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Journal of Historical Archaeology & Anthropological Sciences

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Approach behaviorist and humanist: psychopedagogical implications

Volume 10 Issue 2 - 2025

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Received: August 07, 2025 | **Published:** October 07, 2025

Introduction

The educational phenomenon is human, historical, and multidimensional. It encompasses human, technical, cognitive, emotional, sociopolitical, and cultural dimensions. Studying and understanding these educational phenomena requires multiple and convergent approaches anthropological, philosophical, sociological, economic, ideological, and psychological. Privileging one approach or another would foster a series of reductionisms, the flaw of which lies in isolating one aspect of the educational act and then discussing the object of education based on it.

Through a socio-historical retrospective, we can observe the presence of some theories of knowledge that prioritized the primacy of the object (behaviorist approach) and the primacy of the subject (humanist approach). Each of these theories condenses different conceptions of humankind, society, culture, and knowledge. These different positions, in turn, can imply, from a logical point of view, different pedagogical applications. Currently, contrary to the first theories of knowledge that privileged either the primacy of the object or the primacy of the subject, it is believed that the interpretation of vital phenomena, whether biological, sociological, or psychological, must begin with the subject-environment relationship, that is, the subject-object interaction is emphasized. Let us then revisit these theories of knowledge to better understand the support philosophical and epistemological what guides to the approaches of teaching-learning, as Mizukami[1] assures us, namely: traditional, cognitivist, humanist, behaviorist and socio-interactionist approach.

First, we highlight Empiricism (primacy of the object), which advocates the organism as subject to the contingencies of the environment, with knowledge being a copy of something given in the external world. Therefore, there is an emphasis on the importance of the object, of the environment, whether the subject is considered a "blank slate" or whether it is less orthodox and the maturation of some cognitive activity is admitted.

Within the conceptions of this school of thought, knowledge is seen as a discovery and is new to the individual who acquires it. What was discovered, however, was already present in external reality; that is, for empiricists, there is no construction of new realities. From a pedagogical perspective, this position is guided by an empiricist associationism, where all knowledge is reduced to an exogenous acquisition, based on experiences, verbalizations, or audiovisual resources and materials; which are simply transmitted (and what it happens with to the approaches of teaching traditional and behaviorist).

In a second position, we can highlight nativism, apriorism, or innatism (primacy of the subject), which argues that forms of knowledge are predetermined in the subject. "Ready-made" categories are attributed to the subject, to the human organism, for which all stimulation sensory and channeled. It occurs, of this form, emphasis in the importance of the subject, including both tendencies that advocate absolute pre-formism and those that admit a process of updating. From a pedagogical point of view, the concern would be, in large part, focused on what Piaget called "exercise of one reason already prefabricated". This manner, while node first case (empiricism) there is an emphasis on an exogenous pre-formation of knowledge, in the second (nativism), the emphasis is on an endogenous pre-formation.

In a third position, we find the interactionist perspective (subject-object interaction), as already mentioned, which considers knowledge as a continuous construction, and, to a certain extent, invention and discovery are pertinent to each act of understanding. The passage from one level of understanding to the next is always characterized by the formation of new structures that did not previously exist in the individual. This includes the tendencies in which this interactionism appears, whether in the a priori form of "gestalt" or as a process characterized by sequential constructivism. In this latter tendency, there is no preformation, neither endogenous (innate) nor exogenous (empiricist), but rather a continuous development of successive elaborations that imply the interaction of both positions. One of the pedagogical developments of this current is the great importance given to children's activities, spontaneous or not, in their interaction with the physical, psychosocial, and cultural world. Thus, interactionists emphasize a dynamic relationship between hereditary genetic baggage and its adaptation to the environment in which it develops.

After this brief retrospective, let us analyze the behaviorist approach, which focuses on the primacy of the object, and the humanist approach, which focuses on the primacy of the subject. Let us revisit the historical and philosophical origins that supported these two approaches. Let us begin with the precursors of behaviorism.

