DOCUMENT RESUME

ABSTRACT
        Humanistic psychology has emerged as a third force
alternative to behaviorism and psychoanalysis. It offers a new
orientation to psychology, one that incorporates basic existential
ideas related to personal choice, freedom, and responsibility, and
which also includes central phenomenological themes related to
perceptions, personal meanings, and subjective experiences. Coming
into its own in the mid 1950s, humanistic psychology established a
theoretical-philosophical beachhead that focused on the whole person,
highlighted the importance of conscious processes, and gave
psychological respectability to the constructs of self and
self-concept. Humanistic and cognitive emphases have combined to have
an enormous influence on teaching-learning activities at all levels
of education, including: (1) a recognition that affective states and
cognitive functioning are interactive processes, both of which
influence learning outcomes; (2) a recognition of how and why a
classroom's emotional climate influences learning for better or
worse; and (3) a recognition that learning is facilitated when
personal meaning is enhanced. The underlying concern that early
humanism had about the right of people to arrive at some level of
self-realization through reason and rational thought remains alive
and well through its contemporary expressions in humanistic and
cognitive psychology. An 8-page list of references concludes the
paper. (Author/NRB)

Humanistic-Cognitive Applications to Teaching and Learning:

Theoretical-Philosophical Bases*

By

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Abstract

The two primary objectives of this paper are: (1) to examine the <u>philosophical roots</u> and theoretical bases that support the psychological framework of the humanistic-cognitive position, and (2) to discuss ways in which the philosophy and theory of humanistic psychology can be translated into positive approaches for enhancing teaching processes and learning outcomes. Humanistic psychology has emerged as a "third force" alternative to behaviorism and psychoanalysis, not so much as a new psychology, but as a new orientation to psychology, one that incorporates basic existential ideas related to personal choice, freedom, and responsibility, and which also includes central phenomenological themes related to perceptions, personal meanings, and subjective experiences. Coming into its own in the mid 1950s, humanistic psychology established a theoretical-philosophical beachhead that focused on the "whole" person, highlighted the importance of conscious processes, and gave psychological respectability to the constructs self and self-concept. Running as parallel currents in the same stream of holistic and phenomenological thinking, each with its own particular eddys of interest, humanistic and cognitive emphases have combined to have an enormous influence on teaching-learning activities at all levels of education, including: (1) a recognition that affective states and cognitive functioning are interactive processes, both of which influence learning outcomes; (2) a recognition of how and why a classroom's emotional "climate" influences learning for better or worse; and (3) a recognition that learning is facilitated when personal meaning is enhanced. The underlying concern that early humanism had about the right of people to arrive at some level of self-realization through reason and rational thought remains alive and well through its contemporary expressions in humanistic and cognitive psychology.

INTRODUCTION*

The two primary objectives of this paper are to examine the theoretical framework and basic postulates of humanistic and cognitive psychology, and to discuss ways in which principles derived from these related positions can be used for enhancing teaching processes and learning outcomes within the larger arena of educational psychology.

WHAT IS HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY?

We need first of all to acknowledge the fact that there is no single position that is identifiable as the humanistic psychology approach. Unlike other areas of psychology--e.g., personality, physiological, experimental, or abnormal psychology--humanistic psychology is not so much a specific content area as it is an attitude or outlook about how to think about psychology, how to use it, and how to apply our knowledge about it to solving human problems and enhancing human existence on a day-to-day basis.

In an effort to understand self-image dynamics more fully, humanistic psychology has endeavored to develop a body of scientific knowledge about human behavior that is guided primarily by a conception of how a person views him or herself rather than through the study of lower animal forms. It is a position that makes humans and the human condition the center of attention. It is a psychological framework that focuses on how persons, in a social context, are influenced by their self-perceptions and guided by the personal meanings they attach to their experiences. It is a point of view that centers not so much on persons' instinctual drives, but on their conscious choices; not so much on their responses to external stimuli, but on their replies to internal needs; not so

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*All of the reference citations used in the longer version of this paper have been left in this condensed version.

much on their past experiences, but on their current circumstances; not so much
on "life conditions" per se, but on their perceptions of those conditions.
Hence, the emphasis is on the subjective qualities of human experience, the
personal meaning of an experience to persons, rather than on their objective,
observable responses.

In an everyday sense, it is the psychology concerned friends use as they
wonder why we may seem "so troubled"; in a clinical sense, it is what therapists
use as they probe for the deeper meanings behind what subjective experiences
mean to the client; in an educational way, it is what teachers practice as they
help students to see the personal relevancy in what they are learning.

