

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY



Generally, psychologists and educators are interested in the area of teaching and they have made many contributions to the field. Recently, psychotherapists have suggested that the interaction of student and teacher in class is similar to the interaction of therapist and client in the therapeutic situation because certain kinds of relationship should be developed in both situations. Rogers¹ presented his ideas as follows:

...(then) that educators are interested in learning which are functional, which make a difference, which pervade the person and his actions, then they might well look to the field of psychotherapy for leads or ideas. Some adaptation for education of the learning process which takes place in psychotherapy seems like a promising possibility.

Stavsky, a clinical psychologist, expressed the point of view that psychotherapy and education involve the same kind of interpersonal relationship. Both teaching and psychotherapy try to reduce anxiety, but on a different level - the psychotherapist works mainly on the unconscious level while

¹Carl R. Rogers, "Significant Learning : In Therapy and in Education," Educational Leadership 16 (3) : 232-233, 1959.

the teacher works along an ego-building level. Stavsky² states:

From a psychotherapeutic point of view, teaching is basically an interpersonal relationship, which, with its proper techniques and devices, helps reduce or control anxiety and so promotes learning.

As a result of some of this theorizing, research has been carried out to obtain ideas of what are the characteristics of a therapeutic relationship. Fiedler³ tried to investigate whether the theory and technique a therapist held had an effect upon his beliefs about the ideal therapeutic relationship and whether there is a unique relationship which occurs only in the therapeutic situation.

Fiedler used a Q-sorting method in his study. The therapists' concepts of ideal relationship were obtained by having them sort a series of 75 statements about characteristics of the therapeutic relationship. These statements represented:

1. The therapists' ability to communicate with and understand the client.

²William H. Stavsky, "Using the Insights of Psychotherapy in Teaching," The Elementary School Journal, October, 1957, p.32.

³Fred E. Fiedler, "The Concept of an Ideal Therapeutic Relationship," Journal of Consulting Psychology 15: 239-249, 1950.

2. The emotional distance which the therapist takes toward the client. (emotionally withdrawing, neutral or close to the client)

3. The status of the therapist in relation to the client. (superior, subordinate or equal to the client.)

There were twenty-five statements in each dimension and each dimension was subdivided into five groups of five statements. The total group of statements were to be sorted into seven categories with 1, 7, 18, 23, 18, 7, 1 statements in each category. Therapists were required to sort the statements from those most characteristic of their idea about the ideal relationship to the least characteristic statement. The results of each person's rating of items were then intercorrelated and factor-analyzed by Holzinger's bi-factor method.

Fiedler reported that the results of his study revealed that therapists' theory and technique hold no important influence upon their beliefs about the nature of the ideal therapeutic relationship. As to whether there is any unique characteristics which occur only in the therapeutic situation, he concluded, "These data rather support the hypothesis that a good therapeutic relationship is very much like any good interpersonal relationship."⁴

⁴Ibid., p.244

As a result of these theoretical presentations and findings, questions arise as to whether there is any similarity between the ideal student-teacher relationship and the ideal therapeutic relationship, and what is the ideal and less-than-ideal of the student-teacher relationship. Tyler⁵ used Fiedler's procedure in her study. Fiedler's seventy-five statements were rephrased so that they were appropriate for a teaching situation. She had ten persons, nine professors and one physician, sort the statements. The results were intercorrelated and the intercorrelations were factor-analyzed. Then a factor array sort was calculated. Conclusions of the study were:

1. There is a significant agreement as to the characteristic of the ideal teacher-student relationship.
2. The most ideal teacher-student relationship involves good or excellent communication, in a peer relation which tends to be emotionally close. The nature of the teaching relationship which is least ideal is that involving no communication, with the teacher feeling very superior and drawing away or rejecting the students.
3. There is a great similarity between the ideal teacher-student relationship and the ideal therapeutic relationship.

⁵Louise L. Tyler, "The Concept of an Ideal Teacher-Student Relationship," The Journal of Educational Research 58(3) : 112-117, 1964.

4. Non-teachers can describe the ideal teacher-student relationship in about the same manner and as well as teachers.

In Thailand, the study of student-teacher relationship is an interesting area for investigation; it has not yet been investigated by anyone. One study which seemed to indicate the significance of the student-teacher relationship was the survey of factors which obstructed learning of students in Mathayom 1-3 (grades 8-10) in public schools, done by Ongphaiboon.⁶ Her study revealed three factors which obstructed learning : teachers like to tell others about students' faults, teachers cannot be friendly with students, teachers always want to take revenge upon students. The study also revealed that students don't want to be punished and they like teachers who are optimistic about them. Aside from this study, no study reveals anything significant about the student-teacher relationship except for some articles written by educators in Thailand stressing the importance of the relationship in class. Swangsak,⁷ in his article written on a good teacher, said that a good teacher must be able to get along well with students and have a good relationship with them. The relationships which he insisted that teachers develop

⁶Thasanee Ongphaiboon, "The Survey of Factors obstructed Learning of Students in Mathayom 1-3 (grades 8-10) in Public School in Bangkok," Thai Educational Research 1:1-26, August, 1962.

⁷Thanu Swangsak, "Good Teacher," Vitayajarn 2:85-100, 1962.

are quite similar to Tyler's relationships; that is, the teacher must be able to adjust himself to students, try to understand and communicate well with students, and be able to control his emotion. Ninlawan⁸ stated that a right kind of relationship will help student and teacher to understand each other and also helps students to develop their potentialities in learning, their way of forming attitudes, and their values towards the environment around them.