A quick incursion into the history of psychology, in its process of constitution as a science of man, in its search for authenticity reveals to us that it has undergone two large courteous epistemological: THE first occurred when, no intending devoting himself to the task of abstract and reflective knowledge, he sought to break the umbilical cord what the called to Philosophy. THE second court, resulting of first, is linked when psychology, in the 19th century, aligned itself with a perspective called "scientific," constituted by the scope of the physical, biological, or psychochemical sciences, whose scientific status was recognized by all. The birth of this scientific psychology occurred in a climate permeated by Comtean positivism, which attempted to apply the methods and principles of Comte to human problems of the natural sciences. The dual objective that Auguste Comte set himself was, on the one hand, to delimit the boundaries of science against any and all possible incursions of metaphysics and, on

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the other, to establish the principles and methods of science, taking as a basis the methods of physics or chemistry.

Despite the Comtian doctrine, behavioral psychology had to wait about 80 years until it established its status as a public scientist, recognized through Watson's work.

The developments of positivism stem from the formation of the Vienna Circle in 1920, a group of philosophers, mathematicians, and scientists who strove to reform philosophy and purge it of metaphysics. This neopositivism maintained Comte's commitment to considering science the only vehicle for progress, but eliminated of speech human questions metaphysics and of value and morality, considering them merely "unscientific." For this group, the only statements considered scientific were those whose content could be publicly verified.

Under the influence of Wittegnstein (a disciple of Bertrand Russell), Viennese neopositivism arrived in England, where it constituted Logical Positivism, and formed the famous "Group of Oxford", what Iran influence tremendously the thought of Skinner, already what advocated the need for scientists to prescribe how science should be carried out, not describe how it is done.

Skinnerianism emerged within American environmentalism, which emphasized the importance of the environment and its influence on human personality and behavior. In the social sciences, the research of Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead stood out, and in psychology, the work of Watson. Watson, due to the strength of the environmental effects, launched behaviorism and transformed the study of learning behavior modification as a result of experience—into a dominant topic in American psychology for three decades. However, Skinner criticized these early versions of environmentalism for failing to explain how the environment worked and for the large amount of space given to autonomous humankind. In Skinner's experimental analysis of behavior, the behavior of autonomous humankind is transferred to the environment; that is, humankind is a consequence of the forces existing in the environment. The hypothesis that "humankind is not free" is a fundamental premise for applying a scientific method to the field of behavioral science. Thus, the purpose of science, for Skinner, is to influence, shape, modify, and control human behavior through the manipulation of environmental variables.

The concern with the agents that control behavior in Skinner's work (government, family, religion, culture) emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as a result of pressure from American society for psychology to focus on solving problems such as: equal treatment of citizens, the understanding of human freedom, among other themes.

Having briefly outlined the sociohistorical roots of Skinner's work, let us now examine his conceptual framework in more detail and delve deeper into the realities of teaching and learning. Themes such as society and culture are emphasized throughout his work. THE culture, in the perspective Skinnerian is understood as one experimental space used in the study of behavior and as a set of reinforcement contingencies. This approach advocates, then, the use of a science in the planning of a culture. The emphasis on developing this social and cultural planning was expressed in his book Walden II, when Skinner portrays an ideal society governed by the laws of behavioral engineering. Thus, in the behaviorist approach, culture becomes represented by dominant customs and practices, and by behaviors that persist over time because they are reinforced as they serve power.

In the context of this sociocultural planning, the individual plays a merely passive role, responding to what is expected of them. Control and directness of human behavior prevail, and the human being is seen as a cog in a planned and controlled machine, efficiently performing the expected function.

Planned experience is, therefore, the basis of knowledge, thus demonstrating the empiricist foundation of this approach: knowledge is the direct result of experience. Thus, we see that Skinner did not pay attention to the processes, intermediate constructs, and with what it could if process hypothetically in the individual's mind during the learning process, as the cognitivist approach does, for example.

Node what if refers the education this is linked, intimately, the transmission cultural. In other words, education, in this type of approach, should be responsible for imparting knowledge, as well as ethical behaviors, social practices, and skills considered fundamental for manipulating and controlling the world/environment (cultural, social, etc.). The basic purpose of education would be to promote desirable and permanent changes, which imply both the acquisition of new behaviors and the modification of existing ones.