EARLY HUMANISM: PARENT OF THE HUMANISTIC SPIRIT

Beginning as a social attitude and growing into a philosophical position,
humanism began in fifteenth century western Europe as a reaction against, and
protest to, a firmly entrenched ecclesiastic and scholastic authority
(Richardson, 1971). Early humanists differed on many issues from scholastic
philosophers of the church, the most important, no doubt, being the humanists'
emphasis on the freedom of individuals to arrive at their own opinions through
independent critical thinking and an emphasis on the natural world rather than
the spiritual world. In Barron's (1979) view, humanism ". . . sought to express
in common language and everyday real images the feelings of the ordinary person.
It did not scorn learning or art, but it did reject the abstract, the pedantic,
the rigid . . . It embraced reason (and an) enlightened rationalism (which)
distinguished it from superstition and anarchy alike" (pp. 5-6). It is no sur-
prise to note that the basic idea undergirding the philosophy of humanism is one
that asserts the dignity and worth of each individual and the right of each
person to arrive at some level of self-realization through reason and rational

thought. The Renaissance, the Reformation, science, and democratic government, along with emphasis on the free pursuit of knowledge, the development of the intellect, and opposition to dogmatic authority are all outgrowths and expressions of early humanism.

Humanistic psychology is a natural outgrowth of the repudiative, questioning spirit which has been so characteristic of humanism over the centuries. Just as early humanism developed as a protest against the narrow, thought-restricting, authority-oriented religious dogma of its time--the dogma, for example, behind the Inquisition and eventual exile and imprisonment of Galileo, who dared suggest that the earth was not the center of the universe--so, too, has contemporary humanistic psychology evolved as a protest against certain psychological dogmas of its time.

EMERGENCE OF THE HUMANISTIC ORIENTATION AS PSYCHOLOGY'S "THIRD FORCE"

For the first 50 years or so of the twentieth century, psychological thinking, practice, and research was largely dominated by two major forces-- behaviorism and psychoanalysis. Both of these giants-to-be emerged at about the same time in the early 1900's, and for essentially the same reasons, namely, in reaction to what was seen as psychology's excessive preoccupation with consciousness and introspection (Matson, 1971).

Stressing the importance of environmental determinants, behavioristic psychology focused its attention on outer experience, overt behavior, action and reaction, and offered the point of view, supported by its theory and findings from research with animals, that people are conditioned, by virtue of the rewards and punishments to which they are exposed, to turn out (behave, respond, grow, act) in certain ways (Lundin, 1983; Skinner, 1968). Behaviorism's contemporary leader, B. F. Skinner (1971), has underscored this point of view with his idea

that human freedom and dignity is really a myth, a misconception we nourish, he says, by failing to see that all behavior is subject to the controlling influences of environment.

Psychoanalysis, the second major force of the twentieth century, was less interested in the external stimuli that produced the responses, and more interested in the unconscious motivations and internal instincts that propelled the behavior (Giovacchini, 1983; Hall, 1954). This view of behavior, particularly as it was articulated by Freud (1937/1961) promoted the idea that people were very much creatures of instincts classified under two general headings: life instincts and death instincts. Life instincts are those concerned primarily with individual survival and racial propagation. Basic drives such as hunger, thirst, or sex, energized by the ubiquitous Freudian libido, would fall into this category. The concept of death instincts reflected the basic pessimism built into psychoanalytic thinking about the human condition. Add to this Freud's (1937/1964) idea that ". . . even before the ego exists, its subsequent lines of development, tendencies and reactions are already determined" (pp. 343-344), and you have a brief overview of the core ingredients of psychoanalysis: psychogenetically determined instincts, an emphasis on unconscious motivation, and a basically gloomy view of humankind.

Between the environmental determinism of behaviorism and the biological determinism of psychoanalysis, any sort of view of the person as a whole, complete, intraconnected individual was all but squeezed out of psychology by the 1950's.

Humanistic psychology is a reaction against this state of affairs. It is a countermovement against the sort of reductionistic thinking in psychology that compartmentalized human behavior into responses and instincts and, in the process, largely overlooked what it was that made a human being "human" in the first place. Thus, humanistic psychology emerged as a "third force" alongside of behaviorism and psychoanalysis, not so much as a new psychology but as a new orientation to

psychology. It was, as described by Abraham Maslow (1969), father of the humanistic movement, "a larger superordinate structure" (p. 724) which could accommodate behaviorism, psychoanalysis, and other positions in psychology. When we consider that a significant aspect of humanistic psychology grows directly out of the holistic theories of Kurt Goldstein (1939) and Fritz Perls (1958), who both stressed the idea that humans function as organized wholes and are best understood within the interactive context of the person and the environment, rather than just one of the other, it is not difficult to see why the humanistic position easily encompasses other points of view.

