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Models of transactional analysis in educational management

Edukacyjna Analiza Transakcyjna 5, 39-45

2016

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

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Jak cytować [how to cite]: Schachner, S. (2016). Models of transactional analysis in educational management. *Edukacyjna Analiza Transakcyjna*, 5, 39–45.

Keywords: transactional analysis, educational management, conditions for teaching, transactions.

For several years, I have been working as an educational manager in different primary schools in Vienna, Austria. The project in which I work was created by the government, and includes my colleagues and me – all of us are teachers with a special training. We work for public and private schools which invite us to stay with them for 8 weeks for tutoring and for evaluating their teaching. The goal of this initiative is to support teachers in their teaching and to establish and develop their professional roles. I do this by working with them on their personal development, by answering their questions, by helping them develop effective teaching strategies and by reflecting on their teaching process.

The aim of this article is to describe my profession, which is actually not well-known in this area of work and to outline different possibilities of educational transactional analysis in creating conditions which stimulate and manage the teaching processes in the best possible way.

The role and function of the educational manager

In my role as an educational manager I am invited by teachers to their lessons to help them improve or reflect on their professional work, to help them deal with difficulties in their classes or to support them with introducing new educational practices. No extra costs for schools are involved, as I am paid by the government. I stay in one school for about eight weeks working with teachers on location. They are not forced to do this and I have a supporting function without controlling, evaluating or reporting their work to anyone else. We work

on a confidential basis and the headmaster does not get any information about the content of our work. This is very important because normally teachers assume that evaluation from the outside is connected with inspection and comes from a higher hierarchic level. Our common work consists of three parts: first, we set the objectives of our work, we brainstorm for ideas what to do and plan the teaching unit together. Second, I observe the teacher at work, and third, we reflect on it together. This three-part process is ongoing for all the time I stay at a given school. Half a year later I come back for one day to reflect on further developments of our earlier work.

Most schools apply again and I come back one or two years later for another eight weeks. Those repeated terms are very effective, because the teachers know from the beginning what to expect, they know me and my working style. I can see the developments of the last months, and we can go deeper in their daily work and working routine. The range of the topics we work on is very wide and individually adapted to concrete situations, which can be connected with the behavior of the teacher herself, problems with setting up boundaries, giving structure or motivating pupils (Schachner, 2015). My work can also include some questions about the behavior of particular students or it can concern topics referring to the teaching process itself, e.g. enriching teaching methods, answering methodological questions or using new teaching techniques (Schachner, 2013).

The possibilities of using transactional analysis

Using the models of transactional analysis are very important in my work. I use them for my own professional practice, for planning and reflecting on my own work, and also for describing the best conditions for ‘good’ teaching during the reflecting sessions with teachers. The models are helpful to describe the observed processes and to make the effects of transactions and interventions visible.

Description of conditions for teaching

The balance of the three hungers

Teaching is successful if it meets the three hungers described by Berne. I combine it with some ideas from Jean Illsley Clarke. She describes effective conditions for education and offers guidelines for parents.

With the help of this triangle it is possible to plan teaching units in a balanced way. If there are disturbances, it is useful to look where the disturbances are located to find the source of the problem. Depending on the kind of problems I have to deal with, e.g. a problem with structure, with recognition or with stimu-

lation, on the content of the lesson and on the methods used, it is necessary to find different interventions.

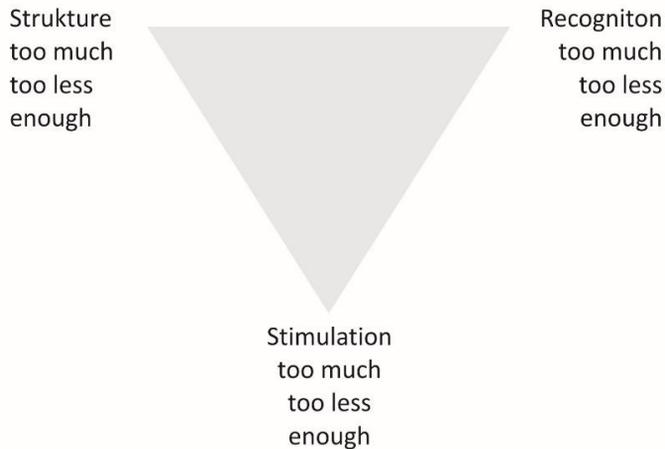


Figure1. Berne's three hungers

Source: own compilation.

The three Ps of Crossman

Protection: For an ongoing learning process it is important to have a space in which the students can explore their social and intellectual capacities. The teacher is responsible for introducing some non-negotiable rules, the most important of which include: no violence, no laughing at the ideas of others, no disturbing others.

Permission: Students and children come to the classroom with their personal injunctions and script beliefs. Permission to think, to explore, to try something new are essentials for an effective learning process. Teachers have a great influence on students' self-awareness and self-confidence, and it is very important that teachers should be aware of it.

Potency: The potency of the teacher is her ability to teach. S/he has to have extensive knowledge about the learning process, didactic possibilities, the methods of teaching and the developmental needs of their pupils and students. This gives students' an opportunity to experience their self-efficacy and to find their own learning strategies and interests.

Influence of the life position

On the basis of the four life positions, I observe different behavior of teachers influencing their attitude towards students and teaching.

+/- position: Teachers with this life position act from an authoritarian position. Students have to adapt to the teacher and the learning contents. If they are not able to follow it, it is their own fault and they have to get the knowledge from someone outside the school. These teachers criticize children for not being well-prepared parents for not supporting them enough.

-/+ position: Teachers with this life position seem to be very engaged at first. They are interested in the welfare of their students, they have a lot of learning materials and explain a lot. However, they often have problems with setting boundaries and limits and justify this with a lot of explications. Sometimes they do not feel well in the professional role of a teacher and would prefer to be their students' friends.

