

THE TEACHER AS A PERSON. THE PERSON AS A TEACHER

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Abstract. *The paper develops the problem of teacher's personality. Usually, this topic is approach from a professional position, from a teaching-learning point of view. However, the teacher's personality as a human being is most influential influence upon students. Directly or indirectly, the personal emotional experience of a teacher determines his didactic behavior.*

Key words: *teacher, child abuse, educational training, self-defense mechanism*

THE TEACHER AS HE IS SEEN

Very often there are discussions, more or less academic, about the teacher, about his qualities. There are studies about the way students perceive their teachers and about how the last ones ought to be. In one word, the ideal teacher is always referred to. His professional and human qualities seem to be above any doubt. All these, obviously, in theory. In the best case, giving way to the realities, to the individual differences, it is recommended to the teachers to "forget" the personal problems when in school and the reversal. It is supposed that they do that.

THE TEACHERS AS THEY ARE

Far from being the ideal person, the teacher is firstly, a common person; having a specific evolution, certain opinions about life and guiding values; having certain feelings. As any other person, he let himself lead by impulses, acts more or less aware in different situations and especially, he has an emotional history which subordinates his lifestyle and the general conception about life. Over this sum of specificities, the profession is added.

Out of combination of the individual characteristics with the ones requested by the profession, comes the teacher as he shows up in every school. His dominant activity is focused around the transmission of the information and the methods used in this activity. It seems that there cannot be too strong interferences between the *real* teacher's personality and his personality as a professor. However, the major impact of a teacher upon his students, especially if they are young, is not the informative one but the emotional and axiological impact.

The teacher, as any other person, has the tendency to project his own experience upon the classroom events. Directly or indirectly, he guides his pupils in that way that they would assimilate his experiences as their own, to live the teacher's own feelings as they are their own sentiments. Miss Brodie, Muriel Spark's character (*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*) is a typical example of the children's "molding" according to an ideal that is alien to them.

TWO EXAMPLES

Here there are a few concrete examples from some former pupils' experience, students at present, preparing them to become teachers. The students were asked to write some events they have experienced during their school period that they had positive effects and some other having negative effects.

One of the female students narrates the following happening, during the primary school period:

„There was, one day, close to the school year. One day before, our school teacher has told us that we shall have a dictation and he will rap our knuckles; how many errors, that many slide rules.

Arrived at school I was afraid of the lesson coming. The schoolteacher came in and seeing that we were ready for the dictation, he started. The dictation was not difficult and I thought that I did not mistake with anything, Very sure that I did everything well, I went out from the classroom and I didn't even think about the next lesson when the teacher would bring back

our papers. My work was the last and all my colleagues have received also a few of slide rules on their palms. Seeing that my work was the last one, I thought that I didn't have any mistake, but I was wrong. I had five mistakes. When I took my paper I received also *the punishment that I deserved*. Tears came into my eyes; I took my work and I went back to my desk. Until the end of the lessons I did not utter one single word and when I came home I didn't say anything, not even to my mother, but she found my dictation and understood.

Since the , every time I had a class work or home work, I used to look three-four times over it, checking not to have any mistake."

The story was considered as a positive one.

Here there is another event that is considered (by other female student) as a positive story:

„A happening which marked me positively has taken place in my fifth grade when we had to prepare a fragment of a long poetry for the literature lesson. Of course I was very well prepared, memorizing perfectly, the verses.

Everything went well until the literature lesson came; from whatever reason, the teacher got very angry, starting to question us the lesson alphabetically, as the children were in the class register.

Being a very emotional nature, my name being at the half of the register and seeing my colleagues went haywire and not being able to answer anything and getting very bad marks, 3 or 4, I loose my head too (being the first in my class, I did not get ever a mark under 8), I became so agitated that I forgot one word in a verse and so, I didn't know anything anymore and the teacher gave me a 3.

I was so upset that I have started to cry and I became even more upset when my colleagues who were as good as I was and also, didn't answer at all, got a 4, not a 3. I was also afraid of my parent's reaction.

Why did this experience influence me positively? - Because I didn't despair, I became more ambitious and I've learned very well for the literature subject. After that I found out that the teacher gave me a 3 and not 4, precisely to stimulate me and made me aware that I am an intelligent girl...[...] that is why my teacher did not give me the highest mark until the end of the school years.

Only when I finished the school I found out that my teacher considered me the cleverest among my colleagues. Even I got a 3 at that time, to me, the teacher remains the same person that I respect, even more than before because **he put forth objectivity**- this is what I think- and he knew how to make himself understood in the way that I was able to notice what expectations he had from me. I own to him all my knowledge on literature. This event has positively marked me...[...]"

One can observe in both stories the same thing: fear and tears.

The motive is also the same: the teacher's aberrant behavior. In the first case, we have a method of "correction" of the children's errors by a radical technique: every error, big or small has a constant value: it is equivalent to a beat on the child's hand. Still, a very used assessment method with of course, different variants.

In the second case, there is not about even the teacher's original contribution to the evaluation of his pupils' knowledge; simply, the teacher is choleric and attempts a self-therapy by the liberation from the "negative energies", by terror over the children and very bad marks for the whole class. Again, is nothing new under the sun.

What is less natural is the distortion that accompanies these memories. Too painful for remembering as they actually happened, they were modified in time and becoming positive facts. So, everything that was done, even painful was only to "my own good".

The two female narrators transferred the traditional mentality of parents which beat their child only to guide him on the right path, over their own personal experience. The teacher acts in the same way as a parent. The authoritarian parent might provoke fear but he acts

only from love, he is violent only because the other (the child) made him to be so. A right education of a child requests a method to be remembered by this one.

Both female students consider that the events from their school life had positive consequences. The first one does not dare, after so many years, to see her schoolteacher in his real light: as a violent and aggressive person. She affirms that she deserved the punishment. She does not oppose herself to the kind of the punishment that should be less hurtful. She accepts and presents the effect: she learned to pay more attention. A life time teaching.

The second female narrator is even more determined in the alteration of the memory about the teacher with whims and revenges against his pupils, inventing aberrant motives. How much a person wants to help a child and because of this, to upset him for many years, to give him bad marks only to stimulate him?

That little girl, now a student, needs however this horrible lie in order to survive the long time psychological pressure. She needs this lie in order to keep her self-respect.

The whole contemporary psychology knows that, a child who has been abused, has chances to become in his turn, an abuser. The chances are even bigger if the adult who was abused in his/her childhood occupies a position of authority. What is going to happen with the two students.

The conclusion of the two narrators has to be, necessarily, only one: the violence applied with good intentions leads to among the most beneficial effects. The supreme argument refers to their own person which is, they *must* believe that, a model of fulfillment.

CONCLUSIONS

The two examples are not singular. Many accounts of the life school events reveals the physical or/and the psychological abuse of the pupils together with the activation of some defense mechanisms as the identification with the aggressor, obvious in the cases presented above.

Naturally, when they will be in the same position of authority as their former teachers were, the two students will behave in the same way. They will apply, with good will, the same methods as those teachers did, preserving in this way, the continuity of the inheritance of the didactic violence.

In this context, a very serious problem appears-the one of the initial training of the students which will be future teachers. This training must be extended from a limited educational domain to the psycho-pedagogical counseling zone.

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