question of the exemplary, in its teaching as well as content aspects, is a matter of *reduction*. When a large or comprehensive aspect of reality is reducible and becomes understandable in terms of one or more exemplars there is mention of exemplary teaching. In such a case, a comprehensive theme is reduced to one or more examples that is taken up in them and by which the whole theme can be made clear in the teaching so it can be mastered by a learning person.

Thus, the entire matter of exemplary teaching cannot be limited to its verb or activity tendency. In this already mentioned respect, it also does not differ from the verb connections that arise with the other ground-forms. That is, *the activity (verb) that is linked with the concept "exemplary" is that of reducing*. Indeed, it is unique to this form of living and life contents in the life world of persons, to the extent that it appears in the educative situation, that a teacher reduces a comprehensive aspect of reality to one or more exemplars so this whole can be presented in terms of a generally valid part of it. In such a case, the whole, according to the principles contained in it (its elementals), becomes understandable in light of one or more well-chosen exemplars. Then, when there is mention of the exemplary as a didactic ground-form in a teaching situation, this means that the whole can be made clear and visible on the basis of one or more of its aspects. All other aspects are variants of what is chosen as an exemplar.

On this basis, particular aspects of reality can be presented by exemplars. Examples of this are found in the handling of mammals in biology, solving equations in mathematics, figures of speech and analyzing sentences in grammar, the concept of statesman in history, etc.

After this brief fundamental explication, the merits as well as the practice of exemplary teaching are examined.

## 2. ORIGINS OF THE EXEMPLARY METHOD

The years after World War II are known as a period of knowledge explosion. It is obvious that this proliferation of knowledge has taken its vengeance out mainly on teaching.

The central idea that this knowledge explosion has had a fairly negative influence on teaching is that pupils and students within the same number of years of study must master increasingly more details and an increasingly expanding curriculum in order to fulfill the requirements of their preparation. Briefly, the explosion of knowledge has had the detrimental effect on teaching of an excessive flooding of the curriculum and increasing demands regarding the scope and breadth of the learning contents that are presented. The essential danger has arisen that threatens to suffocate and stifle the forming and especially the cognitive becoming of these youths by the masses of contents adopted in the curricula as necessary requirements.

The direct cause of and most important reason for implementing an exemplary method is the flooding or overloading of the curriculum. In a variety of ways this important matter is related to the general-scientific views (pedagogical [theoretical] studies) as well as to school-directed training aspects (pedagogic [practical] studies). With respect to these two important ramifications, particular aspects of the merits of an exemplary approach arise for consideration that ultimately and obviously must acquire a place in a particular curriculum theory and in establishing the school curriculum. The following are of particular importance:

a) The experience of educating certainly shows without any doubt that there is an intimate, mutual relationship between teaching and learning. This relationship especially arises in the meaning and effect of educating in the sense that educating continually is realized during teaching and that the meaning of teaching is in educating. Earlier, sufficient orienting facts were offered regarding

this. By the nature of things, this is a topic for pedagogical study that will not be dealt with here.

For teaching practice this relationship manifests itself on an entirely simple and empirically verifiable level, namely, that effective teaching and effective learning factually are complementary concepts. The aim of all teacher preparation is that the quality of teaching is carried out on the highest level possible with the aim that a pupil can actualize the learning activity in the most effective way possible. There are, perhaps, few aspects in an educative as well as a school situation that so profoundly influence the becoming of a child. The entire matter of cognitive becoming rests on this and the level of elevation mentioned in psychopedagogics is determined mainly by the quality of teaching.

It was indicated that form and content with respect to the exemplary method are identical in many details. However, if for a moment one should attend to the question of contents, then this involves a question of contents for teaching (pedagogic guiding). Outside of the question of contents, teaching and learning are empty concepts. With the aim of evaluating this relationship, it is extremely important for any teacher to think about the *scope* or *amount* of contents presented, as well as about the design of a teaching situation, as influences on the learning activity. From this, the second aspect of the reason for an exemplary method follows.

b) All teaching and all learning, especially school teaching and a school's actualization of learning, are directed to some form of achievement. This not only implies that a pupil must be able to master a particular area of contents but that there also ought to be a recognizable and noticeable elevation in level of learning. The effective actualization of learning necessarily is related to the amount of contents that are presented in the learning situation.

When the amount of contents are of such a nature that pupils no longer can acquire a grasp of them within the usual or traditional period of time, this necessarily influences detrimentally the quality (elevation of level) of the actualization. The detriment especially is that a pupil covers an enormous area of contents and, thus, hardly learns to know them; no deep and really penetrating mastery is

possible because too many contents are presented. As we know, real achievement is not possible without a thorough or a really penetrating study of a matter. In the period of the explosion of knowledge, this thorough study of particular, basic and representative contents no longer is possible without the exemplary method.

