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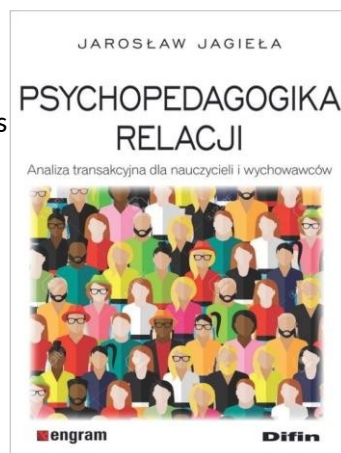
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**[Review of the book], Jarosław Jagieła (2023).
Psychopedagogika relacji. Analiza transakcyjna
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In the introduction to his monograph, Jarosław Jagieła articulates the purpose and goals of his research. He emphasizes the relevance and importance of his work for teachers and psychologists. The author mentions several reasons for writing the monograph. One of these reasons is the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the negative effects of forced remote interactions on human relationships. Many studies have been published on this topic, both before and during the pandemic. These include works by Kim & Thayne (2015), Xu, Chen, & Chen (2020), and Beaunoyer, Dupéré & Guitton (2020). Jagieła notes changes in the younger generation's lives due to the trauma of isolation. He expresses concern about their future. I agree with



the author. A key task for psychology and education is to create ways to bring back natural communication between teachers and students as society returns to normal.

Why use the term "natural"? Recently, increasing scientific research has encouraged active use of machines in educational communication (Edwards & Edwards, 2017). Moreover, some researchers promote collaboration between teachers, students, and pedagogical agents—digital teachers. Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies are claimed to support processing natural human language and improve communication between students and pedagogical agents, particularly in developing human qualities such as emotions (as cited in Sikström, Valentini, Sivunen, & Kärkkäinen, 2022).

However, from an educational perspective, I consider this approach inappropriate. Behaviourally, it may achieve intended outcomes, but psychologically and relationally, it could lead to harms such as "digital dementia" (Spitzer, 2013). Experience has shown that during the pandemic, both schools and teachers became distanced from students, with the internet replacing direct interpersonal relationships. Reduced contact with others increases suspicion toward people. Maintaining this situation may cause defensive attitudes, creating a negative cycle. Isolation leads to suspicion, causing defensive responses that further heighten suspicion and isolation—a self-fulfilling prophecy. The psychopedagogy of relationships, analysed through the lens of transactional analysis—a theory fundamentally based on describing relationships—is particularly useful for addressing and analysing the issues discussed in this book.

From the very beginning of his work, the author clearly indicates that Transactional Analysis (TA) is not limited only to examining communication processes between people. Education today extends beyond interactions solely between primary participants (teacher-student). The author exceeds his original goal, which fits well with our views. So, the author looks to TA theory. He believes it can help improve relationships, according to him and members of the British Transactional Analysis Society. This is the main purpose of the book. The author rightly emphasizes that in the space of "post-leadership," restoring interpersonal communication using TA will be essential. He refers to humanity's oldest message—"In the beginning was the Word"—to emphasize that interpersonal relationships are the starting point for everything essential in human life. Within educational settings, the art of teacher-student relationships creates the school as a social institution, just as marital relationships create parenthood through the same relational art. Together, these relationships form a "social triangle." The strength of attraction between the sides of this triangle and its overall functioning depends on relationships shaped by categories such as essence, need, encompassing form, mysticism, and the "innate You." It is difficult to disagree that the teacher-student relationship is the most crucial social interaction, serv-

ing as the foundation for the student's further educational path and quality of future life. To fulfil this role, teachers must possess appropriate skills (Jakimiuk, 2015) and competencies (Madalińska-Michalak & Górska, 2013).

