In the good old days when I did my CM exam in 1981, things were simple. There were the 3 schools of transactional analysis - the classical school, the redecision school and the cathexis school. This was widely accepted and when asked a question about the different schools in your oral exam you knew what to say.

Also around that time I remember presenting a paper at a PTM training session on this and I made the statement that the classical school covered the Adult ego state, the redecision school covered the Child ego state and the cathexis school covered the Parent ego state. This generated much discussion as that did not leave any more ego states and what did that imply in terms of where transactional analysis could develop to, if anywhere. As time has shown it has.
As people continued the theorise and experiment with different techniques, new approaches evolved. The difficulty is, when is a 'school' a 'school'? When is a new approach significantly different to be considered a separate school or is it just a variation of an already existing school. There is no clear answer to this, only opinions and this has lead to much confusion over the past decade or so in the Transactional Analysis literature.

In the 2004 October edition of the "Script", Charlotte Sills presented her ideas on the existence of 6 schools of transactional analysis. In my view it is a very erudite statement in capturing the main schools or approaches that currently exist. An excellent summation of the overall TA theory that has evolved about the different approaches from the start up unto now.

Charlotte says that this is what she teaches about the different transactional analysis schools. This statement is a combination of the work of Tudor & Hobbes (2002) and her own thoughts.

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* Classical Transactional Analysis - a cognitive-behavioural approach that also addresses feelings, used by Berne and those in the original San Francisco group; ideal for "change now," for someone who has insight and is able and willing to take
charge of his or her thinking and behaviour. Developments in this tradition include Kahler's process communication model and English's existential therapy. Many classical transactional analysts (e.g. Claude Steiner, Hogie Wyckoff and others) used (and use) transactional analysis within the radical psychiatry movement, which holds that the vast majority of emotional disturbances are the consequence of power abuse, sexism, racism, class oppression, and so on. It recommends as a psychotherapy the demystification of oppression and action against it.

* Stroke centered transactional analysis and its practical application, emotional literacy training, developed out of an aspect of the original theory of classical transactional analysis. This approach proposes that game playing and harmful scripts are largely the result of chronic stroke hunger due to toxic stroking patterns and therefore seeks to correct in a positive direction the way people interact with each other.

* Psychoanalytic Transactional Analysis - especially associated with the Italian schools of transactional analysis (Moiso and Novellino) working with transference and unconscious communication. A development of this tradition is relational transactional analysis (Hargaden and Sills). It involves bringing largely unconscious intrapsychic processes into the interpersonal/intersubjective realm in order to be understood and changed via the interpersonal process of relatedness.

* Redecision Transactional Analysis - originated with the Gouldings; the focus is on self-responsibility and resolution of those internal conflicts that are accessible to conscious memory.

* Cathexis Transactional Analysis - developed by the Schiffs; involves structured restructuring of the ego for clients whose developmental deficits and conflicts have left them without reliable functioning.

* Integrative Transactional Analysis - developed by Erskine, Trautmann, and the New York Integrative Psychotherapy Group; a model of inquiry, attunement, and involvement for those with accessible early developmental trauma.

* Constructionist Transactional Analysis - associated particularly with James Allen; takes the approach of helping people understand how they construct themselves and their story and experiment with different narratives. A development of this is cocreative transactional analysis (Tudor and Summers), the use of the here-and-now relationship, combining elements of the constructionist approach and drawing on gestalt principles of here-and-now cocreation of the self in the relationship.
REFERENCES

Tudor, K & Hobbes, R.