For the compilation of a curriculum, a fundamental matter is the claim that the exemplary method is the only way to avoid the overload of contents. Therefore, the exemplary view strongly contributes to the reduction of contents, i.e., the theory of the elemental.

c) This matter of the elemental and of “elemental-izing” also was considered in an earlier chapter. Here, only a few remarks are needed to briefly recapitulate this orientation.

The theory of the elemental deals directly with the question of contents. The object is to implement in a teaching situation only such contents that really can contribute to providing a learning person with a fundamental or basic entry into various aspects of reality and science. Therefore, these elementals are functionally unlocking or access-providing and make possible insight into and command of particular aspects of reality. To arrive at elementals, a didactician must be in a position to reduce contents (to their essentials, elementals). This holds for designing a curriculum as well as a lesson.

This view is linked up with the theory of exemplary teaching because a thorough and in-depth study only is possible when the elementals become available as contents in a teaching situation and when these elementals can be made visible by means of handling the exemplary. When there is effective learning, in the first place this does not have to do with the scope or area of the contents but with the possibility of acquiring a deep mastery of their principles or elementals. In this way there can be a breaking away from a one-sided memorizing and all of the modes of learning can function in an accompanying as well as far-reaching (effective) way.

### **3. EXEMPLARY LEARNING**

Without going into the psychopedagogic or subject didactic aspects of exemplary learning, there still are some very important didactic findings that must be considered regarding the relationship between exemplary teaching and exemplary learning. The tasks for didactic theory are extensive in this respect and we mention only two:

i) A didactician must give an account of and be able to present empirical evidence for the exemplary principle, theoretically and practically, regarding its aims, i.e., precisely evaluate its effect, think about it and put it to the test. The visible effect of learning is not a matter of superficial and hasty acceptance of particular findings. The relationship that the exemplary shows with the theory of elementals is a living example of this.

ii) Exemplary teaching is a far-reaching and radical change and deviation from the old notion of encyclopedic knowledge in various school subjects. Therefore, its use has particular consequences for interpreting specific concepts that, today, still are generally prevalent in didactic theory. Merely think of pronouncements such as: scientific, systematic, chronological order, linear ordering, etc. The exemplary method, indeed, is a matter of an elemental or a thematic approach.

On this basis, the *heuristic* approach to teaching and learning is of particular importance. This means that a pupil's exploration and self-disclosure of particular meanings are done by designing lesson situations in terms of the exemplary principle. Consequently, it often happens that a lesson problem is presented in the form of a hypothesis or conjecture that, in its turn, has important subject didactic consequences because it is so closely connected with the nature of the contents or the nature of the various school subjects. In many respects the exemplary method requires a subject didactic design that, in fact, is the diametric opposite of the so-called systematic or chronological approach to contents.

As far as the effective actualization of learning is concerned, the exemplary oriented theory of teaching speaks of a *genetic* foundation of teaching as well as learning. Obviously, this concept easily can be incorrectly understood by being explained and

interpreted as evolutionistic, bio-mechanistic and atomistic. However, this is not what is meant by the exemplary theory.

As in the case of the book of Genesis, the concept “genesis” refers to beginning, origin or first beginning. When teaching and learning are actualized genetically this means (in relation to the heuristic principle mentioned above) that in thematizing the contents and their thorough and penetrating mastery, concentration must be on origins and principles that put a pupil in a position to interpret all related phenomena or realities in terms of these origins or first principles. The fact of the flexibility of insight (transfer or even application) is, therefore, in the exemplary actualization of learning, an entirely particular task. It is evident that the accompanying teaching and lesson design must, to a degree, take this into account. In this respect the exemplary principle also claims to be a radical and new dynamic arrangement of didactic tasks.

It is obvious that, on the basis of the above, new light is cast on the exemplary approach and even shows an unfamiliar relationship regarding its point of concentration or focus in a curriculum. For example, it is necessary that the contents be presented on a much more integrated scale with the consequence that the coherencies of meanings and facts in the actualization of effective learning are of much greater significance and this approach also involves the presentation of a (lesson) problem much more than is the case with a systematic-chronological handling of the contents. These coherencies of meanings and facts represent basic matters regarding the elevation of the level of the cognitive. With a thematic approach, such as the exemplary, this cannot be otherwise. Consequently, the field of concentration, and even the principles of organization that arise, must be investigated anew and must be interpreted and implemented by a teacher in accordance with his teaching circumstances. The principle standpoint of the exemplary is oriented to the elemental and thematic on the basis of which an in-depth study (origins, principles) is of fundamental significance for actualizing the learning activity.

