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EDUCATION, VALUES AND AUTHORITY: A SEMIOTIC VIEW

INTRODUCTION

What is the relationship between values, authority and education? I believe one very probable first thought could be some kind of idea of moral education. Others might be sceptical, or hold critical views that education and teachers have now lost the authority they used to have in the schooldays of the elders of today, or that neoliberalism and commodification have wiped all old values out of education. Instead of these plausible suspicions, I will here argue that there is (still) a strong internal connection between all these three areas and it is not restricted to any special area of moral education. My main argument is that, on the one hand, we need the concepts of values and authority to understand what education is, and, on the other hand, we need the concept of education to explain why these especially human areas of values and authority exist at all. This theoretical consideration will not, of course, offer any practical guide to values and authority in education, but I hope this kind of analysis could also have some applicable practical consequences.

I will develop my argument in a framework of action theoretical semiotics which I have been building mainly on the theoretical heritage of A. J. Greimas. My application of Greimassian semiotics is, however, quite unorthodox and I have mixed in some central influences from Peircean semiotics and biosemiotics. This whole theory project is situated in the research of education, so it is educational semiotics or edusemiotics throughout. The most peculiar feature of this theory in comparison with other semiotic theories is that its basic concept is *meaning* instead of sign, which is seen as rather derivative. Education in this theory is viewed of quite traditionally as a transformation from animal to human, from the plainly biosemiotic to anthroposemiotic sphere. In this respect, it shares and leans on the ideas of classical continental traditions of pedagogy to which the idea of *Bildung*¹ is central. One aim of the project is to make this cryptic concept more accessible by translating it into semiotic vocabulary. In addition to the above mentioned roots, in this study I will utilize also Robert Brandom's notion of *conceptual* as a special characteristic of human rationality.

THE FRAMEWORK: MEANING AND ACTION

The basic concept of action theoretical semiotics is not the sign, as in semiotics usually, but rather the meaning². Sign is a more derivative concept which can be

defined as anything which has (or evokes) a meaning. Meanings are always of or about something and to or for someone³. We shall call that someone the *subject* and that something respectively the *object*. These names must not be understood here as any ontological categories, but just names for the termini of a temporary relationship of meaning. When meaning exists or happens, it takes place between two poles whose roles may be different so that this relationship is not symmetrical. Just to tell the poles apart, they have these more or less descriptive names so that the object is the one of which or about what this meaning is, and the subject is the one to whom the meaning is. In other words, we can say that the object is meaningful and it means something or rather somehow to the subject. The basic question of semiotics is how an object can be meaningful to a subject.

The relations of any entity are part of its being, the way it is. Without taking sides in the ontological dispute as to whether relations are primary over their termini or other way round, I hope we can safely state that the relationship can affect the being of its termini, but also the entities can affect their relationships and via them also other entities. So, for example, the being of a subject can change so that at one moment it is in one way and at the next moment it can be in another way. Of course, its being must all the time remain somewhat, or in some sense, similar and stable in order that we have a reason to call it the same subject at all. Whatever change takes place in the being of the subject, we probably cannot easily and evidently say what caused that change. The change could be caused spontaneously by the entity itself or it could be caused by some other entity via a certain relationship between them, or thirdly it could be changed just by pure chance - or perhaps it is caused by the joint effect of all of these. (Pikkarainen, 2013)

Further, we could assume that the way of being of all possible entities which can take part in a meaning relationship is active in such a way that they can at least in some circumstances cause changes to the ways of being of both themselves and others. The other side of the coin is a passive being, which etymologically does not mean inert stableness either, but rather is changing as a consequence of some effect, it suffers changes. So every relationship between a subject and an object is at least potentially interactive where both poles can affect and undergo changes to and from each other. Dewey (1985, 113) famously called this active and passive interaction as experience, but if we add to this his principle of continuation, we can call it action or interaction. This simplified basic framework for experience of meaning is depicted in figure 1.

