

The Phenomenology of Pedagogic Observation

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Un nombre important d'éducateurs se sont récemment faits critiques d'un mode courant de pensée qui se veut instrumental et rationnel, lequel mode prédomine lorsqu'il s'agit de recherche dans le domaine des programmes d'études. On a mentionné que la phénoménologie et l'herméneutique pourraient fournir d'autres paradigmes de recherche, mais jusqu'ici les progrès se font attendre en ce sens. Dans cet article, on tente de relier certains aspects de la méthode phénoménologique à la littérature pédagogique de l' "Ecole d'Utrecht." L'accent est mis sur la signification de l'observation pédagogique. Des descriptions phénoménologiques peuvent contribuer à améliorer les pratiques éducatives même si ces descriptions ne fournissent pas de schémas de cueillette de données basés sur le comportement, sur des habiletés et des techniques d'observation. L'aspect pratique d'une description réside plutôt dans la contribution qu'elle apporte à la structure profonde de notre compréhension de l'objet.

"Educators need phenomenological schooling and they need to make themselves at home in existential philosophy and in modern anthropology." This is the observation made by a former associate of the Dutch Pedagogic Institute at the University of Utrecht (Beets, 1952/1975). Pedagogic thought and practice rely on phenomenological analysis of what it is like to live as a young person in present-day society, in the modern family with father, mother, and brother or sister. Educators need to focus on the child as a way of being in the world: how the young person actually and concretely experiences being at home, in the neighborhood with friends, among peers, on the way to school, in the classroom, and so forth. Beets employs a way of writing about education which places him in a lineage of thinkers among whom we may count Schleiermacher and Flitner in Germany and Langeveld and Buytendijk in the Netherlands. Within this school of thought, which has been described with referents such as philosophical anthropology, phenomenology, and personalism, the concept of pedagogic wisdom is the point about the question: what makes a good educator? What stands out in a true educator, according to Langeveld, is the idea of personality. A pedagogue demonstrates his or her practical competence in the manner by which he or she can structure a situation into an educational situation. This form of thinking comes very near to what in North America today has become a concern of curriculum theorists and practitioners. Yet it is true that the language is very different. A North American curriculum spokesman may talk about

related curriculum topics such as "preparing the educational environment," or "making deliberative classroom choices by matching curriculum structures to the characteristics of the learner." It is clear that the North American language of curriculum is more closely related to social engineering and the empirical sciences; in contrast, the language of Beets is more closely aligned to philosophy and dialectical phenomenology.

Pedagogic thought, says Beets, is not equivalent to the kind of thinking which occurs in the empirical sciences. But since it describes, analyzes, clarifies, corrects, and provides direction to concrete situations, pedagogical thinking is closely related to existential philosophy (Beets, 1952/1975, p. 70). Beets seems to suggest that pedagogical observation of children by the teacher of the humanities, social studies, arts, etc., means constructing existential analyses whereby the educator must be psychologist in addition to subject matter expert. This recommendation appears to be entirely at odds with what North American teacher education institutions provide in the way of teacher preparation experiences.

How sharp the contrast can be is illustrated in a recent study by Popkewitz (1976) of the way in which beginning teachers, interns, were prepared for their educational practice. One of the main questions pursued in the study cited by Popkewitz is the manner and the extent to which teachers in training learned to adopt a complex framework of interrelated beliefs, norms, values and expectancies about what it is that ought to go on in a classroom. Popkewitz, like Michael Young, Dwayne Huebner, and others, refers to this framework as an ideology which defines the way in which the student-teacher learns to view the child, the curriculum content, the teaching-learning process, achievement, evaluation, and so forth. In following the experiences of 250 beginning teachers, Popkewitz discusses, for instance, how interns were required to take "behavioral samples of children's activities during a short time interval." One of these interns recorded a child's behavior thus: "The student lowered his jaw, the student faced the window, turned his head from his work." This intern commented: "These kinds of things need to be recorded but you can't make any inference such as he looked like he was bored." Popkewitz notes that "the purpose of taking behavioral samples was to provide a mechanism to identify where to intervene to manage a child's behavior" (1976, p. 14). What Popkewitz found was that "despite the surface differences of the programs in many schools there was a striking and continual similarity in assumptions to guide professional perspectives." The concern of teaching was technique, a search for efficient and rational procedures to teach precisely measured skills. Much of the internship was consumed in applying routinized and standardized practices. The value of technique went beyond the specific activities interns were asked to do. Technique became the "end" rather than the means of teaching (1976, p. 9). Thus Popkewitz was able to show through numerous case materials how the epistemology underlying behavioral learning theories, instructional objectives,