In this sense, a scattering and splintering of contents and confusion regarding relationships for the learning person are a very decisive and even central problem for a teacher. Although the compilation

of a school curriculum is not primarily concerned with the scientific character or the teaching of the subject science, the scientific frame of reference and taxonomy of the school subjects cannot merely be left out of consideration. The school contents also claim that they are representative and valid *knowledge*, although the pedagogic aim ultimately is reality orienting in nature.

The tasks for actualizing meaningful learning, as far as the exemplary is concerned, possibly can best be summarized by the concept *propaedeutic*, i.e., a preparatory or introductory orientation (to a strictly scientific study). In the original meaning of the word, therefore, it must be formative and educative in nature without laying claim to completeness or exclusiveness regarding the knowledge aspect. Thus, exemplary teaching means to become involved with contents in an introductory or orienting way. For a learning person, the task is to actualize learning in terms of the thematic approach, the heuristic tasks and the genetic foundation referred to previously, in order to gain deepened insight into the coherencies of meanings and facts. On this basis it is clear that the didactic modalities in exemplary oriented teaching are concentrated on matters such as self-activity and self-actualization. Logically, it follows that these expectations fostered in the learning person, to a great extent, are the focal point for the guiding (teaching) and the ordering of contents by which there is mention of a lesson design.

To what degree this propedeutic approach makes demands of the pupils' educative insights regarding, e.g., experiencing and lived experiencing the actualization of the various modes of learning, certainly is a particular task for psychopedagogic research. Also, there are no research results from a psychopedagogic perspective on the significance of the theory of elementals and the task of "elemental-izing" contents.

#### **4. THE EXEMPLARY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT AND SUMMARY**

It is understandable that a concept such as "exemplary" not only is susceptible to various interpretations but there also are many related derivations and forms, even newly created concepts, that must be recognized.

The root word and original meaning of the concept “exemplary” is the Latin “exemplum”. “Exemplum” literally means to come out, expose or disclose. Therefore, if there is mention of “exemplum” this refers to something that is radically reduced, i.e., is stripped of all non-essential aspects and is exposed as a principle, origin, or original truth. As such “exemplum” lays claim to truth and validity and presents itself as an elemental, real and valid access to particular structures of reality. In this sense it has particular significance for the accompanying aspect of the learning activity because it underlies formulating the aim, designing the way learning must occur and ultimately evaluating the level of achievement. When the content is an “exemplum”, at the same time, it also provides the criteria for planning each of the above aspects (aims, actualization and evaluation) of a lesson.

On the basis of its claims of validity and truth, the “exemplum” must make the general knowable in light of the particular. For example, when an example is used in a lesson situation, this particular example must expose more clearly and synoptically the totality of the insight into the total theme (e.g., mammals). The “exemplum” announces that its particularity has generally valid relevance.

#### **4.1 “Exemplum” and exemplar**

The fact that there is a definite and observable relation between the general and the particular and that the particular can illuminate valid, general realities, is the basis on which the distinction between “exemplum” and exemplar rests. The ‘exemplum” presents a norm or criterion. The exemplar represents the particularization of the “exemplum” in a particular example or matter or phenomenon by which the characteristics or identity of the particular phenomenon come very clearly into the foreground and become accessible to insight. Therefore, the exemplar points to an “elemental-izing” by which a particular example can be identified and even isolated with respect to particular definable characteristics. An exemplar always is one of a variety of possibilities that all show the same characteristics. The “exemplum” presents the norm regarding the validity or effectiveness of the individual exemplars. Therefore, the

exemplars, in themselves, are exchangeable or interchangeable without doing violence or harm to the norms that are presented by the “exemplum”. An exemplar (now as a particular example) has the function of explicating something and making it understandable. In terms of this particularizing and explicating, the contents become knowable as one of a species. Some examples of this are an epical or lyrical poem, a sonnet, a one-act play, an equation with one unknown, a dicotyledon (a plant with two seed leaves), etc. It is obvious that particular examples or exemplars of, e.g., an English sonnet can be interchanged without any damage if the chosen exemplars fulfill the demands and characteristics (the particularizations) that hold for the concept “English sonnet”.

## 4.2 Exempel

Originally the concepts “exemplar” and “exempel” were used identically. However, over time it became clear that some exemplars so clearly reflect the structures or essences of a particular aspect of reality that they can be called super-exemplars, as it were; i.e., they are exemplars that stand above other related exemplars and thereby are elevated to the position of a model-exemplar or exempel.

In this case think of the bean as an exempel of a dicotyledon plant that for years has figured so prominently in the elementary school curriculum. In this sense the exempel really functions on the same level as the “exemplum” because it serves as a standard (criterion) in terms of which related and new exemplars can be evaluated or judged with the aim of implementing them in teaching. For teaching this means that a pupil, by means of the exempel, must be able to arrive at a pure image and identification of a particular matter or species.

