

## INTERNATIONAL PEDAGOGICAL CONFERENCE IN BUDAPEST

The representatives of the pedagogical institutes of the Soviet Union and those of the people's democracies countries were invited by the Pedagogical Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences under the auspices of the II Department of the Academy to a pedagogical conference for October 4th and 5th 1962.

The main report of the conference on *Structural questions of the didactic process* was made by SÁNDOR NAGY. Its whole text had been published in advance in the 2nd number of this year of the Magyar Pedagógia (Hungarian Pedagogy), and the guests from abroad received it in translation in time. JÓZSEF SZARKA, GYULA FEHÉRVÁRI and ÁRPÁD KISS, delivered correferata to the main report upon invitation.

At the conference M. A. DANYILOV (Moscow), HEINZ LEHMANN (Dresden), M. PENCHERSKII (Warsaw), PAUL POPESCU-NEVEANU (București), JOZEF VANA (Prague), HRISTO VASILJEV (Sofia) foreign, SZILÁRD FALUDI, LÁSZLÓ FARAGÓ, LÁSZLÓ GÁSPÁR, BÉLA JAUSZ, FERENC JUHÁSZ, LÁSZLÓ KELEMEN, ISTVÁN SZOKOLSZKY, JUDIT VERESS Hungarian participants were contributing. JÓZSEF BÁNFALVI had sent in a written contribution. The Pedagogical Committee held an additional continuous extended session on November 19th so as to give a hearing to those Hungarian participants who had no possibility of remarking in the course of the two day's conference. This meeting was conducted by JÓZSEF SZARKA, its issues were summed up by SÁNDOR NAGY. FERENC ÁBENT, GYÖRGY ÁGOSTON, LÁSZLÓ BALASSA, ISTVÁN BORI, LAJOS HORVÁTH, SÁNDOR KOMLÓSI, LÁSZLÓ KÖRTVÉLYESI, LAJOS MAKAI, EMIL MOLNÁR, LAJOS SZATHMÁRY, ALFRÉD TEMESI, GÁBOR TÓTH joined in discussion:

Preliminary steps in the conference were taken by an organizing committee consisting of certain members of the Pedagogical Committee; in its successful accomplishment MÁRTON FARKAS took part on the authority of the II Department, and GÁBOR TÓTH as invited in particular.

The foreign and Hungarian guests were greeted by LÁSZLÓ MÁTRAI on behalf of the Presidency of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In the large audience representing all strata of the pedagogues JENŐ LUGOSSY, deputy minister, too, was present.

The material of the international pedagogical conference will be published by the Pedagogical Committee in Hungarian. As much as the extent of a report permits, parts of it should be emphasized hereby, grouped round a few important problems.

First of all, independtly of the progress made in the matter discussed, *the mere fact of holding the international conference* itself is to be appreciated on the basis of its perspectives promising in two directions.

It is the first notable evidence that the Hungarian Academy of Sciences turns with a greater readiness than did so far to stand by the science of education, reckoning with the consequences of the reality worded by LÁSZLÓ MÁTRAI in his opening speech as follows:

In the years gone the by board of the II. Department of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences repeatedly dealt with the situation, problems and perspectives of the science of education. This is to be perfectly understood in such era in which social responsibility for this science is growing considerably compared to anything happened so far, consequently its weight and influence has necessarily to grow...

But the perfect understanding of the participants of the conference expressed so often has to be qualified to be full of promise in the desire that an international organization and coordination of pedagogical researches are urgently needed, at least in case of certain spheres of problems. It has been stated very often by us as well as by others that institutes of peoples living in neighbourhood of one another are working hard in solving similar problems without knowing the results or cares of one another, without making an attempt at joining forces there where it would obviously shorten experimental phases, render results more reliable.

Accordingly, one may, without moving excessively off the reality, think that, in solving quite a number of such new problems as have been drafted by the conference and — a few of them — will be detailed in the following passages, the educational practice may rest on a scientific orientation more reliable and more controlled than so far.

### 1. *Securing Pedagogical Conditions for the Reform of Public Education*

Participants of the conference are dealing with the reform of public education, within this with the structural analysis of didactics as an *object*, and as a *way* and *means* seen together with the object. New objects and tasks may not efficiently be set by referring to an out of date means system.