It is important to remember that according to Eric Berne, the author of TA, the life script begins forming through relationships between the child and their parents and grandparents between the ages of 3 to 6. The non-directive communication style between teacher and student, which the author states "minimizes anxiety levels in school situations," is shaped during early childhood and should later dominate interactions in schools. Our practical experiences have consistently confirmed that children raised in an atmosphere of trust and love at home require the same approach in the school environment. Schools are (or should be) centers of kindness, positive relationships, recognition, and respect. Indeed, the greatest challenge during such interactions is obtaining positive feedback from teachers. Negative feedback can lead to conflicted relationships with students (Allen et al., 2011, 2015). Additionally, successful transactions between teachers and students are significantly influenced by how students perceive various aspects of the school environment (Wang & Eccles, 2013). Therefore, like the author, I am convinced that research supports the importance of further exploring the TA concept. Prominent Polish educators support the TA approach. Their work shows it is valid and useful.

In characterizing interpersonal relationships, Jagieła draws on classifications by other researchers (Wojciszke & Doliński, 2011, p. 356) and clearly connects them to both positive interactions (such as helping others and mutual attractiveness) and negative interactions (e.g., aggression). It is hard to disagree with the author's claim that understanding, and communication should form the basis of interpersonal relationships. Like the author of the book, I agree with distinguishing between interpersonal communication and interaction, which involves action. Based on a broader understanding of interpersonal relations, Jagieła convincingly argues that the quality of these relationships significantly affects our lives and our functioning within society. Moreover, we believe that the quality of interpersonal relationships also shapes the overall quality of society, influencing citizens' levels of awareness. Improving communication quality by providing accurate, unbiased data as a foundation is desirable. Thus, quality communication in classic "person-to-person" dialogue helps build bonds and can further develop into communication between individuals and groups, ultimately enhancing interactions between individuals and society.

One of the fundamental axioms highlighted by the author is the assertion that dialogue, manifested through interpersonal transactions between various ego states of individuals, is the cornerstone of TA. Such dialogue conveys information and simultaneously builds relationships, for instance, between a mentor and students (a group of individuals). As my extensive experience in secondary

schools and universities shows, this approach is relatively time-consuming and costly. However, it remains the most effective system for acquiring competencies. Parents should often use this approach in the family education system. The book's author emphasizes this point, rightly highlighting that effective dialogue must respect the dignity of the transactional partner. Based on this, Jagieła accurately notes that a school is more than just a home or part of the educational system traditionally seen as an interaction space between teacher and student—it encompasses everything occurring "through words" between teachers and students. This approach requires all participants in the educational process to treat each other equally and collaboratively.

Jagieła recommends building interpersonal relationships based on dialogue while avoiding communication barriers. Incidentally, the analysed book is particularly valuable because its author, an experienced practicing psychotherapist, provides practical recommendations (listed at the end of the book). One of the author's most valuable recommendations, in my opinion, involves overcoming challenging relationships, captured in the idea: "If you do not wish to change your attitude towards me, I will change my attitude towards you." I also consider it important to address the topic of relationships with students' parents within the context of TA. Contemporary educational science and teachers themselves pay significantly less attention to this issue than the globalized and digitalized environment demands. Moreover, the honest and sincere admission by teachers that meetings with parents are among the most stressful elements of their job deserves recognition. In this context, Jagieła emphasizes the importance for teachers to "create an atmosphere free of authoritarian judgments or statements full of advice and instructions." This aspiration remains largely a goal today, yet it is crucial to strive towards it.

According to Jagieła, TA, with its conceptual framework, can greatly assist in building effective teacher-parent communication. In today's digital school age, we should find new ways to talk to parents. While much progress has already been made (e.g., electronic gradebooks, social media groups), this is not sufficient for building truly effective relationships. If internet tools are to be utilized, educational electronic platforms should be developed to facilitate more frequent video conferences with parents, for example, monthly. It is also essential for representatives of school administration, or even extracurricular educational institutions, to participate in the communication between teachers and parents. By applying a thoughtfully implemented and clear understanding of TA theory, effective communication that acknowledges the interests and needs of all stakeholders—not only teachers and parents—can be achieved. It is worth noting that the book's author is among the few researchers who recognize and emphasize the relationship between the core principles of TA and the humanistic message. The author points to a clear interaction between TA and Positive Psychol-

ogy (PP), suggesting this could become an interesting subject for future research. Regarding TA terminology, it is important to highlight that Jagieła authored the Dictionary of Transactional Analysis (Jagieła, 2017), which facilitates a deeper understanding of this scientific field. I am also impressed by the broad range of TA methods presented, which allow both psychotherapists and teachers to formulate accurate diagnoses. The author outlines specific TA-related diagnostic categories, such as behavioural diagnosis, phenomenological diagnosis, historical diagnosis, and social diagnosis, that address individual problems effectively.