Actually, the emergence of humanistic psychology was a slow and gradual process, one that started in about the middle 1950's and has been growing ever since. In a sense, humanistic psychology started out as modern humanism, addressed to both the construction and defense of a concept of humankind comprised of people as creative beings, capable of self-determination, purpose, and intention, who are controlled not by outside or unconscious forces, but by their own values and choices.

Contributions of Existential Psychology and Phenomenology

Since humanistic psychology, phenomenology, and existential psychology are frequently used in the same breath by persons discussing humanistic viewpoints, it may help us to be clearer about the theoretical structure and philosophical roots of humanistic psychology by briefly examining how existentialism and phenomenology are historically connected to the emergence of humanistic views in psychology.

We begin with existentialism. This is basically a twentieth-century philosophy that stresses each person's responsibility for determining his or her own fate. It is an introspective philosophy that focuses on intrapersonal

conditions such as awareness, personal contingency, and freedom to choose from among alternatives for behaving. Indeed, the existential outlook maintains that a person's essence (being, behavior, personality, "self") is _created_ by his or her choices. As existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre once put it: "I _am_ my choices."

A central tenet of existentialism is the idea that humans struggle to transcend themselves--to reach beyond themselves--always oriented to their possibilities. Further, there is the idea in existential thought that humans are capable of what Morris (1954) has called "dynamic self-consciousness." That is, not only can people think, but they can also think about (criticize and correct) their thinking; not only can people feel, but they can have feelings about their feelings. We are not only _conscious_; we are _self_-conscious.

Phenomenology represents a view which asserts that reality lies not in the event, but in the phenomenon, which is to say, an individual's _perception_ of the event. Since, by definition, a phenomenon is "that which is known through the senses and immediate experience," you can see why perceptions play such a key role in determining what is and what is not real (true, valid, authentic) for a given individual.

Snygg and Combs (1949) took this basic phenomenological idea and creatively developed a new frame of reference for studying and understanding behavior, which has been variously called phenomenological or perceptual psychology. From this point of view, they suggested that the proper subject matter for psychological study was the individual's phenomenal field, that is, "the universe of naive experience in which each individual lives, the everyday situation of self and surroundings which each person takes to be reality" (p. 15).

Phenomenology is difficult to define with precision. It is an old term, now stewing in its own metaphysical juices, that allows for so much individuality that there could be almost as many phenomenologies as there are phenomenologists.

The reason for this is probably because the essential concern is with _meaning_, and meanings can vary extensively.

To summarize, we could say that the emphasis of existential psychology is on personal choice, freedom, and responsibility, while with phenomenological psychology the emphasis is on our perceptions, personal meanings, and subjective experiences. Inasmuch as humanistic psychology is an orientation that focuses on human interests and values, a person's capacity to make conscious choices, and one's self-perceptions, the incorporation of existential and phenomenological ideas into this system is a natural blending and synthesis of overlapping concerns and views regarding human behavior.

ROLE OF THE SELF IN HUMANISTIC THINKING

The self occupies a central seat of importance in humanistic psychology because it underscores the phenomenological idea that it is how people perceive themselves and the world in which they live that determines their intrapsychic feelings and interpersonal behaviors. A self-concept point of view allows for the opportunity to consider self-perception as the intervening variable between the stimulus and the response. Rather than it being an S-R world, one that some feel negates the person, it becomes an S-P-R (Stimulus - Person - Response) world, one that others feel elevates the person, while at the same time establishing a frame of reference for explaining why responses may vary from one individual to another even though stimulus conditions are the same.

The idea of the self as a legitimate conceptual construct in the humanistic system has been enormously enhanced in recent years by Epstein's (1973, 1980) integrative cognitive theory of self-concept, which, as an integrative synthesis of existing self-theories, psychoanalysis, behavioral approaches, and other cognitive theories, offers the point of view that self-concept is actually a

self-theory, one that individuals unwittingly develop because they need it to lead their lives. As described by Epstein, a person's self theory--i.e., assumptions about what he or she is like--interacts with a person's world theory which are assumptions about what the world is like. Together, these two "theories," unconsciously derived, constitute a person's implicit theory of reality, the purpose of which is to assimilate experiential data, maintain a favorable pleasure-pain balance, and optimize self-esteem. Defense mechanisms --denial, projection, rationalization, etc.--are used not only to defend one's theory of reality and self-esteem by fending off unacceptable impulses, as stressed by psychoanalysis, but also to maintain the consistency and unity of a person's self-system, as stressed by self-theorists. In addition, Epstein's (1980) theory has built into it the idea that "behind almost every emotion there is a hidden cognition" (p. 109), which suggests that it is how we think about or interpret events, not the events themselves, that determines the emotions we feel. This particular aspect of the theory incorporates nicely some of the more cognitive approaches to behavior, such as those of Beck (1976), Ellis (1962), and Meichenbaum (1974), each of which stresses the idea that the way to encourage people to change maladaptive emotional states or negative self-images is to teach them to change their ways of thinking.