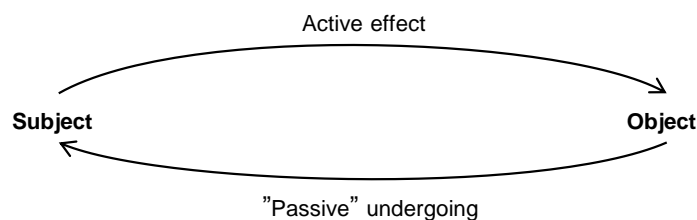


Figure 1. The circle of interaction

Now the reader may protest that this is not at all about meaning but just about causality. However, this model differs from the received view of causality because this is two-way interaction between entities, and causality is often seen as a one-way effect or determination between events. Nevertheless, we could situate in the scheme of figure 1 in the place of subject for example some mechanical device like thermostat, or a simple entity like atom, and then we could discuss the question whether they experience meanings and what kind of meanings. I see no serious problem in this kind of discussion, but rather I would say that interactions between these kinds of mechanical or purely physical beings should be called causal, and it would be better to restrict them out of proper semiotics. But it is invaluablely important to announce that probably all meaning effects and meaning experiences necessitate purely causal relations, even though it must be possible to make some clear difference between causal and meaningful.

The proper area of meanings and semiotics can be provisionally delimited with the concepts of action, life and competence. This delimitation is unavoidably somewhat circular, because we should not use any concepts from outside semiotics. For this reason, we must be cautious with the concept of life as a biological concept. It would be easy to say that only living creatures can experience meanings, but it seems too difficult to draw clear limits to living beings. Action is better because no other science can define it better than semiotics. When we study action as a meaningful object (i.e. "sign"), we discover that we can call action only those events and processes which seem to have a competent subject. Competence is the presumed or inferred feature of the subject, which makes it possible for her to act that way, to be the subject of that action (Greimas, 1987, 44-46). So, when we discover that something is happening, we can understand it as some subject's action if we can presuppose that the subject has the competences needed for that action. This means that we regard that subject as responsible for that happening. Life then can be seen as a whole of the actions of a subject.

There is thus something not empirical in action, because competences are not perceivable, but they can only be presupposed or inferred from a subject's perceivable action. Here we have a necessarily circular definition: we decide that the perceived happening is that subject's action, and then we infer what competences she has. But we must first presuppose that someone has the needed competences before we can regard her as a subject of that action. So we can never be absolutely sure, because competences are something internal to the subject. But there is also something else which is internal to the subject. We cannot perceive whether the subject is secretly plotting something, what kind of alternative actions she is planning, and especially what kind of meanings she is experiencing. It is just this internal side which differentiates proper semiotic action, as depicted in figure 2, from plain physical interaction.

