

Objective Inquiry into Structures of Subjectivity

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Expectations and surprises are natural ingredients of the life-world of the classroom. Maybe we would not want it any differently. The moments of surprise and the unexpected make teaching such an alive and dynamic affair. And yet, how much do we sometimes crave for a world wherein we have perfect control. This is especially evident in instances where teachers tend to talk about their students as if the students' behavior were unrelated to the teachers' own interpretative actions and interactions. "The 9b's are in an ugly mood this afternoon." "If only I knew how to handle Ka." "If only I knew how to get this across to my students." Sometimes we teachers would like to think of ourselves as clever artisans building admittedly delicate bridges across abysses of ignorance. If only we had the proper tools and techniques in order to overcome this hurdle! This is where the curriculum specialist is supposed to come in. We need better science! Experimental research! Let's do more careful planning! In the ideal world of science and planning we will have resolved our uncertainties. The classroom is under our full control -- what this means is that the mental and physical experiences of the children we teach are measurable, predictable, within our influence sphere. Down with uncertainty! Long live accountability!

But the everyday life-world of these children is not the same as the predictable and controllable world of science. In the world of everyday life predictions turn into satisfactions, disappointments, surprises, even astonishments. "I hold you responsible for doing this assignment by tomorrow," says the teacher. "I don't know what it is about Li, it seems she doesn't want to learn." The life-world of children and teach-

ers is a world not only of tentative expectations and planning, it is a world of agreements, deals, negotiations, conflicts, understandings, misinterpretations, tasks, promises held and broken, responsibilities, frustrations, triumphs, and so forth.

Is a "life-world science" possible? And more particularly is a pedagogical science of the life-world feasible? Educators who are familiar with this question are reminded probably of Husserl's musing about the project of a "life-world science." *But now the paradoxical question: Can one not (turn to) the life-world, the world of which we are all conscious in life as the world of us all, without in any way making it a subject of universal investigation, being always given over, rather, to our everyday momentary individual or universal vocational ends and interests - can one not survey it universally in a changed attitude, and can one not seek to get to know it, as what it is and how it is in its own mobility and relativity, make it the subject matter of a universal science, but on which has by no means the goal of universal theory in the sense in which this was sought by historical philosophy and the sciences?* (Husserl, 1936 (1970), p.383)

Following Husserl's idea of a "life-world science" and also Dilthey's methodological themes of "interpretation, expression, and understanding (*verstehen*) life topics," we may discern several systematic probings into life-world structures. Ethnomethodology, ethnography, analytic sociology, and constitutive phenomenology are examples of relatively recent developments of descriptive-analytic investigations of the world of human experiences (see figure one).

At present much research into teaching and learning and curriculum practices employs the objectifying language of empirical science. The search is for empirical structures of teaching-learning processes and the curriculum reality. Empirical social science treats these structures as variables and attempts to find lawful or correlational relationships among these variables. In contrast, phenomenology directs its focus of inquiry onto the structuring activities themselves. Phenomenology asserts that empirical science reifies social structures, i.e., glosses over the life-world aspects of the structuring activities. Thus, Mehan and Woods say that "in ethnomethodology, the concern for structuring activities (also

Inquiry Approach	From Surface to Deep Structure	Methodological Search for Structures	Educational Import
New Ethnography (participant observation)	In what ways do members of a culture actively construct their social world?	Let members speak for themselves; search social complexities for simplifying structures.	Elucidating interpretative competencies and reality perceptions.
Thick Description (ethnographic observation analysis)	What social meanings and cultural motives lie at the base of social action?	Uncover layers of deeper meanings and reasons which explain aspects of social patterns, conduct.	Increasing awareness of personal, institutional, and cultural motivations which lie at the base of teaching, learning, evaluation, curriculum.
Ethnomethodology (documentary analysis of audio/video tape material of everyday scenes)	What background expectancies and taken-for-granted rules do individuals rely on and follow?	Disruption of everyday routines, exposing rule-use and indexicalities	Destratifying practices; increasing reflexive awareness of taken-for-granted practices.
Analytic Social Inquiry (analysis of everyday life topics)	What life-forms lie at the basis of everyday speech?	Collaboratively explicating intersubjective grounds	Making visible positivist forms of life in educational and curriculum talk and theorizing.
Constitutive Phenomenology (situation analysis of life-world phenomena)	What are the ground structures of life-world phenomena?	Use of life-experience material variation of examples in imagination; analytic description of existential structures	Providing hermeneutic-pragmatic insights into pedagogic phenomena