Self-concept, then, is not just a route for knowing a person more deeply from the inside out, but a door for helping people change for the better from the inside in, an idea quite compatible with humanistic approaches to teaching and learning.

BEGINNINGS OF THE HUMANISTIC MOVEMENT IN EDUCATION

In some ways, what is now referred to as humanistic education goes back as far as the 1920's and 30's, when "progressive education" became the focus of

na .ional attention. Even then, there was a concern about the possible dangers of compartmentalizing students into unconnected cognitive and affective fragments, and about the lack of effort to teach the "whole" child.

By the 1950's and early 60's, there were signs of change. Thousands of veterans of World War II had either returned to or resumed their education, thousands more babies were born in the 50's who were beginning their schooling, and increasingly more attention was paid to what was happening in classrooms across the nation. America had begun its space race with the Russians during the Sputnik era of the 1950's and, as part of the political fallout of that race, more and more stress was placed on the importance of schooling, particularly its math-science curriculum. Consequently, there was great emphasis on learning, but, in the minds of some, too little emphasis was given to understanding the learner.

This began to change as a chorus of humanistically-oriented educators, psychologists, and social critics raised their voices and their pens to protest what they saw as education's lack of concern for the student. Stinging commentaries began to appear, such as Goodman's (1964) Compulsory Miseducation, Holt's (1964) How Children Fail, and Kozol's (1967) Death at an Early Age: The Destruction of the Hearts and Minds of Negro Children in the Boston Public Schools. The titles speak for themselves. Not long after, these books were followed by Schools Without Failure (Glasser, 1969), written by a psychiatrist talking about why success is so important and how to go about helping students achieve it, and Rogers' Freedom to Learn, a book devoted to ideas, techniques, and approaches for making teaching more relevant and learning more meaningful within a humanistic framework.

Confluence of Humanistic and Cognitive Psychology

If we can agree, as stated earlier, that humanistic psychology is more on

the order of a new <u>orientation</u> to psychology than it is a new psychology onto itself, then it is easy to see how cognitive psychology fits comfortably under the humanistic umbrella. For example, both humanistic psychology and cognitive psychology acknowledge the existence of each person's "phenomenological reality," the idea that people behave in a way that is consistent with how things seem to them (Snygg & Combs, 1949), and both have been heavily influenced by holistic theory (Goldstein, 1939), gestalt theories (Perls, 1969; Wertheimer, 1950), and by field theory (Lewin, 1935), each of which have contributed to the general idea that people behave, learn, perceive, in other words, function, as organized wholes and not as compartmentalized segments.

Led by psychologists Jerome Bruner (1960, 1966) and David Ausubel (1960, 1963), cognitive psychology became a more clearly defined part of the contemporary scene with the 1967 publication of Ulrich Neisser's <u>Cognitive Psychology</u>. Looking back, we can see that humanistic psychology, coming into its own in the mid-1950's, established a theoretical-philosophical beachhead that focused on the "whole" person, that highlighted the importance of conscious processes, that gave psychological respectability to the constructs "self" and "self-concept," and which underscored the importance of being sensitive to personal and interpersonal aspects of schooling. In the early 1960's, cognitive psychology emerged as a parallel current, but with a specific interest in the sort of conscious perceptual-mental processing that goes on when people seek to understand a situation from their own unique point of view. Whereas humanistic psychology focuses more on the affective and interpersonal components that influence the overall educational experience, cognitive psychology attends more to information processing and cognitive development factors that influence learning outcomes.

Along this line, Wittrock has observed that "A cognitive model emphasizes the active and constructive role of the learner . . . Learners often construct

meaning and create their own reality, rather than respond automatically to tne

sensory qualities of their environments" (1979, p. 5). We can see in this quote

the overlapping interest that both humanistic and cognitive psychology have in the

idea of the learner being an active participant in the learning process, as

opposed to being simply a passive receiver; we can also see the overlapping

attention given to the idea that meaning and reality are the products of one's

own point of view, not someone else's. Exactly how one goes about the business

of converting perceptions into personal meaning (learning) is a problem that con-

temporary cognitive psychology is addressing in an offshoot of cognitive theory

termed information processing. By using computers to simulate less complex

human learning processes, significant gains have been made in formulating models

of human information processing (Bower & Hilgard, 1981, pp. 315-453).

