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Preliminary Copy
Brief on Psychology in Teacher Preparation
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The policies and practices of public education are currently receiving critical examination by a variety of groups and individuals. Everyone seems to have an opinion about education and many of the opinions are not too complimentary. A special target of current criticism is the complex issue of just what constitutes desirable training or preparation for teaching.

Further, within the area of teacher preparation questions have been raised about the role psychology should play. In extreme form, this question is: "Is psychology an important, or even necessary, ingredient in teacher preparation programs?".

To this question of the place of psychology in education, this brief presents the following answer.

"Psychology is essential to the advancement of educational theory and practice, including the refinement and improvement of teacher education programs." I will now list five arguments which support this contention:

1. Teaching and learning are both complex human behavior processes, thus they are psychological processes and require a psychological orientation on the part of teachers.
2. The growth and development of personality is a psychological process. Psychological knowledge and principles are required for an understanding of personality development including individual abilities and attainments and recognition of typical vs atypical behavior.
3. The classroom, school, and the whole of education are complex interactive systems which defy intelligent description and understanding without recourse to (social) psychological knowledge and theory.
4. The lives of children and adolescents and the problems specific to their age, group, ability status, and cultural membership can best be understood and reacted to from a solid knowledge of developmental and self-concept psychology. To recognize the atypical one must be able to also recognize the typical.
5. Much that is learned in school is learned either (or both) within the structure of the teacher-pupil relationship or within the context of peer relationship. Interpersonal relationships, communication and dynamics are psychological phenomena and require psychological knowledge and orientation for their understanding.

Developmental psychology, the psychology of teaching/learning, and psychology of interactive and social systems and examples of key research, theory and knowledge bases for education in general and teacher preparation in particular.

Now I will briefly outline three topics within (educational) psychology which have critical importance to classroom operation.

A. Pupils' Perceptions of Teachers

The research on teacher effectiveness is overwhelming - both in its quantity and its inconclusiveness. Yet I believe that there is not such a mystery about what constitutes an effective teacher. Let us review one or two interesting studies.

In 1962 Evans¹ reviewed eight studies conducted between 1900 and 1946 and concluded that:

Children, apparently know quite clearly what they like and what they dislike in their teachers, and different generations of school children have held the same opinions for a period of over fifty years. They like teachers who are kind, friendly, cheerful, patient, helpful, fair, have a sense of humor, show an understanding of children's problems, allow plenty of pupil activity and at the same time maintain order. They dislike teachers who use sarcasm and ridicule, are domineering and have favorites, who punish to secure discipline, fail to provide the needs of individual pupils and have disagreeable personality peculiarities. (p. 112)

Children very definitely express preference for certain personal qualities and certain technical competencies in teachers. These preferences have important implications for what one might call an interactional psychology of education.

B. Classroom Emotional Climate

Interpersonal relations (pupil-pupil; pupil-teacher) determine the feeling tone or "emotional climate" of the classroom. It is generally

¹Evans, K. M. 1962. Sociometry and Education. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

accepted that students learn better when they are influenced by a positive emotional involvement in classroom activities than when they are apathetic or when they experience negative emotions in the classroom. A certain amount of emotional tension acts as a positive motivator so long as the tension is in the service of learning. The healthy classroom is one where the normal emotional needs of children are met. Such needs include the need to belong, the need to be approved or confirmed, the need to be supported when upset or hurt, the need for friendship and enjoyable experiences, and the need to succeed.

Various studies have demonstrated that it is the teacher who primarily sets the emotional climate of the classroom. The general behavior of children is in response to that of their teacher rather than vice versa.^{2,3} Different psychological climates are produced by different teachers with the same group of students.⁴

From the numerous studies on classroom emotional climate one can derive three general inferences:

1. the teacher's behavior is the prime determiner of classroom emotional climate;
2. teacher-pupil relationships affect some pupils at deep levels (sometimes positively, sometimes negatively) and
3. the teacher acts as a model and thus influences how students come to view others (social attitudes and how they will treat others (human relations)).

Again, the evidence on classroom emotional climate emphasizes the need in teacher training for a sound interactional psychology of education.