Within these assumptions, the school appears as an educational agency that must adopt a peculiar form of control, according to the behaviors that aims to establish and maintain. It is therefore up to the school to maintain, conserve, and in part modify the patterns of behavior accepted as useful and desirable for a society, considering a given cultural context. The school, therefore, serves social objectives to the extent that it serves the objectives of those who grant it power the power of knowledge, if we wish to use a terminology. Foucaultian. In this approach, schools are also seen as linked to and dependent on other agencies that control society and the social system: government, media, politics, and the economy. These agencies, in turn, also need schools because they are the institutions in which new generations are formed.

In this context, the teacher's role lies in their ability to manipulate the student's environmental conditions to ensure learning. The student's role becomes that of a receiver of knowledge and is expected to accept pre-established goals. These goals are assessed by measuring responses (or changes) of behavior) what they are directly observables and liable of to be measures. The technological model based on behaviorism includes programmed teaching, that is, the reinforcement of correct responses that are intended to be fixed and the extinction of undesirable responses or behaviors. On the other hand, the behaviors held as "desired" by students will be installed and maintained by arbitrary conditions and reinforcers such as praise, degrees, grades, recognition from teachers, among others, which are associated with another class of more remote and generalized reinforcers: the diploma, the advantages of the future profession, status, among others.

From the above, we can say that Skinner's theory of positivist foundation maintained the mechanistic description of man, who is considered a passive being whose behavior is fully explainable according to a simplistic model of cause and effect, reminiscent of the scientific model of 19th century Physics, now abandoned even by this science.

The first criticism we can make of Skinnerian theory is about the Determinism versus free will. In the behaviorist or behavioralist approach, the traditional subject-object relationship is inverted, and instead of privileging the finalistic operation of the former over the latter, the function of determining and shaping behavior is transferred to the environment. This is reductionism, an epistemological position that seeks to reconstruct all human sciences based on a single theory. Psychological what he has node behavior your category more elementary.

Citation: Wanderley F. Approach behaviorist and humanist: psychopedagogical implications. *J His Arch & Anthropol Sci.* 2025;10(2):68–71.
DOI: 10.15406/jhaas.2025.10.00327

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This In this way, taking the model of Physics, behaviorism aims to abolish the opposition between mental interiority and objective exteriority, describing all types of action, thinking of reality in a single dimension, that is, considering reality as that which is manipulable. In this type of approach, education, teaching-learning and instruction come to mean the arrangement of environmental contingencies to enable cultural transmission. and to generate modifications behavioral, of agreement with the pre-established put a decision-making body—the school, the teacher, and other institutions of power. Thus, in the Sikinnerian conception, pedagogy, education, and teaching are identified with methods and technology. The methodology and principles used in this approach derive from experimental analysis, thus reducing human life to a mere laboratory situation.

The applicability of this type of analysis to teaching produced and enabled the development of an educational technology based on the premise that everything that is not programmed is undesirable.

In contrast to this apology for educational technology, Carl Rogers' humanist approach appears to attempt to rescue the human dimension. Despite their opposition, Skinner and Rogers shared the same American scientific and cultural milieu of the 1930s and 1940s. This included the penetration of positivism into scientific circles; American environmentalism (marking Watson's sociology, anthropology, and psychology); the American value system rooted in Puritanism; and concern for the plight of minorities—blacks, foreigners, and women.

Given this panorama and socio-historical context, Skinner's work, as we have already analyzed, based on logical positivism and guided by an experimental line, proposed a system of behavior control that would promote individual and social well-being. From a humanist perspective, the Rogerian proposal attempted to rescue those problems social and only found one path: the recovery of man. This man should be analyzed using a phenomenological approach, essential for the emergence of proposals that would change some fundamental aspects of society.

The philosophical foundation of the humanist approach rests on the European intellectual tradition, which began in the 1930s and 1940s and whose origins can be traced to Hegel, Marx, and Bretano. Although there are no strong ties between each of them, each represents a movement away from Kant and the entire rationalist superstructure of Enlightenment thought. The break with this tradition gave rise to new directions, shaped by divergent thinkers such as Martin Heidegger, Soren Kierkegaard, Merleau-Ponty, and Jean Paul Sartre, who devoted themselves to the study of human existential problems: life, death, pain, and anguish, among other themes. This movement, known as the Philosophy of Existence, emerged after World War II, and its main objective was the investigation of human existence. Existentialists consider humankind as mere subjectivity, understood in its creative sense: humankind freely creates itself; it is its freedom.