## 4.3 The paradigm

The concept “paradigm” literally means to show or indicate. As such, in the course of time it has become an overarching concept under which all sorts of models, types or examples can be placed. In this sense it has the danger of being applied so generally and diffusely that it becomes meaningless.

Such a general or diffuse concept, understandably, is undesirable for didactic practice because it is vague. When the “paradigm” must be elucidated and it is not self-evident, as an example, it is better that, as far as possible, it be didactically set aside after notice is taken of it.

#### **4.4 The type or typical case**

The concept “type” or “typical case” is a much stricter, limited and narrower concept within the framework of exemplary teaching. In the “typical case”, decisive and denotable characteristics of a particular nature must appear. Therefore, “type” or “typical case” usually is a concrete or visible variation of the exemplar by which the form is directly shown.

Klafki speaks, e.g., of a desert as a geographical type, a conifer as a biological type, etc. As a type, it shows particular essences that correspond greatly with essences that also can be observed in other cases and that, thus, also make possible the inference of general or typical ideas.

According to Van Dyk the “typical case” or “type” acquires a place in exemplary teaching because it, with respect to these matters, is not so much involved with making visible particular laws, rules or principles but much more with copying a particular structure. Therefore, an example that can be described as a “type” approximates an ideal character.

#### **4.5 The pure case**

We are well acquainted with court verdicts that are a “pure case” regarding the matter of premeditated or intentional murder. A verdict has validity despite the fact that everyone is aware that each murder is unique in its motive, circumstances and perpetration. Consequently, with the “pure case” it occurs that particular norms or realities regarding the structure of an event or object are applicable to that particular case or example. The simpler the details that arise, in the elemental sense of the word, the purer the case will be.

The study of the “pure case” within an exemplary context deals with particular details appearing by reducing them to a single case under the assumption that there are other cases that have the same components. Consequently, in this respect the pure case acquires exemplary significance. Its implementation in exemplary teaching is closely related to the analysis of the aim of the subject didactic design. It also is understandable that the pure case easily can become blurred into a paradigm or the explication can sharpen it into a definite type.

#### 4.6 The classical case

When, in exemplary teaching, there is mention of a “classical case”, usually this means that this particular case has validity as a model. Van Dyk views the “classical case” as a related concept in exemplary theory by which particular cultural contents and forms are of central significance (formative value) for the world orientation of a child. Therefore, the “classical case” always is worthy of imitation on the basis that, to a large degree, it has model characteristics. Mastering the model and the possibility of its application, therefore, can lead to carrying out imitative or analogous learning activities.

This pronouncement is of particular validity regarding cultural contents, their values and norms. On this basis generalizations are relatively easy because, in truth, the “classical case” is an inspiring example.

#### 4.7 Pattern and specimen

At this stage it is clear that an exemplar, type or case are able to appear such that their details can be repeated without changing the contents or the form and in this way can create a repetition of the same matter or object.

In this case, one thinks of a pattern for wallpaper that, on the basis of its repeatability, can bring about a particular unity or harmony, or a dress pattern that makes it possible to repeatedly make precisely the same dress without deviation. When an exemplar or example can be repeated or continued without limit one essentially has to do with a *pattern*.

In contrast, with a specimen a larger whole is presented in all of its particular details by a small part of it. Merely think of the general significance of a specimen of wood or specimens that are available for the sake of selecting a mat or choosing cloth. Thus, there necessarily is a correspondence between what it is the specimen offers and what will appear in the larger whole when the specimen is multiplied many times. In terms of a specimen, the larger whole is presentable for thinking.

In addition it also is the case that the qualities or characteristics of a particular matter that lends itself to being a specimen, can be tested. When, therefore, a specimen is drawn or can be made use of, the deductions that can be made from the specimen also must be valid for the larger whole that is presented through the specimen.

#### **4.8 Model**

No one will doubt that the specimen and the model copy or imitate a greater whole. However, the model has an exemplary advantage over the specimen in that it can represent a large (comprehensive) aspect of reality in its absolutely simplest form. This also implies that the model contains particular possibilities of reducing, schematizing and representing without impairing its usefulness or validity. When the model is applied in an exemplary context it is possible to reduce it so radically that only the details relevant to the particular lesson design need to be made known and clarified. In this sense it often is of much greater value for teaching than is the real object itself because too many details of the latter can create confusion and possibly block insight. Here it also must be remembered that all models are preliminary designs or partial totalities. The model is never the matter itself. As exemplars they often are abstract simply because they are a representation that tries to present uniquely emphasized particular facts, and therefore they easily can lead to incorrect or distorted emphases if a thorough insight into the structure being modeled does not exist. There is an essential danger of faulty association and over-objectivity that sometimes leaves the child completely behind in the lesson situation.