² Anderson, H. H., and J. E. Brewer. 1946. "Studies of Teachers' Classroom Personalities II. Effects of Teachers' Dominative and Integrative Contacts on Children's Classroom Behavior" Applied Psychological Monographs, No. 8.

³ ibid. Psychological Monographs, No. 11.

⁴ Withall, J. G. 1952. "Assessment of the Social Emotional Climates Experienced by a Group of Seventh Graders as They Moved From Class to Class" Educational Psychological Measurement, 12, 3, 440-451.

C. Classroom Interaction Styles

Flanders⁵ has reported studies which confirm the "style" of teacher-pupil interaction influences both what pupils learn as well as how they relate to others outside of the immediate teacher-pupil relationships. Teachers who tend to dominate, force and command elicit similar behaviors from pupils. Teachers who demonstrate cooperative, integrative behaviors, offer choices and encourage pupils to express opinions and ideas elicit similar behaviors from pupils. From his studies on various interaction styles, Flanders concludes that generally, pupils will both learn more substance and enjoy or value their school experience more under the influence of a teacher who displays a flexible, democratic style than under the influence of a rigid, authoritarian teaching style. To the extent that we value a democratic society, then certainly there can hardly be a more suitable environment for the practice of democracy than the classroom.

Obviously, the factor of "classroom interaction styles" underscores the importance of the interactional emphasis in psychological studies for teachers-in-training.

I will go so far as to say that I believe a great deal is lost in terms of general educational quality and specific pupil learning and development if teachers do not, in effect, become (educational) psychologists in their own right. At the very least they should have a psychological orientation toward instruction, classroom management and teacher-pupil interactions. This means that a teacher should be able to make decisions regarding classroom procedure using the following thought process:

"I am predicting that this way of organizing this class together with this set of procedures, will help these pupils achieve these educational objectives."

This method of thinking about the highly complex behavior processes of teaching and learning indicate a psychological orientation on the part

⁵ Flanders, N. 1965. "Teacher Influence, Pupil Attitudes, and Achievement" Cooperative Research Monograph, No. 12, Washington, D.C., USGPO.

of the teacher. The teacher who is able to develop a psychological understanding of teaching and learning is in a better position to develop expertise and competence in dealing with educational problems in a professional way. On the other hand, teachers who are either unwilling or unable to use psychological knowledge and procedures in their teaching have little option but to teach by habit, dogma, rule of thumb, exhortation or sheer guess-work. Such teachers fall back on their "articles of faith" about which they can be extraordinarily dogmatic.

Now I will present in summary form five important functions of educational psychology which are relevant not only to teacher preparation but to the whole of education.

General Functions of Psychology in Education

1. The primary function of psychology in education is research. Psychological research (in education) is usually undertaken to provide knowledge, validate theory and extend understanding of (a) the learner or, (b) the learning process or, (c) the learning situation, or (d) some combination of these three categories. Psychological research in education is, unfortunately, a confusing affair. A proper discussion of this matter is quite beyond the scope of this brief. However, I will record some comments about psychological research in education, each of which, I believe, carries some truth:
 - (a) Of all disciplines, psychology has made the largest theory and knowledge contributions to modern educational practice.
 - (b) A great amount of psychological research in education is trivial, mindless and mainly constitutes an enormous waste of time and money.
 - (c) Psychological research in education (all research in education) suffers from a morbid and strait-jacketing preoccupation with statistics and in appropriate forms of experimental design and method. A reform of research is long overdue and might include such reformulations as:
 - i. naturalistic research methods.
 - ii. doing research as close as possible to actual classroom and learning situations - hand-in-hand cooperation between researcher and teacher.
 - iii. making conceptual (idea) research legitimate.
 - iv. integrate teaching and research into a common process.

2. The second function is to increase the teacher's understanding and competence in carrying out teaching/learning tasks and of increasing the teacher's knowledge of the development and growth of children and adolescents (and adults).
3. The third function of psychology in education is to develop various psychological specialists such as school psychologists, counselling and guidance personnel and specialist teachers.
4. Fourth is the consulting function. This includes such work as consultation on educational and psychological problems in many areas: classrooms, schools, school districts, ministries of education, other governmental agencies, as well as consultation on educational problems in non-educational institutions such as industry, churches and the media.
5. Fifth is the function of test construction and the evaluation of pupil performance, teaching materials and educational programs.

