



TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Transactional Analysis is a theory developed by Dr. Eric Berne in the 1950s. Dr. Berne proposed that verbal communication is the core of all social interactions, especially the face-to-face communication. We find that some people are authoritative in their tone and body language; some are vulnerable – childlike while some are curt -straight forward and tend to take instant decisions. Classroom dynamics too are similar in nature. Students from different backgrounds with different aptitude and attitude communicate in the classroom. Teachers sometimes find it difficult to understand the transaction pattern of children leading to misunderstanding and misconceptions. So to provide an extra edge to the teachers the understanding of Transactional analysis comes very handy.

Keywords: *Transactional Analysis, communication, classroom dynamics, classroom management.*



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Transactional Analysis is a theory developed by Dr. Eric Berne in the 1950s. Dr. Berne proposed that verbal communication is the core of all social interactions, especially the face-to-face communication. We find that some people are authoritative in their tone and body language; some are vulnerable – childlike while some are curt -straight forward and tend to take instant decisions. According to transactional analysis theory, each human has three identities -- the parent, the adult, and the child -- and moves in and out of them many times during a day. Transactional Analysis is a social psychology and is a method to improve communication. Transactional Analysis is underpinned by the philosophy that:

- people can change
- we all have a right to be in the world and be accepted

Objectives:

- To have a understanding of Transactional Analysis
- To enhance classroom management with the use of Transactional Analysis Components

To have an understanding of Transactional Analysis it is important to know about Ego state. Eric Berne developed his theory of a tripartite structure to the ego which was both internally

experienced and directly observable. Ego State is defined as a 'consistent pattern of feeling and experience directly related to a corresponding consistent pattern of behaviour'

Berne defined the Parent ego state as 'a set of feelings, attitudes and behaviour patterns which resemble those of a parental figure'

The Adult ego state stems from here-and-now reality and was described by Berne as 'an autonomous set of feelings, attitudes and behaviour patterns which are adapted to the current reality'.

The Child ego state is comprised of an individual's historical experiences and acts as a source of regression from a repository of subjective memory systems, including the affective components of experiences. It is 'a set of feelings, attitudes and behaviours which are relics of an individual's own childhood'

TA theory assumes that an individual adopts a life position which is a fundamental orientation the infant develops usually in response to very early interactions with his or her caregivers. It establishes the sense of relative worth and value of the self and others. In characteristic TA style, the life position is described using everyday language.

Literature Review:

Barrow, Giles (2015) considered the application of transactional analysis (TA) in the field of education. Initially, the focus is on the use of TA in reducing conflict in the classroom and staffroom before offering observations about its broader relevance to contemporary UK schooling. Concepts covered included the ego state model of personality, functional fluency, psychological game-playing and contracting. Finally, the author considered issues rose in considering the application of a psychodynamic framework in the context of education.

Lorraine & Others (2013) critically analyzed how the concept of the drama triangle--part of the game theory associated with transactional analysis--can be used by post secondary instructors teaching online to build a sense of community and decrease students' dependence on instructors in discussion forums. The article begins with an overview of sense of community, followed by a detailed discussion on the drama triangle and its applicability to online instruction and discussion forum management. Observational data as an online instructor are presented in order to illustrate how drama triangle interactions in the online environment can stall sense of community formation. In addition, the authors provide online instructors with specific strategies for recognizing and avoiding instructor-student interactions that promote the rescuing, victim, and persecutor behaviors that detract from sense of community formation.

Hattangadi Vidya (2016) emphasized that all transactions in our life are made with certain expectations. Occasionally contracts are made with multiple parties - with all parties to the contract having their own expectations. If these expectations are all compatible then things work out, if they are ambiguous, it is better to discuss out everybody's expectations which will lead to greater understanding and therefore to a clear contract. Contracts need to be outlined in positive words i.e. what is wanted, rather than what is not wanted. Transactional Analysis helps in improving communication, it helps the sender to send clear expectations.

Implication of TA on Classroom Management:

Transaction analysis can be judiciously used by teachers to manage the classroom dynamics. It will help to discipline with dignity; so that the students' self esteem and motivation is also upheld.

Ego States: This helps us to know individual's behavior, attitude and feelings. Teachers and Children continuously swap their roles in three different Ego states: Parent, Adult and Child. A child may have a habit of engaging into lot of arguments in the class. So if the teacher is knowledgeable about the ego states, she will not react or stop the student because she will analyze her behavior as 'controlling parent'. So with experience the student needs to be aligned with the adult ego state. The teacher needs to divert the skill of argument to healthy logical reasoning.

For Eg. If the child has not finished his/her H.W, as a teacher we may reply in one of these three ways.

Teacher (Parent): "You will be punished if you have not completed your H.W."

Teacher (Child): "If you do not complete your H.W, our Principal will scold me."

Teacher (Adult): "Why couldn't you finish your H.W? Complete it after your recess."

An ideal teacher will find out the reason of not completing H.W and will give an opportunity to complete the same.

Transactions: The different types of transactions are: Complementary, uncomplimentary and ulterior transactions. In Complementary transactions the sender receives the intended message from the receiver.

Complementary Transaction:

Student (Parent): "Have you seen my compass box?"

Student (Child): "Yes! It is with me"

Crossed Transaction

Student (Parent): "Have you seen my compass box?"

Student (Child): "You blame me for everything!"

Teachers do not have problems during complementary transactions but during crossed transactions unnecessary conflicts and ill feeling develops among children, they tend to fight, defend leading to inappropriate behavior. A teacher has to intervene and analyze the transactions from beginning and replay the entire episode with acceptable behavior from them.

Life Positions:

Attitude affects our life and human relations. Within the framework of TA the positive attitudes are O.K and Negative attitudes are not O.K.

Generally human beings fall under one of the following Life Positions;

- 1) I am O.K, You are O.K
- 2) I am not O.K, you are O.K
- 3) I am not O.K, you are not O.K
- 4) I am O.K, You are not O.K

So teachers have to make a deliberate effort to direct all the children to the advantageous life position i.e. I am O.K, You are O.K

Strokes: Students need recognition and positive feedback, or "strokes." TA works on eliminating unhealthy patterns of stroking and understanding how people give and receive both positive and negative strokes. With technology advancement and excessive use of social media, the students have been disconnected with people. The teachers have to initiate and intervene in the lives of children to regain the lost love and compassion they have for others. This will help to bring back the lost connectivity with the students.

Games: Some of the games include, "Yes, but....," "Why don't you....," and "I'm Only Trying to Help." works very well with the students. Students needs to be heard but they might not be correct or on right lines all the time. So TA with its games helps them to analyze the situation without being felt hurt.

Conclusion: A role of a teacher is re-structuring the ego states, supporting, co-creating and being playful with children. On the other hand inconsistent, interfering, reckless, oppositional, over-adapted, criticizing nature has to be curbed. People who are good in negotiation skills seem to have mastered transactional analysis. It is very important to adapt to a suitable ego state and encourage others to do to resolve differences and to get the best deal.

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