## 4.9 Example

The word example literally means “first image”. In this light it is understandable that the concept example also often means “valid image” and can be implemented, as such, on an exemplary level.

When a person refers to a particular example this definitely implies that particular principles are appropriately illustrated by a concrete case. Therefore, when there is mention of examples in exemplary teaching, their choice and subsequent explication rest on certain definite and inherent details that are made available in the example and that will make the matter, as such, known to a pupil. This illustration-effect of the example must put a pupil in a position to disclose commonalities or correspondences that are identifiable with matters already available in his foreknowledge. It is especially in this respect that its exemplary use often brings about a particular flexibility and possibility of application in a class situation. The example is continually disposed to get beyond a merely verbal explication in order to present a matter as it really is.

As an exemplar, the example always takes the place of the real object in its *general* details because these generalities can be made clear or present in a pure and comprehensible way in the example. This particular functionality of the example holds for the conceptual as well as the concrete; i.e., it covers the abstract as well as the perceptible. Therefore, in a teaching design it is necessary that a teacher continually be aware that the pupils do not slavishly imitate the examples and, on the basis of limited insight into the coherencies of meanings and facts, be subverted by the slightest variations or deviations. Consequently, a single example is insufficient regarding exemplary teaching and a pupil continually must be led in terms of the presented example to disclose new examples and explicate their validity himself.

## 5. CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN EXEMPLARY METHOD

The conceptual distinctions briefly dealt with in the previous section are representative of the entire possible variation of implementing the exemplary idea. Each of these concepts is relevant in one way or another when there is reasoning from the “exemplum”, “exempel”

and “exemplar”. Therefore, they are representative of the entire variety of the same matter. One should also be able to mention one’s own variations. It seems that each of these variations involves learning contents, the choice of which are at the center of exemplary teaching.

In considering essential aspects of the exemplary method, at this stage, there are only two aspects that deserve attention because the third (learning in an exemplary way) was briefly considered above.

### **5.1 The exemplary as form**

A few remarks about this aspect also were made above. Implementing the exemplary as form (so it was stated) rests on the fact that this is a matter of the radical reduction of contents. To the extent that it is going to be the form (i.e., the ground-form) of any lesson design, the basic point of departure implies a radical representation of a large aspect of life reality (or large whole of knowledge) by applying an exemplar. The consequence is that, regarding the offering itself, in most cases the exemplar, as ground-form, is combined with one of the others (play, conversation or assignment). However, this is not a fast or unchangeable rule. Concepts such as paradigm, typical case, pure case and model can and are also implemented in a teaching situation in such a way that they literally speak for themselves in the illustration.

This entire matter would be incomplete, however, if one did not also indicate that the exemplary method is not restricted to any area or any aspect of a methodological principle, principle of ordering contents, methods of teaching, as well as choice and emphasis of didactic modalities. A teacher similarly is free to make these various aspects of a lesson structure functional (i.e., in the same way as with the other ground-forms) according to his best insight into and judgment of his circumstances.

For this reason it is unnecessary and also unaccountable to exclude the exemplary method from particular pronouncements about implementing the didactic form because in the initial planning the identity between form and content is clearly identifiable.

## 5.2 The exemplary and the contents

Above it was indicated that the central meaning of an exemplary method regarding the learning contents is in limiting the amount of contents such that a superficial and encyclopedic knowledge of them can be replaced by an in-depth study of particular aspects of them. This in-depth study of only exemplars must, in the course of teaching, lead to the fact that the insights and the command can be transferred to other, relevant or comparable areas or problems. Therefore, the matter of the exemplary primarily is a matter of curriculum.

Only when a curriculum is limited in extent, i.e., the area of the contents are limited radically, is this aim realizable. In truth, no teacher can realize the teaching ideal coupled with an exemplary approach if he is confronted with an encyclopedically summarized curriculum.

For those who are accountable for a curriculum, all contemporary studies show in this regard that curriculum development is a primary and fundamental activity with an eye to the various ways of implementing contents in teaching.

For curriculum this terrain is found within four fixed points:

**5.2.1 *Criteria:*** In terms of this the choice or judgment of contents with the aim of including them in the curriculum becomes possible. If we take into consideration that the concept “criterion” literally means “gauge” or “standard” and if the necessary gauge or criterion should be missing, when the exemplary idea is to be worked into the curriculum, the establishment of a curriculum that is exemplary-oriented is entirely impossible. Then, any characteristics that the contents might show with regard to the exemplary approach merely are haphazard. The task for didactic theory in this respect is to more closely investigate and especially interpret the mass of data regarding curriculum criteria in light of the exemplary principle.