PURPOSES OF THE PRESENT STUDY *Re. Bwo*

1. The general purpose of this study is to investigate the characteristic of the ideal and less-than-ideal teacher-student relationship.

2. The specific purposes are:

a) To discover whether there is any significant agreement as to the nature of the ideal teacher-student relationship among pupils, teachers and university students from The Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University.

b) To compare the results of this study concerning the ideal student-teacher relationship with Tyler's study.

c) To find out whether there is any similarity between the characteristic of the ideal student-teacher relationship and Fiedler's therapeutic relationship.

⁸Skon Ninlawan, "How to be a Teacher," Sounsuksa 9:1-7, 1959.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Mgt Problem

A classroom is just like a small society in which the teacher is the leader and students are followers. Co-operative-ness in class will lead to successful activities, but co-operativeness will not occur unless the right kind of relationship is developed. Sometimes the teacher is said to be ineffective, not because of insufficient knowledge but just because he cannot maintain good relationships with students. As a result, students dislike and disobey him and refuse to hear him explain things, and so learn nothing from him. To be an effective teacher requires not only having lots of knowledge, and skill in teaching, but also being able to develop the right kind of relationship with students. Yourglic⁹ studied teachers' and students' evaluation of various qualities of the ideal teacher. The study revealed that an ideal teacher must possess some academic background, honesty, responsibility, and must devote all his time to his teaching career. In addition he must be friendly to children, understand and help¹⁰ them, and be able to get along well with them. Symonds¹⁰ studied the characteristics

⁹Anita Yourglic, "Study on Correlations Between College Teachers' and students' Concepts of 'Ideal-Student' and 'Ideal-Teacher'," Journal of Educational Research 49:59-64, 1955.

¹⁰Percivail M. Symonds, "Characteristics of the Effective Teacher Based on Pupil Evaluations," Journal of Experimental Education 23:289-310, 1955.

of the effective teacher as found in pupils' evaluations. The results revealed that the superior teacher must like children.

The studies above show that students and teachers both perceive the significance of the relationship between student and teacher, because the results of these studies seem to reveal that an effective or an ideal teacher must possess certain characteristics which will be helpful to him in developing the right kind of relationship with students.

There is also evidence that the more appropriate the relationship in the classroom, the more students will be able to develop their potentialities in learning. Cogan¹¹ investigated the relationship between teacher behaviors and the amounts of both required and class-related self-initiated work performed by their pupils, finding that in almost every classroom significant relationships existed between the extent to which the students described their teacher as warm and friendly and the amount of both the self-initiated and required work that was accomplished. He draw the conclusion from his study that the characteristics of the student-teacher relationship influenced interest in a scholastic subject because the child, by doing his work, brings himself into

¹¹Moris L. Cogan, in Harry Levin, "Studies of Teacher Behavior," Journal of Experimental Education 26, September, 1957.

symbolic proximity to the teacher and if this is found to be a pleasant relationship the child tries to recreate it by doing things that the teacher would like or that the teacher stands for. The results of Cogan's study are interesting and are supported by a study of warmth and permissiveness of teachers as related to student achievement which was done by Christensen.¹² He found that there was a significant correlation between warmth of feeling of the teacher toward students and students' achievement with respect to vocabulary and arithmetic. In addition, Ryans¹³ found that in both elementary and secondary schools there are significant correlations between productive pupil behavior and teacher behavior which can be described as understanding; friendly classroom behavior; organized, businesslike behavior; and stimulating, original classroom behavior.

Careful observation of students in school may reveal that students devote more attention and interest to a subject taught by a teacher they like much or with whom they have a

¹²C.M. Christensen, "Relationship Between Pupil Achievement, Pupil Affect-Need, Teacher Warmth, and Teacher Permissiveness," Journal of Educational Psychology 51(3):169-173, 1960.

¹³David G. Ryans, "Some Relations Between Pupil Behavior and Certain Teacher Characteristics," Journal of Educational Psychology 52(2):89-90, 1961.

pleasant relationship. One main factor why some students stay away from school may be that they hate their teachers because they can't get along well with them. Regan¹³ found that children under an authoritarian teacher experienced more school-related fears. The dominant fears were of school in general, lectures, tests, specific subjects and marks. Since a good relationship between student and teacher can lead to better learning by the student, whereas an inappropriate relationship may lead to conflict, so knowing the nature of this relationship will be helpful in eliminating conflicts in class and lead to more effectiveness in learning and teaching.

In addition, if evidence is found that the student-teacher relationship is similar to the therapeutic relationship, then any ideas or theories of therapists in developing a better relationship in the therapeutic situation will be worthwhile for application in the classroom to eliminate conflicts and facilitate learning.

¹³John F. Regan, "The School Connected Fears of Children Under Authoritarian and Democratic Teachers," Doctor's Thesis, New York : New York University, 1958, 200 pp., Abstract Dissertation 18:459, 1958.

HYPOTHESIS

Resulted from the investigator's observations of the way students and teachers respond to each other in class, though research in the area of student-teacher relationship can hardly been found in Thailand, these following hypothesis are expected to be met:

- ✓ 1. There should not be any significant disagreement as to the characteristic of student-teacher relationship as perceived by teachers, students and university students.
- ✗ 2. Because of the cultural difference, there should be some differences between Tyler's ideal student-teacher relationship and the ideal relationship found in this study.
- ✗ 3. We may assume from Fiedler's study¹⁴ that therapeutic relationship should be similar to every kind of interpersonal relationship. But because of cultural difference interpersonal relationship perceived by Thai teachers and students may not be similar to that perceived by Americans, so there should be some differences between the result of this study and Fiedler's.

¹⁴Fiedler, op.cit.