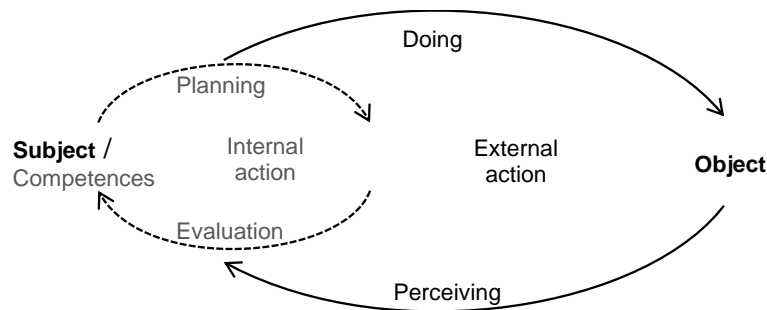


Figure 2: Action of a competent subject

Now at last we are ready to define meaning as an effect of an object in the environment of the subject's action which affects the course of her action. So this is quite a simple and straight forward definition with a somewhat biosemiotic tone. Some points must be stressed. The competent subject acts spontaneously and autonomously directing the course of her action within the limits and possibilities afforded by the environment. Although any and all of the objects in the environment can affect the subject and her action, it is always the subject herself who steers the course of the action - at least partly and at least the internal part of it. As biosemiotics has stressed, the environment of the subject consists only of the meaningful objects - or perhaps only of the meanings of the objects. This does not mean that the meanings were all conscious. That requirement would exclude most of the biosemiotics and also most of the normal actions of humans out of semiotics. It is only required that the subject actively, and according to her competences, takes in to account in her action the "passive" effect of some object or objects. Typically, this takes place when the subject perceives something, but it can also be that she knows or presupposes something about her environment, perhaps completely tacitly and unconsciously, and, as often happens, erroneously or fictively.

GOAL OF ACTION AND LEARNING

It is a deep common sense assumption that a competent subject i.e. a proper subject of some action has always some goal or intention why she acts and in what she striving for in her action. Juridical and often pedagogical discourse talks about motives. This will be discussed more later, but at the moment we can say that the goal is an essential part of the subjects competence. While action is always in some way goal directed and the environment of the action sets uncontrollable restrictions to the possibilities of what can happen, including that the goal will not be always achieved. Sometimes the action will be unsuccessful. One central or perhaps the most important initial function of meanings is that it can tell us whether we are going to succeed or not, and should we go on with our action, or should we change or stop it. This requires only that the subject can initially differentiate two meanings: good and bad⁴. The good or positive means that for example a particular perceived object is something useful, and either the action towards it should be

continued or perhaps action should be steered more towards it. Respectively, bad or negative meaning suggests that action should be changed to some other direction, and the object should be avoided. This simple meaning structure can be depicted geometrically as two dimensional co-ordinates where the vertical axis is the amount and the horizontal axis is the contents of meaning. Here the different possibilities will be situated in a triangle shaped area according to figure 3. If meaning is low then it will be neither good nor bad, but if meaning becomes higher there can be a contradictory and tensioned situation where meaning can be either good or bad.

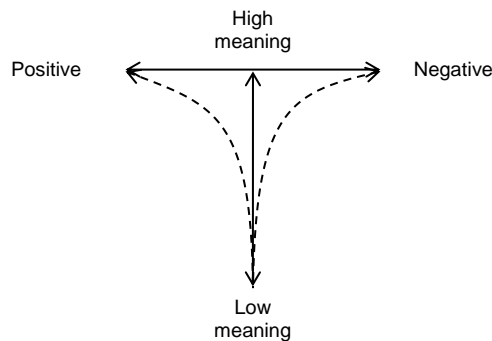


Figure 3: The simplest meaning possibilities as “semiotic triangle”

Learning as a competence change (Pikkarainen, [in print]) seems to be an essential and organic part of all competent and more or less successful action. The successful action in a certain kind of environment requires a certain kind of course of action and that requires certain kinds of competences. The subject can only act in those ways for which she has competences. If she cannot change the environment, then she is in need of a change of competences. As long as an action continues successfully, we may say that the subject can do that. Nevertheless, all the time learning is going on as the competence of the subject strengthens. As soon as the environment changes so much that the action does not success any more, we say that now she can no longer do it. At this time, the need for learning of course intensifies remarkably. If the competence of the subject changes so that she can again start to act successfully, we say that she learned (again) to do that. This kind of pragmatic learning can be depicted with the scheme of figure 4. We can utilize here the inference alternatives of Peirce so that the strengthening phase is called induction, the problem phase is the falsification of the inductive conclusion, and the search for new ways of action is an abductive phase (Douven, 2011).

