

QUADRILATERAL TEACHING

Sunnie D. Kidd

Quadrilateral teaching is a way of placing the self at the center of the dimensionality of an event.¹ It is a way of displaying not only the past, present and future but also the height, depth and breadth of experience.² The human being resides on four fronts: backward, forward, outward, inward:

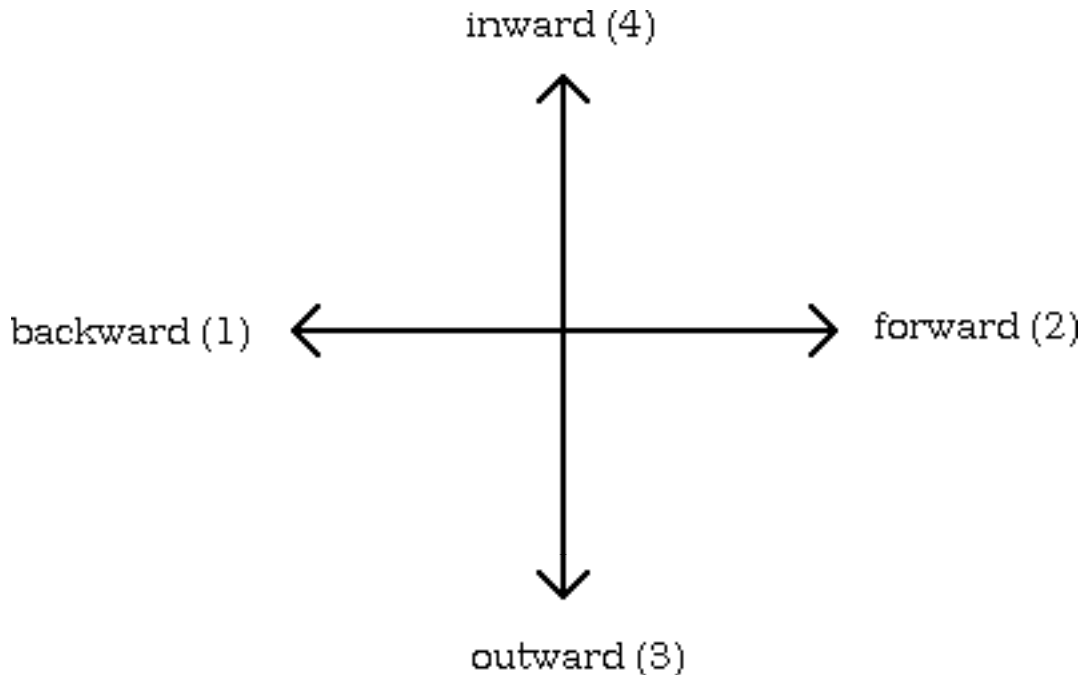


Figure 1

To speak, says Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy, means to be placed in the center of the cross of reality.³ This means that one speaks from an inner space to an outer world and from an outer world into one's own consciousness. One speaks between the beginning and the end of times.⁴ The beginning is when one comes on the scene, so to speak, for that particular person, the end, for that particular person. The person comes on the scene within the already and moves toward the future which goes beyond that particular person.

Each person is, between the past and the future with the possibility of knowing it. Now and here, we are living in a twofold time and a twofold space.⁵ All four aspects of life are in unity.⁶ Time and space is co-original, in that, we do not encounter one without the other. Our reality, says Rosenstock-Huussy, is not a circle but a cross.⁷ To speak leaves the circle of control as it breaks through. One shifts between the four ways of speaking.

To live means to look four ways and to choose between continuity and change. The emphasis is on movement, flow and change. I am hinders the flow, as to be is not in place but far beyond. Transcendence is not a going outside of experience. It is an experience that transcends. For beyond all experience, says Gabriel Marcel, there is nothing.⁸ It is being-ones-own-beyond. In this way I become the future that persists. One is the arrangement of the four directions of time and space. This is an arrangement not a separateness. It is not a mixing of four styles, no one style communicates the whole truth. Speaking is fourfold.

The relation between thought and speech, says Rosenstock-Huessy, is inter-action.⁹ Each person has the power to say:

This has been.
This shall be.
I see this. This is.
I am of it. Let me be me one of yours.¹⁰

This is entering the four forms of grammar. This has been, is backward. This shall be, is forward. I see this. This is, is outward. I am of it. Let me be one of yours, is inward. These are experiential expressions¹¹ of one's location in time and space.