Alongside traditional methods and techniques of TA, Jagieła also presents the latest methods, which are currently undergoing testing and will be introduced into scientific circulation after further research. He also mentions the application of modelling methods. The author interprets TA theory as a comprehensive theoretical model, encompassing numerous other frameworks, patterns, and theoretical constructs. Moreover, Jagieła, with his extensive research experience in TA, rightly emphasizes that TA is not limited solely to the Parent-Adult-Child (P-A-C) model. He points out that TA includes various other models inspired by traditional and contemporary psychological schools. Without neglecting the list and content of traditional TA approaches, the author focuses on a new direction—Relational Transactional Analysis (RAT). Among the essential foundations of this concept, he emphasizes the special role of relationships in interpersonal interactions, and the significance of subjectivity and unconscious processes within these relationships. These aspects primarily relate to psychotherapeutic work but, as the author points out, can also apply to teacher-student relationships. However, transferring these ideas directly to educational settings, especially regarding "empathetic transactions," although theoretically possible, requires careful consideration and specialized research. Therefore, the author clearly defines the main application areas of TA as psychotherapy, counselling, coaching, and organizational improvement, highlighting Educational Transactional Analysis (EAT) as a distinct area.

Jagieła convinces readers of the close connection between therapeutic and educational approaches within TA. With extensive professional experience in both education (pedagogy) and psychotherapy, the author formulates key doctrinal principles of Educational Transactional Analysis (EAT), which undoubtedly merit special attention from educational researchers. He supports his viewpoint with an analysis of therapeutic and educational research conducted in the field of TA over a significant period (1963-2010).

When discussing the functional division, the author, based on research (Stewart & Joines, 2016, p. 27), clearly explains that the structural model describes "what," while the functional model explains "how" and how it can be observed. However, as the author notes, recent views among TA specialists advocate for a clear separation of the structural and functional models, which was

not present in the original concept. I favor the traditional approach as it better illustrates the connections between TA and educational theories. In the following paragraph, the author clearly presents, using illustrative models, situations in which some Ego states can be excluded or blocked from the general Parent-Adult-Child (PAC) structure. Similar to the author, we often tend to idealize the Adult Ego state, but Jagieła himself emphasizes that some degree of contamination by other states is inevitable. From a psychotherapeutic perspective, Jagieła examines in detail, supported by illustrations, the importance of working on the integration of the Adult Ego state as an attempt to connect the adult aspects of thinking, feelings, and experiences. He highlights the importance of certain models in educational processes without detailing exactly how and when to apply them. Further, the author revisits the topic of personality integration and associated educational objectives. Using the concepts of ethos, pathos, and logos, he associates these classical ideas with transactional states: Ethos arises at the intersection of Parent and Adult states; Pathos represents a combination of Child and Adult; Logos occupies a central position in second-order structural analysis, interpreted as Adult within Adult. Each of these ancient concepts is aptly identified by the author as a guideline for educational activities, conveniently classified and presented in a table.

From his dual perspective as a psychotherapist and educator, the author thoroughly describes conditions of the relationship between the Self and Family—one of the oldest yet unresolved and thus pressing educational issues concerning parent-child relationships. From the TA viewpoint, teachers frequently activate the Parent ego state due to their caregiving and normative roles. The Adult state is central to teachers' professional activities, while the Child ego state also plays a crucial communicative and expressive role when working with children. The author provides a detailed analysis of ego states within the learning process. Understanding this content by teachers, teacher educators, and even students is essential for achieving educational goals, such as clear and effective communication aligned with a permissive ego style and preventing authoritarian approaches in lessons and seminars while acquiring both general and specialized competencies. The communication model presented by the author can practically support these objectives.