Figure One

called practices, methods, procedures, reality work, and so forth), has caused the pendulum of social theory to swing from an exclusive concern with structures to an equally exclusive concern with structuring" (1975, p. 192). Similarly, we find that ethnographic approaches, analytic sociology, and constitutive phenomenology usually formulate their methodological interests in the structures which interpretative analysis attempts to uncover.

In education and in the field of curriculum the aforementioned approaches have already made certain (albeit limited) contributions. Thus, the main purpose of this paper is to clarify that it is legitimate to ground descriptions of this reality in the immediately given, the life-world, and that the inherent meaning structures can be displayed intelligibly. But, although the term "phenomenology" has been applied equally to cover a variety of approaches it should be recognized that the kinds of structures examined are of a fundamentally different nature. Ethnography, ethnomethodology, analytic sociology, constitutive phenomenology all have in common that they wish to treat ordinary social intercourse as a feature of the life-world. The attempt is to break through the surface of everyday utterances, actions and interactions to the structures which are embedded on deeper levels. But in spite of this shared methodological interest in deep structure, the languages of deep structure are speaking different tongues. And this, it would seem, has implications for educational theory and curriculum. Ethnomethodology speaks of different things than does ethnography and constitutive phenomenology, etc. All may provide in different ways understandings which are of benefit to the pedagogy and didactics of curriculum.

The above methodologies rest on the assumption that the reality of curriculum has a far richer modality than what is embodied in what teachers may have planned for their students to learn. In concrete situations of classrooms the curriculum is enacted both by pupils and teachers. And, thus, the interpretive processes that (through talk, gestures, readings, exchanges, conventions, etc.) constitute the embodied curriculum is the fusion or meeting of life-worlds as they are operative in the school.

From figure one it may be gleaned how the analytic structures laid bare by ethnography differ from other approaches. Spradley and McCurdy's *THE CULTURAL EXPERIENCE* is an informative introductory text on the use and practice of the "new ethnography" (also called "semantic,"

"linguistic," or "emic" ethnography). It contains several brief studies which are of educational import; "Teachers, Kids, and Conflict: Ethnography of a Junior High School" by Janet Davis; "Helpers, Officers, and Lunchers: Ethnography of a Third-Grade Class" by Jean Doyle; and "Games Children Play: Ethnography of a Second-Grade Recess" by Sue Parrott. Classroom- or school-ethnography in the above sense attempts to provide a descriptive account of the cultural scenes, the understandings and interpretations which children share. Instead of asking, "What do I see children and teachers doing?" the ethnographer asks, "What do these children and teachers see themselves doing?" (Spradley and McCurdy, p. 9). And rather than thinking of ethnography as a matter of presenting the "objective" facts about a society the concern shifts toward what it is that one has to know acceptably as a member -- i.e., "how to be competent in the things members are expected to be competent in" (Goode-nough, p. 111).

For example, when Janet Davis examined the "culture" of an eighth grade girl class, she found that these youngsters interpret their school experiences in ways which might surprise their teachers. Not unlike the more ambitious research by Smith and Geoffrey (1968), Janet Davis sets out to reveal some of "the complexity of meanings" that make up this "complex of interaction between teachers and kids." While teachers may perceive different children as bright or slow, high or low achievers, etc., the students make very different kinds of distinctions themselves. When asked what kinds of students there are in school, children provided the following types of descriptions. (The informants said that "you can look at 'em and tell what group they're in"):

TROUBLE-MAKERS: goof-off, "have a mischievous look on their face," raise hell, get detention a lot, big mouths.

GOODY-GOODIES: fairly good grades, real quiet in class, never get detention, do what teachers say.