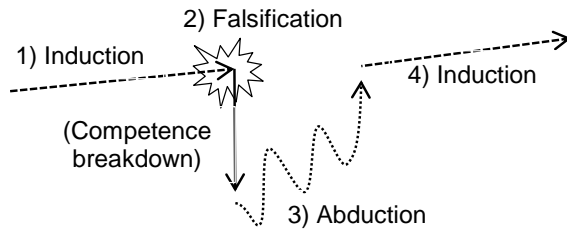


Figure 4: The model of pragmatic learning

When the subject’s action becomes more complex, containing separate action alternatives like eating, resting, nesting, reproduction and escaping, there will of course arise a need for more versatile meanings than just good or bad (cf. Stjernfelt, 2007, chp. 9). Depending on what action alternative is ranked highest for the subject, the same object can have a different meaning, but it can still be recognized as same object. A piece of food can have no or minimal positive meaning when the subject is not hungry, but it can still be recognized as something special – perhaps for future possible needs. Thus the object means food even though its meaning can be more or less neutral in the good vs. bad dimension. This causes the multiplication of qualitative meaning possibilities.

When more qualitative meaning possibilities arise, the previous model of the semiotic triangle will grow to a semiotic square (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, 309). In a semiotic square (see figure 4), high meaning creates similarly a tensional axis between some opposite meanings like food vs. poison, friend vs. enemy or generally good vs. bad. However, now also in the more neutral situation there are respectively two possibilities: not-food and not-poison, not-friend and not-enemy, or not-good and not-bad (see Floch, 2001, 20-23). Something which is not-food may have a lesser meaning, but it still can be poison, and on this occasion it will again have more meaning. Anyway it is important to know also what some object is not - and what else it thus can be.

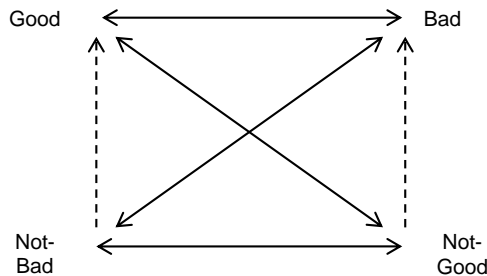


Figure 4: Greimassian semiotic square

This multiplication of meaning possibilities and their organisation in internecine relationships, which is depicted in the semiotic square, makes possible the specifically human conceptual learning and internal action based on concepts. However, this transition will not take place via simple pragmatic learning, but it requires education proper.

EDUCATION AS BECOMING A HUMAN

There is some difference between action and meanings of plainly biosemiotic subjects like animals and those of human subjects. Before we go to the disputed question about what is the difference and how deep it is, it is better to stress the similarities first. Actually, we have here three levels: first, the physical or “physiosemiotic”⁵ level of plain causal relationships, secondly the biosemiotic or biological level of living and action based meanings, and thirdly the anthroposemiotic or human level. All these levels have strictly the same ontological basis. We do not need any ontological dualities or trialities and not even any ontologically loaded ideas of emergence. So the differences are only structural and functional, which means that entities of the lower⁶ level have a more simple internal and external structure, and their interaction with their environment is different. They are different and they act differently. Secondly, the levels are nested so that every entity in the higher level is also an entity of the lower level and it has all the basic features, possibilities and restrictions of the entities of the lower level. (Heil, 2003; Pikkarainen, 2013.)

There are some generally held views about the differences between humans and animals. Perhaps the most important are following four features: humans have ethics and moral responsibility; they have a hugely greater ability to mould their environment; they have an ability use concepts for abstract reasoning and yet a special kind of self-consciousness. These four features are connected together and form one whole. The moulding ability is possible because of abstract reasoning, or alternatively, the changing of the environment requires the development of more abstract concepts. The ability to affect other people requires ethical control which again, with the use of abstract concepts, makes self-consciousness possible - and necessary.

All these characteristics can be quite easily understood as features of a human way of action - not as fixed properties of human beings as substances. However, as ways of action, these require certain competences which are probably missing from animals, and perhaps also missing from humans as biological creatures. This is the critical starting point of classical conceptions of education and Bildung: The competences for human action must and can be created in action because they are not innate and they do not develop automatically. Their development, the process of Bildung, requires educational care, guidance and control - both formal and informal.

