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CiCe
Institute for Policy Studies in Education
London Metropolitan University
166 – 220 Holloway Road
London N7 8DB
UK

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The Development of Citizenship for Senior Form Students in the Schools of National Minorities

Zoja Chehlova
University of Latvia Latvia)

Introduction

The social and economic changes taking place at the end of the 20th century have drawn attention to the issues of the spiritual and ethical self-determination of an individual in the ethno-cultural society. The development of citizenship plays a key part in this process. As regards the representatives of national minorities, social integration is the basic pre-condition for the development of citizenship. The mechanism ensuring the integration of society is based on the social perception of cultural distance, which enables the representatives of ethno-cultural minorities to form positive local identities (e.g. 'the Latvian Russian') corresponding to the new ethno-cultural and political reality.

The development of citizenship refers to social-psychological and cultural factors on two levels of cultural transmission. The primary level includes the family and the surrounding mono-ethnic environment, while the secondary level includes all levels of education, mass media, and the existing cultural institutions. However, many parents, the representatives of ethnic minorities, do not have the status of a citizen at present. Therefore, the system of education plays the decisive role in the development of citizenship for secondary school students, the representatives of the Russian diaspora.

The purpose of this article is to determine the essence of citizenship as a pedagogic phenomenon and to work out the cultural model of the content of education for the development of citizenship.

The Essence of Citizenship as a Pedagogic Phenomenon

In pedagogy, there exist two ideas concerning citizenship: one considers citizenship as a personal quality; the other understands it as a system of attitudes to higher values (the state, the motherland, the people). It is connected with different understandings of the role of educational activity. Some educators believe that it is necessary to develop and perfect personal qualities. According to this approach, it is necessary to form and develop those qualities which are highly valued in society and culture: discipline, kindness, diligence, politeness, patriotism, duty and responsibility, activity, etc. However, the number of such qualities is very large, and the formation of a long list of wonderful personal qualities is an impossible task which is bound to fail. Personal qualities are stable reactions to life phenomena, fixed in a certain form during the history of individual development. It is extremely difficult to change a personal quality which has been formed during the life of a certain individual. A teacher who wants to perfect a child's personal qualities encounters a lot of problems as it is difficult for him/her to determine the essence of personal qualities and find a mechanism for their development. There also exists another point of view concerning the role of educational activity. These educators focus on the development of a person's attitudes to basic values (to the world,

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to others, to oneself) (Schurkova 2000). An attitude is dynamic, contradictory, many-sided, and variable. Moreover, it does not have a completed form. It manifests itself as an open system capable of changing. If a teacher purposefully encourages the development of attitudes to certain values, it also results in the development of personal qualities as the indicators of attitudes. Thus, the two ideas discussed above do not contradict each other. One can say that they supplement each other. Attitudes can be considered as a mechanism for the development of personal qualities. Each personal quality implies a certain hidden attitude to a particular value. Based on this, it is possible to determine the strategy for the development of a particular personal quality.

Behavior is generated by an attitude. Its correction does not take place through influence or through the organization of the educational process, which could involve some manipulation techniques. It happens by appealing to a person's conscience, by indicating to an individual his/her hidden attitude, and by revealing this attitude together with the learner. A teacher has to develop his/her skills in revealing the value basis of an event, a situation, or a phenomenon and facilitate the development of attitudes to values. In this way, it is possible to stimulate the acquisition of positive personal qualities for children.

A person as a world phenomenon tends to possess a certain system characterizing his/her spiritual outlook. One of the system-forming factors is the attitude to Man as the highest value. According to this conception, the essence of citizenship is considered as a system-forming personal quality whose content manifests itself as the attitude to such important values as family, country, motherland, duty, and responsibility.

At present, a competence-based approach is used referring to citizenship. It is due to the fact that the basic result of the person-oriented activities of an educational institution is not expressed as a system of knowledge and skills, but as a system of basic competencies.