Running as parallel currents in the same stream of holistic and phenomeno-

logical thinking, each with its own eddys of interest, humanistic and cognitive

emphases have converged to have an enormous influence on teaching-learning

activities at all levels of education. Although, in the remainder of this paper,

I will be discussing humanistic implications and applications within educational

psychology, I want to make it clear that much of this discussion applies equally

well to wha. has been called cognitive psychology. Both are interested in per-

ceptions, personal meanings, and learning within a holistic framework--humanistic

psychology emphasizing more the affective and interpersonal dimensions of this

framework and cognitive psychology emphasizing more of the cognitive and informa-

tion processing components.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE HUMANISTIC MOVEMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES

A major implication for educational processes growing from this point of view

is the emphasis on helping students decide for themselves who they are and what

they want to be. The further implications are that students can decide for
themselves, that they have conscious minds that enable them to make choices, and
that through their capacity to make choices they can at least have a chance at
developing the sense of self necessary for productive, actualizing lives. (You
may recognize the influence of existential psychology here.) In other words, a
meaningful educational experience (external) can assist a student in finding
out <u>what is already in him or her</u> (internal) that can be refined and developed
further.

Another major implication growing from humanistic approaches to education
is the idea that in order to enhance teaching effectiveness it is necessary to
understand students from their point of view. This is consistent with a truism
growing out of perceptual psychology that holds that people behave in terms of
what is believed to be true about reality as it is <u>perceived</u> (see Combs & Snygg,
1959). If teachers hope to be as effective as they can be as teachers, then it
would be helpful for them to attempt to see the world as students see it, accept
it as truth for them, and not force them into changing. This does not mean that
teachers should not challenge what students believe or that they should avoid
presenting them with alternatives. It only suggests that, to maximize teaching
effectiveness, teachers are advised to <u>start where the student's perceptions are</u>
<u>and not where their own happen to be at the moment.</u>

The question remains, how can the philosophical tenets and theoretical
framework of humanistic psychology be translated into meaningful principles for
teaching practices and learning experiences?

TOWARD FACILITATING TEACHING AND LEARNING WITHIN A HUMANISTIC FRAMEWORK

Humanistic psychology does not offer a formalized theory of instruction. It
tends to take a holistic rather than atomistic approach to the study and

understanding of teaching and learning. More specifically, it is an approach
that seeks to understand behavior—inside the classroom and out—within an every-
day living context of perceptions, personal meanings, and relationship variables
rather than within the more laboratory-oriented paradigm of operant conditioning,
reinforcement schedules, S-R bonds, and the like. In practice, this means that
humanistically-inclined teachers are somewhat more focused on understanding
students' internal perceptions than they are with manipulating the students'
external environments; they tend to be more involved with the discovery of
subjective, personal meanings to explore further than they are with looking for
objective, observable behaviors to reinforce; they tend to be somewhat more con-
cerned with questions related to how to have good relationships than they are
with questions associated with how to give good rewards, although none of these
aspects of a teaching-learning environment is entirely independent of the others.

The emphasis a person chooses is not necessarily an either-or issue. That
is, humanistic teachers or psychologists are not necessarily either subjective
or objective, manipulative or understanding, cognitively focused or feeling
oriented. Emphasis on one approach does not automatically mean exclusion of the
other(s). What is does mean, however, is that instruction will very likely be
done in a somewhat different manner, with somewhat different goals, and will be
described in somewhat different ways, depending on where the emphasis is placed.
We may understand these differences more clearly by examining two variables
that, when considered within the humanistic framework described in this chapter,
are components of the teaching-learning situation which humanistically-oriented
teachers acknowledge as crucial aspects of the overall educational experience,
those being: (1) relationship variables and (2) climate variables. The research
I will discuss in relation to each of these two components is not necessarily
research done by persons who would call themselves humanistic, nor are the

findings of that research applicable only to "humanistic" classrooms. Rather, it
is a sampling of research findings that both identify and exemplify those elements
of classroom life that underscore basic humanistic concerns: interpersonal rela-
tionships, personal perceptions, overall climate factors, self-concept, and so
forth.

Teacher-Student Relationship Variables Are Important

In almost all discussions about the importance of teacher-student relation-
ships, an inevitable question is raised: "Does attention to relationship variables
actually help students learn more?" The evidence does not allow us to say that
students always learn more in classrooms where teachers pay greater attention to
the quality of interpersonal relationships, feelings, and personal perceptions,
but it does allow for the conclusion that students learn at least as much and, in
addition, usually feel better, not only about what they have learned but about
themselves.