HUMANIZATION AND USE OF CONCEPTS

We can evaluate those previously mentioned characteristics of the human way of action differently. The ability to mould the environment so that it will transform

radically to be unrecognizable, or even to destroy it as a living environment is perhaps not such a special ability after all, regardless of its possibly fatal consequences. Also animals and all living beings do it but only on a smaller scale. All action is then effecting the environment, changing it somehow. Rather the abstract reasoning has made it just possible to use unforeseeably effective tools for it. So perhaps the use of abstract concepts and reasoning which makes this possible is the most peculiar and critical difference between humans and animals. It seems quite clear that this ability has become possible by the use of human languages. Only language-using humans can infer logically, monitor their own belief formation, reflect their desires and attribute thoughts to other beings (Bermúdez, 2003, 188). These skills require the ability to “hold a thought in mind” i.e. to think about a thought and this is possible only through human language which codifies thoughts as explicit signs (Bermúdez, 2003, 172).

Here we must not think of human language as a communication system consisting of symbols which are just arbitrary signs referring to some objects, like the simplified language games described by Wittgenstein in the beginning of *Philosophical Investigations* (Wittgenstein, 1981). It is true that the invention of symbolic or arbitrary reference is an enormous innovation affording a flexible and effective tool to communicate meanings, but more important is the possibility to use this tool in thinking. Coarsely this means that by mentioning in inner speech or auto-communication the name of some phenomenon a human can evoke internally the same meanings which would rise if she encountered that phenomenon really in her environment. In a similar fashion, Wittgenstein’s builder causes his assistant to bring a brick just by shouting the name. Actually Pavlov created this kind of arbitrary symbol for his dogs in his laboratory, but only in human use have the linguistic symbols made it possible that “[Hu]Man is freed from the enthrallment of things by giving them names (Thom, 1985, 289).”

A very important point is that human language is not primarily a communication system but a modelling system. This together with syntax makes it possible to frame an indefinite number of non-existent possible worlds (Sebeok, 1991, 56-58). Yet even this possible articulated reference to non-existent objects does not unveil the essence of conceptual thinking, but we must in addition to inter-word syntax take into account the intra-word structures. This means firstly that most, if not all, concepts are analyzable into content components, and in this analysis we must use other concepts. Secondly, this means that the words of language form an inter-conceptual network where every concept is definable by other concepts. This is the core of Saussurean notion of language (Saussure, 1983) and the Greimassian notion semiotic system (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, 295).

Here, however, as Wittgensteinians stress, the language as a reservoir of concepts is not as important as the use of these concepts. A typical or possible use of language is the articulation of the models of existing or non-existent parts of our environment as we saw above, but there is still another use which may be the most important characteristic feature of a human being and human action. This use is reasoning in the form of inferring from one model to another. Robert Brandom has propagated an incisive name for this action as “a game of giving and asking for reasons” (Brandom, 2000; 2009). What is peculiar here is that the relations between the sentences or claims as minimal parts or forms of the models are much

more essential than the relationships between these expressions and their possible objects or referents.

The inferential relationships between the expressions are neither determined by the objects they refer to, nor by the fixed network of language solely, but rather they are formed just in this rule based action of giving and asking for reasons. Their basis is the commitment of the language users to logical rules like “if A and B then A” and - what is still more important - to rules of material inference like “if A is red then A is colored”. Our understanding of the contents or meanings of a concept is directly dependent on the material inferences we can make from and to the expressions where that concept is used (Brandom, 2000, 61). These rules of inference and contents of concepts are all the time questionable, and it is just because of this that we must submit ourselves to that continuous game of giving and asking for reasons - reasons for our beliefs, our actions, our linguistic expressions and our inferences. This is the metasemiotic function of human language, and the basis for our reflective self-consciousness.