The term competency comprises not only cognitive and operational-technological components, but also motivational, value-based, ethical, socio-cultural, creative, and behavioral factors. Its content also includes the results of education (knowledge and skills), the system of value orientations, etc.

In the system of basic competencies, there can be singled out those referring to the field of civil social activities e.g. performing the roles of a citizen, an elector, and a consumer. According to this approach, citizenship is as a competency whose content implies a positive attitude to the basic values and the skill of performing one's role as a citizen.

The Culturological Model of the Content of Education as the Basis for the Development of Citizenship

The development of citizenship is based on the potential of humanitarian culture. Humanitarian culture plays a key role both in the system 'an individual – the society', and on the level of individual existence. It determines the life values and ideals, both individual and social ones, social orientations and behavioral standards, as well as determining the individual self-determination of a personality. In pedagogy, there have been determined the basic functions of humanitarian culture: the functions of culture-identification, norm-orientation, social consolidation, individualization, and meaning-formation.

The meaning-formation function of humanitarian culture is primarily based on its huge spiritual and ethical potential. Besides this, the constituents of the ideal world of culture possess a personified character.

The individualization function of humanitarian culture implies ensuring an individual's understanding of his/her own uniqueness and the ability to find one's own calling.

The social consolidation function of humanitarian culture and humanitarian creativity is based on a dialogue. A dialogue (or even a polylogue) is a natural condition and the most important mechanism for the development of humanitarian culture and the actualization of its essential potential.

Considering the idea of 'person-creation' as its key task, humanitarian culture presents itself as the manifestation of the genuine essence of human history and culture. Therefore, humanitarian culture can be considered as the universal basis for the self-determination of a person and the development of his/her key competencies. Consequently, the development of the culturological model of the content of education will facilitate the cultural development of students and the development of their citizenship.

The culturological model of the content of education comprises the following components:

- The cognitive component, referring to the cultural experience of mankind as the system of knowledge about man, culture, history, nature, which forms the basis for spiritual development;
- The creative activity component, which reveals the potential of man's activity in the area of culture and the creative character of this activity;
- The personal component, representing a person's individual cultural experience of emotional value-based attitudes, which manifest themselves as cultural needs, the motives of activity, and the choice of a personally meaningful system of value-orientations.

While all the components described above are definitely important, it should be pointed out that the personal component is the principal one. This is the main difference

compared to the traditional approach to education, according to which the cognitive component is considered to be the prevailing one.

The present culturological model of the content of education has been worked out on the basis of the following principles:

- The relationship principle between objective cultural values and the value-orientations of an individual;
- The principle of a dialogue-based activity;
- The principle of wholeness;
- The principle of variability.

The first principle implies that the organization of educational process according to the culturological model is aimed at the implementation of the basic concept of the personality-oriented pedagogy, i.e. the development of a learner's personality: the development of a unique personal image of the world as a uniform multilayer system of person's ideas about the world, about other people, about oneself and one's own activity (A. Leontiev 1990).

According to this principle, I believe that my primary task is the development of a learner's personality as the subject of culture, i.e. as a free personality acting on the basis of one's own goals and choices, possessing not only consciousness but also self-awareness and a unique state of mind capable not only of complicated intellectual operations but also of emotional experience, i.e. of profound personal acquisition and transformation of the outer experience into the facts of one's own biography (Kagan 1996).

The personal acquisition of culture takes place in the educational process if objective cultural values become part of a learner's awareness and emotional experience, i.e. they transform into subjectively meaningful stable orientations of a personality, its value-orientations.

The principle of a dialogue in a learner's activity is based on the fact that the transformation of objective cultural values into personal ones is impossible without the learner's own activity, his/her own efforts in the acquisition of cultural norms and ideals.

Besides, I share B. Bibler's view that the development of a child can be imagined not as the acquisition of common norms and a picture of the world but as a self-construction, as searching for oneself in the dialogue with one's cultural communication partners (Bibler 1993).