There come into the limelight — said LÁSZLÓ MÁTRAI right at the opening of the conference — those research tasks that are destined to create the *pedagogical conditions* of putting the law (III. 1961) into force on a level as high as possible. SÁNDOR NAGY added to it forthwith as follows:

The law of the government of our People's Republic connected with the school reform clearly determines the perspective standing before our schools. We have to educate active, initiative, creative people partaking in building socialism with useful work. For this it is, of course, an indispensable condition the *creative nature of the school work*, such further development of instruction — education that the *creative work* should form the basis of shaping personality, of the communist education.

For this, however, the method of school teaching until now has to be changed.

In realizing the school reform, in creating the new school, the clue to further successes in decisively in the hands of the pedagogues. . . The *most modern objects of education cannot be realized with old, often out of date means* — said GYULA FEHÉRVÁRI. And ISTVÁN SZOKOLSZKY attempted to delineate the picture of a class learning by working. We have to pass beyond — he said — the deplorable opinion inveterated deeply that activation of the pupils means to draw them into collective work by way of conversation. We have to go beyond this standpoint and lay stress upon the work of the pupils with own exertion. Situations are to be created in which not a common work in the traditional sense of the word is going on but the pupils work independently, do work by writing, measure, construct, make observations, do all school work according to a plan independently. In the meantime the pedagogue is going about among the forms keeping an eye on how work is going on, controlling, evaluating and helping if need be.

The way of looking at the new tasks and didactic process essentially different from that till now appears together also in the manifestations of the foreign participants.

About the question of reorganization of school system and parallel of the improvement of didactic process M. A. DANYILOV was addressing in general.

The specialists — he said — study the didactic process with particular attention. In the Soviet Union where the transformation of the school system started before more than four decades. . . schools endeavour to equip the new generation growing up with real scientific knowledges, to arouse and establish *in every pupil* lastingly the interest in science, the love of science, to make creative work attractive for them and to qualify them for certain trade. Schools endeavour to improve in general in the pupils the ability of using their knowledges in life with adeptness and economically and to familiarize them with the bases of the dialectical materialistic ideology. . .

We are recalling still hereby some characteristic statements of other foreign contributors proceeding from manifestation of general facts towards mentioning more specific problems.

POPESCU-NEVEANU emphasized that, in socialist countries, schools did the long way of the development and renewal in a short time. We are advancing constantly, the mass of the knowledges acquired in school keeps growing from year to year, the level of development of the pupils in all directions improves in the same way owing to the increasing efficiency of education. The situation, however, is that schools have to satisfy, new, greater requirements. The rate of development of the school, that of the improvement of tempo achievements is still obviously behind the rapid stroke of the development of society, science and technics. . . .

A situation took shape with us — HEINZ LEBMANN is arguing — that certain teachers were of opinion that everything would be solved by school reform, new law, new curricula and textbooks i.e. people would be changed by them. It is not evident for every man even that today either that the new objects of new law and education will only be effective if every pedagogic in every lesson brings something qualitatively new and better into the didactic — educational process.

By the other three foreign contributors one or the other side of the problems was elucidated.

HRISTO VASILJEV, concerning to the general school is stating that there mainly the development of mental abilities — attention, observing power, memory, imagination, thinking, etc. — is to be promoted. That is one of the fundamental tasks very important from point of view of success in general schools. One of M. PENCHERSKIJ's many important statements, too, emphasized this side of the school pedagogy. According to it the reform of the plan of tuition (curriculum) has to be based upon the creation of such a connection between theory and practice as secures that the knowledges of the pupils required in school should serve for means of analyzing phenomena seen in everyday life, and they should be the factors of intellectual development and ideology of the pupils. The instruction has to direct the pupils' thinking, to help them in putting questions and in making out the answers, to develop the ability of valuation and choice in them, to further in them the shaping of the claim to a personal participation in the process of social development as well as in the cultural development of the country and the whole world. At last the Czech JOZEF VANA devoted all his lecture to the analysis of the process of learning reasoning as follows: The education of the new personality is the essential constituting element for building the communist society. If we want to attain that the science — that takes off the spontaneity in the socialist and communist society in every respect, — should lend efficient aid in solving problems connected with the education of the people of the new social epoch and lead to such perceptions on the basis of which the educating activity may be directed successfully, then we have to break with the traditional solution of pedagogical problems, to go beyond the empirism and subjectivism until now, to learn from other, fast developing fields of the science, to utilize the technics so developed today, to look for new ways, to work out new methods. . . The aptitude to be reshaped is identical with the ability of learning, of acquiring the new attitude and the new habits. The idea of learning spreads over all such areas and forms of human attitude that shapes themselves or develop, respectively, under the effect of experiences. . . Therefore, he deems to be decisive dealing thoroughly with the psychology of learning, and its considering it at the analyses referring to the didactic process.