WHAT ARE VALUES AND WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Ethics is one of the central characteristics of a human being and human action. Human moral behaviour has much in common with other social animals and it seems to be deeply rooted in our biological setup developed by evolution (Gazzaniga, 2009), but here I do not mean this basic heritage but rather the moral action and responsibility in connection with ethics as moral reflection and reasoning. Ethics as moral reasoning is of course based on the conceptual and inferential reasoning described above. But it is also the other way around, that conceptual reasoning is based on a certain kind of moral responsibility and normative commitment to the inferential rules and linguistic expressions. I will return this idea of Brandom a little bit later.

The concept of value is quite central to almost all kind of ethics - and yet important in many areas outside ethics especially in aesthetics. So let's start from values. There are some two or three basic ontological assumptions about what values are. One is the objectivist stance which says that values are something existing objectively and independently of any subjects' ideas about them. An objectivist can be either an idealist like Plato, who thinks that values are objective ideas, or more naturalist like Aristotle, who thinks that values exist in nature as essences. The other pole is subjectivism according to which values may be just some subject's preferences⁷. Both or all of these views have serious problems, especially about the learnability and knowability of values. In addition to those problems, there is a conceptual problem about the meaning of the concept of value. Value is something that is or should be pursued, increased or sheltered. So it is something which is missing or it is in danger of vanishing. Essential to it is not its existence, but rather its non-existence.

As something non-existent or a vanishing object or state of affairs, value is similar to a goal of action. So it seems to be something subjective in a similar way as action is necessarily subjective. It must have a subject. But is subjectivism then right? No, at least from the point of view of pedagogy this would be a problematic stance because if all subjective goals were equally values then there could not

arise any ethical problems with them. All my doings were always valuable and right, no matter what others think. There could raise social problems but not ethical ones. So there must be a possibility to ask if this or that goal of my or your action is really a value or according to a value. A social or intersubjective solution cannot be either because one should be able to ask this same question about commonly shared goals.

The solution could be some kind of not-objectivist rationalism in the form of a Brandomian game of giving and asking for reasons. This solution in a way reduces ethics to conceptual reasoning, but it does not reduce the contents of ethics i.e. morality and moral problems to reasoning. Brandom (e.g. 2000, 33) stresses the Kantian roots of his thinking, and the idea that a human being is free to commit herself to rational rules of both action and thinking. Here we can follow Martin Kusch's interpretation of Kantian ethics that a human being must first have - to be learned and inherited - the natural and conventional morals before she can apply her reason to these probably one sided and controversial principles and conventions of moral action and evaluation (1983). Actually, I suppose that the adequate learning of conventional morals - an ability to commit oneself normatively to any rules - is a prerequisite for rational commitment to all reasoning, both theoretical and practical.

AUTHORITY AND PEDAGOGY

As said above, every subject learns all the time as long as it lives and acts. No special educational authorities are needed for that. Yet we can say that actually the environment has that authority. It allows some actions and prevents others, and it requires certain kinds of competences from the subject for successful action. In pedagogy, this situation changes so that some other people, as individuals and collectives, take the authority and start to manipulate the learning environments and to require certain new competences. This taking of authority is not always necessarily conscious and wilful. For example, parents may just find themselves in that situation and start acting the way they remember their own parents have acted. But on the other hand, an educator's situation typically stirs more or less rational reflection about the reasons for different alternatives of educational action.

Educating, like all action, has some goals and pursues some values. According to Greimas there can be two fundamental values or rather value pairs. One is Life vs. Death and the other is Culture vs. Nature. (These pairs should be situated to the semiotic square to get the proper value structure.) The first is the basis for all individual meaning horizons and the second is for all collective or social ones (Greimas & Courtés, 1982, 175, 361). He does not relate to each other these two pairs which form the high meaning axis of the most basic semiotic square, respectively in either idiolectal or sociolectal meaningful expression. My view, however, is that they are developmentally nested so that Life vs. Death is more original and it is the main value structure on the biosemiotic level. On the anthroposemiotic level there emerges the new value pair which is partly in dissonance with the earlier and in principle and at least in some situations start to control it. With this I mean that biosemiotically Life vs. Death is always identical with Good vs. Bad, but in social settings it is possible that Death or Not-Life (e.g.

suffering) can be better than Life or Not-Death (e.g. escape) if it happens to be the prize of promoting or sheltering the value of Culture. This hierarchical value structure is depicted in figure 5⁸.