movements, and management procedures for classroom interactions comes to constitute a technological ideology — a way of “seeing” and sense making of the nature of the child, knowledge, and the process of education. The objectifying and technological framework which is probably prevalent in many teacher-education institutions thoroughly influences the way in which a teacher prioritizes and organizes elements of the curriculum.

A significant number of educators recently have become critical of the predominant instrumental attitude in curriculum thinking. Such critique has addressed itself to the perverse attempts of reducing all educational processes to the tune of behavioral instructional objectives. Others have criticized the oversimplified reduction of “basic” education to some rock-bottom core of knowledge, as if there were such firm bedrock of knowledge upon which competent citizenship can be founded. Again other curriculum writers have criticized the validity of the Tylerian input-process-output model of curriculum development. They have argued that this prevailing instrumental attitude is fostered by the business-minded tendency to evaluate curriculum programs by standards of cost-accountability and product-efficiency criteria. Walker and Kliebard have traced the Tylerian factory model of curriculum thinking back to men like Bobbitt and Charters, to the early science-inspired reform movement in curriculum building. More radical critics of schooling, such as Bode and Counts in the 1920s and more recently curriculum scholars such as Huebner, Apple, and Mann, have linked the instrumental ideology in education to the contradictions at the level of the existential structures of capitalist society.

Studies such as the one by Popkewitz formulate an implicit critique of curriculum. What is lacking in contemporary curriculum inquiry is the construction of a form of knowledge which is genuinely descriptive and situation-analytic, focusing on the distinctiveness of what is to be found in the subjective reality of educational experiences. A quarter of a century ago such knowledge was found in the work of the proponents of the Utrecht School. The writings of Beets are examples of this work.

The phenomenological descriptions provided by Beets are not practical in the sense of technical usefulness. Beets’ analysis of the phenomenon of pedagogic observation does not provide us with rules of behavior which will tell us what to do in specific circumstances. Rather, by gaining a sense of the form of life in which pedagogic wisdom grounds its authority, the reader is invited to make himself at home in the authentic mode in which the phenomenology of pedagogic observation resides. Beets’ descriptions are “practical” in the sense that they may contribute to a teacher’s pedagogic orientation: the wisdom to act with self-inspired pedagogic sense in educational situations. This means that the authority for pedagogic observations does not rely on the proper management or execution of a set of predetermined, “tested” rules; rather, the authority ensues from the personality (dare we say “character”?) of the pedagogue in the way that

this personality is rooted in the deep structure of the idea of pedagogic sense making.

"There are different situations in which it is possible to speak of observations." This is how Beets begins his analysis of the phenomenon of pedagogic observation. When I as passer-by stop to watch some children play — let's say, boys playing soccer — then my watching could be called "observing." I stand and watch for ten minutes at a soccer field that belongs to an inner-city school. If I know soccer, then I have seen quite a bit in 10 minutes' time. Subsequently, I continue my interrupted walk. For the children I am an outsider, a passer-by who stopped to watch and then left. Whatever I have "seen" is a reflection of this.

When I am not an outsider/passer-by, but someone who *belongs* in the life of the children — a father who participates in the game, or a coach of the soccer club — then I observe the game in a very different manner. There is a relationship between myself and the children whom I observe. They know me and I know them. When I watch their game this, too, is observing. My vantage point is now different. I observe from out-of-their-midst. I am not an outsider but an insider in the life of the children (Beets, 1952/1975, p. 15).