**5.2.2 *Selection:*** The basic principle behind the concept “selection” is that in any form of selection particular preferences are exercised, i.e., one matter is chosen above another. The same principle also

holds when selecting teaching contents. In the case of exemplary teaching this is a matter that acquires particular prominence when its theory of curriculum arises. In a literal sense of the word, the selection of the contents makes possible the point of introducing the exemplary approach into the curriculum and, therefore, also into the classroom. Also, this aspect deserves much more attention from teaching authorities and researchers in didactic pedagogics. Any encyclopedic curriculum really is encyclopedic in nature because the curriculum compilers waver in exercising a definitive preference in selecting contents. To eliminate the possibility of failure they choose the principle of totality instead of that of the exemplary.

**5.2.3 *Ordering:*** In addition to selection, the arrangement or ordering of contents in the exemplary approach is of particular importance. This matter has been stressed repeatedly in previous chapters. As we know, the possibilities are many. There are *no* preferences or criteria that place or force one principle of ordering above another. Also, in this regard, as far as exemplary teaching is concerned, there has been little penetrating research done or radical conclusions drawn. In cooperation with psychopedagogics, didactic investigations in this respect can make a particular contribution, e.g., to determining, in comparative ways, possible preferences of ordering for an exemplary oriented curriculum.

**5.2.4 *Evaluating:*** In light of the fact that the exemplary approach particularly is attuned to breaking out of the encyclopedic and memorization practice that for centuries was so peculiar to the traditional school, it is obvious that in evaluating the pupils' achievement different kinds of criteria must be applied. In this respect, what holds for exemplary teaching also holds for project teaching—to mention only one other approach. The fact of the matter is that insight and the flexibility of this insight (the possible transfer of it to other areas) constitutes the warp and woof of any evaluative practice with exemplary teaching.

Here it must be stressed yet again that exemplary practice, of whatever nature, is not to be considered or planned apart from the theory of the elemental and the fundamental. It is very importance that a prospective teacher interprets the theory of the elemental and the fundamental within an exemplary context. None of the

above fixed points for an exemplary curriculum is realizable without this. The criteria, selection, ordering and evaluation of the pupils' achievement (for a particular lesson or in general) cannot be constituted other than within the referential framework of the elemental theory. If the exemplar is not also an elemental it cannot lay claim to exemplary status. The exemplar must serve to unlock the contents fundamentally, to illuminate essences and principles, to link theory and reality (thinking and acting) and to provide real access to the basic categorical structures of reality. These are all aspects of the elemental theory that *ipso facto* must appear in any view of exemplary teaching.

## 6. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN EXEMPLARY APPROACH

With respect to considerations for an exemplary practice, once again, it is stressed that a teacher is completely independent in implementing particular methodological principles, teaching methods, principles of ordering and all facets of the didactic modalities. He exercises his own choices and in exemplary theory there are no prescriptions that force or limit him in any ways in his decisions regarding these lesson structure essences.

The exemplary method can be introduced into a practical lesson situation equally effectively in terms of the inductive as well as the deductive principle. The same holds, e.g., for question-and-answer methods compared to narration methods and the concentric principle of ordering compared to the linear. In all of these respects, the lesson design provides precisely the same freedoms, possibilities and functional flexibility as does any other teaching form.

When a teacher works in accordance with the exemplary principles, however, he must take the following aspects thoroughly into account for his practice:

- i) Each chosen exemplar must carefully be judged to determine if the elementals of a matter, problem, view or law can be presented by it *according to the real essentials of the matter*. If this is not the case, choose another exemplar that does fulfill these

criteria or demands. The success of the teaching ultimately depends entirely on the quality of the exemplars that are worked into a lesson design.

ii) The simpler the exemplars, the more effectively they function in a teaching situation.

iii) As far as possible, use aids for illustrating or concretizing (e.g., by using models); their function cannot be overemphasized in exemplary teaching. Just because exemplary contents are intently selected and are presented as islands, as it were, the presentation must put a pupil in a position to learn to know the remaining required or desired themes himself and on his own responsibility. In this way the islands established in the teaching must be mutually connected by a pupil himself or even be elaborated into a larger continent. If in any way possible, begin with the known. In exemplary teaching the known and the actualization of this foreknowledge is of the greatest importance if the statement of the problem eventually is to be successfully presented.

iv) Keep the possibility and the principle of integration continually in mind. The success of the flexibility or transfer of insight and mobility with respect to the differentiated themes in a particular school subject area, and all of the school subjects collectively, represent one of the key tasks of the pupils.

v) Remember that the simple (elemental) is not always so simple. Therefore, search thoroughly for complex or abstract principles that speak from the exemplar. Verbalizing, defining and explicating these sometimes abstract or unknown aspects of the exemplar constitute continual snares and potholes for the pupils. Pure concept forming is the first principle when a learning person seeks insight. Not enough attention can be given to firming up and explicating concepts presented in *all* teaching. With the exemplary approach, however, this matter is of fundamental significance.

