**EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF HUMANISTIC EDUCATION**

(Second semester)

As Lei (2007) states, the humanistic approach as one of the mainstreams of contemporary educational theories and practices has influenced the second language pedagogy over the past two decades and has led to certain implications and applications both for language teachers and learners. Many scholars and authors, investigating humanistic education, have focused on this specific issue some of the important ones are discussed through the following lines.

One of the main goals of educational practices has been mentioned by many scholars to be encouraging the power of critical thinking in students. As to critical thinking, Richards et al (2005) define it as “a level of reading comprehension or discussion skills when the learner is able to question and evaluate what is read or heard” (p. 174). This implicates that in learning the students are actively engaged in a deeper processing. Respect should be paid to students as independent thinkers who are proficient at particular mental processes, such as analyzing, inferring, synthesizing and evaluating. Humanistic education giving priority to learners' psychological states can prepare optimal learning conditions and, as a result, foster critical thinking in the learners.

According to Brown (2007) in adjusting Rogers‟s notions to language learning/ teaching we need to make sure that learners realize themselves and communicate this self to others openly and non-defensively. Teachers who are regarded as facilitators should consequently provide the nurturing setting for learners to build their meanings in cooperation with others. When teachers rather programmatically expose students to knowledge, which they later on consume, they may make a climate of defensive learning in which most learners try to protect themselves from competition with fellow students, from failure, from criticism and possible punishment. Here, classroom activities and materials in language learning must consequently employ meaningful contexts of real communication with students working together in the process of becoming “people.”

From the humanistic process perspective, Rogers (1961, 1983, cited in Zhang & Atkin, 2010, p. 122) advocates a student-centered approach. He underlines relevance, participation, negotiation, self-assessment, the centrality of the self-actualizing potential, and the reach for personal manifestation and creativity in fulfilling individual learning needs. The basic tenets determined in the humanistic learning process are that much important learning is gained by doing, and learning is eased when the student focuses on responsibly in the learning process.

O'Hara (2003, cited Zhang & Atkin, 2010), referring to Rogers‟s ideas, uses the term “transformative pedagogy” to show that in humanistic education the concentration is away from teaching and moves toward learning. The end of education is the expedition of change and learning. in fact, learning how to learn is more significant than being taught something from the “higher-up” viewpoint of a teacher who unilaterally decides what should be taught. Brown (2007) regrets that many of our present standards in education, in proposing curricular goals and prescribing what shall be learned, deny persons' freedom and dignity.

In the light of humanistic philosophy, McKenna (1995) argues that the objective of education is to facilitate the development of the student to achieve self-actualization. Humanistic processes are described as a series of progressive changes which optimize the potential of the student towards the goal of inherent purposes, internal organization and infinite creativity.

The implications of a humanistic approach, as Huo (2006) states, have been also considered for the educational administration itself. The mainspring in such an organization is should be the motivation for growth and learning which is implicit in each person. The task of decision maker is so to fix up the organizational conditions and ways of operation that people can reach their own goals by fostering the jointly defined ends of the institution. The administration seeks to ease the ability of teachers and students to formulate and use their potential, via removing obstructions and making a climate of valuing, prizing, and trusting. Everyone takes part in the organizational process, sharing initiative, responsibility and authority. In-service training would be used to build up facilitative leaders—person who could listen, accept, understand, clarify, and communicate-who could assist individuals and groups grow.

From language learning aspect, Ely (1986) maintains that the variables of class participation and sociability are the possible major determinants of language proficiency. Ghaith and Diab (2008) reveal that language acquisition is determined by interaction among a number of student-related and contextual factors, and the using of humanistic method of teaching can increase students‟ motivation and class sociability. As it is obvious, all these statements attempt to articulate the central proposition that humanistic education have positive influences on students‟ learning competence.

Hamachek (1977, as cited in, Williams & Burden, 1997) provides certain useful examples of the kind of educational implications that follow from taking a Humanistic approach. First of all, every learning experience should be considered within the context of assisting the learners to grow a sense of personal identity and associating that to the realistic future goals; that is, learning should be personalized as much as possible. This is in keeping with the view that one significant task for the teacher is differentiation, i.e., identifying and attempting to meet the individual learner‟s needs within the context of the classroom group.

Emotional intelligence concerns the capacity for knowing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for dealing with emotions well in ourselves, and in our relationships. Emotional intelligence depicts abilities distinct from, but complementary to academic intelligence, the solely cognitive capacities measured by IQ. It is demonstrated that when teachers attend of the students‟ EQ, students will be more probable to take care of their own IQ. Consequently it‟s better for teachers to communicate freely and empathically with their students and urge them to do the same (Cited in Wang, 2005, p. 4).

The humanistic approach, as Stevick (1990) expresses, has also some implications for teacher education. A mix of the cognitive and the affective in education and a concern upon the interpersonal conditions for facilitating significant learning demand changes in the preparation of teachers. Teacher education presently emphasizes subject matter and methods of cognitive learning. To develop good interpersonal conditions, counseling learning or whole-person learning should be fostered and developed through teacher education programs. Stevick (1990) maintains that such a program of preparation would require many capable facilitators of small-group processes. Task-oriented groups of staff members should be formed to consider the question "How can this school help the whole person learn?" These groups should not be limited to cognitive discussions, but would focus upon the whole person. The groups would consist of volunteers who were willing to become involved experientially as well as cognitively. A probable outcome of such teachereducation programs would be "free-university' type of teacher-training institution in which the students would form their own curricula, participate in the facilitation of learning, and find other means of evaluation than grades (Stevick, 1990).