

Review: Classroom Behaviour Management in Further, Adult and Vocational Education

GWENNAËLLE MULLIEZ

Denise Robinson (Ed.) (2019): Classroom Behaviour Management in Further, Adult and Vocational Education. Moving Beyond Control? London: Bloomsbury Academic, 151 pp.

The anthology comprises ten literature-based and practice-oriented contributions that deal with the topic "Classroom Behaviour Management" in adult education and further education. The editors' aim is to support teachers and prospective teachers in their professional training and development. In addition to providing practical advice on how to deal with the participant behaviour in the course, the central concern is to develop a deeper and critical understanding of the social conditioning of both their own professional intentions and the behaviour of participants in the classroom. The necessity to deal with this complex of issues, which the authors from the UK see as particularly justified by the fact that, as a result of various political activities and guidelines, there is a change in the professional self-image of teachers in the neoliberal world: "Teachers, as reconstituted 'classroom and learning managers', are no longer primarily there to teach but to manage future human resources; and students subconsciously or consciously recognize this" (Robinson, p.2). These changes are particularly obvious in the school context but are becoming increasingly relevant in the area of vocational training. In terms of content, the contributions in the anthology cover a wide range of topics, from linguistic reflection on the linguistic representation of disorders and conflicts in the course process, considerations on affirmative leadership in the field of mental health, ethos and culture in formal and informal sectors and their effects on behavior management, criticism of general approaches to behavior management, to the examination of the use of professional standards for teachers and trainers to promote positive behavior.

Two of these contributions will be highlighted due to their particular potential for the practice and research of adult and continuing education:

In his contribution, Pete Bennett discusses the effects of the political discourse on behaviour management and the related reinterpretation of the role of the teacher as 'classroom manager'. Using Foucault's genealogical approach, the author combines elements from politics, philosophy, autobiography and practice. He argues that educational aspirations are increasingly shaped by the myth that investment in education can be equated with future economic gains and social advancement (Bennett, p.20). Instead, education must recall its emancipatory claim. This can only happen if, instead of the deficit perspective on learners, the relationship between learners

and teachers is renegotiated, taking equality and social justice into account. The prerequisite for this, however, is that teachers also learn to emancipate themselves in their professional actions (in the sense of Rancière: model of 'universal teaching').

The importance of evidence-based recommendations for teaching practice in continuing education is the focus of another article in the anthology that deserves special mention. Following Schleicher, David Powell emphasizes that advice without empirical evidence represents only well-intentioned opinions. Overall, a synthesis of teaching-led research and research-led teaching must be aimed for in the educational context. However, this requires a certain amount of know-how on the part of the teachers in particular regarding the evaluation and implementation of study results into their own practice. The author calls this ability 'research literacy' (Powell 2019, p.72). First, studies relevant to the context of continuing education and classroom behaviour management are summarized in an overview. Powell notes a serious research gap with regard to quantitative research methods for evaluating the effectiveness of classroom management strategies and the lack of studies explicitly related to the context of continuing education. He critically emphasizes that school-related studies are often provided with a note on their transferability to other educational contexts. In particular, the studies by Parry and Traubmann (2013) and Marzano et al. (2003) are discussed in detail and their implications for classroom behaviour management are questioned. From this, Powell derives his plea to shift the focus to teachers and their relationship to participants in the future. In conclusion, the author offers three methods – action research, self-study and living theory – which are intended to encourage those involved in further education to empirically and scientifically accompany their organizational and pedagogical-didactic actions.

The explicit examination of classroom management in adult and continuing education still represents a desideratum of research on professionalism in adult education. The diversity of contributions in this anthology clearly illustrates that the perspective of classroom management is promising for the investigation of problems regarding the organization of interaction contexts in courses. Especially following Powell's contribution, empirical follow-up questions can be formulated with regard to the appropriateness of pedagogical options for action and the implementation of research results in practice. The subject of all contributions is formal adult education. In addition, it should be investigated to what extent classroom management becomes relevant for other areas of adult education against the background of social change processes. The central objective of the anthology, to support teachers and prospective teachers in their professional development, is fulfilled by the authors in that each contribution is completed with case studies, questions for reflection or references to further literature. This encourages readers to critically examine their own teaching behaviour and the reactions of their course participants and to recontextualize disturbances.

Author

Gwennaëlle Mulliez, M. A., is a research associate at the professorship for Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Cologne. Her research interests include adult education and migration as well as educational organization research.

Contact

University of Cologne
Faculty of Human Sciences
Department of Educational and Social Science
Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education
Innere Kanalstraße 15
50823 Cologne
Germany
mulliez.gwennaelle@uni-koeln.de