Another pillar of this approach is humanism, not the Renaissance kind, which defended individualism, but a contemporary humanism that assumes a communal character that historical humanism lacked.

Conclusion

To conclude our analysis of the ancestry of the humanistic approach, we can to say what start put Kant and evolves, through of Hegelianism, until phenomenology and existentialism. Often omitted from the discussion of phenomenological history is the fact that the fundamental notion of intentionality is implicit in the epistemology of Kant. It is verified also, as we show[2] that theorists like Piaget, Lewin and Kolberg, who deal with intrinsic maps, fields, rules of formal reasoning, are linked to the Kantian tradition that flourished as phenomenology.

Despite these philosophical influences on Rogers' thinking, his theory was constructed from his clinical experience, and he did not seek to justify his positions as originating from a philosophical or psychological school. Thus, the Rogerian approach part for the lack of theoretical basis, but do not he can to deny the vision of reality and of the human nature that he expresses and that will identify him in a phenomenological approach.

Regarding education, Rogers contrasts traditional learning theories, which focus on learning, whether as a process or as a product. For Rogers, the focus is on the learner. Learning theories, in general, provide support for planning and organizing teaching strategies. Rogers' suggestion is not about methodologies, but rather about the teacher's attitudes. The teacher should assume the role of facilitator of learning, and it is in this "facilitating" environment that the student will come into contact with vital problems that have an impact on their lives. The teacher, as a facilitator of learning, must be authentic (open to their experiences) and congruent, that is, integrated.

The philosophy of education that underlies Rogerianism is called philosophy of democratic education, since it consists, as we have already mentioned, of leaving the responsibility for education with the student himself. Within these proposals, the basic purpose of education is to create conditions that facilitate student learning, releasing your capacity of self-learning of form what it is possible your both intellectual and emotional development.

Thus, we can say that Roger's propositions on person-centered teaching (primacy of the subject) imply techniques of directing without directing, that is, directing the person to their own experience so that they can structure themselves and act. This is the purpose of Rogers' non-directive method, diametrically opposed to the directivism of Skinnerian educational technology. The non-directive method consists of a set of techniques that implement the basic attitude of trust and respect for the student, who must, in this process, take responsibility for the learning objectives that are meaningful to them. In summary, the basic characteristic of this approach is the emphasis given the A pedagogical relationship that must occur in a climate of mutual respect between teacher and student, a climate conducive to the development of both. It is in this climate of mutual respect that Rogers believes what he calls meaningful learning is achieved, which must be meaningful and experiential for the learner.[3]

This meaningful learning has the quality of personal involvement the whole person participates in the learning process, both sensory and cognitive. Although encouragement often comes from outside, discovery, grasping meaning, and understanding come from within. This learning elicits changes in the learner's behavior, attitudes, and even personality. As this learning occurs, the learner assesses whether it is meeting their needs and pursuing what they want to know; thus, the "locus" of assessment resides within the learner.

Rogerian proposals based on meaningful learning and the facilitation of this learning clash with a school scheme based on pre-established curricula, duties identical to all you students, tests standardized, classes

expository teaching as the most widely used teaching resource by teachers as learning measures. Roger's proposal is based on the idea that all of this must be rethought, so that new objectives and values can be defined for educators and students to strive for.[4]

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DOI: 10.15406/jhaas.2025.10.00327

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The most important consequence of the Rogerian point of view is its hypothesis that we possess, in terms of existence, the power to choose, which implies attributing to man the freedom and responsibility for his choices.

The humanism Rogerian consisted in become reality to the possibilities human creativity and growth, consider the person in the here and now, emphasize the central place of the "I" and free people to walk for themselves.

Regarding formal education, Rogers was harsh in his criticism, considering schools, from primary to university, the most obsolete, incompetent, and bureaucratic institution in our culture. His major contribution to pedagogical reflection was to propose a form of teacher-student interpersonal relationship in which individuals function more fully and are self-determined.

Although Rogers and Skinner held almost entirely antagonistic positions and approaches to human problems, both left their mark on American psychology. We can find, however, a point of convergence between them. Two theorists: they analyze humankind in the present day, without focusing on the past as psychoanalysis did. They are concerned, above all, with the human person and the possibility of social reconstruction.

Acknowledgements

None.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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