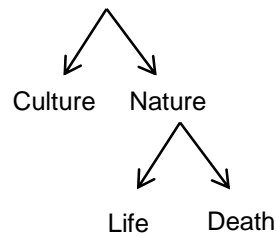


Figure 5: Structure of basic values

While all learning and action initially takes place in the biosemiotic sphere, pursuing Life - whatever it consists of for that subject - and avoiding Death is raised to the cultural and thus anthroposemiotic level by education. Thus an educator must be seen of as a special source of authority, not unconditionally compelling and restricting like the environment of action, but rather as a moral authority which has an effect through the subject's own commitments. With the famous Greimassian (1980, 206) actantial analysis this means that an educator is not a Helper but rather a Sender. However, the situation is not of course so simple, because the educator as an educating subject must have a Sender herself and she is acting by the mandate of the Culture. But if we regard Culture as a value rather than an actant, then we could suppose that the society which gives the statutory authority to the educator is the final Sender. Nevertheless, this is a problematic view because we earlier stated that values cannot be reduced to preferences and the laws and perceptions of society are just more or less shared and collective preferences. So a better candidate for the final Sender would be a *tradition* understood as a continuous conceptual research program (MacIntyre, 1988). Nevertheless, an educator is a mediating Sender who can often be seen also as a Helper, or rather an advocate of the educated in her relationship to society as the hermeneutic tradition of pedagogy has stressed with the concept of pedagogical relationship (Wulf, 2003, 31-33).

PARADOX OF PEDAGOGY

Values of education, and generally all action are thus either Life values or Culture values. The former are based on the being of subjects as subjects of action. They are means-end rational values of any action, but the most basic of them are those values which make it possible to continue to exist as subjects. Thus they are, of course, important and necessary, also in the anthroposemiotic sphere. The latter values could be any aims and contents of existing cultures and traditions, but the special anthroposemiotic core of these values is the ability to use concepts

inferentially. This is literally a critical ability, because it makes it possible to rationally criticize any ideas, actions and situations. This is the basis for human freedom but it is itself based on freedom. As Brandom (2009, 117) stresses, it was Kant's greatest invention that human beings are free just because they can commit themselves to self-imposed norms and rules. By following self-made rules, human beings commit themselves to moral responsibility of what they do and what they should do. Only this commitment makes the inferential use of concepts and thus any rational deliberation of action possible.

This invention caused for Kant the famous paradoxical core problem of the theory of education: how can we reconcile freedom as an aim of education and coercion as its necessary means (Kant, 1992, 20). Partly this problem can be now reinterpreted so that the aim of education is to lift the educated to the anthroposemiotic level, and develop their anthroposemiotic competences, but the means of education must largely be biosemiotic. A possible direction for a solution to this problem could be the analysis of a modal structure of human competences. It is important to note that the question of moral responsibility and rational deliberation is connected to all action, not just some especially moral action. According to Greimas's theory, there are four types of modal competences connected in every special competence of some doing (Greimas, 1987, 121-). These modal competences are respectively related to the modal auxiliary verbs: Want, Can, Know and Must⁹.

