



THE TEACHER AS A COACH IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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Abstract. The aim of the article is to disseminate knowledge about the role of a teacher as a coach in the educational process. The understanding of the essence and sources of educational coaching was shown, coaching teaching style was characterized and dialogue as a basic tool in educational coaching was characterized, the need for mutual understanding, cooperation and partner teacher – student relations was referred to, and the potential and barriers associated with the implementation of the coaching approach in educational practice.

NAUCZYCIEL JAKO COACH W PROCESIE EDUKACYJNYM

Słowa kluczowe: nauczyciel, coaching edukacyjny, dialog, współpraca, coachingowy styl nauczania

Streszczenie. Celem artykułu jest upowszechnienie wiedzy na temat roli nauczyciela jako coacha w procesie edukacyjnym. Ukazano rozumienie istoty i źródeł coachingu edukacyjnego, scharakteryzowano coachingowy styl nauczania i dialog jako podstawowe narzędzie w coachingu edukacyjnym, odniesiono się do potrzeby wzajemnego rozumienia, współpracy i partnerskich relacji nauczyciel – uczeń oraz przedstawiono potencjał i bariery związane z wdrażaniem podejścia coachingowego w praktyce edukacyjnej.

Introduction

The focus of the author's article revolves around issues related to coaching in the educational process. The considerations are limited to the role of the teacher as a coach towards adult learners (students, course participants, seminar attendees, etc.)

Coaching, both in the realm of practice and scientific theory, has found its place as a concept, methodology, and practice that is increasingly widespread and utilized with greater awareness and understanding. The most common types of coaching include *business coaching* – supporting the achievement of professional goals; *career coaching* – focused on supporting career planning and development; *life coaching* – concentrating on personal development; *managerial coaching* – aimed at mid-level managers; *executive coaching* – intended for senior management; *retirement coaching* – supporting retirees in planning their retirement life (Brzeziński, 2022). The type of coaching can also depend on the number of people being coached. There is *individual coaching*, *couple coaching*, *group coaching*, and *team coaching*. The article addresses the issue of *educational coaching*. The application of the coaching method is a novelty in the Polish education system. While the idea of close cooperation between teacher and student is not unusual in theory, its implementation in practice is rather rare. Paradoxically, there is a growing demand for various levels of coaching support for development in the educational process.

The aim of the article is to seek answers to the following questions: What is educational coaching? What constitutes the so-called coaching style of teaching? Why must both the student and teacher perceive the outcomes of the coaching activities as their joint success? What opportunities are associated with implementing coaching methods into the daily teacher – student relationships? Can (and should) every teacher be a coach?

This study is descriptive in nature and serves as an introduction to the discussion on the opportunities and barriers associated with implementing coaching as a teaching method in educational practice.

What is educational coaching?

When I pose this simple question, included in the subtitle, I cannot hide a feeling of uncertainty. I would like to answer with the words of one of the philosophers, St. Augustine of Hippo, who, when asked, “What is time?” replied, “If no one asks me, I know. If I try to explain it to someone who asks, I do not know”. (cited in: Janowski, 2017, p. 134). However, such an answer will not suffice. I will attempt to respond to the question using definitions cited in scholarly publications on coaching. I will make a brief review of the definitions. This will, of course, be a subjective selection – I present only those definitions that are consistent with my – as the author’s – understanding of the essence of coaching:

Coaching is always an action taken with someone, not for someone. Therefore, responsibility [...] lies on both sides: the coach and the employee. Both parties must demonstrate mutual trust and openness, which are essential for the creation of proper relations between them (Clutterbuck, 2009, p. 37).

Coaching is unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their achievements. It is not about teaching someone, but helping them to learn (Whitmore, 2002, p. 8).

Coaching is a form of conversation that follows ironclad rules regarding what must be present: respect, openness, compassion, empathy, and a rigorously adhered to commitment to telling the truth (Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, Sandahl, Whitworth, 2019, p. 25).