BRAINS: ("you can always tell the brains"), good grades, always answer questions, do what teachers say, stay out of trouble, (some) stuck-up.

IN-BETWEENS: nice looking, dress good, good-looking, smoke.

COOL KIDS: goof-off, dress good, good-looking, smoke dope, "anything to get them high."

ABSOLUTELY SADS: shy of boys, wear baggy pants (both sexes), pointed penny loafers, dresses down to knees, anklets, goof-off, ugly.

COLOURED KIDS: take heads (cut in lunch lines), the girls pick on you, want to fight, are "privileged."

DEAF KIDS: stuck up, smart asses, Mr. Jackson's class.

LONERS: kids not in any group at all, never talk, not smart, not dumb. (J. Davis, p. 108).

Similarly, when students were asked to describe what it is that teachers do at school, the students provided accounts which are expressive of different kinds of perceptions than might be expected of teachers. Janet Davis organized into a taxonomy the variety of student interpretations of the "the kinds of things teachers do at school" (see figure two). We see from the above examples that a descriptive ethnography of the complex life in classrooms may expose interpretative structures in terms of which a group of junior high students make sense of their everyday school life. The ethnographer attempts to be sensitive to the implicit structures and frameworks in terms of which members of a group (e.g. students) make sense of their social reality. Janet Davis found that, although she did not set out to examine the nature of conflict in school, conflict emerged as an important dimension of the lives of her (student-) informants.

Whereas the interpretative structures which descriptive ethnography sets out to unravel are situated relatively close to the prereflective consciousness of the life-world of pupils and teachers, the more analytically oriented ethnography of so-called "thick description" probes for more deeply lying structures on the level of psychologically or culturally embedded motives and norms. This approach has been mentioned in the context of educational research (see Jon Magoon, 1977), but few concrete curriculum studies seem to have employed this method.

Gilbert Ryle and the anthropologist Clifford Geertz borrowed the concept "thick description" from Malinowski to describe the method and aim of an interpretative ethnography. Thick description, says Geertz (1973) is

		Beat kids
		Smack kids in the face
		Push against wall
		Have a paddle
		Hit kids (Hit with books; hit with yardsticks)
		Slam kids' heads down on desks
		Yell
		Bitch
T		Send kids to office
H		Send kids to detention center
I		Make whole class stay after
N	P	Pick kids out who misbehave
G	i	Act mean
S	c	Make fun of kids
	k	Pick kids out by ability
T		Won't help kids
E	o	Call kids stupid
A	n	Lean on kids' shoulder
C		Make kid put nose on wall
H	k	Cut down kids
E	i	Assume kids are guilty
R	d	Keep kids after school
S	s	Tie kids to desk
		Embarrass kids
D		Shake kids
O		Make kids sit in a certain seat
		Give extra assignments
		Give sentences

Talk a whole lot
 Run A. V. equipment
 Give tests
 Pile on the work

Figure two

	Keep you in the book		
	Hand out assignments		
	Catch kids		Catch kids fighting
			Catch kids in the halls
			Catch kids smoking in the cans
T	Try		
H	to		Keep cigarettes in shirt pocket
I	be		Dress cool
N	cool		Crack dumb jokes
G			Cut down kids
S			Give detention
T	Be		
E	nice	Let	Let touch drapes
A	to	be	Let read orally
C	kids	pet	Let write on blackboards
H			Let run errands
E		Let	Let put stuff on the bulletin board
R		do	Let turn off lights for movie
S		something	Let run projector
		special	Let off assignments
			Let run errands
			Let switch assignments
D		Let	Let off detention
O		off	Let you sleep instead
		easy	of smacking you to wake you up
			Give good grades
			Write a note to another teacher telling her
			you're staying for her
			Don't yell
			Call you by your first name

Figure two cont.

