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Introduction

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This Easter edition of the Journal is our welcome to you all in this new year 2013.

The first article, by Florian Osswald, looks at the question of a ‘true’ pedagogical approach. Where can this be found? On what is it based? How do we tackle all aspects of inclusion in this context? Many of these questions are part of this subject which is the topic of many articles and currently very much in the media.

The contribution by Nana Göbel offers a brief overview of the history of the Hague Circle, the current International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Schools. The Pedagogical Section is very keen for everyone to be aware of this work. As is apparent from its name, the International Forum for Steiner Waldorf Schools is an international group comprising colleagues from 29 nations concerned with the well-being of Steiner Waldorf Education. The next meeting of the International Forum will take place in Vienna at the beginning of May.

A meeting by teacher training co-ordinators has been organised prior to this meeting. The core question will be how the various training centres approach the study of the human being. Teacher trainers will share and discuss tasks, plans, aims, and concerns across the realm of teacher training and will seek new ways of working together in the future. The second part of this meeting will coincide with the meeting of the representatives of the International Forum. Florian Osswald is thrilled to share this initiative with you!

We are hoping that a great number of teacher trainers will join us to work deeply with these questions.

More immediately, we are looking forward to the First World Foreign Language Teachers’ conference which will no doubt be instrumental in setting new impulses for foreign language teaching worldwide.

We wish all our colleagues happy working with all our pupils in all our schools worldwide, over 1,000 of them!

The English part of this edition includes a translation of Claus-Peter Röh’s translation on the subject ‘Feeling your Way into a Foreign Language and Discovering it from the Inside Out’. This contribution had to date only been published in German.

Best wishes from the Pedagogical Section

*Dorothee Prange
translated by Steffi Cook*

Inclusion and the reality of education

“Inclusion” is a word that is gradually becoming part of our everyday vocabulary. I remember when I first heard it. It sounded strange. Then it came up increasingly in conversations; it inspired debate and evoked an array of emotions. People associated it with legal aspects, utopian ideas, cost-cutting measures, restructuring of the education system, stressed teachers – but hardly ever with children or adolescents. It seemed to be a matter of education policy. The debate had been kicked off by a UN work group that had taken hold of an idea, fashioned it into a law and submitted it to the governments for ratification. The UN Convention for People with Disabilities was not the result of a democratic process. In this Convention we read that *“States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures, including through peer support, to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life.”* (Art. 26)

Imagine a group of children of various ages and with various gifts. Imagine you are standing in front of them. You’ve been given the task of educating these children. Of course, you do not have to re-invent the wheel. There are theories on developmental psychology and research results on learning processes that tell you how you best enhance development, optimize learning and organize your lessons. Knowledge is available and there is no shortage of educational ideals. The children are there, in front of you, waiting for the person who is ready to develop his humanity with them. What would you do if you were given the chance to embark on an entirely new beginning?

Rudolf Steiner described such a situation:

“What we were really interested in was reality – absolute reality. What is this reality? First, there were children, individual children with various characteristics. We had to learn what these were and get to know the children’s inherent characteristics that they had brought down with them; we had to understand what was expressed through their physical bodies. First and foremost, then, there were the children. Then there were the teachers. You can adopt, as much as you like, the principle that children should be educated according to individuality (this is part of every reform program), but absolutely nothing will come of it. On the other hand, aside from the children, there are the teachers, and it is important to know what the teachers can accomplish with children. The school must be run in such a way that we do not establish some abstract ideal; rather, we allow the school to develop out of the teachers and students. Those teachers and students are not present in any sort of abstract way; they are very real, individual human beings. That is the gist of the matter. Then, by virtue of necessity, we are led to build up a true education based on a real knowledge of

the human being. We cease to be theoretical and become practical in every detail."¹

It cannot be a matter of implementing a convention or of saving money by restructuring the education system; it can only be a matter of educating children in a way that is in keeping with reality.

It has unfortunately become disreputable to question the idea of inclusion. The idea has become a law and is seen as right in itself before it could be tested in real life. Have we already fallen into its bondage? "*We must be able to confront an idea while experiencing it; otherwise we will fall into its bondage*".²

What is today's educational practice like?

Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical impulse is permeated by a deeply inclusive spirit, as we can see from various of his statements. Inclusion was a goal that the teachers of the first Waldorf School strove towards.