Reviews of process-product research related to teacher behaviors and student
outcomes by Dunkin and Biddle (1974), Good, Biddle, and Brophy (1975), Hamachek
(1985, chap. 10), and Rosenshine and Furst (1973) have identified a cluster of
teacher behaviors and characteristics that have been most frequently associated
with positive teacher-student relationships and a greater likelihood of high
student achievement: flexibility in style and approach; clarity; variability in
teaching methods; enthusiasm; indirectness (questioning rather than lecturing,
frequent use of student-to-student interactions); allowing enough time for students
to learn the material; frequent use of praise, but delivered contingently and to
specific students for specific contributions; use of multiple levels of questions
or cognitive discourse (as opposed to relying only on one level of discourse;
interpersonal warmth and involvement. These are some of the major teacher behaviors

that contribute to positive teacher-student relationships and high student achievement. Most of these findings are derived from correlational rather than experimental studies, so it would not be accurate to claim they are <u>causative</u> factors in making for positive teacher-student relationships or high student achievement. However, the consistency with which they are found in study after study would suggest that relationship variables are an important aspect of students' achievements in school and in attitudes about school.

Classroom relationships between teachers and students do not work in just one direction. Teacher-student relationships are more clearly two-way streets than we may have thought. For example, Brophy and Good (1974) have made the point that "students influence teacher behavior at the same time that their own behavior is being influenced by the teacher" (p. viii). Apparently, teacher-student relationships are reciprocal and mutually reinforcing. Individual differences in students make differential impressions upon teachers, which, in turn, trigger a cyclical process of differential teacher behaviors and attitudes that begin to affect teacher-student interaction patterns and student learning. Attention to relationship variables can help us understand these phenomena more clearly. Humanistically-oriented teachers seem inclined to do this and, in that way, stay in touch with interpersonal emotional processes while keeping academic goals squarely in sight.

Considered Crucial: Classroom Climate and Its Impact

Whether in first grade, twelfth grade, or graduate school, the composition of every classroom is made up of a miniature, transient society with its own members, rules, organizational structure, social order, and hierarchy of authority. Just as each person develops unique characteristics, so, too, does each classroom. One class can be somewhat quiet and withdrawn, while a second is

outgoing and assertive; still another can be cold and detached, while a fourth is warm and receptive. The kind of personality a class develops is not a chance happening. It is, rather, the outgrowth of student-student and teacher-student relationships that, together, give a classroom's evolving personality both form and substance.

Every class has, as it were, a social-emotional-intellectual climate that can make a crucial difference in how students perform academically and how they feel about themselves personally. Brookover et al. (1978) found that climate variables were clearly a factor in affecting achievement outcomes of over 8000 students in 68 different elementary schools, and Anderson (1970) found that climate factors influence not only how much is learned, but how long the learning lasts.

How a class behaves as a group or feels about itself depends to a large extent on how the teacher handles his or her role. The now classic White and Lippitt (1968) studies of the effects of different social climates on group behavior demonstrate well how behavior is affected by "climate" variables. In earlier research, Anderson, Brewer, and Reed (1946) found that classroom climates were very much influenced by certain teacher behaviors. For instance, where teachers relied largely on dominating techniques, there were more signs of inter-personal conflict. Tension was a major climate variable. On the other hand, where more cooperative working methods were used, spontaneity and social contributions were more frequent. Cooperativeness was a major climate variable. Moreover, it was noted that the longer a class was with a teacher who encouraged a coopera-tive climate, the more likely it was that there would be increases in contributory and spont_neous behaviors. In addition, it was noted that when a class changed to a more dominating teacher, students reflected more interpersonal conflict in their behavior.

All in all, climate variables and relationship variables seem to be outgrowths of those very "human" transactions that constitute the phenomenological reality of every classroom at every level of education. It would be neither accurate nor fair to say that only teachers who call themselves "humanistic" pay attention to the two variables we have examined. One does not have to be a humanistic teacher in order to use humanistic principles, anymore than one has to be a psychologist in order to use psychological principles.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

I realize that this is only one person's point of view and that there may be different opinions, and with that in mind I would like to offer some ideas, first of all, about what applications of humanistic-cognitive principles to teaching and learning do <u>not</u> mean, and then turn to an examination of what they <u>do</u> mean.

What Humanistic Applications to Educational Psychology Do Not Mean

Inasmuch as humanistic approaches to educational matters include ideas which take into account such matters as the importance of personal choice, relationship variables, private perceptions, individual meanings, the value of an emotionally healthy classroom climate, and the like, it seems only natural to conclude (erroneously) that, to be an effective "humanistic" teacher, one needs simply to be a warm, open, friendly person who is more of a facilitator than a teacher. Were it only that easy. Nowhere do we find A. H. Maslow or Carl Rogers, or Arthur Combs or Gordon Allport, declaring: "Expecting your students to work hard is not all that important, because the thing that really matters is being a warm and friendly person." Indeed, research by Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, and Smith (1979), involving a study of 1400 students in twelve secondary schools in central London, showed that some of the major characteristics of successful

teachers (those with well-behaved classes and high achievement) were that they
did more active and direct teaching, they were less casual about letting classes
out early, they gave more homework, and they put more emphasis on academic
performance. Successful teachers, far from being harsh, detached nonhumanistic,
authoritarian martinets, more frequently encouraged their students, put good
work on the bulletin boards, and made themselves available for students to con-
sult them about problems of a personal sort. Strong evidence, it would appear,
for the idea that high warmth and involvement, when combined with high expecta-
tions and standards, can produce positive results.