Jagieła skillfully and consistently describes various types of transactions—parallel transactions, crossed transactions, hidden transactions, and transactional devaluations—supplementing these descriptions with graphical illustrations for better understanding. This helps beginners encountering TA concepts for the first time grasp their purpose and practical application, while experienced researchers can refresh their understanding of these constructs. The author illustrates their application in teacher-student transactional situations. Jagieła does not overlook the critical issue of conflictual transactions, relevant

to both psychotherapy and pedagogy. I am particularly impressed by his depiction of the positive aspects of functional conflicts, where transactional participants (in the fourth transactional position—"I'm OK, You're OK") reconsider their positions toward each other. In an educational context, the author aptly cites Danish educator Jasper Juul, who asserts, "There is no such thing as a difficult class, only relationships between teachers and students."

Jagieła provides valuable advice to teachers from a TA perspective, recommending the technique of "grounding" during sudden and heated disputes. This approach helps teachers remain objective rather than reacting impulsively and thoughtlessly. He also cites practical advice from Gary Victor, emphasizing that effective teachers must understand the communication process and reflect on their interactions with students. Jagieła supports his theoretical insights with contemporary communication models such as the Process Communication Model (PCM) and The Three-Phase Model (TPM).

Finally, the author discusses a group of transactions considered most effective in school contexts. Among these, he highlights the "Bull's Eye" transaction, focused on "hitting the target," and the "3C Model," which stands for care, closeness, and compatibility. Particularly insightful is the author's analysis of transactions between parents and adolescents. Jagieła rightly notes that this developmental stage often involves misunderstandings, tensions, and challenging moments due to young people's striving for autonomy and independence, alongside their ongoing, objective dependence on parents. These factors contribute to transactional conflicts. From a pedagogical perspective, understanding how to prevent such conflicts is crucial.

One significant issue in psychopedagogy is the construction of effective teacher-student relationships based on TA. According to the author, a crucial aspect of this relationship involves teachers actively using various ego states—not limiting themselves to the Parent and Adult states but also including the Child state. I fully agree with the author that, when selecting a communication style and ego state, teachers should adhere to the principles of a realistic educational philosophy, viewing students as individuals entitled to self-determination and self-realization. However, we must also emphasize to students—and this is crucial—that they have not only rights but also responsibilities. Foremost among these responsibilities is learning, which requires perseverance and diligence. It is worth agreeing with the author that one of the goals of interpersonal communication is to promote recognition, respect, and the evaluation of achievements by others. Isolation in a school environment may foster a sense of individuality and autonomy, but it does not allow for the development of community and support. The concept of a "stroke"—a form of recognition—is discussed, highlighting the importance of being noticed and appreciated by others and the willingness to focus attention on perceiving others. The early develop-

mental need for physical touch and affection is later symbolized through words in the form of various types of recognition signals. The author illustrates positive and negative recognition signs in tables for comparison and analysis.

The author provides examples of recognition signals in teacher-student relationships, including sympathy, antagonism, antipathy, and indifference. Referring to Oswald Summerton, he states that participants in such transactions can recognize and acknowledge each other on five levels of interaction: Parent-Parent, Adult-Adult, Child-Child, Parent-Child, and Child-Parent. At the same time, the author highlights the significance of teacher recognition, describing it as positive and unconditional acknowledgment that helps young people build self-confidence and develop self-affirmation. Another form of recognition—positive but conditional strokes—often dominates teacher-student interactions. These strokes support a sense of competence by reinforcing specific behaviors. This most commonly manifests through teacher rewards because of expected behavior. In the absence of unconditional attention, students seek emotional support through conditional words. Upon receiving such recognition, students may come to believe—and this is a crucial point—that praise from a teacher is earned only through achievements and obedience. If students do not receive recognition, they may strive to gain attention in any form, even negative, simply to be noticed.