Taxonomy of the Domain of Things Teachers Do at School

(Adopted from Janet Davis "Teachers, Kids, and Conflict: Ethnography of a Junior High School" in J. P. Spradley and D. W. McCurdy, **THE CULTURAL EXPERIENCE: ETHNOGRAPHY IN COMPLEX SOCIETY**. (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1972).

not an experimental science in the search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning: *The thing to ask about a burlesqued wink or mock sheep raid is not what their ontological status is. It is the same as that of rocks on the one hand and dreams on the other - they are things of this world. The thing to ask is what their import is: what it is, ridicule or challenge, irony or anger, snobbery or pride, that, in their occurrence and through their agency is getting said. (p. 10).*

Thick description recovers the subjectivity of the life-world by uncovering the motives which give rise to selective perceptions, interpretations, and interactions. This is the level of motivational structures which seems to probe in an analytic fashion a somewhat different layer of social conduct than the more descriptive oriented ethnographies do. An example is provided in a UNCAL report prepared by David Jenkins:

"Jim Smith"

There is a consensus view of Smith, relatively unchallenged, that points to his openness, his dedication, his ability to "think big," and a track record that suggests high levels of competence and reliability. If the National Programme had an Alf Ramsey as evaluator he would doubtless declare Smith's "work rate" to be highest of them all. But some are perplexed by his talkativeness, his over-watchfulness in situations, a calculating quality that does not escape an element of self-regard, and the fact that he can be a little overwhelming (if not manipulative). But Smith is also valued differently by different people and the accounts picked up by UNCAL have varied from near-adulation to indifference. Colleagues trying to bring order to these differences have been tempted to see Jim as "upward-orientated," more concerned to win approval of those above him than the respect of those below. At one extreme he has been suspected of male chauvinism, but there was insufficient evidence to make the charge stick. It could amount to as little as a tendency for Jim, finding himself surrounded by female aides, to exaggerate his disposition to delegate responsibility rather than authority and to appear "hovering" around everybody else's work situation ("short term contract people need support," explains Smith). What is ungrudgingly agreed by Jim's admirers and detractors alike is his talent for organization, his meticulous concern for details and capacity for sheer hard work. His colleagues judge jim as "unrivaled" in committee-

manship, although inclined to play the system a little unashamedly. He is also patently ambitious ("You can almost smell the ambition"). His success in Committee is not always fully acknowledged, particularly by those who attribute more success to the organ grinder than the monkey, and dismiss Smith easily as "Jones' man." Some remember the time when Smith with Jones' approval went around asking people if their undergraduate courses were really necessary." (David Jenkins, quoted in Barry MacDonald, 1975, pp. 59-60).

Jenkins, in providing the above data, makes a case for the need to understand the dynamics of interplay of personalities in the curriculum development process. Similar claims might be made with respect to the primacy of the role of personalities, motives, etc. in the everyday going-on of classroom curriculum practices.

Ethnomethodologists such as Mehan, Mackay, Sacks, and Cicourel (1974) do somewhat different analyses. They make it their business to elucidate how taken-for-granted "rules" lie at the basis of everyday communications and interactions among social actors. For example, Mehan (1973, 1974) has shown how interpretive skills on the part of children are crucial but unrecognized (seen-but-unnoticed) requirements for the normal conduct of classroom lessons. Ethnomethodologists are able to show how teachers "unknowingly" make certain normative demands on their students, implicitly assuming that certain communicative competencies on the part of the pupils can be employed in standard classroom procedures such as lecturing, questioning, reading, testing, and achievement evaluation. Communicative competence and interpretative skills depends upon unexplicated expectations -- those regarding certain ways of talking and acting -- being recognized by the students as appropriate rules for classroom interaction.

Ethnomethodology is a form of ethnography, but it asks its own kinds of questions about the structuring activities of people in social situations. Particularly it focuses on the "rule use" or "members' methods" for making those social activities "visibly-rational-and-reportable-for-all-practical-purposes."

The search for structuring activities is expressed by ethnomethodology as an interest in indexicalities and background expectancies (Garfinkel, 1967), normative rules, or cognitive processes (Cicourel, 1973). Research

by ethnomethodologists in such areas as "language use and school performance" (see Cicourel, et. al., 1974), shows that relying on background expectancies and following taken-for-granted rules have profound implications for curriculum and teaching.