To conclude, I propose that:

1. more rather than less psychology is needed in teacher preparation.
2. the kinds of psychology offered in teacher preparation are in need of reformulation, and
3. research and teaching should be better integrated into a common process (perhaps we should have "teaching schools" along the same lines as medicine has "teaching hospitals". In "teaching schools" an attempt would be made to impart the very best in research, theory and practice to teachers in-training.

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TO DREAM, PERCHANCE TO LIVE...

Before the dream episode, Mrs. B was known to me only slightly through several casual conversations at social events during the past two years. I knew that her husband had died about a year previously, that she and her sixteen year-old daughter continued to live in the family home and that she worked as a civil service secretary for the government. Socially, she appeared to me as a pleasant, extroverted and rather opinionated 50 year old woman.

One evening, I was home alone working on a paper in my study when I heard a knock at the door. Since the door was also an entry into my study, I called out to the visitor to enter. I was quite surprised when Mrs. B came into the room. I could see immediately that she had been crying and appeared much upset.

Since this evening's conversation and two which followed were so vivid and unusual I am describing them in some detail from my notes and memory. I believe that they illustrate a clear case of counselling as emancipation and illustrate the power of a dream to mobilize a person in adapting to everyday realities. As nearly as possible I have reconstructed portions of our conversations, using the designations "Mrs. B" and "T" (therapist) for myself.

Mrs. B: *(Entering)* "Oh, Dr. P, I don't know what I'm going to do."

T: "Come in, I'll take your coat, have a chair."

Mrs. B: "I don't know who to talk to, I thought maybe you...."

T: "You are really feeling upset - at a loss..."

Mrs. B: *(Beginning to cry and fumbling for a cigarette)* "I just can't..."

(Mrs. B who was in past contacts quite expressive and even boisterous - although noticeably socially 'proper', now was showing no signs of propriety and was holding her tightly clenched fists against her cheeks with tears streaming down her cheeks.)

T: "It's quite all right for you to talk to me, I have plenty of time to listen - maybe you can say something of what you are feeling upset about."

Mrs. B: "I just don't know where to begin, I'm so confused."

T: "Confused--"

Mrs. B: "Oh, Dr. P, - M (*teen-age daughter*) is gone."

T: "Gone -, how do you mean?"

Mrs. B: "Well, about 5:30, T (*daughter's boyfriend*) called from a phone booth. M was with him. And he said she has decided not to come home. We've had our fights before, but not this."

(The conversation then proceeded to fill in the details. Mrs. B and M had a long talk the night before about whether or not the daughter would go to University next fall. The discussion began again the following morning and erupted into a full-scale argument. Actually, their 'arguments' consisted of the mother's shouting and the daughter's silence. Mrs. B had then gone to visit a friend in a nearby small community. Upon returning home in the late afternoon she could not locate her daughter. Shortly thereafter she received the telephone call from the daughter's boyfriend saying that M was not coming home. After several hours of waiting at home and getting progressively more upset, Mrs. B had finally decided that she would come to talk with me because, in her words, "I thought you might understand my situation". At this point in our conversation I was struck by two observations. First, that Mrs. B's upsetness seemed quite intense, perhaps her daughter's decision not to come home was only a partial cause. Second, although we had been talking less than half an hour, she had already smoked three cigarettes. Without doubt, there are many reasons why she might do this. However, it occurs to me that a person frequently smokes rapidly when trying to forget something. Also, I noticed that when she placed the cigarette in her mouth, for an instant her face would compose into an act of concentration as though she was trying to see into something but was not quite able to. For a few minutes Mrs. B continued talking, mostly complaining about how hard it is to understand a teen-age daughter and how her daughter made no attempt to understand her (Mrs. B's) situation. At one point, Mrs. B broke into angry shouts about her daughter's inability to make a decision and stay with it. This allusion was primarily to the decision about University. It was at this point (after a diatribe about her daughter's indecisiveness) that a dramatic change in the content of the conversation occurred which I was show in the following conversational details.)