The process in which a coach, working with a client, uses listening skills and questioning in such a way as to enable them to devise solutions to their problems. It focuses not on the causes of problems, but on the search for their solutions (McAdam, 2011, p. 19).

Coaching encompasses the learning process in a holistic manner. Each participant of the coaching program is treated as a separate entity – a being endowed with abilities and potential. An important, integral part of the coaching process is the spiritual development of the individual (Clutterbuck, 2009, p. 18).

One could expand this set by adding many similar definitions to it. The diversity of approaches and positions, which is the essence of coaching, is also evident in definitional matters. Trying to somehow organise the presented definitions (and many others), they could be divided into two groups: 1) definitions emphasising the course of the coaching process; 2) definitions emphasising the goal that coaching serves.

As for the goal of the coaching process, it can be succinctly defined as the development of participants' potential and creativity. Defining the course of the process, I would repeat after Małgorzata Sidor-Rządkowska that "coaching is a conversation that matters" (2022, p. 18).

The essence of coaching is conversation. It is essentially a dialogue in which people open up to each other, being in a relationship with one another. According to Józef Tischner, the human-to-human relationship is characterised by a dialogical bond. It gives awareness of the presence of another person, because it is through questions that an individual knows there is another subject beside them. Awareness of the other is a dialogical opening to another person (Tischner, 2006). A dialogue "is a conversation, a meeting, in which individuals, being in a partnership relationship, are open to another person and their opinions, express their own opinion, while listening to others, mutually respect their right to differ, and have the space to suspend previously held assumptions. Dialogue facilitates a better understanding of oneself and others and requires an openness to another person and their (different from ours) opinions" (Kozieja-Grabowska, 2016, p. 50). Dialogue creates conditions for intellectual cooperation, as the aim of the dialogue is not to "win" but to jointly inquire, to better understand each other, to expand one's knowledge, etc. Dialogue teaches to recognise types of interactions in relationships, patterns of behaviour that hinder learning and good communication. Hence, there is a justified interest in dialogue understood as the essence of coaching in the educational process.

Educational coaching concerns individuals who directly influence teaching. These include teachers and students. With reference only to the work of the teacher, "educational coaching is a process aimed at developing the competencies of educators and thereby achieving better teaching outcomes. The aforementioned process occurs through understanding the identity, beliefs, values, skills, and behaviours of students and skilfully working with them and effectively motivating them to learn" (Kupaj, Krysa, 2016, p. 240). It is a process of continuous learning and rediscovering oneself anew. In this process, various obstacles appear, and facing them often means the necessity of stepping out of one's comfort

zone. This applies to both parties in the teacher – student relationship. It is about mutual inspiration to take action despite the accompanying fear (Whitworth, Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, Sandahl, 2010, pp. 11-12).

Educational coaching is based on building a relationship between the teacher and the student, characterised by an atmosphere of trust, confidentiality, understanding, and inspiration, leading to reflection. Thanks to such a relationship, the teacher helps the student discover their inner potential, shows them a broader perspective, builds their awareness, taking into account their individual needs and expectations. The teacher sees in the student not only the ability to learn but also gets to know their values and beliefs. The student, independently but supported by the teacher, achieves the set goals, while refining the competencies they already possess.

Educational coaching appears as

a method serving to: 1) pause for deep self-reflection, begin making decisions in harmony with oneself, that is, with who we are and what we consciously want to create in our reality, and then 2) review the actual situation in terms of possessed competency resources and existing limitations, 3) create a strategic and tactical plan, and 4) implement it at the level of regular actions until achieving the set goal or consciously changing direction based on the experiences gathered along the way (Czarkowska 2013, p. 5).