Our observation of teacher, tester, and children's performances in testing and classroom situations suggest that children do not always share the teacher's or tester's idea of what the lesson or test is about. Although both the adult and the child's conception of what is happening in a test or lesson is based on their background or experience, and prior strategies for dealing with such events, they do not draw the same substantive conclusion from the available materials. Hence, the informational context of lessons and tests influence both the child's performance and the teacher's, tester's, and researcher's inferences about the child's underlying competence. (Cicourel, 1974, p. 5).

For example, the following piece of tape transcript illustrates the extremely complicated processes by which children get sorted in schools. Kenneth Leiter shows how this task is accomplished as teachers and principal are engaged in telling stories about the children and other teachers while relying on the "rules" of good pedagogy. In this manner, the tracking system at school A was initiated, says Leiter: its foundation rested on the instructions, typifications, and rationales given by the principal.

- Principal: Here are the pictures of (Teacher 1's). Now. . . .*
- Teacher 1: No, mine were here first my friend. These are (Teacher 2's) Wait a minute those are mine.*
- Principal: Now what I want you to do is take each one of these and on the back with a felt pen or something write two or three descriptors. (Picks up a picture). What's outstanding about this child, Pa (. . .): sunny, cheerful, aggressive, retiring?*
- Teacher 2: Would you please write a long list that we could choose from, those are great (laughs).*
- Teacher 1: No, she's outgoing, and academically strong.*
- Principal: Okay then that goes on the back here. Now re-*

cognizing that (jet overhead masks out talk). (First Grade Teacher A) is a different kind of person, what would be good for this child? Now does this child need somebody strongly oriented academically? Does she need that kind of strong hand? Here's a warm mother (tapping First Grade Teacher B's card): I came into the auditorium and she had Li on her lap. Li had gotten money at lunch time but she didn't bring it quite by accident because the student teacher thought she'd brought money for her lunch and she had to take it back which just crushed her. And First Grade Teacher B instead of saying "It's all right now you just get in line and go," there she was sitting with this child – it was beautiful. Now we're going to have some kids in here who are going to need a Momma-type. All right here's your Momma (tapping First Grade Teacher B's card). Here's a gal we want to protect (pointing to First Grade Teacher C's card which is actually going to be the new teacher's class). We don't want to give her really tough ones. I will not have her picking up all the kids that are difficult.

Teacher 1:

Hummm.

Principal:

People who have the experience, people who have the know-how pick up the tough ones because they know more and can protect against that kind of child. So these are the two that we give the really difficult kids to and – Now you know how First Grade Teacher A teaches: it's very open and noisy and undisciplined (now holding Su's picture).

Teacher 1:

Couldn't stand it –

Principal:

Well this is right. What kids will benefit by being–

Teacher 1:

Su should go right there (puts picture on First Grade

Teacher B's card).

Principal:

All right you'd have Su over there, see. Now when you get these you slip them in like this

Analytic sociology is represented in the work of a group of ethnomethodologists such as McHugh, Raffel, Foss, and Blum (1974) who accuse ethnomethodology of positivist bias. Rather than using video-tape or tape-recording for analysis, the analytic sociologists feel there is no pressing need to do observational description and analysis. Life topics for analysis are ready at hand in our own speech. Like constitutive phenomenology (after Husserl) analytic sociology uses the analytic method in order to get at the essences, the deep structure of life forms which are visible through everyday speech. It involves a neo-platonic epistemology which McHugh et. al. formulate as follows:

Socrates introduced the analytic tactic of examining near-at-hand and mundane examples in order to fasten the mind on the essential feature of a problem which the example covers over. Yet his interlocutors invariably resisted this strategy on the grounds that they did not see the connection between the mundanity of the examples and the idea toward which he was leading them. They did not see that the example neither described nor defined the idea, but served instead to re-route the mind so as to approach the idea in a way that was unencumbered by the convention of ordinary formations. (McHugh, et. al., 1974, p. 109).

Various educators (such as Dwayne Huebner) seem to have used an analytic approach which served the purpose of showing how educators in their language use demonstrate a commitment to a positivist form of life. Recent talk about the "basics" and "core" curriculum may be used as an "example" of such positivist bias in education.

