



***Social stratification in the classroom -
challenges for teachers***

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SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN THE CLASSROOM – DETERMINANTS

§ **Material status** - children from rich families and children of low-income parents

§ **Family status** - orphaned children, children of divorced parents, children raised in institutions, by relatives or foster families

Material status of students and social stratification

§ Recently students tend to build high self-esteem based on material values and the power that parents have, not based on their abilities and learning achievements.

§ Sometimes students with excellent marks in class, yet not from families with high material status, are often subjected to irony and sarcasm.

Family status and social stratification in the classroom

Children reared in incomplete families or in institutions are closed in themselves, they are more uncertain and when in class there is a discussion, concerning the family, they are usually troubled, worried to talk about, as well as they are underrated in comparison with others.

CASE STUDY

In my class I have a student who comes from a very poor family. He lives with his father, who has a mental illness and is unable to work, and sometimes, he becomes aggressive. Family atmosphere is very depressing. The boy looks disturbed and self-closed, and it is difficult to communicate with him. He is cautious and always preferring the rear seats in the classroom. No money nor for clothes, neither for textbooks. It is not easy for him. Being oppressed by poverty and family problems, he dipped himself in self-isolation while in class. We did bring some efforts to make friends, but it is very difficult. Together with the students from the class we collected some money for school books and some clothes. But he felt embarrassed and ashamed by this situation, and even more distant. I noticed that he spends much time in school because his home was not a friendly place for him. I decided to use it by assigning him additional tasks related to the subject I teach -Philosophy. He started preparing extra studying material for the next lessons and became my assistant. I watched him in different learning situations. It was obvious that he is quite analytical, considers everything very carefully, preferring to observe, collecting data and information for studying a phenomenon from different perspectives, rather than acting immediately. I appointed him as a reflector type, according to the classification of learning styles by Honey & Mumford. I figured, it would be difficult for him to work in a group with much more active and confident classmates of him. So he has been asked to perform individual tasks, which he could perform not only in class but also in extracurricular time. I wanted first to earn his trust, and to encourage him to show his abilities only in the cases where it is proved he is well-prepared and to pre-thought it. Thus he gained more confidence. He is doing great with learning at the moment. On the occasion of learning tasks gradually he came to interact more with his classmates.

MANAGEMENT AND TEACHING

What can the teacher do in order to control the social stratification in the classroom?

Some teaching ideas for creating a positive atmosphere in the classroom



Communication based on mutual understanding and trust

Accumulation of trust is the most important component in creating a stimulating learning environment. The skill for trustful communication is the most difficult to be built, but it greatly helps in the daily work with students.





Agree on common rules for all to observe the process of learning

The purpose of the rules is to create conditions for the expression of a personal opinion, to promote initiatives, while respecting the right of the point of view of other students.

Using interactive teaching methods

§ Organization of discussions, debates, role-playing games and case studies while teaching, makes students active.

§ When working on cases, students sometimes argue and express extreme views, but they think and engage themselves with the case studies, by reflecting on citizenship and personal behavior and the values for self-assessment of their abilities.

Encouraging students to succeed

In the formation of small working groups, who to work on projects, the particular students in the groups could be combined in such a way, that those who are more worrisome, passive or self-closed in themselves, to fall into a group with more active, but tolerant for others, who in turns to help them to fulfill the task together and to experience the feeling of success.



Validation of rituals

Initiation and completion of the lesson, a congratulation to be submitted the student or the team who performed in the best way (applauses or other acclaimed awards of achievements);
2-minute "warm-up at the beginning of the lesson, in which individual students briefly share their experiences or questions about reflection, no matter what field.



SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN THE CLASSROOM

IT IS WELL WORTH CONSIDERING ABOUT...

THANK YOU !