Sources of educational coaching

It is hard to identify another field of practical activity, apart from coaching, that draws so extensively from philosophical sources. Socrates (known through Plato's writings), Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas – these are just three examples of eminent thinkers whose ideas are referenced, in a more or less conscious manner, by contemporary schools of coaching. The main goal of coaching, “maximising potential,” which means transcending barriers and limitations to enable people to utilise the possibilities within them, aligns with the concept of *the fullness of humanity* that has been present in philosophy for centuries. Understanding the role of the teacher as a coach is close to Socrates' understanding of the teacher's role (Taboń, 2012). The Socratic method indicates that the role of the teacher is not to impart “unquestionably certain” knowledge. The teacher is to stimulate the student to think by asking challenging questions in such a way that the student arrives at their own answer. Socratic questions teach critical thinking and help

eliminate negative thoughts. The Socratic method is not a “dry” academic lecture nor a didactic method, but one that provokes thinking, self-reflection, self-awareness, and stimulates activity. Ready-made knowledge is not provided, yet a person becomes wiser. It is worth asking: why is dialogue essential in Socratic dialectic? Because, according to Socrates, it is not the showy speech, long, i.e., monologue, but dialogue, i.e., questions and answers, that provide the space where the teacher-coach and the student-coachee can jointly seek the truth.

Albert Einstein understood the role of a teacher in a similar way (Konczal, 2023). In his view, the real task of a teacher is not to provide answers but to stimulate questions and encourage independent searches. Most teachers waste time asking questions designed to reveal what the student does not know, while a “true” teacher tries to use questions to reveal what the student knows or what they are capable of learning. According to Albert Einstein, the highest level of educational skills is the art of awakening creativity in adult students, using simple teaching aids.

Coaching, as a form of working with human potential, draws from the sciences of philosophy, but also from psychology, sociology, and pedagogy. Coaching sessions are not free from emotions, as these are an integral part of the entire process. Emotions are part of the normally functioning human being, building the psychological sphere.

Humans are inherently social beings, and self-awareness and subjectivity can only be achieved through entering into an I – You relationship, a dialogical relationship so important in the coaching process. As Lidia D. Czarkowska writes (2016, p. 10):

Communication in this relationship occurs on a horizontal plane and is based on partnership, which acknowledges that the participants of the dialogue are equal, yet different. These differences, instead of judgments, fears, the desire to hide behind masks, or the need for domination, arouse curiosity. Thanks to this, both sides can ‘bring themselves’ into the dialogical relationship – their reflections, feelings, and experiences – and through this, they can draw inspiration and learn from each other.

From the perspective of creating a subject-oriented coaching relationship, it is worth recalling the principles developed in therapeutic practice by Carl Rogers: 1) authenticity, meaning freedom from facades/masks; 2) empathic understanding, which is based on empathy, attentive and free from assumptions

listening; 3) unconditional acceptance, which is an attitude full of approval towards the uniqueness and right to self-determination of another person (Rogers, 1991). Coaching is often compared to psychotherapy due to the specific context of psychological support involving individual meetings and the sharing of certain techniques. Coaching draws from the methodology and experiences of psychotherapy (Huflejt-Łukasik, 2010). Both psychotherapists and coaches are involved in helping, although the former helps to return to a good psychological state, and the latter supports the client in setting and achieving goals.

It is worth adding that in the current classification of occupations and specialities for the labour market (Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 7 August 2014 on the classification of occupations and specialities for the labour market and the scope of its application – Journal of Laws of 2018, item 227; Journal of Laws of 2021, item 2285), the profession of *personal trainer (coach, mentor, tutor)* is included and designated with the digital symbol 235920. This profession belongs to the group: *Specialists in education and upbringing, not elsewhere classified*. The tasks of a personal trainer (coach, mentor, tutor) include, among others:

- Applying various techniques to support development;
- Guiding the client towards the achievement of set goals;
- Supporting the client in identifying and eliminating obstacles, as well as in recognising and exploiting the possibilities for their realization;
- Avoiding suggesting, insinuating, or proposing solutions, judging, and advising the client;
- Supporting the client in discovering and analysing their mistakes and failures in various spheres of life through appropriately asked questions and attentive, active listening;
- Assisting the client in developing solutions that will eliminate the causes of failures;
- Encouraging the client to use their skills and internal resources optimally and consciously, and to creatively solve existing problems;
- Inspiring motivation and commitment in the client to achieve set goals, supporting them in making key decisions and in difficult situations;
- Reviewing achieved results, which is an opportunity to draw conclusions for the future, revising plans, changing limiting beliefs, and action patterns.

