Success Factors for migrant students in school

“The illusion of equal opportunities” or:
“primarily it’s the right stable-smell”


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- †: 2002

Important concepts:
- Capital
- Habitus
- Field
The illusion of equal opportunities

- “Equal Opportunities“ is the catchword of our time; the norm of social equality
- Our system(s) of education don't help diminishing class privileges – on the contrary: they help to sustain them by creating an illusion of equal chances
- Higher education has always postulated what it pretends to communicate:
  - Very good command of language
  - Elegant style
  - Familiarity with cultural norms of the upper class
- As the system doesn't explicitly produce what it demands, it demands implicitly that students already know: A language and culture whose basis has to be laid out of school, within a family with high socio-economic status
Pierre Bourdieu’s Forms of „Capital”

**Economic capital:**
- What you earn
- What you own
- What you inherit as moveable possession
- Can be easily converted into other forms of capital

**Social Capital:**
- Resources that are based on belonging to a group.
- Depends on the size of the social network of the person, and capitals owned by the members of the network

**Cultural Capital:**
- **Embodied:** Quality of achieving sth. over a longer space of time (dealing with fine arts; music,..)
- **Objectified:** It is transferable (books, paintings,..)
- **Institutionalised:** Achieving of degrees and academic titles that give limited information about the competences of a person

**Symbolic capital:**
- It’s the capital that others recognise and accept → so it is valuable.
- It’s important in connection with social Fields
Forms of Capital (Bourdieu 1986)

“A capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field” (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 101)

Internal recognition: \(\rightarrow\) **symbolic** capital

**Cultural** Capital: Knowledge & skills

**Social** Capital: Friends & networks

**Economic** Capital: Money
Embodied cultural capital becomes a fixed part of a person → HABITUS

It is a set of dispositions and competences which are formed through the life of a person, especially during the first years, the childhood and the family of a person.

The circumstances under which a family is living and the social economic situation have an important impact on the Habitus.

It is extremely difficult to change the Habitus so that attitudes, sets of behaviour, ideologies,... are permanently influenced in a way that a person doesn't fully recognise it. → Internal set of rules.

Structured structure: Habitus is coined by experience within society. All those sets of dispositions are relatively stable

Structuring structure: means the creative power of the Habitus. Mechanisms that are innate in a person and that create activities according to rules of society.
Early Childhood Education

- “It’s not the problem how a person is formed into a being of society, but under which circumstances he/she can be a certain part within society with a specific position.”
- Cognitive abilities: especially language
- No cognitive abilities: motivation; Motivation, Self-esteem; risk-aversion
- Social factors: which surroundings, health-care,…
- Authoritative style of education: stable principles in a cosy surrounding, open communication, self-reliance, development of own viewpoints
- Educational systems: Prefer kids whose primary Habitus coincides with the aim of the system. → stabilises social fields → no equal chances
Migrant Parents – Competences
(Stefan Gaitanides, Frankfurt, 2001)

- Low language and educational standards
- Low identification with the parent’s job
- High physical work-pressure
- Low income
- Little challenge due to closer surroundings
- Negative role model of elder brothers/sisters
- Dysfunctional education
- Little contact with school
- Highest priority of parents and children is to maintain the level of education

© G. Latke: Factors that influence success in school for migrant students
School (Studie Frankfurt)
(Stefan Gaitanides, Frankfurt, 2001)

- School is ignorant towards compound bilingualism
- Deficit-orientated assessing
- Not appropriate schools due to abnormalities of behaviour;
- School is a “strange world”
- Little contact between school and parents
Used literature

- https://www.google.at/search?sourceid=navclient&q=Pierre+Bourdieu&hl=de&ie=UTF-8&rlz=1T4AVNB_deAT582AT582&g=die+feinen+unterschiede&gs_l=hp..2.0j41.0.0.12476...........0.VSYUsrWfgoA&pbx=1
- http://www.adlit.org/article/36286/#strategies