From an analytic point of view it is of interest to ask the question how talking about the basics is indeed a "way of talking," i.e., a way of talking about education, about teaching, learning, and about knowledge. To be sure, the question is not whether "the basics" is a category which is descriptive of certain forms of knowledge such as vocational knowledge, academic knowledge, high-culture knowledge, or knowledge as embellishment. And the question is not even whether there is something like the basics in the school curriculum. Rather the question becomes how it is, that the

basics are seen to be desirable or even attainable, as something to strive for. The point is, that "talking basics" (like "talking business") is a method of making reference to a way of life – to the way educators speak of knowledge, of the learner and of education in general. In an analytic sense the everyday usage of the term "basics" imparts a recommendation for viewing knowledge as some-"thing" that can be "had," "quantified," "measured," "purchased" (like books which "contain" knowledge), or otherwise distributed and acquired. In other words, the basics is an instance of the talk which illustrates the notion or the desire to be efficient, effective, objective, business-like, and accountable. Speaking of the basics as something to include in the curriculum reflects the desire to be practical about it. It reflects the desire to put it out-there-on-display so that it can be looked at, measured, tagged, labelled and appraised, and then accepted or rejected as being adequate or inadequate. This attitude treats the notion of basics technically; i.e., as an objective and detached or neutral description of that knowledge. The point is not that this way of talking is wrong but rather that we should be aware of the cultural or sociological implications underlying our concept of core or basic knowledge. Recommendations for a "return to the basics" expresses a desire for a more positivist life-form which puts the value of rock bottom certainty and faith in technological progress back on firm footing." (Van Manen, 1977, p.5)

Constitutive phenomenology, like the preceding approaches, concentrates its focus on life-world structures. But once again the specifications of meaning of the idea of structure is peculiar and unique to its method. Constitutive phenomenology stands in more direct descendancy to Husserl, in the sense that it is concerned with *Wesenschau*, the search for essences or ground structures of selected life-world phenomena. Like the aforementioned descriptive-ethnographic and ethnomethodological approaches, constitutive phenomenology uses participant observation and concrete life experience material. And like analytic sociology it also applies the method of analysis to ready or mundane "examples" in order to extract the ground structure of a piece of experience.

In a recent article, Luckmann seems to feel that this program of phenomenology still is in its infant stage and needs serious commitment. He advocates: *a phenomenology of the universal structures of everyday life. . . [which] is founded on a rigorous method that uncovers and clarifies invariant structures of the conscious activities in which human action is constituted. . .*

The descriptive phenomenology of everyday life which is ultimately founded on this radical [descriptive-analytic] method describes the universal structures of subjective orientation and action: lived space, lived time, the elementary structure of face-to-face situations, the levels of anonymity, the biographical-historical communication in everyday life, and so on. To the most general discoveries of the "geology" of the Lebenswelt these "geographic" analyses of a descriptive phenomenology thus add some basic surface contours. (pp. 174, 183, 184).

In philosophy and psychology the phenomenological method has acquired an existentialist foundation as in the works of Heidegger, Scheler, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty. And in Germany and the Netherlands it led to a tradition of pedagogic and educational theorizing which has recently gained a renewed interest (see Van Manen, 1978). Like most adherents to existential phenomenology, proponents at the Pedagogic Institute of the University of Utrecht (the Netherlands) hold that it is possible to obtain insights into the essential structures of pedagogic phenomena on the basis of a careful analysis of life-world situations. In *BELEVING EN ERVARING (Experience and Lived-Experience)*, Beekman and Mulderij identify three distinct but inter-related facets of the investigative studies of the Utrecht School: 1) there is the gathering of life-experience material; 2) this material is investigated for its descriptive-analytic forms or ground structures; 3) recommendations or orientations to practical action are formulated. In the classic studies by Langeveld (1967), Linschoten (1953), Van den Berg (1963), and Buytendijk (1962) these three elements are artfully interwoven in masterly descriptions. *PERSOON EN WERELD (Person and World)* contains some of the best contributions to the phenomenological enterprise of the Utrecht School. Each article is a fascinating and careful description of the ground structure of some aspect of the life-world. The following is taken from Langeveld's discussion of "time in school," as perceived and lived by the child.