## 2. Overall Sense of Modernization

He who has read attentively the problems touched in point one, cannot have any doubt that the practical modern realization of the didactic process may not be explained in a way that *modernization* should extend only to certain components of the process. And what is more, evidently, it is not going only about instruction.

SÁNDOR NAGY has already emphasized that the object of analysis is the didactic process *in its entirety*. In order that this process should grow a *creative work* on a higher level than it is at present, not only structural relations, but also *conditions of way of looking* must be born in mind. He also mentioned that endeavours of modernization spread over the entirety of the education; it would not be expedient to look simply for its conditions only in the didactic process.

This latter standpoint has been stressed by JÓZSEF SZARKA in his lecture: The questions of modernizing the didactic and educational process are contiguous. The points of contact and connection are obvious here, the didactic process, namely, is part of the process of education. "It seems — he said — that the passivity of the pupil, the methods inciting to passivity, to one-sided reception are criticized and censured from point of view of the instruction, only more exactly, of the intellectual education, though they might be censured, at least so much, also from point of view of moral education. . ."

From among the Hungarian contributors just one remark of SZILÁRD FALUDI should be mentioned here. He has been arguing that the modernization of the didactic process can really be carried out only if its requirements have already been taken into consideration at working up the *substance of the instruction*. Are fundamental expertnesses and promptitudes not developing in a satisfactory way? Has instruction no satisfying educational effect? Why is that so? It is so because instruction is often "broadly" interpreted, it is only this that is regarded also instead of education; it is not taken into consideration that instruction is a part and means of the education.

The foreign participants deal with the problem more in detail or more sparingly according to their choice of subject. M. A. DANYILOV mentions only so much that it is a task not be put off any longer to work out a general elaborate theory of instruction and education. The essence of the question, the unclear state of the whole and the part of the taxological point of view has been made clear by JOZEF VANA: . . . pedagogy is, essentially, divided into two parts, the one is didactics, the theory of the process of instruction, i.e. of the process in the course of which pupils acquire knowledges and aptitude; the other is the theory of education, in the range of which all the constituent elements of education are studied with the exception of the intellectual one which is treated of in didactics, in the theory of instruction. But do pupils not acquire certain knowledges and habits also in the course of the moral and aesthetic education? And is it not the task of instruction to meet all the relations of education and the many-sided development of pupils?

He upholds the view that, if people approached the systematization of phenomena belonging to the scope of education from the side of learning, they would attain considerable progress surely in two lines: on the one hand, there would be no need for dividing a homogeneous process according to different points of view, on the other, the possibilities of a scientific examination of the whole process, or of one of its components, respectively, would be growing.

The overall importance, of modernization bearing on the whole range of the education, has been emphasized by several Hungarian contributors, too.

### 3. Didactic Process and Learning

According to SÁNDOR NAGY's definition, instruction is a *joint work of educator and of all the pupils*. As such it requires, and more emphatically than so far, the trend towards learning (and not towards the form of imparting). *Motivation*, SÁNDOR NAGY said for example, is an instruction-psychologic relation of didactic process, and as such, *is more important than we could point it out so far* (it is about the motivation of learning). In the introductory lecture motivation and object have been brought into connection, applicability and the importance of application have been emphasized. The known structural components of the didactic process (1. confronting pupils with the facts, observation, *gaining experiences*, 2. *analysis*, 3. *abstraction, generalizations*, 4. *consolidation, fixing, systematization*, 5. *application*, 6. *control*) were presented thus, in such a systematic division

hat the first four, subordinated to the main idea of *acquisition of knowledges*, and the *application* have been opposed as such a main requirement the proportion of which has to be improved within the whole. With all the components independent activity, the possibility of collective work, etc. have been referred to.

JÓZSEF SZARKA set forth the necessity that *learning should grow an intelligent activity of creating nature*, and the educative efficiency of instruction should increase by it. He, concretely, sees the most essential structural modernization of the process of education in the fact "that, against the methods of ethical verbalism flooding everything with words and insisting one-sidedly on influencing consciousness, the practice, the action, the behaviour in concrete situations, the proof of moral courage get place. . . It is not only a structural question. . . It is the question rather of the way of looking, the substance, the general methodology but, expressly, that of the quality of the structure of process, too. . ."