There is a third form of "observing." I pass by the schoolyard; I could be the school psychologist, a counsellor, or maybe a home-room teacher who has special responsibilities for these children. The children know me and I know them. When I stand still and watch while they are playing, I am an outsider in a certain sense, since now I observe them from a scientific or an educational vantage point of "pedagogue" or "diagnosticus." But I am also involved, since I am and feel that I am responsible for their education. I stand beside a parent — on the side of the educators. Now I observe in a special manner, however. I have learned to adopt a scientific vantage point and my observing is observation from that "vision" (Beets, 1952/1975, p. 16). Beets' use of the word "science" (*wetenschap*) derives from the term "*Geisteswissenschaften*," which is closely aligned to philosophy and which is best translated as the "science of human mind and human experience." As in the Anglo-Saxon usage of this term, "science" in the phenomenological sense makes claims to objectivity, but this objectivity is grounded not positivistically but hermeneutically¹ in interpretation theory.

The above is a free translation of the way Beets sets up his phenomenological analysis of what it is to speak of "pedagogic observation." Beets' interest in pedagogic observation is predominantly motivated by his role as child psychologist and educator connected with the Pedagogic Institute at the University of Utrecht. In contrast, the interest pursued in this paper has a curriculum focus. But it would seem that there is much in Beets' writings that may point to productive directions for development in the field of curriculum inquiry. Work such as that done by Beets may provide us with a tradition of educational thought that can contribute to

a non-subjective approach to the study of the subjective reality of curriculum.

Beets demonstrates how children “appear” differently depending on the philosophic view of man and its underlying principles. “Without deep anthropological reflection it is not possible to recognize what it is we do when we, as educators, observe children” (1952/1975, p. 17). Beets anticipates the work by ethnomethodologists and men such as Berger and Luckman when he analyzes phenomenologically how observations are socially constructed. In doing this Beets refers to what it is that scholars such as Erwin Strauss, Paul Schilder, Von Weizsacher, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Buytendijk, and Van den Berg have to say about related ideas.

The intent of this paper is to begin a reflective discussion of the phenomenology of pedagogic observation. In doing this, it borrows extensively from Beets. More important even than discussing a description which aims for practical significance is the question how such knowledge can be pursued. For this reason this paper draws attention to *one* aspect of phenomenological method, i.e., the function of “example” in phenomenological inquiry. Those who have studied writings in the phenomenological tradition know that “method” in a phenomenological sense can be approached only indirectly. (This is in contrast to the method of empirical science, which can be studied “head-on” in university courses dealing with research designs, statistics, and so forth.)

Buytendijk once referred to phenomenology as “the science of examples,” but this label may be confusing. The function of “examples” in phenomenology differs markedly from the ways that “examples” are frequently used. In ordinary language as well as in scholarly writings, examples may serve to designate instances of empirical generalizations, or they may serve pedagogic purposes. One might tell a story about Betty’s reading problem in order to illustrate concretely some abstract notion such as dyslexia or dysgraphic learning problems, but such usage is different from the function of examples in phenomenological statements.

In phenomenology examples serve a methodological as well as an epistemological function. Examples are methodological language through which the deep structures of experiences are explored. One should not think, of course, of the idea of deep structure as some kind of absolute representation of reality. The idea of deep structure is only a metaphorical referent, a way of referring to the pursuit of a descriptive-analytic method, leading to a *verstehende* grasp of social phenomena. Examples, then, are a methodological device that belongs to the surface structure of phenomenological inquiry; they are formulated to assist in the effort of making deep understanding possible. That is, it is the deep structure or ground structure of the phenomena that examples are meant to make “visible.” The challenge for phenomenology is to make available, through a reflective use of method and descriptions, “opportunities for seeing” through the surface structure of everyday life the ground structures of common

educational phenomena and experiences. Buytendijk ties the epistemological and the methodological functions of examples together when he states: "The phenomenological analysis of 'seeing' can only succeed on the basis of a rich experience in a variety of situations. It requires a repeated 'back to things themselves,' a good selection of exemplary cases and their variations, and 'ascent,' as Goethe put it, from simple experiences . . . to the *pure* phenomenon" (Buytendijk, 1967, p. 362). Description through "free imaginative variation" is the method of probing the distinctive or essential features of curriculum phenomena. But since examples are not meant to lead to generalizations in an empirical sense, their validity does not depend on the accuracy with which they represent a class of observable phenomena. One is reminded of recent statements in the works of phenomenological sociology: "Examples in our sense should not be confused with data. They do not refer to the world — they are not descriptions. They are more like icons. They should be used to refer back to what makes them possible" (McHugh, et al., 1974, p. 10).