vi) It was indicated that an exemplar really implies the particularization of a comprehensive, extensive area. It also is demanded of the exemplar that the general must be clear and visible in this particular. This is the matter that was stressed in (i) above. However, proceeding from the particular to the general, or from particularizing to generalizing, are not always obvious matters for the pupils. Special attention must be given to this. If pupils are not in a position to make general use of the individual data of the exemplar they will actually stagnate immediately and a teacher will

only find this out when he chooses to evaluate the coherencies of meanings and facts. The problems that he then includes in a test will have an entirely unfamiliar character (i.e., be an unknown factor). This matter arises again when the phases of exemplary teaching are discussed briefly. Once again: the amplification of the particulars to the general carries the possibility of flexibility and transfer of insight. Successful exemplary teaching, as far as learning achievement is concerned, is highly related to this matter.

vii) An imperative for exemplary teaching is that the pupils continually are actively involved in the teaching in the true sense of the word. A pupil can recognize what gaps can arise only if he thinks about a matter that can't be memorized because it is not organized within the particular context of a linear course of themes. The self-activity of a pupil is and remains an essential matter; indeed, it is a necessary precondition for exemplary teaching.

viii) For good exemplary teaching, really *authentic* experience of the *original* structures (essences) of what is presented by the contents is of special significance. This authentic, or life reality, or true to reality experience enables a teacher to achieve success by actualizing pupil foreknowledge and placing the problem within a definitive context.

ix) Be on guard against too many details. A teacher's reduction of the separate exemplars must be done very clearly and judiciously. It is understood that core details (principles) must not be confounded with peripheral details. This confounding blocks the pupils' insight because, by nature, they are inclined to concentrate on these peripheral details if they are in the field of known possessed experiences.

x) Thoroughly take into account the pupils' state of becoming. When contents either are too easy or too difficult, exemplary teaching runs the danger of staggering or miscarrying. A thorough knowledge of the pupils, the possible heterogeneity of the class, choices regarding the lesson tempo, and the variation of exemplars that can be implemented, all to be accommodated into a lesson structure, are of particular importance.

xi) In exemplary teaching, attention to scientific methods is of special significance. It is obvious that when later a pupil must apply these methods, in a figurative sense, in order to obtain additional particularities, the ways or methods by which he can possibly succeed are extremely prominent. This matter holds for all

scientific methods, e.g., the historical, the comparative, the experimental in the natural sciences, the heuristic method, etc. The practicing **of** and practicing **to** insight in the course of a lesson are highly related to this matter and ought to constitute a firm and inescapable aspect of evaluating pupils' achievement.

## 7. PHASES OF THE EXEMPLARY APPROACH

One can well understand that the course of the exemplary planned lesson is not essentially different from any other lesson. Indeed, there is one important matter that continually is prominent when the exemplary is used in presenting new contents. Consequently, the phases of the exemplary are directly applied to this aspect of the course of a lesson.

By exemplary phases is meant that the presentation of new contents, as soon as foreknowledge is actualized and the problem is formulated, include clearly denotable steps or phases.

There are three clearly denotable phases and they are explicated as follows:

i) During the *first phase* a teacher shows. This means that he handles the first exemplar himself in a class and purposefully gives attention to the contents as well as methodological aspects that are relevant to understanding their meaning, explanation and clarification. Therefore, during this phase a teacher stands entirely at the center of the teaching situation, i.e., he stands with the contents themselves facing the class with the aim of trying to guarantee the later actualization of learning by the pupils. The quality of this first exemplar or exemplars is of special importance. The control of the pupils' attending and understanding is utterly necessary. In this phase all variants of essences and principles are disclosed and the success of the second as well as the third phase depend greatly on a teacher's actions.

ii) During the *second phase* additional, related exemplars are presented as problems for the pupils. In this phase, a teacher does not give up his guiding role but continually moves between the contents and the pupils in order to practice control over the direction, insight and mobility of the class. Teacher and pupils work *together* on an additional exemplar or exemplars during the

second phase. Here a teacher appraises himself of the degree of success achieved by the explanation in the first phase. Under no circumstances does he proceed to the third phase if during this phase he has not ascertained that the pupils have arrived at a thorough understanding and mobility of the contents as well as the methods.

iii) During the *third phase* the pupils work independently. This is the phase of periodically breaking away during which a pupil, on his own knowledge and insight, is assigned to exercise the insights of the first and second phase on his own responsibility in class or at home, to extend them to difficult or related exemplars, arrive at an integration of the already mastered details, etc. Therefore, the third phase is a matter of independent and autonomous learning by a pupil. Here he must disclose and explain by himself coherencies of meanings and of facts, responsibly apply methods, be able to verbalize his own disclosures and reasoning, etc. In the third phase, literally, he provides evidence that he has learned from this.