A teacher as a coach in the educational process seems to be able to – and perhaps even should – perform these tasks.

Coaching style of teaching

The teaching style is an indispensable element of the education process. The effectiveness of the educational process depends on both the content itself and the way it is conveyed, as well as the teaching methods used. Renata Nowakowska-Siuta posits that “teaching style is a category that relates not so much to the content of teaching, but to the form (manner) of the teacher’s didactic and educational work and includes a set of characteristics distinctive to the teacher, that is, distinguishing their personal way of teaching from the ways characteristic of other teachers” (Nowakowska-Siuta, 2006, p. 1106). This explanation indicates that the adopted teaching style comprises two key elements: individual features defining the teacher’s personality and preferred methods of cooperation with students. More than 30 years ago, Richard I. Arends (1994, p. 57) advised those learning to teach that an effective teacher – implementing effective teaching – possesses a body of knowledge that supports the art of teaching; has and knows how to use a repertoire of the best pedagogical practices; demonstrates attitudes and skills necessary for systematic reflection and problem-solving; treats learning to teach as a continuous process that extends throughout one’s professional life. This guidance is relevant today, including in teachers’ learning to apply a coaching style of education.

Coaching changes the teaching style – from one in which the teacher is the source of knowledge and solutions for the student, to one in which the student is more independent, contributing their creative input to generating solutions. In this arrangement, the role of the teacher has been expanded to become an inspirer and catalyst for the inventiveness of their students. As a result, the student is expected to reach a solution to a problematic issue with the teacher’s support. This does not exclude the teacher from sharing verified knowledge from a given area or jointly generating solutions with the student in a “brainstorming” session. As Richard I. Arends (1994, p. 35) emphasizes: “If teachers are to help others think independently, they themselves must think independently; they must be able to act independently and collaborate with others, maintain the ability to judge critically. They must be people of broad and deep knowledge”.

In their work, teachers use dialogue – a structured conversation – to provide support to the student. One of the first models structuring conversation in coaching is the GROW model (*goal – reality – options – will*), invented by John Whitmore (Rzycka, Porosło, 2012). Structuring the conversation allows

the teacher to direct the student towards finding solutions by focusing their attention on several key issues: the *goal* they want to achieve; *reality* – the current situation they are facing, along with influencing factors and the issue that needs to change; possible solutions, action *options*, from which the student chooses the best one for themselves to achieve the goal; a specific action plan – *will*. Such a form of conversation enables teaching students goal-oriented thinking and solution finding through the use of a universal scheme. “Its undeniable advantages are simplicity and ease of application in quite any professional context (Zawiłowski, Huflejt-Łukasik, Skoniecki, 2016, p. 108), and therefore also in an educational context.

However, the competence of conducting a structured conversation within the coaching style of teaching is not sufficient to support the student on their way to the goal. The students themselves and their expectations towards teachers are changing. Students’ needs force teachers to behave more flexibly. Sometimes, a teacher must go beyond a structured conversation, possessing not only the skills of asking questions (or reading them from a sheet) but also the flexible selection of questions, understanding what is happening at the psychological level with the student, and operating advanced change tools, intervention techniques in case of recognizing inappropriate, destructive student behaviours.