The clock of the adults says: "It is five minutes past nine!" The child looks at the clock reproachfully. As a child you can grimace at the clock because the latter is no longer an indifferent object. The clock is telling you that things are going wrong. He says: "You are going to be late." Suddenly the life of the present turns thin and pauperish; the child is at wits' end. He is now in the fourth dimension of "being late." Will we get punishment? Time stretches, stretches, stretches until the school principal, the god of time, says, "All right then -- go to your class. We'll try it once more

Suddenly we are back in ordinary life; the experience of the present opens up to the horizon again; the strangeness of the class which had begun to work already is quickly overcome and we are industrious and well-behaved. The morning goes by fast. The clock cooperates, the hands don't get stuck on the face of the clock. It is continuously "so late already," that is, "it is later already than I thought it would be." Apparently there is not only an experience of anticipation, an experience of the present, and experiential relationships of different kinds with the past, there is also existence of a temp of time - or, similarly but seen from a different vantage point: there is an experience of duration (1967, p. 45).

Langeveld makes visible again, for us educators, how the child experiences "time at school" and how subjective time and objective time play definite roles in the curriculum of the school.

About Grammar or the Deep Structure of Curriculum and Teaching

In the previous pages I have tried to show, in an admittedly sketchy and simplifying manner, that interpretive or phenomenological inquiry into educationally relevant topics can be seen as alternate attempts at clarifying and x-raying aspects of structures of the life-world. In this way ethnography, ethnomethodology and phenomenology can produce knowledge which may benefit our educational insights. But none of the approaches herefore discussed (with the possible exception of the phenomenological pedagogy of the Utrecht School) offers the outlines or even the promise of an interpretive theory of curriculum or pedagogy. It is on the level of a more fundamental explication of the idea of deep structure that an interpretive theory of curriculum and pedagogy may find its genesis.

In all structuralist (positivist) methodology there is the assumption of a deeper, not directly observable reality, at which level "patterns" and "functional relationships" between and among components of systems are situated. What distinguishes the interpretive and phenomenologically oriented methods from structuralism and functionalism is the rejection of a positivist definition of "structure." Within an interpretive framework structures are not thinglike entities or quantifiable functional relations among variables. Instead, structures are seen as processes in which the members are actively engaged. And the structuring activities, on differential levels of depth, can be made comprehensible within an epistemology of hermeneutics. This requires the positing of the idea of "deep

structure," "grammar," or "asupices" which, as the analytic of the last resort, is grounded transcendently in the innate or cultural-linguistic depth of our humanness. The idea of "deep structure" is a way of making reference to the mysterious grounds of human sense making, both on the level of the pre-reflective sphere of the life-world, as well as on the level of the reflexive attempts to discern the structuring forms of pre-reflexive human experiences. The concept of grammar or deep structure should thus not be reified; it is merely posited as a way to refer to human creativity, such as everyday life speech acts. *For Plato, the Reality of Ideas did not reside in what they depicted, or in where they originated (objects, mind), but in how they served to make reference to that of which they were icons.*" (Blum, *THEORIZING*, p. 77)

This does not necessarily imply the acceptance of the Platonic ontology of an immutable "Realm of Ideas." The metaphorical reference to or analogue with Plato's notion of eidos or Forms does not imply the belief in the reality of absolute structures which are real, eternal, changeless, or in any way superior to the world of particular and concrete experiences given by everyday life.

The import of a dialectic-hermeneutic interpretation of the idea of deep structure lies in its position to challenge several axiomatic features of traditional curriculum knowledge: the positivistic cause-effect character of teaching methods and curriculum principles; its objectivity; and hence the claim of dominant curriculum knowledge to instrumental-pragmatic validity for everyday practices of educators.