Humanistic applications to education do not mean that teachers are passive
in setting limits, establishing standards, or permissive about expectations for
either achievement or behavior. Valuable lessons can be learned from Summerhill
(A. S. Neill's totally "free" school in Suffolk, England) in this regard. On
the basis of in-depth interviews with 50 former Summerhill students, Bernstein
(1968) found that attending a school with an atmosphere of total freedom
(students take what they want, come to class when they want) was not so inspiring
as it may seem. One student, for instance, who had attended Summerhill for 10
years, confessed that classes were rather "humdrum" and that it was rather easy
to be led astray by new students who did little or no studying. In fact, he
went on to state that procrastination was an attitude one could easily pick up
at Summerhill. The disenchantment with the lack of academic emphasis was further
evidenced in the fact that only 3 of 11 parents--all former Summerhill students--
sent their own children to Summerhill! The 3 parents who did send their own
children to Summerhill took them out before age 13, almost wholly because of
their convictions that not enough emphasis was placed upon the academic side of
learning.

Somewhere between too much freedom and too much control there is a fulcrum

point that allows us to balance and weigh the advantages of student choice and
teacher guidance. The bulk of learning research, not to mention good old common
sense, suggests that the best way to encourage motivation and learning is to
blend a student's choices, interests, with a teacher's guidance, direction and
experience. There is little question but that the Summerhill philosophy is
appealing. It does, after all, seem to make good sense to allow students to
study only those subjects and topics that have intrinsic value, because then the
problem of extrinsic motivation is eliminated altogether. However, it is the
rare and fortunate student who is able and willing to put together fragmented
bits of information if left entirely to his or her own cunning and devices.
There is a fine line between allowing students to have choices and abandoning
them to those choices. Humanistic teaching does not necessarily mean leaving
students with unstructured choices (although at times that may be appropriate),
but presenting them with guided alternatives.

An important footnote we might add to this is that when students do pretty
much what they want to do, then they may seldom be stretched beyond the safety
of their own choices. I say "safety" of their own choices because there is
evidence to indicate that when individuals do only what they choose to do, they
feel less successful and competent, even if they succeed at what they choose to
do, then those who accomplish a task that they did not choose and that represents
another person's expectations. Luginbuhl (1972) has noted, for example, that
if individuals succeed at a problem they chose from a number of problems, their
feelings of success may be blunted by the knowledge that they influenced the
situation to make the success more possible. This suggests that it may not be
wise for a teacher to permit students to have their own way (e.g., choose the
number or kind of books to read or the kind of paper to write, etc.) all of the
time. Living up to a teacher's expectations (e.g., writing a report on an

assigned topic, getting it done and in on time) can be another way students can feel successful and thereby add to their feelings of competence and self-esteem.

What Humanistic-Cognitive Applications to Educational Psychology Do Mean

Emphasizing, as it does, such factors as perceptions, personal meaning, and subjective views, humanistic applications within the larger domain of educational psychology no doubt can mean different things to different people. The following ideas suggest what humanistic-cognitive approaches to educational processes mean to me.

1. Humanistic-cognitive applications to teaching and learning keep in mind that students bring their total selves to class. They bring heads that think and feel. They bring values that help them to selectively filter what they see and hear, and they bring attitudinal sets and learning styles that render each student unique and different from all the rest. Humanistic teachers do not only start out with the idea that students are different, but they recognize that students may still be different at the end of an academic experience. Indeed, they may even applaud that fact. They recognize that because students may have the same learning experience--in terms of exposure to similar ideas and content-- this is no guarantee that they will use, interpret, or feel in similar ways about the experience or learn the same thing from it.

2. Humanistic-cognitive applications to education recognize that not only must teachers thoroughly understand their subject matter and make wise use of research-demonstrated principles of motivation and learning, but that understanding themselves and making wise use of the self as an important teaching aid is a very good idea. Effective teachers recognize that it is not only what they say that is important, but how it is said, both of which influence and are influenced by relationship and climate variables. I have expanded this idea of teacher

self-understanding at greater length elsewhere (Hamachek, 1985, pp. 333-358).