-/- position: Teachers with this life position are frustrated with the system and the developments at schools. They miss recognition and they do not see any sense of their work. They are either burnt out or they have no interest in their jobs. They do not expect motivation or learning success in their students and they do not motivate them. Those teachers do not like any changes in the system and are not willing to adapt their methods to the reality.

+/+ position: Teachers with this life position are interested in their profession and in their students. They are interested in self-development and in the development of their students. They see them as individuals with some specific learning needs and they look for effective methods to stimulate the learning process. They improve their own capacity and adapt their methods and learning materials to the actual needs of the students. They are self-confident enough to manage the class and to solve difficult educational or learning problems. They give confidence to their students and support them so that they can be successful learners and reach the learning goals.

Assumptions about learning

The three assumptions of TA about the human nature (Stewart, Joines, 2004) can be used as important assumptions about learning:

People are ok: Every student has his or her own learning history and his or her own developmental steps. It is the responsibility of the teacher to find ways to stimulate this process.

People can think: Every human being is able to learn – it is the responsibility of the teacher to structure their teaching in a way which allows the student to understand it. It is the responsibility of the student to find his or her own learning strategies and to structure their own learning process (Goulding, Goulding, 2005).

People can take decisions: Students have their learning history with injunctions and permissions for learning. It is the responsibility of the teacher to be interested in these individual patterns and to find ways to give permission, support and recognition for learning steps. The student can change his assumptions about

his or her own learning capacity by taking the responsibility for his or her own learning and development.

Cocreating

Learning is a cocreative process (Dyer, Hicks, 2014). It is the teacher who is responsible for stimulating the learning process by selecting the learning contents, the methods and creating conducive learning space and conditions. It is the student himself who has to use this offer and benefit from it. Learning is an active process done by the person himself, it can be stimulated but not done by others. It fully succeeds only if it is an interplay between learners and teachers.

Rules and Contracts

Explicit contracts help to reach the learning goals with transparent and good structured steps (Haake, Schachner, 2015). Teachers can use behavioral contracts and learning contracts. It is very important to distinguish between non-negotiable rules, negotiable rules and contracts. Non-negotiable rules are given by the teacher and they have to be followed without any possibility to discuss them. One example for this is the rule: No violence at school. Negotiable rules are given by the teacher, but they can be discussed and have to be adapted to the age and the maturity of the students, for example, the way of spending school breaks. As long as the rule is in operation, students have to follow it, the next step is discussing and adapting the rule and after that students have to follow a new rule. Rules offer structure and protection to students and open the space for a good learning process and a good being together.

Contracts are discussed and signed between the teacher and the student or students and are a good way to become autonomous (Nappers, Newton, 2013) Together students and the teacher define the learning goals, the learning steps that are necessary to achieve the set goal, and the time that is necessary to succeed. Finally, they decide together on the reward and benefits if the contract is fulfilled and what happens if the contract is not fulfilled. So, the learning process becomes transparent and cocreative, and it is visible that the responsibility for the process is shared between the teacher and students. The teacher's role changes from being an instructor or examiner to being a facilitator.

Transactions

The model of functional fluency (Temple, 2015) can be used to reflect on and analyse transactions. Temple describes different manifestations of an integrating adult. She differentiates between the structuring and nurturing modes,

the accounting mode and the cooperative and spontaneous modes. Similarly, in the functional ego state model, she talks about negative and positive manifestations of the nurturing and structuring modes and the spontaneous and cooperative modes. The more teachers stay in positive modes (the big five), the more the transactions are constructive and efficient.

| | |
|--|---|
| Negative control DOMINATING MODE | Negative care MARSHMALLOWING MODE |
| Positive control STRUCTURING MODE | Positive care NURTURING MODE |
| Accounting element ACCOUNTING MODE | |
| Positive socialized self COOPERATIVE MODE | Positive natural self SPONTANEOUS MODE |
| Negative socialized self COMPLIANT/ RESISTANT MODE | Negative natural self IMMATURE MODE |

Figure 2. Susannah Temple's „Nine Behavioral Modes of the Functional Fluency Model”

Source: Temple S., (2003), *Action on the functional model*, EATA Newsletter, p. 4.

Finally, I want to summarize several points important for teachers if they want to become more professional and efficient in their work:

- an awareness of one's own background for being a teacher and an awareness of one's own learning biography,
- some knowledge about psychological and developmental needs of the students,
- some knowledge about learning theories and learning methods,
- curiosity and interest in the learning topics and in the development and individual needs of the students,
- a deep interest and willingness to reflect on one's own position and teaching,
- an interest in ongoing discussions about learning and teaching,
- an interest in self development and reflection.

Transactional analysis can support all these points with different models, with its underlying philosophy and the assumptions about human beings, their development and capacity for taking decisions and facing challenges.

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Wykorzystanie modeli analizy transakcyjnej w zarządzaniu edukacją

Streszczenie

W prezentowanym artykule autorka zwraca uwagę na użyteczność wykorzystania wybranych modeli analizy transakcyjnej w zarządzaniu edukacją. Na początku opisuje ona obowiązki, jakie wchodzi w zakres pracy managera edukacji, oraz korzyści, jakie jej praca może przynieść szkole, dla których pracuje. Następnie przedstawia, w jaki sposób wykorzystuje różne aspekty analizy transakcyjnej, np. do opisu warunków sprzyjających nauczaniu, regulaminów i kontraktów szkolnych oraz transakcji.

Słowa kluczowe: analiza transakcyjna, zarządzanie edukacją, warunki do nauczania, transakcje.