*"If the basic source of compatibility did not lie within human nature, we could not implant it by any outward laws! Only because individuals are of one spirit can they live out their lives side by side."*³

The first task is to develop the inner attitude that can give us the certainty that we are of one spirit. In living the world of ideas individual differences emerge. To be of one spirit means children and adolescents share the same life. Each individual person will extract from any given situation what belongs to them. Diversity is a constant companion.

While I write these words I sense how easily they are put on paper and how challenging the learning situation referred to can be. Individual differences can bend the bow to breaking point. The chasm between idea and living reality can open up in all its depth.

How can we connect the two? Shall we build a bridge? Do we see the bridge as a solution? First we must ask how the two sides relate to each other. Could it be that there is a bridge, but we don't see it? Do we have to build a new bridge each time we "cross over"?

We notice that there is a similar tension in human interaction. In both cases, idea – life and person – person, the encounter takes place at four levels:

1 Rudolf Steiner, *Human Values in Education*, GA 310, Great Barrington MA 2004, tr. V. Compton-Burnett; Arnhem 17 July 1924, p. 11.

2 Rudolf Steiner, *Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path: A Philosophy of Freedom*, GA 4, Hudson NY 1995, tr. M. Lipson, Appendix II, p. 257

3 Ibid., Chapter IX, "The Idea of Freedom", p. 155

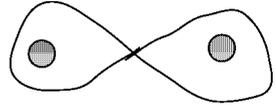
1 Parallel

We are separate.



2 Consecutive

We connect with the other
The other is present in me



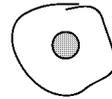
3 Because of each other

I am because of the other
I would not be without the other



4 Apart

I have emerged from the other
We are different but we are of one spirit.



How does the encounter with the world, with the other person, transform as we pass through the four stages? Is an appearance being created or a construct of reality? No – passing through the four stages gives us a living concept of the human being and creates a space between us. Step by step we are led into the essence of inclusion. We experience that this is about me and about the other person. Inclusion is a communal task. It is a way of newly confronting the riddle of ‘I’ and community. Community does not happen automatically today. We have to build it anew, again and again. We must enter into it consciously.

An education that reflects the reality builds on this living concept of our inclusiveness. Reality does not just happen. The world is not passively reflected in us. We are actively involved in generating reality. We are involved in an activity that, while it belongs to us, makes it possible for us to take hold of reality. We take part in the events of the world by individualizing them in us. If we want to understand a thing, we need to relate it to the world and take hold of the thought that is inherent in it.

“If I can think about the things; if, through thinking, I can find something out about the things, then the things must already contain the thoughts within them. The thoughts must be part of the make-up of things and therefore we are able to draw the thoughts out of them.”⁴

This is comforting: we are not strangers in the world even if our physical bodies create a separation (level 1). By understanding and conditioning each other we

4 Rudolf Steiner, *Die Beantwortung von Welt- und Lebensfragen durch Anthroposophie*, GA 108, Lecture given in Karlsruhe on 18 January 1909 (The lecture is published in English under the title “Practical Training in Thought” in: *Anthroposophy in Everyday Life*, Hudson NY 1995)

come close to the world of ideas (levels 2-3): the place where we emerge from one another, where we are of one spirit (level 4). In our relationship to the world of ideas lies our true individuality and also the certainty that we are of one spirit.

Every new situation therefore asks for the form that is appropriate for it.

It is not primarily a question of educational goals and of inclusion or exclusion. What is important is the wellbeing of the child, the advancement of the individual.

“What is individual in me is not my organism, with its drives and feelings, but my own world of ideas that lights up within this organism.”⁵

The secret behind the art of education is self-education that becomes active participation in the other person’s learning processes. This participation is like a breathing process between people.

If we study the attempts that are being made towards achieving such participation in schools – as in Italy or Argentina for instance – we see a great variety of similar components without gaining the impression that there is one right way.

We should take courage from this and focus, in new situations, on the children, educators and teachers: *“Allow the school to develop out of the teachers and students.”* What lives in the children? How do they learn? How can we structure our task? What skills do we need? Can one person cope with this particular group or do they need help. What do we need for an education that takes its cue from reality?