3. Humanistic applications to teaching and learning emphasize the here-and-now. This is simply a way to help students be tuned into current reality and contemporary experiences. For example, in an educational psychology class, rather than talking about individual differences that may exist "out there" in a hypothetical classroom with hypothetical students, would it be possible to discuss the individual differences in this classroom, with these students? Rather than only lecturing on the differential consequences of different group climates, would it be possible to examine and discuss the group climate of this classroom at this time? Rather than merely discussing ways to evaluate and grade students "you may teach someday," would it be possible to discuss the grading and evaluation that is going on in this and other classes at this time during this term or semester? This leads to a fourth idea.

4. Humanistic applications strive to create experiences that involve thinking and feeling. One good way to avoid feeling and encourage just cognitive processing is to stay in discussions that are primarily there-and-then oriented. It is easy enough to involve students in abstract discussions about the group dynamics of a White-Lippitt study or even of a hypothetical class, but perhaps it might be more meaningful in a personal way to blend thinking and feeling in a here-and-now experience. An example may illustrate my meaning. Take the group dynamics topic. A way to approach this is actually to create different "climates" by role playing different leadership styles.

5. Humanistic applications to teaching and learning do mean that teachers work at being prepared, knowledgeable persons who are actively involved in the total educational process. Teachers who are essentially nondirective and who see themselves more as "facilitators" than as "teachers," and who, within this context, feel that students should do most, if not all, of their own planning

and decision-making are not necessarily humanistic teachers.

6. Humanistic applications to education strive to personalize teaching and learning so as to encourage a here-and-now involvement with thinking and feeling in a human process of people-to-people transactions. Encouraging students to speak for themselves rather than for others is one of the things a teacher can do to help create a learning climate that is a dynamic blend of cognition and affect. For example, rather than students saying something like: "When you study about the effects of teacher understanding, it makes you aware of aspects in yourself you might improve," they are encouraged to "own" their statements and speak only for themselves; for example, "I think that my study of the effects of teacher self-understanding has made me aware of aspects in myself that I might improve."

7. Humanistic applications to teaching and learning do mean being flexible. By far, the single most repeated adjective in research literature describing good, or effective, teachers is "flexibility" (Hamachek, 1969). If I am interpreting the literature correctly, this does not mean flexibility only within activities and emphases that are clearly humanistically-oriented to begin with--e.g., allowing students to have choices, encouraging students to study what interests them, giving students more freedom, and so on. There are many students who, by virtue of past experience and/or personal inclination, prefer more structure, direction, and active teacher guidance.

Teachers aligning themselves with humanistic views, who believe that their primary responsibility is that of creating the sort of unconditionally accepting climate that allows students to freely choose may not have rigid or authoritarian attitudes, but they are no less dogmatic than those who believe that the traffic flow of learning should always be determined by the teacher. Rogers (1969) has

addressed this issue in the following way:

It does not seem reasonable to impose freedom on anyone who does not desire
it. Consequently, it seems wise, if it is at all possible, that when a
group is offered the freedom to learn on their own responsibility, there
should also be provisions for those who do not wish or desire this freedom
and prefer to be instructed and guided (p. 134).

Truly "humanistic" teachers are not intellectually myopic. They are--or
can be--"total" teachers, in the deepest sense of that word. That is, they are
able to do what they have to do to meet the demands of the moment. They can be
firm and evaluative when necessary (able to say "No!" or "You can do better
than that" and mean it) or accepting and permissive (able to say "I really like
what you've done" or "Do it your way" and mean that, too) when appropriate.

A FINAL WORD

The overall impact of humanistic psychology on the field of educational
psychology has been one, I think, of sensitization; that is, sensitizing
researchers, teacher educators, curriculum planners, and textbook writers to the
importance of knowing more about, being more alert to, and researching more
thoroughly all components of the total teaching-learning experience, particularly
those that involve interpersonal relationships, intrapersonal feelings such as
self-concept variables and self-esteem considerations, climate factors, and
perceptual modes moderating students' receptivity to new learning (input),
capacity for acquisition of learning (processing), and motivation for continued
learning (output).

Humanistic approaches to teaching, learning, and research do not have a
lock on how these things should be done. They are approaches that say,

simply: If you want to understand the whole process, don't just look at one part of it. Everything is connected; hence, the holistic emphasis. Life in one corner of the classroom affects, to some extent, life in all other corners. It is not just what the teacher does that matters; it is also how the teacher is perceived doing what he or she does. All in all, humanistic psychology is a theoretical umbrella under which can be found a framework and a language for understanding the inner person and for teaching in such a way as to enhance the integration of cognitive processes and affective outcomes.

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