How are phenomenological descriptions constructed?² In *Beleving en Ervaring* (Experience and Lived Experience) Beekman and Mulderij (1977) identify three distinct but interrelated facets of the investigative studies of the proponents of the Utrecht School: (1) there is the gathering of the life-experience material; (2) this material is investigated for its descriptive-analytic forms, or ground-structures; (3) recommendations and orientations to practical action are formulated. These component facets then are the integrative elements of a descriptive pedagogy and psychology. In the classic studies by Langeveld, Linschoten, Van den Berg, and others, 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 he 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 would be." Apparently there is not only an experience of anticipation, an experience of the present, and experiential relationships of differ-

ent kinds with the past, there is also the existence of a tempo of time — or, similarly but seen from a different vantage point: there is an experience of duration. (1966, 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. And in his description he also exemplifies for us how a pedagogue can observe by adopting the viewpoint of the child.

When we examine Beets’ method of describing the idea of pedagogic observation, it becomes clear that he is not interested in describing pedagogic observation as a skill or technique, i.e., as a set of procedures for gathering data of a certain kind:

When, as a passer-by, I stop to watch a class of boys . . . playing soccer, I observe as an outsider. I happen to come by. In no way am I involved in the life of the boys. I am a person, who stood there for a moment, unnoticed possibly by anyone. There is a maximal distance between me as the observer and they as the observed. For me it means that I can focus all my attention on the things I see. I am not hindered in my observations by my personal biases, preconceptions, sympathies, and antipathies, which can play such a role for an educator. I stick to the facts: that kid playing left center makes good combinations and cuts effectively through the defense line of the other side. There’s going to be a score soon. But I also see that there is an individual player on the other side who is a constant threat to the sloppy defense tactics of the otherwise strong opponent. What I see is this: a field of power, I see power relationships. (Beets, 1952/1975, p. 17)

Thus, upon first reflection it seems that as an outsider-observer my view is detached, cool, objective, sober-minded. But is it possible to remain detached, cool and objective? “What do I experience and re-experience as an on-looker? In the first place, I stop because I already have a certain interest, a personal preference for the game that I see. I cannot watch soccer with full attention unless I were in a certain sense a soccer player.” In extensive and detailed descriptions Beets perceptively teases loose our thin awareness of the subjectivity of observing a soccer game. He shows how we develop certain interests in the parts of the game; how we virtually co-experience the movements of the players. Indeed, he shows how we may catch ourselves “being there” on the field, reaching for the ball with our feet, our head. It is as if we were the passenger in a car, sympathetically reacting to the traffic. This too is an aspect of outsider-observation. I can catch myself moving my limbs as if I were there, anticipating the bounce of the ball on my foot. What Beets demonstrates is how such casual observation in everyday life is constituted. But the reality of outsider observation is multi-layered. And Beets exposes, by example and by reflective dialogue, how each layer is grounded in a theory of man, in a philosophic vision. By an analytic description of real and imagined experiences, Beets reflectively “uncovers” the ground structure of pedagogic observation. In doing this Beets continuously appeals to our “com-

mon” sense; he invites us to insert our own experiences in a reflective dialogue. That is, he invites you, the reader, to collaborate in the construction of his analysis.

Sartre has described how my physicalness always lies hidden “behind me.” I am always just ahead of my body. I am so involved in what I am doing that I continuously “forget,” as it were, that I exist physically. When I have really forgotten something, then it lies indeed behind me in time, in my past. Thus my experience of the present fuses with my anticipations of that which lies just ahead of me. This is the sort of reflection that William James referred to as protension (in contrast to “retension” of my experiences which lie just behind me).

Apply this to the children playing soccer. When that goalie jumps to the ball, then he is there first with his glance and thus already himself on the spot where shortly the ball will be, and *after that* his body and also the ball. In “seeing” the situation — the ball in the left top goal corner — both the ball and body go *after it*. This means that at the moment of “seeing” which leads to my action, I am already in the future, as it were.