From a pedagogical perspective, the author also describes the consequences of excessive use of recognition signals. He notes that receiving positive but conditional strokes—without the presence of unconditional ones—often leads to workaholicism in adulthood. In educational terms, it is important to consider that, like Eric Berne, the author rightly believes that negative recognition signals contribute to the development of psychological games in the future. Thus, a key factor in overall well-being is whether individuals receive positive strokes. Based on this, the author identifies three teacher personality types according to Zbigniew Zaborowski's model: elevating, exchange-based, and diminishing. Teachers who effectively use positive recognition signals typically exhibit an elevating orientation. They help others and are committed to reducing tension and conflict, aligning with the TA position of "I'm OK, You're OK". The author of the book proposes creating rules for the positive exchange of strokes, specifically addressed to teachers, namely: give genuine strokes; ask for the strokes you need and want; accept the strokes you wish to receive; reject strokes you do not wish to receive; and give positive strokes to yourself.

Analyzing pedagogical literature, the author equates positive strokes with the concept of affirmation. However, from the perspective of a practicing teacher, Jagieła cautions that strokes should be given to children carefully and thoughtfully, as they do not always yield beneficial outcomes. He encourages teachers to follow the principle: "Give sincere strokes to others, especially students, as often as they truly serve a purpose." This guiding principle, effectively

articulated by the author, can rightly be considered one of the fundamental rules for teachers in the realm of motivation—what he refers to as "psychological stimulation."

One of the most insightful and positive aspects of Jarosław Jagieła's book is its structure and organization of the material. This allows for a comprehensive discussion of the examined phenomenon from theoretical, methodological, and practical perspectives. At the end of each chapter, the author presents research findings—both his own and those cited from other sources—demonstrating clear connections between theory and practice. The absence of this connection has often been a point of criticism in pedagogical research, and unfortunately, in many cases, this criticism is well-founded. In one of the chapters, the author focuses on a fundamental issue—life positions. Without understanding this concept, the rest of the book would be difficult to comprehend. The author rightly observes that life positions form the foundation for the values a person perceives in themselves and their environment. They also serve as a basis for justifying or explaining one's decisions and behaviors. Any researcher in personality psychology or social pedagogy has likely pondered whether anything is more important for an individual than having a life position aligned with the fundamental values of society.

The author partially addresses this question by stating that "life positions are sometimes referred to as basic, life, or existential attitudes." The four positions (I'm OK, I'm not OK, You're OK, You're not OK) can appear in four different combinations and result from common behavioural patterns. As the author notes, "someone in the position of 'I'm OK - You're OK' is considered a winner in TA psychology." While TA theorists agree that this is a desirable position, Jagieła points out that what being "OK" means can vary significantly from one person to another. At the same time, the author raises thought-provoking questions: "Does this not create a temptation to impose our own model on others? Do we not seek to influence them to fit into assumptions we have hastily constructed?"

The author provides a clear answer on how to approach such situations: "Therefore, a person must first be understood in the uniqueness of their life history, without immediately applying labels, oversimplified models, or, most importantly, attempting to impose a specific way of being in the world." For those new to TA, Jagieła references Eric Berne's perspective, which presents a straightforward interpretation: 'I'm OK - You're OK' leads to success; 'I'm OK - You're Not OK' results in arrogance; 'I'm Not OK - You're OK' leads to depression; and 'I'm Not OK - You're Not OK' represents the futility of existence.

When picking up a book or encountering an intriguing title online, we often ask ourselves: What will reading this work offer me? That is why I always begin by reading the author's introduction, which helps determine whether and why I need the book. After reading Jagieła's interpretation of his book's purpose,

I immediately recognized its relevance—both to the broader context of contemporary society and to the ongoing development of psychology and pedagogy, which I integrate with axiology into axio-pedagogy. The result of my research and analysis of the key ideas presented in Jarosław Jagieła's monograph has led to this concise review. I highly recommend this monograph not only to researchers studying the scientific aspects of pedagogy and psychology but also to educators and practitioners in the fields of teaching and upbringing.

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