GYULA FEHÉRVÁRI, too, thinks of utilizing certain results of the independent learning when analyzing the tendency of the so-called "extending" the instructional process mentioned by SÁNDOR NAGY: Our pupils acquire masses of knowledge elements, experiences both during and after school-hours (home surroundings, work in youth organizations and in factories, radio, television, film, readings, etc.). One has to reckon with all these. We have to take notice that school, alone, is not able to teach pupils everything, cannot form people entirely accomplished, therefore one of the important criteria of the success of its work *in what measure is able to grow directing in the social effect-ensemble*, referring this effect to both the time of schooling age and the period after finishing school. By this thought stress is laid upon the importance of developing inner forces, abilities.

ÁRPÁD KISS, making known the issues of the observations belonging to the scope of valuation, has pointed to changes occurred to pupils as for the basis of valuation. The pedagogical work, by all its nature — he said — is such as its efficiency cannot be evaluated by the aid of proceedings suitable to other kinds of work. Since all its results have to be seen and established in children, in pupils, the work of the pedagogues, too, can incompletely be qualified on the basis of the external observation. The fact that the pedagogue was working well has to be measurable upon the thinking more developed of the pupil, on his knowledge increased, on his behaviour more conscious and more socialized, on his moral views, on higher level of his ideology, taste and claims. Consequently, in the first place, the pedagogue himself (herself) has to get aid so as to able to appreciate his work like this.

The connection between the didactic process and the substance of instruction is emphasized by SZILÁRD FALUDI, the necessity of making pupils act independently in all the possible directions by ISTVÁN SZOKOLSZKY, in teaching a subjects the analysis of operation systems adequate to the logic of the subject, the introduction of pupils to these operations by LÁSZLÓ KELEMEN, the importance of motivation by LÁSZLÓ GÁSPÁR, some results in learning cwing to working out new working methods by JUDIT VERESS, the significance of the role of sentiments by FERENC JUHÁSZ. In connection with teaching mathematics, LÁSZLÓ FARAGÓ has said as follows: "The formula of not to do anything instead of them (pupils) they are able to do, applied to our subject has to be rephrased thus: here the pupils have to do all, for we cannot do anything instead of them."

Divergences though might have been in turn of mind of the respective Hungarian contributors, the conference took stand on such learning as affords the strongest stimulation and aid to independent work.

In order to make manifest as how vivid this problem is also in other countries, we impart hereby Heinz Lehmann's report of using up time about 50 lessons with 18 pedagogues. According to this the subject teachers used the time at disposal as follows:

	Minutes	Per cent
50 lessons used by the pedagogues for	2250	100
a) explaining general organization questions or those connected with teaching	138	6,1
b) controlling work	186	8,3
c) imparting new matter (lecture)	279	12,4

	Minutes	Per cent
d) working up new matter in the course of conversation	778	34,6
e) fixing new matter in the course of conversations	142	6,3
f) fixing new matter in form of repetition and summary	278	12,4
g) practising in the framework of independent didactic part of the lesson	8	0,4
h) dictating facts elaborated and coherences, or copying from blackboard	177	7,9
i) setting homeworks	42	1,8
j) controlling homeworks	14	0,6
k) independent work of pupils done during the lesson	131	5,8
l) because of late beginning of teaching have gone lost	77	3,4

For such work — said *Lehmann* — in the course of which pupils get the upper end of their problems without being helped by teacher and thinking independently for given time, they used essentially only 5.8% per cent of the lesson.

In connection with the structure of didactic process reviewed in the main report, *F. A. DANYILOV* has remarked (examining the question from the side of learning, about what a work of his was published in 1960) as follows:

All authors perfectly understand that the didactic process tends towards definite objects at all times, and there is a close connection among its elements.

... one scheme or the other when considering it as the abstract expression of the process of acquiring knowledges, aptitudes and habits, cannot be objected to. But the schemes like these are not useful by all means, even may be harmful.

In real life everything is more complicated and the scheme simplifies the didactic process to a high degree; a) the first phase of instruction is setting the problem to be known, i.e. bringing about the situation denoting the problem eliciting the inner activity of pupils. No real didactic process can exist without it. Facing things in itself still does not bring about the activity, does not get one to do active observation; b) the scheme produces the image of *unchanged*, linear succession of the elements of didactic process and this, however, is wrong. Often it is useful to begin with the "application", or with the solution of the problem, etc. In reality the succession of the elements is rather spirallike. There is no doubt about it either that the elements enumerated in the scheme are found in the process of learning. But *their succession is determined by the logic of the process of learning.*

The logic of the process of learning is determined indeed by the logic of the subject, but not exclusively. The logic of the process of learning is the objective conformity to rules of the process of learning characterized by the fact that every step of learning of the pupil, i.e. both the observation, the acquirement of the facts, the formation of notions, the development of aptitudes and habits, and the practical application of the knowledges are necessary, lawful, fruitful and comprehensible to the pupils themselves. . .

