

Observational stress analysis at school: Classroom teaching as an example of interaction work

Lilian Meder*, Cosima Dorsemagen** und Andreas Krause**

*University of Freiburg / Psychology (Germany),

**University of Applied Sciences Olten / Applied Psychology (Switzerland)

ABSTRACT

This article shows that action theory can be successfully applied to the analysis of interaction work. There are both theoretical and methodological arguments for analysing work stressors using instruments based on action theory. For example, data of self-reports on perceived stressors cannot provide insights into the causal effects of work conditions and stressors on psychological strain. Therefore, adequate methods for analysing work-related stressors are necessary. Especially for service work, there is a need for the construction of job analysis instruments that explicitly define the requirements and stresses of interaction work without relying on self-reports or other subjective data alone. Action theory provides an approach for developing such instruments (RHIA-instruments – instruments to identify regulation barriers) that can be applied to interaction work.

The approach of the RHIA-instruments was tested and applied to teaching (*RHIA-Unterricht*). The instrument allows regulation barriers and capacity-overtaxing factors in classroom teaching to be analysed. It can be used for process analysis of stress during teaching, for statistical analysis of correlations between work stress and other working conditions, such as class size or teaching methods, and for the analysis of single lessons, for example, in school development processes. Reliability and validity of *RHIA-Unterricht* is comparable with existing RHIA-instruments.

Keywords:

action theory – interaction work – teachers – occupational stress – working conditions – job analysis – observation methods