The idea of "deep structure" or "grammar" is not only a device for grounding analytically all phenomenological forms of inquiry, it is also helpful in providing an epistemological basis for talking about teaching competence. Ordinary teaching and curriculum practices can be likened to the linguistic notion of speech and speech patterns. The metaphoricality of deep structure refers then to the phenomenon that we can recognize a "creative" teaching act or a practical curriculum decision as an instance of responsible pedagogy.

Gouldner has (following Habermas) made use of the idea of a linguistic pragmatic for understanding and analyzing practical actions. *The essential*

analytic idea of a Chomskian grammar seems to be the following: there is a community of speakers who use their language in the daily conduct of its affairs and who can teach it to novices. All of them have linguistic reflexivity: they can not only speak the language but also speak about it. They can point to instances of correct or incorrect speech. From these, we can acquire a corpus with which we can confirm judgments about the rules speakers follow tacitly in speaking correctly, or break in speaking incorrectly. (Gouldner, p. 396).

We seem to recognize the validity of the idea of deep structure in many of our educational and curriculum practices. For example, when an apprentice-teacher is evaluated on his/her competence, the master-teacher will usually pass judgment on the teaching of a lesson by debriefing or looking back over the teaching act *as an instance of* what somehow figures as an ideal type of responsible pedagogy. Educators know that there is no equivalent of any concrete lesson. Learning experiences cannot be ordered and manufactured on specifications (in spite of repeated attempts to mass produce teacher-proof, pre-packaged learning experiences). The significant educational judgment about the adequacy of a pedagogic action or a curriculum practice is a *justification* not a prediction or a product inspection check. Without a generative grammar we cannot know what rules of pedagogic action are appropriate and to what extent we are approximating them in our curriculum practices.

Compare the master-teacher's role to the task of the reflexive theorist, in the sense of Gouldner: *It is the reflexive theorist's task to speak the patterning structures and regularities as if they were rules, to offer them to normal actors, and then to ask them: Do you recognize this as your rule? Is this the rule by which you would want to live? The reflexive theorist, in short, seeks to present a rational account of the actor's behavior, to construct a rational account of it for (and with) him. The theorist's object is to strengthen the actor's reflexivity, his self-awareness, his knowledge and understanding of whether or not he lives by rules at all and, if so, which. (p. 397)*

Phenomenological knowledge is impractical in the sense of technical usefulness. It does not provide us with rules of behavior, which will tell us what to do in specific circumstances. Rather, phenomenological knowledge is "practical" in the sense that it may contribute to a teacher's peda-

gogic orientation: the wisdom to act with self-inspired pedagogic sense in educational situations. Instead of formulating educational competence in terms of measurable techniques, and know-hows derived from empirical research, educational competence is seen in a more generic fashion. The idea of deep structure, and reflexivity underlying phenomenological sense making, makes out of every educator, not a technician but something of an artist: *As an image of humanity, the hermeneutic spiral makes everyone an artist, every act creative, every moment mysterious. Every moment is mysterious, as the understood horizon of the moment is inexhaustible. Every interpretive act indexes this mystery in an unpredictable way. A person's every action is thus creative; it reflexively alters the world. The person begins with certain materials that set limits, and then acts and in acting alters those limits. These new limits form the material of another creative act, ad infinitum.* (Mehan/Wood, p. 203)

Conclusion:

- A) A science of the life-world is not a "subjective science," it is an objective science of the subjectivity of human experience.
- B) The various inquiry approaches employ different languages of deep structure which make visible different aspects of the subjectivity of the life-world.
- C) A life-world science in its various forms, such as descriptive ethnography, ethnomethodology, analytic sociology, constitutive phenomenology, etc., is not the same as a pedagogic science. At best these forms of social inquiry may yield insights which are benefit to curriculum and pedagogy.
- D) I see in an epistemological and ontological elaboration of the dialectic-hermeneutic concept of "deep structure" or "grammar" a potential fusion of the ideas of theory and practice. This would be a different (non-technical), yet productive way of thinking about teacher competence.
- E) Pedagogy as pragmatic-hermeneutics or a pragmatic-hermeneutics of curriculum may be an emerging educational theory, rooted in a tradition and based on non-positivist principles.

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