

# Teorije facilitacije

## Općenito

Teorija facilitacije (**facilitation theory**) ponekad zvana olakšano učenje ( **facilitative teaching**), je **humanistički pristup učenju** koji se razvio tijekom 1980-ih od strane utjecajnog američkog psihologa **Carl Rogers** i drugih te je najbolje opisana njegovim riječima:

- *"Mi znamo ... da iniciranje takve vrste učenja ne počiva na vještinama poučavanja vođe, njegovom akademskom znanju o tom području, njegovom planiranju nastave, korištenju audio-vizualnih pomagala, programiranom učenju koji koristi, njegovim prezentacijama i predavanjima, obilju knjiga, iako svaka od tih sastavnica može u jednom trenutku biti iskorištena kao važni izvor. Ne, važnost facilitacije učenja temelji se na određenim osobinama stavova koje postoje između facilitatora (**facilitator**) i učenika."*<sup>1)</sup>
- *"Ne možemo direktno naučiti drugu osobu; možemo samo **facilitirati** njegovo učenje."*<sup>2)</sup>

## What is facilitation theory?

Rogersovo prvo područje interesa je bila psihologija i psihoterapija gdje je od 1940-ih počeo primjenjivati *klijentu usmjerenu terapiju* (**client-centered therapy**) koja promovira stajalište pomaganja ili savjetovanje (**counsel**) klijenta gledajući problem iz njegove perspektive. U drugoj polovici 1960-ih počinje primjenjivati sličan pristup na procese edukacije i učenja. Njegova početna vjerovanja su bila da su ljudi po prirodi dobri i zdravi te da sva živa bića nastoje što bolje iskoristiti svoje postojanje (*tendencija samoaktualizaciji*) (**the actualizing tendency**)).

In his works, Rogers addresses two kinds of learning<sup>3)</sup> introduced by earlier theorists<sup>4)</sup>:

- **rote learning**, referring to meaningless memorization of facts, and
- **experiential learning** in everyday life, which has meaning and personal relevance. It is the result of a natural curiosity, and a recognized importance of the learned material, often acquired through doing, or at least facilitated by student's active participation in the learning process, and often self-initiated. Still, this kind of knowledge is difficult to communicate to another.

Rogers' theory therefore sees the teacher as the key role in the process of learning, but not as a walking textbook transmitting its contents, but as the **facilitator of learning**. The facilitation here occurs through the teacher's attitudes in his personal relationship with the students. Rogers suggests three attitudinal qualities necessary for facilitative practice (both in counseling and education). These so called *core conditions* are<sup>5)</sup>:

- **Realness**. *"It means that he [the teacher] is **being himself**, not denying himself."*<sup>6)</sup> The teacher has to be a real person **aware of his feelings** and able to communicate them appropriately, no matter how exactly does he feel. He should not be just a role in the play of education, *"a faceless embodiment of a curricular requirement or a sterile tube through which knowledge is passed from one generation to the next."*<sup>7)</sup>

- **Prizing, acceptance, trust.** This refers to teacher's **caring about the student** and his acceptance of student's feelings (one that support learning as well as ones disturbing it). It is the trust and prizing of his capacity and abilities as a human being.
- **Empathy.** Empathy means being able to *walk in others shoes*. This means that a teacher can understand student's perspective on the process on learning and his reactions from the inside. The accent here is on *understand*, not *judge* or *evaluate*.

Other tasks of teachers include establishing a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom and thereby facilitating learning and acquisition of new ideas by reducing possible negative effects of external factors. A facilitative teacher should also be open to new ideas, listen to students, pay as much attention to his relationship with the students as he does to the content he is teaching, encouraging learners to take responsibility for their learning and actions and to take self-evaluation as the highest form of evaluation. He should also use **class feedback** for further improvements.

Still, not all of the work during the educational process can be done by the teacher. Its effectiveness does depend on the learner as well. In order to contribute to their own learning, students should be:

- **aware of the facilitative conditions** implemented for their benefit,
- **aware that the problem** to be learned is realistic, relevant and meaningful
- **motivated**, since motivation is, according to Rogers, a tendency towards self-actualization present in all healthy individuals.

If all the necessary conditions are satisfied,

- *"learning becomes life, and a very vital life at that. The student is on his way, sometimes excitedly, sometimes reluctantly, to becoming a learning, changing being."*<sup>(8)</sup>

## What is the practical meaning of facilitation theory?

Rogers' theory, as stated, has rather clear implementation goals, yet they are not always so easy to introduce to the classroom. Establishing a close contact with the students, getting to know them and offering them empathy and support requires a great amount of effort from teachers, who mostly ignore this side of educational process and orientate only on knowledge they are supposed to pass on to the students.

Some of Rogers' Advice for implementing the the *core conditions* are the following<sup>(9)</sup>:

- **Realness.** Being real does not mean to release all the frustrations and anger on the students. That kind of teacher should not be in the classroom at all. **"The attitudes being expressed in being real must be attitudes of respect, warmth, caring, liking and understanding."** The teacher must not pretend to be all-knowing and perfect, since the students know that can't be the truth.
- **Acceptance.** Teachers should **prize all students** not for their positive/negative characteristics, but because they are all valuable human beings. This prizing can manifest as listening to what students are saying, but not necessary as listening to evaluate, but **listening** to learn his **ideas, thoughts** and **feelings**. Students need to feel free to explain their thoughts. Prizing can also manifest through responding to what the students say.
- **Empathy.** Empathy enables teacher to understand the reasons that led the student to certain behavior or an answer, but also to understand his emotional situation that needs to be solved in

order to enable significant learning.

Reported positive results of Rogers' theory in practice include: fewer disciplinary problems in the classroom, better knowledge and IQ test scores, usage of higher levels of thinking, fewer acts of vandalism, positive self-regard, increase in creativity and other.<sup>10)</sup>

## Criticisms

Rogers' theory is criticized for similar reasons as other humanist theories: doubtful claim about the inherent human goodness, and willingness to learn.

## Keywords and most important names

- **facilitation theory, facilitative teacher, realness, acceptance, empathy**
- [Carl Rogers](#)

## Bibliography

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<sup>1)</sup>

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<sup>2)</sup>

[Rogers, C. On becoming a person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1961.](#)

<sup>3)</sup>

[Patterson, C. H. Carl Rogers and Humanistic Education. In Foundations for a Theory of Instruction and Educational Psychology, Chapter 5. Harper & Row, 1977.](#)

<sup>4)</sup>

See for example Ausubel's [Assimilation Theory](#)

<sup>5)</sup> <sup>6)</sup> <sup>7)</sup> <sup>8)</sup> <sup>9)</sup>

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