- Mrs. B: *(Grabbing her stomach and beginning to rock back and forth)*
"I had the most terrible dream - Oh, so awful - about ten days ago. I've tried so hard to forget it. Yet every time I turned around, it... it's terrible."
- T: "So terrible - whenever you start to remember you shove it back, and right now you are remembering it."
- Mrs. B: "I was terrified, there was a roller-coaster, it was going down, down" *(motions with hands in downward sweeping movement)*.
- T: "I'd like you to try to tell me the dream--try to say it as though you are having it again" *(much to my surprise, Mrs. B didn't need any more prompting, she proceeded to relate the dream in much detail and was able to relive the dream in its entirety)*.
- Mrs. B: "I'm on a roller-coaster - standing up - all alone. I'm going down, down and I can't see where. I can only grab the sides with the tips of my fingers - just barely clinging and sinking down so fast - it's dark and awful - I don't know what's going to happen and I can't stop it. I'm feeling terrified", *(Mrs. B was gripping the sides of her chair with whitened knuckles and was speaking in a strident, nagging voice)* She continues: "Suddenly two arms are coming around my waist from the back - I can see my husband's face - I know it is my husband. He is holding me and he's telling me that I will be all right. 'I'm right here, honey', he says and I can feel him", *(Mrs. B's manner of speaking is quieter, even tentative and the tension in her face is less)*. She continues: "The coaster stops and we get off. My husband's arms are still around me - he is hugging me. He looks at me and says 'You'll be OK honey. Now I'm leaving'. He turns and begins walking away. I'm so mad, I start to throw a temper tantrum. Goddam you, how can you do this to me! Now he turns around and comes back to me. He takes me by the shoulders, smiles at me, gives me a kiss and says, 'you will be all right, honey, and now I am going away'. He turns and walks away - I don't say any more." At this point Mrs. B comments: "The dream just faded away". *(She looks at me and tears are running down her cheeks.)* "Then - I am alone, Goddam it, all alone!" *(Mrs. B breaks into anguished sobbing for some minutes.)*
- T: "You are alone, aren't you. You haven't known that, have you?"
- Mrs. B: "Well, I have known, in a way, that J is dead - we buried him. Yet all along I've felt that he was with me - a feeling that he was in the house. It's just that he wouldn't come out."

T: "And then this dream."

Mrs. B: "Oh yes, you don't know how many times I've tried to keep from thinking about it, kept putting it out of my mind. Now it's out in the open" (*cries again*).

As the conversation continued, Mrs. B revealed that she had never disposed of her dead husband's clothes, that his slippers were still in the kitchen and his shaving kit on the dresser. Before concluding our conversation, Mrs. B was able to talk about her own upsetness as contributing to her daughter's leaving home and we agreed upon a meeting with both mother and daughter as soon as the daughter could be contacted. This was done and after two family counselling sessions, the daughter returned home. In the weeks that followed Mrs. B disposed of her former husband's personal belongings and proceeded to make certain decisions, such as a decision to sell the house, take an extended vacation trip with a friend, etc.

In the instance of Mrs. B, the dream may be best interpreted as a message from Mrs. B to herself. A message that her husband was gone and that she must stop pretending (feeling) otherwise. The message was very powerful, and was avoided as long as possible by Mrs. B. She had a hint of the existential truth, "I am really alone" but the fear and avoidance of this truth temporarily imprisoned her. The dream, plus reliving it in a therapeutic conversation constituted a process of emancipation from the pretence that her husband was still with her. By going through this process she was freed to take concrete steps, like disposing of her dead husband's belongings, take a vacation etc. Thus we might characterize this example as one of both negative and positive freedom: freedom from the paralysis of pretence, and freedom to take specific life-affirming actions.

As I am writing this paper three months have passed and recent conversations with Mrs. B have verified that the dream and her expression of it in therapy, set positive adaptational processes in motion which continue today: resolution of parent/daughter conflict; disposal of all husband's belongings left after his death; regular sleeping; several enjoyable vacations, etc.