Experience of the grammatical forms is achieved through: reading, which is backward; writing, which is forward; speaking, which is outward; listening, which is inward. To speak means to forward acts. Speech includes: repeating, which is backward; articulating, which is forward; speaking, which is outward; listening, which is inward. Verbal material, says William James, is the vehicle by which the mind thinks.¹² If we consider the parts of speech: adjectives, are backward; verbs, are forward; nouns, are outward; pronouns, are inward. The use of a word in a given sentence can change. The word, *living*, for example can be a verb, adjective or a noun. For the other parts of speech: an adverb modifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb; a preposition connects a noun or a pronoun; a conjunction connects various words and groups of words.¹³ It should be evident that words are in relation.

The versatility of the quadrilateral allows for grammatical movement, flow and change. When considering the mood of the speaker toward the sentence, in relation to the quadrilateral: narratives, are backward; imperatives, are forward; indicatives, are outward; subjunctives, are inward. To further display the grammatical movement, flow and change on the quadrilateral we might consider: we, as backward; thou, as forward; it, as outward; I, as inward. The arrangement is always in relation. Notice that the word *we* shifts from backward to outward: they, is backward; thou, is forward; we, is outward; I, is inward. Thou precedes I. Grammatically, there is no *I* in the imperative that calls one forward. It is thou. I am a thou for

society before I am myself. Mother is the first other. The other is with me before I am myself. The other first calls my name. I begin speaking a language before I know it. The implications are obvious here: one should begin speaking a language, such as everyday phrases rather than learning tables of grammar first. This utilizes the idea of participation rather than observation. In this way the observer and the observed, subject and object, are inseparable and indistinguishable. When considering participation the moment something becomes connected with the self it becomes interesting.

Once the idea of the quadrilateral has been established the options are only limited by the teacher's impact. It emerges from dialogue created by the flow of ideas coming from the "students." The connecting, says James, is the thinking.¹⁴ Ideas emerge through dialogue and visualization. Change, says Marcel, revolves upon the centre of an experiencing self.¹⁵ For Rosenstock-Huessy, speech is a flaming arc connecting different generations.¹⁶ *Speech* is creative metaphor.¹⁷

For my concluding remarks, first let me suggest the term *animantics* to display the directness of the depth of the intended meaning of speech is creative metaphor.¹⁸ It is through expression, says Maurice Merleau-Ponty, that we make it our own.¹⁹ Language is sedimented. Speech is spontaneous. Speech stirs the sedimentation of language. Secondly, let me suggest the movement of the quadrilateral from the particular to the universal is, as Rosenstock-Huessy would say: trust, is backward; faith, is forward; charity, is outward; hope, is inward. We could further say that: history, is backward; ethics, is forward; sociology is outward; psychology, is inward. The versatility of quadrilateral teaching is not only a quick way to show relations but the applications are numerous.

Notes

- 1) Dimensions could be represented by: 1) a straight line, a dot; 2) right and left, horizontal; 3) up and down, vertical; 4) time and space, intersection.
- 2) Although space of three dimensions could be represented by: width, length and height; experientially, height, depth and breadth seem appropriate for this presentation.
- 3) Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Speech and Reality*, intro. Clinton C. Gardner (Norwich: Argo Books, Inc., 1970), p. 52.
- 4) *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- 5) *Ibid.*, p. 54.

- 6) Thought takes place in time yet vision can transcend it. All events in it are interconnected. This would be the fifth dimension: enlightenment.
- 7) *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 8) Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being, I: Reflection and Mystery*, trans. G. S. Fraser (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1960), p. 59.
- 9) *Ibid.*, p. 172.
- 10) *Ibid.*, p. 187.
- 11) Sunnie D. Kidd, originally coined the term Experiential Expressions in 1976 and in several articles thereafter.
- 12) William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals*, intro. Paul Woodring (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1958), p. 105.
- 13) For an interjection there is no connection to a sentence.
- 14) James, *Talks to Teachers*, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
- 15) Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.
- 16) Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *The Christian Future*, intro. Harold Stahmer (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 229.
- 17) Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *I Am an Impure Thinker*, foreword W. H. Auden (Norwich: Argo Books, Inc., 1970), p. 83.
- 18) James W. Kidd, in Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Applied Science of the Soul*, trans. James W. Kidd, intro. Sandra A. Wawrytko (San Francisco: Golden Phoenix Press, 1984), fn., p. 1.
- 19) Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1976), p. 177.