The idea of inclusion is a challenge. Let’s take on this challenge. Let’s ask about the reality of life. Are we able to learn from each other? If we manage to focus consistently on the child or young person, we will be able to create a learning atmosphere for all involved. This does not necessarily require all to be present in the same space. The children are the future; they are like precious seeds. We have a crucial influence on their thriving, their growth, their becoming. The stone that we throw into the lake of education will make an impact where it hits the water, but it will hopefully also create circles.

Next to my grandmother’s house was a field and at the far end of this field a new school was being built. Heated discussions arose among the people in the village about where the path leading to the school should run. The owner of the field was an elderly man and when the discussions just didn’t lead anywhere he spoke up: “On the first day of school I will mow the field. We will let the children walk across the field in whichever way suits them. After a few days we will see the tracks they leave in the grass. Maybe they will all take the same route, maybe there will be several – we will see.”

Florian Osswald
Translated from the German by Margot M. Saar

5 See footnote 3, p. 153

The Hague Circle

In the years of building the European Waldorf school movement up again after the Second World War, already in the 1950s, there were tentative international meetings, often in Holland. Those carrying responsibility got to know each other.

Then in 1969 at the fiftieth anniversary of the Uhlandshöhe Waldorf School when friends came over from Holland and England it became apparent in conversation that the independence, which the Waldorf school needs, was being increasingly curtailed within the context of educational policy, especially in the regions or countries with social democratic governments. Wim Kuiper (1911-1992), the bearer of greetings from Holland, reported on the hostility in Holland to Ernst Weissert (1905-1981), the then Chair of the Association of Independent Waldorf Schools in Germany, who rejoined, "We should form a group of 'experts' from every country, who have to negotiate with the state. We should meet regularly and discuss the state of affairs, preferably in The Hague." Later on just such interventions occurred in the case of the school movements of other countries (Finland, Croatia, Slovenia). In order to strengthen this work out of The Hague Circle the European Council was founded with the task of engaging politically on behalf of the schools. The Hague Circle was meant to concern itself more with the schools themselves and with question of the identity of the Waldorf school.

Thus The Hague Circle was born, a way for the international school movement to work together, which has been meeting twice a year since 1970; in the early years alternating between The Hague and Stuttgart. The situation of the individual countries was discussed; for example, in the early 1970s a letter was written to the Mexican Ministry of Education, which wanted to close the Waldorf school in Mexico City, and in this period a memorandum was drawn up, in which the conditions of Waldorf school life were characterised: self-government, independent selection of teachers, freedom in the method and curriculum.

In the course of the years with the spreading of the school movement representatives of more and more countries would meet. With Jürgen Smit (1916-1991) as head of the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum communication intensified so that in the 1980s The Hague Circle was able to enter into closer cooperation with the Pedagogical Section. Since then the meetings take place alternately in Stuttgart and Dornach. The Hague Circle has grown to about forty people from all continents. The political questions of the early days have widened to include reflections on the development of Waldorf education in the most varied countries and cultural regions, above all reflections on the inner strengthening of Waldorf education, but also practical questions of how the responsibility is for the admission of Waldorf schools onto the world list. In 2009 a characterisation of the essential features of Waldorf education was adopted so as to put a kind of internationally agreed guideline in the hands of school founders.

In 2009 The Hague Circle was renamed as the “International Forum for Steiner/Waldorf Education” in order to clarify the areas of responsibilities through the name. In 2012 an association was founded with its seat in Switzerland so as to be able to employ co-workers in future. You can find information at: www.haager-kreis.org

Nana Goebel
Translated by John Weedon

Entering deeply into the foreign language and understanding it from within. What does that mean?

When foreign language lessons were introduced in the first Waldorf School in 1919, Rudolf Steiner set new and revolutionary standards, such as introducing two foreign languages from Class 1. If we look back at these standards now, 93 years later, at a time when effectiveness and ever faster cognitive information processes prevail, we realize that Rudolf Steiner’s comments are as innovative and topical as ever:

In these lectures I have mentioned that a certain genius lives in language. The genius of language is ... ingenious. We can learn much from the way language fits together and carries its spirit.¹

There is untold wisdom in these words ... All human characteristics are expressed in the way various cultures form their words. ... If you understand language in this inward way, then you will see how the I-organization works.²

The postulation “to allow the living power of language to play into the child soul”³ in the lesson so that pupils can experience the language in their feeling first, runs like a thread through Steiner’s instructions on language teaching:

“This is of special importance also with regard to the element of speech. Languages are the outcome of a direct human response to inner experiences. If one is able to

1 Rudolf Steiner, *The Foundations of Human Experience*, GA 293, Lecture 11, p. 175f., Hudson NY 1996, tr. R. Lathe & N. Whittaker

2 Rudolf Steiner, *The Roots of Education*, GA 309, 15 April 1924, Hudson NY 1997, tr. rev. by H. Fox

3 Rudolf Steiner in *the Waldorf School*, GA 298, 11 June 1920, Hudson NY 1996, tr. C. Creeger

immerse oneself in the quality of spoken sounds, one can still hear in them the important part which such inner responses have played in the formation of certain words. But in our abstract life, when the logical content of language plays the leading part, this perception of the artistic element almost has been lost. True, there is an inherent logic in language, but this represents only its skeleton, something which is dead. There is much else besides logic in language. Its breath and pulse can be felt only by those who have been touched by the creative genius of language itself.”⁴

Translation and comprehension through feeling?

Even if the very young pupils, intellectually aware as they often are now, ask for direct translation into their mother tongue, teachers must not give in but try to guide the pupils towards allowing themselves to enter emotionally into the stream of listening to and experiencing the language. In the first years of school, the children deeply experience the life and spirit inherent in the foreign language, not through intellectual comparisons and translations, but by feeling themselves into and participating in producing the language. The pupils of the lower classes still have the capacity to take hold of the genius of each sound with their whole being: *“We must not drive these feelings out of the children. They should learn to develop the sound from the external objects and from the way in which their own feelings are related to them. Everything should be derived from the feeling for language. In the word ‘roll’ the children should really feel r, o, l, l. It is the same for every word. This has been completely lost in modern culture.”⁵*

Pedagogically, there is a vast difference between children learning the meaning of the word “Schornstein” by inwardly translating it and comparing it with the English word “chimney” or children internalizing the essence and meaning of the word “Schornstein”, as a new word, through actively speaking the language. *“[...] children learn to speak these languages from the very beginning [...] without the meaning being translated into their own language. Thus, the word in the foreign language is connected with the object, not with the word in the mother tongue. In this way, children learn “table” afresh in a foreign language; they do not learn the foreign word as a translation of the word “table”. In other words, they learn to enter right into the foreign language.”⁶*

Giving space for taking hold of the language

Astonished we witness in Classes 1, 2 or 3 the joy with which the children discover and actively enter into the foreign language with their whole being. These are moments that can inspire the teacher to continue to write or adapt verses and stories so that there is always inspiration for taking hold of the

4 Rudolf Steiner, *Soul Economy*, GA 303, 5 January 1922, Great Barrington MA 2003, tr. R. Everett

5 Rudolf Steiner, *The Kingdom of Childhood*, GA 311, 18 August 1924, p. 120, Hudson NY 1995, tr. H. Fox (adapted)

6 Rudolf Steiner, *The Spiritual Ground of Education*, GA 305, Oxford 23 August 1922, p. 96, Great Barrington MA 1991, tr. Unknown (adapted)

language anew. The following variation on the (well-known) English nursery rhyme allows the children to repeat the sound and rhythm of the language, while grasping the new content:

Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the chimney-crown.

Along came the storm wind and threw poor Incy down.

Out came the sunshine and sent away the storm.

Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the chimney warm.

It is amazing with what devotion and vigour class 1 children like to speak such a verse. Listening, speaking, sound and rhythm, sensory awareness, movement, music, and the meaning of words come together as in one stream. If the individual pupils enter into this stream inwardly, making it their own, one can sense the richness, the potential for integration and development the young persons' I organization carries, especially in the vivacity with which they speak: "*Now we come to the I-organization. ... Just as the astral body can reveal itself through music, the true nature of the I-organization can be studied through the word.*"⁷

Age, linguistic development and self-awareness

This intimate connection of children with language, out of their I-organization, allows for great sensitivity and effectiveness in foreign language learning at the various stages of development: "*Nevertheless, [with the change of teeth, author's note] until nine or ten, children bring with them enough imaginative imitation ... I hardly need to say that teaching languages must be closely adapted to the children's ages.*"⁸