Teaching adheres to certain principles. Czesław Kupisiewicz (2000, p. 115) understood teaching principles as “norms of didactic behaviour, the adherence to which allows the teacher to acquaint students with the basics of systematized knowledge, develop their interests and cognitive abilities, instil certain views and beliefs, and inculcate self-education”. Various proposals for teaching principles and coaching principles are put forward in the literature, both in terms of content and form. They represent not only an expression of instrumentalization but also a guideline for ethical behaviour, having significant practical importance. Here are 14 principles of coaching developed by M. Sidor-Rządkowska (2022, p. 54) in the form of guidelines for professionals:

1. Take care of your own development.
2. Do not betray trust.
3. Only undertake tasks for which you feel prepared.
4. Be truthful.
5. Be loyal.
6. Respect the client’s autonomy.
7. Remember that you are the ultimate judge of your professional decisions.

8. Keep your commitments, bearing in mind the principle: *my word = my signature*.
9. Do not consider yourself infallible.
10. Be sensitive to the issue of conflict of interest.
11. Take care of your own psychophysical condition.
12. Remember the difference between a goal and the means to achieve it.
13. Try to view other coaches not as rivals, but as people with whom cooperation is possible and valuable.
14. Remember that self-respect is a value that cannot be overestimated.

It seems that these can be considered appropriate and true for teachers employing a coaching style of teaching. As Lilianna Kupaj and Wiesława Krysa (2016, p. 243) write: “preparation for the coaching profession is one of the most effective ways to enable teachers to be excellent practitioners”.

A teacher-coach uses many psychological tools to build relationships, such as active listening, psychological paraphrasing, and tuning in at the level of cognitive style and communication. However, this cannot be achieved solely through the teacher’s effort (one-way communication). Therefore, the teacher’s attitude should be characterized by a belief that the student is naturally capable and creative, which is referred to as belief in the client’s potential and creativity (Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, Sandahl, Whitworth, 2019). A teacher, believing in the possibility of change and the positive attributes of their student, thus encourages and motivates them to act (Łaguna, Rozwalka, Migoń, Radkiewicz, 2013). Success occurs when both parties are engaged in the process and when the student wants to learn. As David Clutterbuck (2009, p. 37) points out, the student and teacher must perceive the outcomes of their actions as their joint success.

Dialogue – the fundamental tool in educational coaching

There is no such thing as a universal set of coaching tools. Each teacher chooses the way they will work with their students. Appropriate work methods are selected based on their own experience and the individual case. The most important aspect is the relationship with the student or students and their needs.

The coaching relationship is a special relationship that requires partnership, trust, cooperation, and mutual understanding. Therefore, dialogue is a fundamental tool in coaching. As Iwona Kozieja-Grabowska (2016, p. 61) writes:

“Dialogue is one of many, and at the same time, a special form of communication (conversation), aimed at the ‘flow of meanings’, better understanding of oneself and others, mutual learning. It is not a panacea for all problems, but certainly a form of communication that we can consciously choose when we need it, when we know its basic principles”.

The first challenge that a teacher-coach faces is building an appropriate relationship with the student or students, characterized by an atmosphere of confidentiality and trust, a sense of security, belief in agency and creativity, non-criticism, and not imposing one’s own opinion, which facilitates the student’s learning process. To this end, the teacher should initially establish what the student needs for the process to be effective for them. At the beginning, participants define the goal or outcome, which helps to focus on what is essential. Then they establish the current state and what they would like to change, as well as their expectations for the future. They identify and analyse available options, barriers, and ways to overcome them. Finally, they act, engaging in identifying possible obstacles and in taking action.