It would be irresponsible to declare these phases of the exemplary presentation as an unbreakable rule or law. Still, this constitutes a definitive sequence in presenting new contents in the course of a lesson and they must not be set aside as cumbersome or digressive.

## 8. CLAIMS ABOUT EXEMPLARY TEACHING

Taking all of the above into account, one can understand that advocates of the exemplary approach make particular claims about its success. Most of these, directly or indirectly, have been brought up previously. When these briefly are repeated here, it is only for the sake of systematization.

i) It minimizes memorizing and an encyclopedic knowing-it-all without insight.

ii) It leads to a responsible, thorough scientific attunement by the pupils irrespective of the nature of their instruction or preparation. This claim holds for academic as well as vocationally directed teaching in all of their various facets.

iii) It compels the pupils to a deepening of and insight into the pertinent problematic that arises in the life world.

iv) It represents a definite schooling and forming with respect to directed and systematic thinking.

v) With exemplary teaching, a pupil systematically is prepared to transfer his insights to related or even unfamiliar areas. This movement from the particular to the general and a whetting of a venturing attitude in order to arrive at decisive generalizations are very strongly emphasized.

vi) There is an indisputable and clearly noticeable rise in the level of cognitive achievement. The movement from the concrete to the abstract occurs very systematically and gradually, and this directly influences the quality of achievement.

vii) It promotes independence through insight into methodological problems by which self-study (especially in post-elementary education) is improved.

viii) As an approach, it includes particular possibilities for individualizing in all of its variations by which individual pupils are given the opportunity to follow their own disposition and tempo in order to master the contents.

ix) On the basis of all of these things, it provides the opportunity for much more self-activity or more expansive self-activity and the purposeful participation of the pupils in the learning situation.

## **9. PROBLEMS WITH AN EXEMPLARY APPROACH**

The following are problems or disadvantages with this approach:

i) Exemplary teaching requires very thorough and considerable training of a teacher. His preparation and preliminary study are of utmost importance and a defect in their quality necessarily leads to seriously limited successes with this approach. As an accompanier, a teacher is in a very central position with respect to the exemplary. These requirements hold for his control as well as evaluation of a lesson.

ii) It is important to note that this approach to teaching can lead to pupil insights and knowledge existing as separate unities; i.e., the principle of integration is done justice to such a limited extent that the success of the teaching is a toss up. The search for the coherencies of meanings and facts can present many problems

in the higher grades of the primary school and the lower grades of the secondary school.

iii) Some proclaim that the exemplary approach is the second wave, or turning point, of the so-called reform pedagogics of this century. The tempo of the wave that has flooded the school has had two detrimental consequences:

- a) Still missing in many respects are thorough investigations of the principles that are intertwined in this, especially because matters such as the curriculum, the practice of evaluation, and their influence on the various subjects are used instead of integrating them with the teaching in its totality.
- b) The idea of the exemplary, in the old ordering of learning material, was put by a question mark without really illuminating the solutions and nodal points that are possible regarding what is new.

iv) Contemporary youth often are so taken by the mass media and emancipation from authority that they necessarily are delivered to a snobbism by an over-emphasized exemplary directedness. Research in this regard has shown that often they are delivered to the fact that they no longer can distinguish authentic from artificial laws. Therefore, it also is no wonder that the elementary and primary matters no longer inspire them because their interests, from the beginning, really are in the complex. The home situation shows a clear and definite defect in a deepening in intellectual life. Intellectual life there is not so much built up from directed and systematic thinking but they often show themselves as reacting to various practical demands of a technological society. Within this context, the exemplary approach definitely is not without its dangers. In our inclination to apply, the elemental is not always clearly visible and, therefore, not valued as of fundamental significance. With this it is obvious that this orientation is greatly disadvantaged. As far as teaching, itself, is concerned, this easily can lead to didactic superficiality on the basis of particular slogans or clichés that are not always accounted for. With this one loses sight of the fundamental didactic questions and the exemplary approach easily becomes a recipe-like, drill-like teaching method. The whole, also within an exemplary respect, no longer is more than its parts. If one loses sight of this, an imbalance in the practice of

exemplary teaching can arise that really is not in any way accountable.

v) An exemplary approach requires penetrating and continually ongoing work by a teacher. This holds not only for a particular year of study but for a child's entire career of being taught. When there is a move from teacher to teacher and from classroom to classroom, it is understandable and logical that this aspect easily can suffer damage if one person does not have the same enthusiasm for the matter as another.

vi) It is difficult to implement the exemplary approach in brief periods for teaching or for lessons. A period of 30 minutes is too short to do real justice to the course of the phases of exemplary teaching. Consequently, this requires an entirely new approach to the teaching timetable.