When as outside observer I only look at the driving forces which exist in the body, then I see the jumping, catching, reaching, kicking, running. In short, the movements-on-the-field-for-me emerge from the vital energy displayed by the kids. This is the same as saying that the behavior is determined by what lies behind me, my past. In this sense my body is my visible past. But, says Beets, when I look at the jumping, catching, reaching, kicking, running — i.e., the movements — and my eyes are fastened on the *total* field in which the movement occurs, then my vantage point changes. Now I don’t see the behaviors coming forth from the body but from the “total situation.” Here, I make a difficult mental shift. Here, I am a pedagogue.

I see the other in his total existence. Here is a boy who conducts himself in a certain way on the soccer field. And I say: “If only he could be like this in everything. It is in this way that I show that I have a larger view of him, of his life-world. I reflect on his future and cannot help but care and wonder: “If he really wants to go to university, then he will still have to change a lot.” I know how he does in school in his other subjects. Although I like him very much — and here lies my maximal subjectivity — deep in my heart I doubt the chances of his success. Therefore in this matter I must remain reserved and distanced. In contrasting the observation of playing children as experienced by an outsider, a parent, a soccer coach, or pedagogue, Beets shows how pedagogic observations are existentially constructed. We chose as an example children playing soccer, says Beets, but we could have selected a different activity as our example. However, the advantage of our example is that it permits the exploration of “la condition humaine” in a broad sense. Soccer is a game in which man can appear in his full humanity — for those who can get a sensitive view of it (Beets, 1952/1975, p. 19).

We are invited to look past the examples to the idea in which direction the example is pointed. We are to understand the example not as a description of a form of life (i.e., pedagogic observation), but rather as a method to bring that form of life reflectively into view. In so doing, Beets breaks gently through taken-for-granted conceptions of the way we observe in everyday life and how these conceptions have associated with them background notions of subjectivity and objectivity, involvement and detachment, moral disinterestedness and commitment, and so on. In exploring the vision of the “objective outsider” Beets involves his reader in a dialogue which rhythmically weaves back and forth between first-person reflections on real or imagined situations and on the relationship between these examples and the broader field of phenomenological literature.

Husserl, Scheler, Sartre, and others have raised the questions of the possibility of observing the other person’s subjectivity. How can I understand the other’s thoughts, feeling, and meaningful actions? Schutz, who reviews the theories of intersubjectivity as a transcendental problem, persuades his reader to explore the problem of social observation by turning “to the mundane sphere” of our life-world (1973, p. 168). In attending to a child’s talk we seem to participate immediately in the developments of his stream of thought. We catch his thoughts in its vivid presence. But in attending to our own thoughts we cannot grasp it without an act of reflective turning. What we grasp by the reflective act is never the present of our stream of thought; it is always the past (Schutz, 1973, p. 173). We cannot reflectively attend to our own feelings and experiences *as they happen*. Everyone knows what occurs when we are angry and then try to focus on our anger for critical examination. What happens is this: as soon as I focus reflectively on my anger, my anger has changed already; it is now behind me, as it were, in my immediate past. However, as pedagogue I can reflect on the anger of the child I am observing. What I may see is a child “throwing a tantrum” in his frustrated attempt to get something accomplished. Since I know this child I can place this behavior in a larger context of the child’s personal life history. In a sense I can say that my observation of the child’s anger means that I participate in the anger; I understand how the child feels and cognizes the impossibility of a task which resists the desire of tackling it. The difference is that I can immediately observe this anger because I observe it in the other person, not myself. We view the other person’s stream of thought simultaneously with our own stream of consciousness; “we share together the same vivid present — in a word: we grow old together” (Schutz, 1973, p. 174).

Following Schutz it appears that the pedagogue is involved in two sorts of observations: an immediate or naive observation and a reflective or deliberate observation. Much classroom interaction is a function of the immediate participation of the educator in the child’s experiences. What is the import of this? The act of immediacy by means of which the

pedagogue spontaneously observes and thereby interprets the child's actions places peculiar demands on the teacher as pedagogue. It means that what the teacher "sees" and how he interprets the actions of the child are an expression of the total personality make-up of the teacher as pedagogue. Moreover, the pedagogue's observations will be an interpretive function of the contingencies and exigencies which are present in any concrete educational situation. Other influences on observation find their roots in the particular curriculum ideology embraced by the pedagogue in question. It would seem, then, that immediate or co-active pedagogic observation stands much in danger of unintended deflexion or distortion. The pedagogue must attempt to put a check on the norms of his spontaneous immediate observation. It is on the level of deliberate reflective observation that the pedagogue must structure the educational situation in such a manner that the pedagogic intention of education can be made realizable.