A key factor that differentiates a coaching discussion from a “regular didactic discussion” – although the latter belongs to problem-based, activating teaching methods – is the way the conversation is conducted. A teacher, adopting a coaching style of teaching, does not play the role of a traditional teacher who “knows better,” nor does he or she engage in advising or indicating solutions. A conversation in coaching requires specific competencies to stimulate the process of finding solutions, rather than providing them. A significant challenge for the teacher is to stay in the role of a coach rather than shifting towards an advisor or mentor and not to suggest solutions. This is a difficult temptation to overcome, especially when the student has difficulty finding the right resources or overcoming obstacles, and the teacher believes they know what steps would be appropriate. The essence of the teacher’s role as a coach in the educational process is to refrain from advising and to lead the student to achieve their goal by providing the right conditions – especially mental (cognitive) ones.

The primary tool of a teacher-coach is questions, making the key coaching competency for effective communication the ability to ask questions. These should be open-ended, powerful, deepening, revealing, and aptly asked questions. The shorter, the better. The questions are intended to broaden the student’s perspective, challenge limiting beliefs, and help see more possibilities. They relate to the student’s present and future. Good questions form a logical sequence, stemming from attentive listening to what the student says. They are a measure

of the inquirer's curiosity (Kupaj, Krysa, 2016, p. 245). The teacher's statements and questions are conscious and purposeful, aimed at encouraging the student to reflect and make progress.

A coach primarily uses open (opening) and clarifying questions. Open questions allow the student to freely formulate answers, aiming to broaden the student's perspective, stimulate creative processes, and reflection. These questions should not suggest answers and must directly relate to what the student previously said. Their key features should be the flexibility and readiness of the teacher to "follow" the student or students. On the other hand, clarifying questions enable the teacher and students to better know and understand the students' experiences, aiming to detail the message and get to its essence. Following Grzegorz Zawilowski, Mirosława Huflejt-Łukasik, and Michał Skoniecki (2016, p. 117), here are examples of opening questions:

- What ideas come to your mind? (e.g., when we want to encourage the client to think positively about the reality of the goal and generate solutions);
- What indicates that this is the case? (in reference, for example, to beliefs about the impossibility of achieving something);
- What resources will be needed to achieve this goal?
- How will you know that this decision is the right one? [...].

Examples of distortions in statements and clarifying questions:

- I can't do this. – What would happen if you did it anyway?
- It's impossible. – How do you know? – Since when do you think so?
- All managers are egocentrics. – What leads you to that conclusion? – Do you not know any manager who isn't egocentric?.

Unfortunately, as Janusz Tarnowski writes (2008, p. 14):

Teachers mainly operate with convergent (closed) problems, avoiding divergent (open) problems. The former immediately indicates to the student the correct solution, which they should obediently accept, without stimulating them to personal searching through possible trials and errors. In such an approach, the student essentially does not learn to think. It suffices if they remember the correct answer, for which they will receive a positive grade. Contemporary psychology, however, advocates the use of 'open' problems both in conducting classes

at school and in the editing of textbooks for teachers and students. Only then does creative thinking occur for both.

Research shows that during a lesson, a teacher usually waits about 1 second for a student's response. If it does not come, then in the 'closed' system, the teacher communicates the correct answer to the student and moves on to the next topic. However, in the application of an 'open' system, students are invited to personal reflection, they learn to 'think in silence', and try to present their attempts – however weak – but subjected to criticism from their classmates. In this way, the class group becomes a study-research group. Then, with skilful facilitation by the teacher, an attempt at creative dialogue takes place. The school ceases to be a place of constant boredom and begins to arouse interest and develop the personality of both the teacher and the student.

