Chapter 3
Interaction and Intervention Strategies in Effective Classrooms
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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the author describes a few interaction and intervention strategies and techniques at the level of the class as ways to create an optimal learning and socializing environment. The class of students is described not only as a learning group, but also as a social group. This conception provides the teacher useful information on how to manage the class so as to enhance positive student performance, whether it refers to behavioral, motivational, or influencing techniques. The chapter presents well-known theoretical models in literature that generate specific intervention strategies. In light of the results of numerous researches in education, the chapter synthesizes the following specific features that individualize class groups. The author presents the two instructional options often used in learning practice with sometimes opposite effects, such as cooperation and competition. Also, at the level of the chosen strategies, there is an emphasis on the moral support and support, so techniques focusing on the positive approach of the students’ behavior.

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INTRODUCTION

Classroom intervention has several challenges for a teacher. This chapter aims to present several widespread models that underlie the actions by which the teacher develops the social interactions in the classroom. The models presented are expressions of the most used paradigms in classroom management, centered on teacher-student interaction. Each model has its own strengths and weaknesses. The author gives a special attention to the concrete way of being put into practice. Another goal of the author is to argue that teacher-student interaction strategies are based on an effective design of learning suitable to create a positive climate for all.

Background

The class is a complex unit of analysis for the various social interactions. Through these interactions, the class having its own architecture, becomes the source of behaviors, identity markings, and social comparison. Such features permanently interact with the student’s academic career. Social comparison produces strong effects on self-perception especially in competitive social structures (Marsh & Cavendish, 2002).

The interest in classroom intervention is early marked in the 1970s by the Jacob Kounin’s book „Discipline and Group Management in the Classroom”. According to the author, the most important ability for a teacher is not the way they manage damaging behaviors, but the capacity to prevent them early with a maximum accuracy. The various behaviors of the students are based on the understanding of the rules. The most popular interpretation of classroom management is about designing and applying rules. Thus, all teacher-student interactions are oriented towards this goal.

Early studies in the 1980s show the importance of norms in the real life of the class, in group learning, in resources efficiency and safety or beginning and end of the program. Following the meta-analysis of more than 100 studies, a well-known analyst, Marzano (2003), considers the most important factor with the most extensive effects is the quality of the teacher-student interaction. If this is a good one, students have 30% less rate of transgressing the norms of the group.

In fact, student-teacher interactions imply options for spatial planning, learning strategies, observation behaviors and for deviations management (Brophy, 2006).
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