On the basis of the analysis of the process of learning *JOZEF VANA* is objecting to certain notions not clearly separated (instruction, training, education): "It is not merely about technical terms hereby but about such notions as are destined to express the acquiring of the knowledge of phenomena and processes in their essence. Aptitudes and properties are shaped in the process of learning, from what one is learning and on how one learning depends the development of one's whole personality and education."

At this point we have still to touch upon an addition *M. PENCHERSKIJ* has thought necessary to set forth (partly may be owing to the inaccurate translation of the text of the main report, so through a misunderstanding) in connection with the kinds of *application of knowledges.*

It would be perhaps good — said the Polish delegate — to distinguish two kinds of the application of knowledges. The one, the "theoretical", one means that pupils, mainly by way of inference (the lecture is about this) gain new knowledges, in particular from the substance known, by deduction. This mode of application of knowledges has been known and applied already in *Herbart's* traditional school. An application of knowledges like this does not belong to the scope of action, but is limited to the process of thinking.

To this kind of the application of knowledges belongs still that type of application mentioned in the lecture in which the pupil has to imitate a prescribed scheme of thinking e. g. the teacher analyzes a certain text; and the pupil analyzes another text patterned after that. This type of application of knowledges requires more complicated operation of thinking than the simple deduction. This embraces already analyses, comparison, integration of separate parts.

Another form of application of knowledges is the real *coupling of theory and practice*. The application of a scientific law, or of a whole complex of various laws tending to an alteration of a certain kind of the reality, to productive activity is needed for it. It is the application of knowledges like this that the socialist didactics keep in view (not forgetting its first form either). It is in harmony with the principle that the object of science is not only to explain the world but also to change and improved it.

In the application of knowledges like this a complex of various laws plays role most often and certain laws may act in different ways in the course of their application; may accelerate or retard taking place of results waited for, may alter their interaction. Discovering a law complex like this and consequences of its effect may lead to discovery of new laws. Such application of knowledges combined with action is of researching nature e. g. the rationalization. Theory is not in harmony with practice if it does not take into consideration the whole complex of all the laws acting in the reality.

The Polish conception of the links of didactic process regards the connection of theory and practice as an indispensable constituting element and general condition of didactic activity; therefore it makes obligatory for the pedagogue to take into consideration this basis principle and the creation of relations necessary to its application: In this way it restricts the one-sidedness of the methods imparting ready knowledges and compels the teacher to stimulate the pupils' activity connected with knowledges, to create the relations of the direct contact with the reality. Thus the same preserves it from verbalism and from imparting encyclopedic knowledge. . .

It is of course very difficult to abridge detached parts of lecture so that the reader should be able to look in the essence of the problem discussed: it is, however, the unique way to clear up views agreeing or differing in certain regards .

#### 4. Tasks after the Conference

A survey however fragmentary of the material of the conference like this raises masses of joint problems solved or unsolved. LÁSZLÓ MÁTRAI, reminding the guiding principles of the party congress, calls attention to that the realization of didactic reform follows for the most part hereafter. It is perhaps not exaggeration to state — he said — that *there is still very much to do regarding the creation of the necessary pedagogical conditions*.

Knowing the situation, one of the conditions of all considerable progress is broadening the established bases of the science of education.

It is to be expected that — as SÁNDOR NAGY expressed — the connection of the theoretical scientists of didactics as well as of the pedagogues working creatively in practice existant also in the course of the works so far becomes wider, in the future that there opens possibility of observing the practice acting initiatively and courageously of evaluating the results. And surely this is the condition also that the theory should go to meet experimentings with which the practice looks obviously for better and better solutions regarding the structure of didactic process and the building up teaching lessons respectively."

Pedagogy grew a great science during the last decades and, to all appearances, so it remains. As long as we do not draw all conclusions of that, we only can tell over tasks. The international conference, too, has done essentially so. As to in what order and in what pace can we come nearer to their realization, controlled scientifically, it depends on the possibilities and quickness of the development of science.