The profound transformation children go through in their 9th or 10th year requires an entirely new approach to teaching: While Lecture 4 of "Foundations of Human Experience" describes the feeling as will-related, as "*developing, not yet existent will...*"⁹, Lecture 5 speaks of feeling as interwoven with will and thinking: "*[...] feeling stands between cognition and willing in the centre of soul activity and radiates its essence in both directions. At the same time, feeling is incomplete cognition and incomplete will; it is restrained cognition and restrained will.*"¹⁰

When, in the 9 or 10-year old child, through the participating will, the feeling is "remelted" into stronger I-awareness, it also moves closer to the thinking: children experience the world outside and the language more consciously. The foreign language lessons can now, vice versa, contribute to a strengthening of the pupils' sense of self when, with the continued stream of the enlivened speaking, the language is taken hold of more and more consciously. When, in Class 4, we begin to write in the foreign language and to consciously explore its grammatical

7 See note 2 (translation adapted)

8 R. Steiner, *A Modern Art of Education*, GA 307, Ilkley, 15 August 1923, p. 162, Great Barrington 2004, tr. J. Darrell

9 See note 1, p. 91

10 Ibid., p. 101 f.

structures, we support and promote the children's I-development with the way we teach. The young person, in beginning to think about language and about the world in a new way, reaches a new level of self-awareness: *"At this age, we can begin (gradually, of course) teaching grammar and syntax rules, because the children are reaching a point where they think not only about the world, but also about themselves. As far as speech is concerned, thinking about oneself means not merely being able to speak instinctively, but also being able to apply rational rules in language. [...] It is most important to keep in mind that children do not pass willingly from awareness to self-awareness until nine or ten. To teach grammar before then is absolutely irrational."*¹¹

In summary, all foreign language teaching in the first years of school has the following aims:

- From the beginning of school to the age of 9 or 10: experiencing and speaking the language, and moving in the language, in a way that involves the child's whole being
- Entering into and feeling the sound qualities and rhythms of the foreign language
- No comparative, intellectual translating of words, but discovering and grasping their meaning through speaking, feeling and doing
- Accommodating the new I-awareness that emerges at the age of 9 or 10 by applying a new methodical approach
- Beginning to write in the foreign language from Class 4, using verses the children know well because they have deeply experienced them
- Developing, step by step, out of feeling and imagination, a conscious understanding of grammar

If, as teachers, we perceive and recognize the greater and smaller transitions that occur during child development, we will learn to tell what methods and procedures are suitable at each developmental stage. Experiencing and actively producing the foreign language challenges the child's whole being, while revealing his or her emerging creative I-organization. We will then observe moments of resonance in our lessons, when development and living method are in tune: *"This is why Waldorf education uses the two or three preceding years to introduce language lessons at the right age according to the principles of human development. Perhaps you see why Waldorf education aims to gradually enable teachers to read the human being as such – not according to books or the rules of an educational system."*¹²

Claus-Peter Röh
English translation by Margot M. Saar

11 See note 8, p. 163

12 See note 8, p. 164

A New Impulse for the Future

First International Conference for Organisers of Teacher Training Courses
3rd to 6th May 2013, Vienna, Austria

Are you involved in training new teachers?
Do you have plenty of applicants for your courses?
Do you have enough qualified teacher trainers?
Are you imparting Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical impulses to your students?

What questions do you have around teacher training?

We warmly welcome representatives from all training areas (kindergarten and early years teachers, class teachers, subject teachers, and those involved in curative work) to this conference which will provide an opportunity of sharing experiences and creating a new international network which will interconnect all the various training centres in the future.

Programme and Registration: <http://www.enastecongress2013.net/conference>

The conference will be sandwiched between a High School Congress from 1st to 3rd May and a meeting by representatives of the International Forum for Steiner/Waldorf Schools (5th – 8th May).

Please help us to make this a successful coming together of teacher trainers.

I very much look forward to meeting you in Vienna in May!

*Florian Osswald
translated by Steffi Cook*

Agenda

Forthcoming Pedagogical Section Conferences and Events at the Goetheanum, 2013

April 1 – 6, 2013	International Conference for Foreign Language
May 24 – 26, 2013	Conference for Religion Teachers (in German)
September 20 – 22, 2013	Study of Man, Lecture 11 (in German)
October 18 – 20, 2013	Pedagogical Conference (in German)
October 27 – 30, 2013	Conference for Extra Lesson Teacher