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A Program for Training, Practice, and Research in the Interpretation of Assessment Findings

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This program trains students for practice with projective techniques and objective personality tests in one semester by employing several sources of feedback and permitting separation of skill and eisegesis, or personalized components of interpretation. This program has been underway for ten years and incorporates a research component designed to substantiate the procedural components as well as to explore the kinds of data that assessment techniques legitimately provide concerning personality. The assumption that antedates this program is that assessor and assessee are integral parts of a shared and contractual process. Assessor and assessee validate different aspects of each other's experience. Table 1 presents a flow chart of the program components.

Training

Training begins with description of the stimulus characteristics of Rorschach cards and a thorough appreciation of the complex parameters of administration procedure. The instructor sits-in on the first Rorschach administration and the feedback session although both sessions are videotaped for student feedback. Klopfer determinant scoring is learned to a criterion of 70% agreement on the basis of two examinations for the purpose of student self-diagnosis of kinds of scoring errors, additions, omissions, or reversals. One or more demonstration Rorschach administrations then illustrate the method whose major steps are listed in Table 1. The assessee takes a Rorschach with the expectation of returning for feedback in the form of hypothesis-testing by students. Reports from each student are prepared prior to the hypothesis-testing session and subsequently evaluated by the assessee who indicates agreement or disagreement with each concept.
contained in each report, including a criterion or instructor-prepared report. The students then have three sources of feedback available to them: (a) consensus among themselves upon concepts as well awareness of unique concepts; (b) comparison of their concepts with those provided by criterion reports; (c) assessee reaction to all concepts.

A composite report based upon all data is then reacted to by the assessee. Finally, a separation of unique, assessee-agree and unique, assessee-disagree concepts is made for each student assessor. Unique, assessee-agree concepts probably suggest assessor skill while unique, assessee-disagree concepts may suggest either assessor skill or eisegesis if these same concepts occur in several reports by the same assessor.

Research

The research component is descriptive of the training process. For examples, there are Rorschach case studies (Dana & Evers, Note 1), and changes during one semester in Rorschach interpretation skill as a result of training (Dana, & Willcockson, Note 2). Case studies of test battery concepts are currently being conducted (Dana & Lewis, Note 3). In addition, the process of oral feedback has been illustrated by case study (Dana & Lunday, Note 4).

Research studies are also being conducted to determine the contents of Rorschach interpretation and to provide descriptive personality categories (Dana, Stauffacher & Bonge, Note 5). Finally, the methodology of concept identification has been used for studying the presence and context of Barnum statements in bona fide assessment reports (Dana & Fouke, 1979). These studies represent a belated attempt to look at the interpretation process per se, an area that has been almost entirely overlooked in our history of research endeavors with personality instruments (Dana, 1980; Dana, Note 6).
Practice

The outcomes in assessment practice for this program are noted in subsequent, non-course assessment-related usage of concepts and feedback to clients. Feedback to clients and referral source persons has become a routine part of assessment at the University of Arkansas Psychological Clinic. The feedback procedure has been presented to professional assessors in workshop format (Dana, Erdberg & Walsh, Note 7).
Reference Notes


References


Table 1
Flow Chart for Training, Research, and Practice Components of Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING</th>
<th>RESEARCH</th>
<th>PRACTICE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of concepts reliably abstracted from reports provided by minimum of eight student assessors</td>
<td>Abstraction of concepts from many Rorschach and test battery reports</td>
<td>Discussion with assesssee of assessment process, sharing of procedures and findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison of concepts among students for consensus, uniqueness</td>
<td>Use of concepts to describe student skill (consensus + unique + assesssee accepted) and eisegesis (unique + assesssee rejected)</td>
<td>Administration and interpretation of assessment instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison of student concepts with criterion report concepts</td>
<td>Use of concepts to describe changes (acquisition) of interpretive skill over time and with practice</td>
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<td>Feedback to assesssee; assesssee evaluation (acceptance/rejection) of all concepts</td>
<td>Use of concepts to describe what personality characteristics are suggested by particular assessment techniques and composite test battery</td>
<td>Feedback of content in face-to-face process to assesssee and referral source person</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback to students of assesssee evaluations. Comparisons among consensual and unique, accepted and rejected concepts</td>
<td>Clustering of concepts by clinical judges. Statistical treatment to determine reliability of clustering and identity of clusters</td>
<td>Preparation of report for assesssee and referral source person based upon previous discussion. Alternatively the report may be presented as part of the face-to-face process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of composite report for assesssee (with copies for students) based on all data. Evaluation of report by assesssee and feedback of reaction to students</td>
<td>Use of derived clusters with subsequent concepts as framework for comparison of reports on different assesssees</td>
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<td>Content analysis of unique concepts rejected by several assesssees: separation of skill and eisegesis</td>
<td>Potential applications: Barnum research; Lexicon of legitimate personality content domains for each assessment instrument</td>
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