In communication, words (and their precision) play an important role as they can either support building a connection or hinder it. However, for effective communication, not only the verbal message is important but, above all, the non-verbal; the intention with which we speak certain words is crucial. The verbal message, i.e., the words we utter, only influences 7% of the content of our message. Voice tone and speech pace account for 38% of its understanding, and body language for 55%. A fundamental tool for building contact is "tuning in" to the other person. It is the ability "based on the subconscious (or unconscious) level where we start to show certain symptoms of similarity in behaviour – for example, in facial expressions, gestures, way of speaking, use of words" (Zawiłowski, Huflejt-Łukasik, Skoniecki, 2016, p. 111). It is easy to observe that people wanting to make contact with each other unconsciously adopt similar positions. They maintain eye contact, simultaneously – and in a similar manner – nod their heads, tilt their shoulders. Someone who can communicate effectively changes their way of speaking after a few sentences without even thinking about it. The tone of voice and the pace of speech determine the way of speaking. The speed, loudness, modulation of voice, pauses, and rhythm of speech are important here. Building contact, exchanging experiences, emotions, occurs through behavioural synchronization – mirroring the body position and movements of the other person, pace of speaking, preferred distance between the speakers. On a behavioural level, mirroring concerns gestures, posture, attire. In a coaching discussion, we go a level deeper, as we synchronize both the characteristics of the voice – speed of speaking, melody, rhythm, emphasis – and the content of the statements and the categories used by the speaker.

Synchronization is indeed one of the most effective ways to build contact with another person by aligning with their reality or their way of perceiving the world. The coach then learns what criteria the client thinks by, what strategies they have, how they make decisions, what influences their emotions and motivation, and thanks to this knowledge, is able to adapt to them and adjust their actions towards the needs of the client (Zawiłowski, Huflejt-Łukasik, Skoniecki, 2016, p. 112).

Coaching in teaching work – challenges and benefits

As previously mentioned, the role of the teacher-coach is not so much to provide students with ready-made solutions or answers, but rather to explain the subject matter to them, to show various ways of completing tasks, etc. This means that in addition to conducting standard classes, teachers should also hold coaching sessions with their students. Individual coaching sessions constitute additional educational classes or consultations.

The coaching approach requires the development of coaching competencies in the teacher, including: co-creating relationships, effective communication (based on active listening and asking full, powerful questions), as well as emotional intelligence, the ability to give and receive appropriate and constructive feedback, and challenging students. It must be added that effective teaching occurs when individuals with a high level of engagement participate in the process – both the student and the teacher – similar to the coaching relationship.

Taking into account the socio-emotional aspects of relationships, as well as educational and upbringing issues, the benefits of a coaching style of teaching include:

- Learning in the form of collaboration between the teacher and student(s), which is founded on the teacher's credibility in the eyes of the students, building partnership relationships between teacher and student(s), treating students with equality and respect, and the teacher's belief in the potential inherent in every student;
- Higher motivation of students to learn, to expand their intellectual horizons; effective use of learning time for constructive problem-solving, seeking, and creating new solutions and new learning opportunities;
- Visible improvement in the area of individual intellectual functions of students;
- Effective teamwork among students, an atmosphere of kindness and mutual respect – both for their failures and successes; commitment

to developing both the skills to overcome personal limitations and inner predispositions;

- Good mutual communication between students and between students and the teacher, expressed in the ability to listen actively and in the formulation and asking of questions leading to understanding, the ability to speak so that students listen, building a culture of dialogue, a culture based on mutual respect, appreciation, and trust;
- Engagement in the development of competencies in students reluctant to acquire knowledge;
- Reading body language with understanding and, consequently, recognising real intentions and emotions, noticing changes at the emotional level.

Conclusions

As Cicero, the Roman orator and philosopher, once said, “It is not about having knowledge of something but also in the skill of imparting it”. The paradigm of education based solely on knowledge is becoming obsolete today. The effectiveness of the educational process depends on the methods used.

Coaching is an effective method of supporting teaching, requiring emphasis on both the task and the relationship. Strengthening the interaction between students and teachers is the “golden” means to achieve the best teaching outcomes. For the teaching process to proceed flawlessly in the teacher – student relationship, care, trust, cooperation, and respect must be present. A teacher focused on the student possesses four fundamental characteristics: they are kind, trusting, empathetic, and build positive relationships.

I leave it to the reader to seek answers to the questions: Can and should every teacher be a coach? Can every teacher be a professional practitioner in the coaching approach?

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