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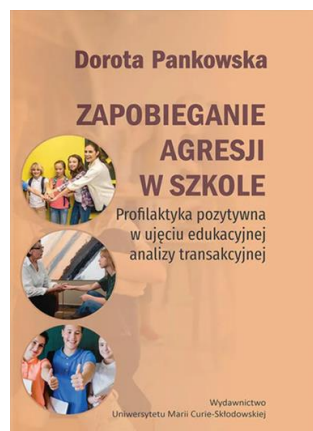
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**Book Review: Dorota Pankowska (2024).
*Zapobieganie agresji w szkole. Profilaktyka
pozytywna w ujęciu edukacyjnej analizy
transakcyjnej*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu
Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, pp. 421**

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Contemporary schooling is a mirror of the current social moment, operating at the intersection of complex educational, technological, and societal challenges. In this context, not only is the pedagogue's knowledge crucial, but also the availability of effective preventive tools. Dorota Pankowska's book, *'Preventing Aggression in Schools: Positive Prevention in the Context of Educational Transactional Analysis'*, appears to be an adequate response and a valuable resource for addressing the escalating phenomenon of aggression in educational settings. The escalating media reports concerning alarming events within the school environment only serve to confirm the timeliness and utility of this monograph.



In her monograph, Professor Dorota Pankowska frames the narrative within the current of positive prevention, focusing primarily on strengthening psychological resources and cultivating a supportive, developmental environment for young people. The author explores the subject of aggression prevention using the framework of Educational Transactional Analysis (TA). This combination—integrating TA with the concept of positive prevention and the school context—constitutes a novel and coherent approach that allows for an integrated perspective on student personality development, social relations, and the school itself as a resource-based prophylactic environment.

The monograph is structured logically, comprising an introduction, five well-thought-out chapters, and concluding reflections. The sequence of content is deliberate and consistent. The reader is first acquainted with the concept of aggression before being gradually immersed in the individual components of Transactional Analysis, such as Ego States, Life Positions, communication patterns, passivity, Life Scripts, and time structuring. The introduced concepts are in constant dialogue, forming a cohesive whole. Issues are analysed in profound depth, frequently broadened by thematically related aspects, enabling the reader to adopt a multi-faceted, almost holistic perspective on the subject matter.

The function of Chapter One is to introduce the reader to the problem of aggression. The author provides a meticulous presentation of its theoretical and empirical aspects, drawing upon both psychological and pedagogical perspectives. Readers gain knowledge concerning the types, sources, and developmental specificity of aggression. The author raises the important issue of understanding aggression; in common parlance, it is often associated with overt aggressive acts, which may actually be a culmination point. When considering prevention, a deep comprehension of the underlying mechanisms is key, prompting action *before* aggressive acts manifest. Furthermore, the author extends the description beyond the school environment, outlining the familial context as well.

Chapter Two is the most extensive in the publication, arguably forming the core of the book. Its subsections address the educational potential and risks concentrated within individual Ego States. The opening subsection describes the structural and functional model of Ego States, upon which the author explains how each state can either favour the development or inhibition of aggression. The subsection on the Assertive Adult delineates characteristics that underpin an assertive posture—presented as a vital alternative to both aggression and passivity. The following subsections focus on developing empathy through the Nurturing Parent and the resources of the Normative Parent in the formation of a value system. The author highlights the role of anti-values and stereotypes as potential threats. The section on the Natural Child focuses on the need to support natural emotions, as misunderstanding or suppressing them can form the foundation for frustration and aggression. Reflections on the creative or destruc-

tive nature of adaptation are made in the context of the Adapted Child, strongly emphasising the role of socialisation and the development of social competence. Finally, the subsection on the Integrating Adult describes the path towards authentic maturity by reinforcing positive personality aspects. The actions described centre on shaping a subject-oriented and responsible attitude, which is crucial for the development of autonomy and aggression prevention. The descriptive style encourages auto-reflection among educational professionals without becoming overly didactic.

Chapter Three details the creation of positive relationships within the school environment. The author analyses the way relationships and interactions are established based on the Life Positions of the educational process participants. These deeply rooted beliefs determine both aggressive and positive (pro-social) behaviours, forming the foundation of attitudes adopted by both students and teachers towards themselves and others. The presentation of the “I’m OK – You’re OK” position as an attitude requiring conscious cultivation is particularly salient. This chapter also incorporates an analysis of communication from the TA perspective, describing how unconscious psychological games and transactions can heighten tension. As an alternative to harmful communication patterns, the author explains the use of transparent communication forms and positive strokes to strengthen relationships and support the development of student agency. Chapter Three thus underscores the role of communication clarity and relational authenticity as a form of aggression prophylaxis.

Chapter Four addresses the intrapsychic sphere in the context of coping with problems and difficult situations. Here, aggression is framed as a response to a lack of resources for constructive action. The author refers to the concept of passivity as an unconstructive coping mechanism, noting that it facilitates the emergence of various forms of aggression. Pankowska details the mechanism of devaluation, which helps to understand passivity not merely as inertia, but as a psychological process of avoiding responsibility. She further discusses the four categories of passivity (doing nothing, over-adaptation, agitation, and incapacity) and analyses them within the school reality. The chapter then examines the concept of Life Scripts—unconscious plans that influence the interpretation and experience of reality and can severely limit personal autonomy. The author illustrates how these elements affect human functioning and how they can foster aggressive behaviours. The latter part of the chapter focuses on prophylactic and intervention activities aimed at developing constructive coping skills.

Chapter Five addresses the organisational culture of the school and how it can be interpreted and supported from the perspective of Transactional Analysis. Professor Pankowska meticulously defines organisational culture, relating it to the school context, and then focuses on the possibilities for diagnosing and improving the school environment using TA concepts. She describes the Ego

States and Life Positions in the perspective of organisational life, referencing, for example, Charles Handy's typology of organisational culture. Tools for assessing the institution's strengths and weaknesses are also presented. Finally, the concept of time structuring is introduced; through a broad description, the author focuses on the potential of different structuring forms to generate aggressive behaviours.

This publication not only presents the issue of aggression comprehensively but also encourages teachers toward creative thinking, reflection on their own practice, and transcending fundamental educational requirements. Furthermore, the book contains practical guidance, including interventions tailored to specific situations and needs. The author engages in dialogue with numerous studies and presents methodological materials that can serve as the basis for lessons or other educational activities.

In my assessment, the monograph is also an intriguing resource for discerning parents, who can not only expand their knowledge of aggression but also gain new ideas for managing it within the family environment. It illustrates the development of aggressive behaviours from the earliest years, where such behaviours are often downplayed or even accepted by the immediate surroundings. While the thematic focus is on school aggression, the author presents the phenomenon in a complex manner, encompassing developmental and social contexts.

Professor Dorota Pankowska concludes the publication with a critical reflection on systemic actions concerning aggression. One can only hope that this book will encourage creative foundational work, fostering unconventionality, courage, and a hopeful outlook for change.