Finally, I will briefly draft a model of modal learning which could lead from the biosemiotic to the anthroposemiotic sphere, and thus realize the *Bildung* process. This learning will take place in three stages. The first stage is purely biosemiotic (and pragmatic). In it, the subject first *wants* to do something to achieve some state of affairs. Then the subject tries to do that in some manner. Depending on the environment the subject *can* or *cannot* do it and achieve its goal. Now, and at least after some trials, the subject will *know* how it can and how it cannot achieve its goal. This know-how will take a virtual form of a technical norm: if I want to get X in an environment Y I *must* do Z. This recurrent circular process is depicted in figure 6. In the second stage, the situation is social and the subject must take into account other subjects who have their own goals. Now there is, in addition to the physical environment, also the actantial environment with useful Helpers and dangerous Opponents and mighty Senders and Receivers. The subject must negotiate and accommodate its goals with the goals of others. The most important change on this level is through the new medium of negotiation: human language which combines the modelling and communication functions. This makes it possible to transfer to the third stage where the subject can explicitly discuss its aims and beliefs both with it itself as well as with others. This starts the game of giving and asking for the reasons, where the reciprocal commitment to the commonly understandable rules of reasoning is essential. Now the subject can rationally articulate and form its own desires, ideals and identity. (Stojanov, 2007.)

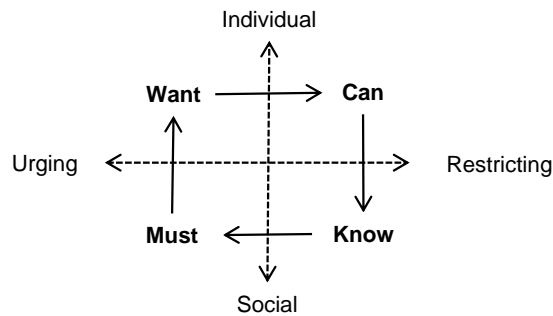


Figure 6: Model of modal learning

CONCLUSIONS

I have attempted here to outline the relationships of the concepts of education, values and authority. They seem to have multiple and circular connections. Values, as rationally deliberated and conceptually explicated ideals and goals of action, are the special characteristic of human rationality. The rationality of values requires on the one hand their authority over human action, and on the other hand conceptual reasoning as to why just this or these values must have more authority than others. The development of competence for conceptual deliberation requires special pedagogical action and a certain kind of education. That education must on one hand take the form of biosemiotic influence to the educated via reorganisation of the environment, but on the other hand it must take a form of just that rational game of giving and asking for reasons i.e. reciprocal serious dialogue. Our double problem as educators is at the same time to bear the authority of the mighty Sender and the authority of pure argument. A helpful aid to avoid the schizophrenia of this paradoxical situation may be to remember to rationally reflect on the final value of pedagogy, and order the means according to it and the situation¹⁰.

NOTES

- ¹ For an English introduction to the concept of Bildung c.f. (Kivelä, Siljander, & Sutinen, 2012).
- ² For Greimas, meaning is the absolute precondition and starting point for semiotic research, but as a basic concept it is itself undefinable (Greimas, 1987).
- ³ C.f. the Peircean triadic concept of sign in which the sign vehicle or representamen conveys something about the object to the interpretant (c.f. Peirce & Marty, 2012).
- ⁴ Thom (1985, 284) speaks about attractor and repelling signs and Deely (2004) uses symbols + and -, and also differentiates a neutral alternative 0 with no meaning.
- ⁵ Deely (2001) has suggested the term *physiosemiosis* referring to Peirce's pansemiotic views. Although I like this term, I disagree with him to some extent about the nature of that phenomenon.
- ⁶ Lower is not a pejorative term here but it means only the earlier mentioned items in the list, and higher respectively means later mentioned ones.

⁷ C.f. Kristjánsson's (2010) quite similar analysis of alternative ontologies behind ethical emotion education as rationalism and sentimentalism.

⁸ A natural conclusion is that there are no values in physiosemiotic level.

⁹ See more detailed analysis in (Pikkarainen, [in print]; Tarasti, 2012).

¹⁰ This reflective activity is traditionally referred to as a concept of pedagogical tact (Van Manen, 1991).

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