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Teacher's Power Basis Perception of Czech Lower Secondary Students

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The ability of a person or a group to influence opinions, values, and behaviour of others is one of the most studied phenomena in social sciences (for example Simmel, 1896; Weber, 1922; Foucault, 1975). Thinking through this McCroskey's (2006) definition of *power*, the importance of this phenomenon for educational and instructional settings is obvious. The latest research supports our view by showing that the realisation of instructional aims is enabled by clearly established *power relationships* in classes (Šalamounová & Švaříček, 2012). This supports Bernstein's (1996) theory of dominance of *regulative instructional discourse* while the *didactic discourse constitutes a part of the regulative one*. *Power negotiation and use of power is understood as an inherent part of educational process* (McCroskey & Richmond, 1983; Šedová, 2011). The most influential, traditional typology of power as a *relational phenomenon* comes from French & Raven (1960). They distinguish teacher's power in relation to a (by students perceived) principle on which it is based on, i.e. *coercive, reward, legitimate, referent, and expert power*. This typology developed during the years and was precised. Nevertheless, main instruments measuring power were based on this original typology with five main power bases (i. e. Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007). Most of the studies conducted with questionnaires based on this typology focused on tertiary students and teachers. The most often used power as perceived by students seems to be coercive power, followed by legitimate and expert power; the least used were reward and reference power (Jamieson, 1974). The use of specific power bases (i. e. reference and expert power) is positively correlated with student's cognitive and affective learning (Richmond & McCroskey, 1984). Elias (1992) found that students perceived as inappropriate the use of so called *harsh power mechanisms* and reported discomfort when they were applied. On the other hand the expert power was perceived as the best by students. Other studies reported also relation of teacher's power and student's motivation (Richmond, 1990) or their inappropriate behaviour (Myers, 1999; Tauber, 1999). No influence of teacher's gender on student's perception of their power was found (Elias & Mace Britton, 2005). The relevance of these findings needs to be further supported with findings on different samples, i. e. above all on younger students and in different socio-cultural contexts.

In accordance to these findings and needs of further theory development, we adapted one of the latest and most used instruments measuring relational power of teachers – *Teacher Power Use Scale* (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007). This regarded the adaptation for younger students (i. e. not university but lower secondary level) and to the Czech sociocultural conditions. Our aim was to test the above mentioned theory and findings on different data and come up with results about Czech sociocultural context as well because there was not enough information about teacher's power bases available in the Czech Republic.

Teacher Power Use Scale (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007) is based on French and Raven's (1960) typology of *power* (i.e. *coercive, reward, legitimate, referent, and expert*). TPUS consists of 30 items on a 7-point Likert scale. TPUS showed better psychometric properties than previously preferred *Perceived Power Measure* by McCroskey and Richmond (1983) and Roach's (1995) *Power Base Measure*. TPUS demonstrated better internal reliability, concurrent and discriminant validity, and it contained more valid and reliable indicators for the five power bases (coefficient of reliability Cronbach's alpha ranges between .77 to .90). TPUS was better in measuring of so called *anti-social forms of power* (coercive and legitimate) and *pro-social forms of power* (referent and reward) at the aggregated level.

Methodology, Methods, Research Instruments or Sources Used

Adapted Teacher Power Use Scale (TPUS) by Schrodt, Witt, and Turman (2007) was used for measuring the perceived power. The Czech adaptation of TPUS included re-designing the instrument for lower secondary students and teachers, and for the Czech conditions. The pilot study showed that a cultural and linguistic adaptation to the Czech conditions was necessary. Therefore the adaptation included independent parallel translations, multiple cultural and linguistic adaptation, multiple expert reviews, and cognitive interviews with relevant respondents. The scale was reduced to 5 points. For ensuring the instrument equivalence validity and reliability we applied: confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), item analysis, estimation of scales reliability, repeated CFA on reduced items, and exploratory factor analysis. Validity of the 5 self-report scales as instruments measuring the concept of power bases, other possibilities of power measurement and the possibilities of triangulation will be discussed as this paper is a part of research project which also includes observations, field notes, diaries and interviews.

The questionnaire's data were collected in 2013. The convenient research sample consisted of 2188 students from 117 classes (7th grade 39 %, 8th grade 48 %, 9th grade 13 %) with 18.70 students per a class (min. 4, max. 30, Me = 19). Average amount of students per school was 19.54 (SD = 6.60, min. 4, max. 15). The classes involved 203 integrated children with special needs. Average age of students was 13.69 (SD = .87, Me = 14, min. 12, max. 17). Evaluated teachers had at average 18.61 years of the teaching practice (SD = 8.91, Me = 18, min. 3, max. 40). Data were collected in the course of four school subjects, i. e. Civics (23 %), History (22 %), Czech Literature (23 %) and Geography (18 %).

Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings

We are currently in the process of data analysis. After CFA and item analysis we are conducting descriptive statistics and we will conduct hypothesis testing. In accordance with our aims and the mentioned state of art the expected results will be divided into 3 main question areas:

- Does Czech data support the Anglo-Saxon model of relational power with five main power bases?
- Which power bases are the most and the least used (seen from the perspective of students) by Czech lower secondary teachers? Are the results similar to international and European findings?
- Are there significant differences in perceived power bases use based on following variables?: Different teachers/classes, teacher's length of practice, different school subjects, students' gender, students' age, and students' achievement.

Data gathered from students will be analysed on the level of individual as well as on the aggregated level of classes taught by the same teacher which will allow us to describe the perceived teacher's power. Results will be based on the conducted CFA analyses of Czech data which shows minor differences in the power bases structure in comparison to the original model of Schrodt, Witt, and Turman (2007). Further analysis will focus on statistically (in)significant relations (above all differences) between the above mentioned variables (ad c) as well. The findings will be compared with international findings, especially with European research results, respecting the effects of traditional similarities in educational systems. Implications for the European and international research, theory, and teacher professional development will be discussed.

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