The teacher as pedagogue is oriented toward the child in a special way. While being concerned with maturation, growth and learning, I do this: I immediately enter a very personal relationship with the child. There is a fellow feeling between us but at the same time another and new distanciation which makes me "his observer." Since I "know" this child I can hold back superficial judgments about him. And in this holding back I create another "distance," but now of a different order of objectivity than the distance of the outside observer. "Simultaneously I stand closer but also further away." There is a maximal closeness with the maintenance of distance. This is what Beets means when he says "pedagogic observation is: discovering and meeting the other in the heart of personal existence" (1952/1975, p. 30).

Seen in terms of symbolic interactionism, pedagogic observation serves the purpose of defining and thereby structuring and restructuring a situation in such a manner that it leads to learning that is worth the student's while. In practical situations, pedagogic observation usually takes place in the frame of the institutional context of schooling. The observer's professional role (teacher, principal, counselor, etc.) will partly determine how he or she defines the situation wherein the child functions. In this, the pedagogue must be sensitive to the ways in which the child himself experiences and defines the situation.

It is in this that I become an educator, says Beets. I mobilize my influence to help the child gain insight into his or her own interest. From a social interaction, I enter into an educational interaction and in this action I represent a social norm, a value-judgment. I try to show the youngster what is the nature of mature adulthood toward which he or she is striving (Beets, 1952/1975, p. 24).

From pedagogic observation of a specific situation arises the educational action. In other words, the pedagogic seeing of a potentially educational situation makes possible pedagogic, i.e., emancipatory action. Imagination

and inventiveness are important assets for an educator. Pedagogic seeing may involve an imaginative varying and comparing of alternative possibilities for acting. The following is an orienting and clarifying example provided by Beekman (1978) of two ways of seeing a situation.

A city park on a Sunday morning. A toddler of two years of age proudly walks a yard ahead of the parents. She strays off the path; walking in the loose sand gets more cumbersome, but the little child marches on without hesitation, until the heavier branches make further walking impossible. The toddler stops somewhat uncertain. Father and mother, who stayed on the path, watch the child. And father says: "Why don't you come back, then we'll go on." And so it goes.

Somewhere else in the park walks another little girl, the same age. She seems about to stray off the path where the parents are walking. "Stay here, on the path," admonishes the father, and he takes the toddler by the hand. As simplified ideal types both examples show a child who learns what may be called a value structure, says Beekman. The children learn that paths in the park are to walk on. But the motivation and accompanying feelings are different: an invitation — "this is easier to walk on, isn't it?" — as compared to a severe, "father says it and he knows best." The comparison exemplifies pedagogic observation by contrasting two styles of child-rearing: education toward self-control or emancipation, and education toward obedience or dependence on authority.

I return once more to Beets who says that my responsibility towards the child confronts me with decisions, makes me express and conduct myself in such a manner that the youth with whom I deal can continuously recognize in me and through me the image of mature adulthood. To the extent that I continuously consider the future of the child that is in my care, I am connected with the child in a social relationship. I cannot permit myself an attitude of "laissez faire, laissez aller!" I am involved and responsible. I meet the child in his dependency of norms which I, as adult, represent; but also in his freedom to defy those norms when necessary. I always leave him as much as possible to his own decision, his own conscience, his own freedom (Beets, 1952/1975, p. 24). This possibility of pedagogic observation is contaminated at source if this normative premise of pedagogy has given way to an observational style which serves as instrumental, control oriented, input-output ideology of education.

REFERENCE NOTES

- ¹ Hermeneutics may be defined as the phenomenology of social understanding. Originally hermeneutics referred to the study of text interpretation, particularly biblical exegesis. More recently the study of hermeneutics focuses on the more general problem of what is the nature of interpretive understanding of any text, human actions and human experiences. An excellent source is Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969). See also the writings of Paul Ricoeur, Charles Taylor, E. D. Hirsch, and Jurgen Habermas.

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