According to these ideas, I consider the development of citizenship in the conditions of multi-cultural society as the development of a learner's ability to maintain a personal cultural dialogue. This ability is one of the basic components of citizenship.

The principle of wholeness implies the formation of a completely different model of educational process compared to the traditional one, based not on the logic of scholarly knowledge about culture, which is objectively alienated from the learner, and not on the

logic of the history of culture, but on the logic of a learner's entering into the world of culture. According to this logic, the purpose of cognition is not the history of culture, but the development of personality in the context of history. It is very important to include humanitarian issues in the content of educational material.

The principle of variability implies a possibility for the subjects of education (both teachers and learners) to choose the content of education according to their own needs and goals.

According to the culturological model of the content of education described above, there was organized an educational process for senior form students aimed at the development of citizenship. It was based on the incorporation of humanitarian issues in the educational material.

The Development of Citizenship for Senior Form Students on the Basis of the Culturological Model of the Content of Education

The incorporation of the humanitarian issues in the content of education was a significant feature of the experimental work. A system of humanitarian issues was developed aimed at the development of citizenship. Each issue implied an attitude to higher values: to the state, the people, and authorities. Revealing of these attitudes and their realization occurred in the process of discussions and other interesting activities. The participants of the experiment were both senior form students and the teachers of pedagogy, philosophy, and literature. The diversity of subjects enabled treating citizenship in various aspects taking into account students' interests.

In the philosophy lesson, the topic 'an individual and the state' was discussed. Actually, this was a general issue in all subjects. The desks were arranged so that all students faced each other. In the process of the discussion, the students presented interesting arguments to support the idea concerning individuals' responsibility to the state. In this case, we can speak about an individual as a citizen. An issue was also raised concerning the responsibility of the state for its citizens.

In the literature lesson, when discussing Turgenev's novel 'Fathers and Sons', a discussion started between the supporters of liberal values and supporters of patriarchal ethical values characteristic of Russian people. It was argued that liberal values are only limited by the provisions of the law. Patriarchal ethical values however are limited not only by the law, but also by conscience and religion. The students expressed criticism concerning the cartoons about the Prophet Mohamed. There arose a problem concerning freedom and responsibility. According to one view, liberal values imply people's attempts to determine human rights. On the other hand, using the slogan of 'human rights', religion and icons are defiled. Liberal values have turned human rights into something absolute without any limitations. These discussions led to the understanding of citizenship as an individual's responsibility to the state. The students decided to offer these issues for discussion in the school as a whole. A survey was carried out where respondents had to answer the question 'Should the society be based on liberal values or traditional ethical values?' The results indicated that 79% of the respondents supported traditional ethical values, but 21% supported liberal ones.

The issue 'an individual and the state' was also discussed in the lessons of pedagogy in the Psychology and Pedagogy Department of the lyceum. The form of the discussion was unusual. It was a 'pedagogic theatre'. First, the floor was given to Rousseau. The performer was a student dressed in 18th century costume. He spoke in support of the idea about educating a free citizen and the need of a social contract between the authorities and the people. Then, the floor was given to J. Gerbart, also performed by a student. He said, 'Mr. Rousseau is wrong. It is necessary to support the education of a virtuous individual, a citizen who supports the values of contemporary bourgeois society.' The discussion arguments were based on works by Rousseau and Gerbart.

The incorporation of universal cultural themes in the educational material made it possible to develop citizenship – the most essential personal quality.

Conclusion

Traditional educational systems functioning in Latvia at present do not provide for young people the necessary basis for the development of a world outlook based on citizenship. It is necessary to re-orient education on cultural values. It is possible by changing both the content and the procedures of the pedagogic process. It implies freedom of choice concerning the content of educational activity and a focusing of the educational process on cognition, acceptance, and interpretation of the objective cultural values by learners, including that of citizenship.

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