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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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Teaching Global Citizenship in secondary schools

C.Maiztegui Oñate
University of Deusto, Bilbao (Spain)

Learning about citizenship is a complex process covering a variety of topics. Internationalisation plays an encompassing role, extending the concept of citizenship (Van Steenberger, 1994). In the field of education there is a growing consensus that we must prepare people for life in a global world: becoming a global or a cosmopolitan citizen is one of the main aims of citizenship education (Cortina, 1999; Dower & Williams, 2002; Intermón Oxfam, 2005; Osler & Vincent, 2002). As Kinnock (2002) points out, it is ironic that despite a growing trend towards internationalism, ordinary people express their disquiet about their inability to control what happens in the world. Those circumstances influence the citizen's competences in different ways. From the viewpoint of political and social literacy, Kinnock explains that 'few people have a basic understanding of the social processes and structures that affect their lives, and few have theoretical or practical understanding of their rights and responsibilities' (xii). Citizenship is about a sense of belonging, usually (though not exclusively) defined in national terms. However the idea of global citizenship is based on the core element of recognition of membership of a wider, global or cosmopolitan world (Dower & Williams, 2002). A second contradiction of this globalisation process is that local and community identities have proved to be remarkably resilient (Cogan & Derricott, 1998). Indeed, the more world integration increases, the more there is identity with aspects of territories and local places. How we deal with this has fundamental implications for education (Kinnock, 2002).

This paper draws on a research project conducted in the Basque Country¹, a comparison of three case studies of secondary schools, in similar socio-economic contexts. One is situated in San Sebastian, one is near Bilbao and the third one in Vitoria. Each carries out similar projects on global citizenship education, but their strategies are quite different.

The first section of the paper outlines the main theories of global citizenship education. In the second section the case studies are described. The third section analyses some common traits and conclusions.

Globalisation and citizenship education: the global dimension

Citizenship is traditionally understood as membership of a nation-state. Historically, modern notions of equal citizenship have their origin in the process of building nation-states. The concept is therefore understood in terms of rights and duties associated with membership of a nation-state. This state-centred approach has come under challenge because citizens usually possess an attachment to more than one identity, even in the most homogeneous societies. In this context, national membership may mean little to its

¹ The research entitled *Citizenship education. Actors, challenges, proposal and resources* was carried out by the University of Deusto and Alboan NGO. It was granted by the Basque Government.

members compared to other forms of community with which they identify and through which they exercise claims and obligations (Kymlicka, 1990).

In this way a citizen belongs to several social groups (family, friends, work, peers) and identity is obtained by their roles in activities related to broader questions, for example a global framework. Cogan and Derricott (1998) note that this situation has clear implications for citizenship. As they observe, an increasing literature argues for a global concept of citizenship.

Globalisation is changing our world. Global issues are part of the younger generations' lives, in ways unfamiliar to previous generations (DFC, 2005). How does education react to this challenge? Historically, education has been assigned an important role in the preparation of citizens. Today, new strategies, policies and plans are preparing young people to live in an increasingly interdependent world (Osler & Vincent, 2002). Though citizens must see themselves as members of several overlapping communities - local, regional, national and multinational - their sense of identity remains rooted in the local and the personal.

Perhaps the main characteristic of global citizenship is that it explores the interconnection between the local and the global. This dimension is close to the spatial dimension of citizenship (Cogan and Derricott, 1998, p.121). It requires that citizens should be able to live and work at a series of interconnected levels, from the local to the multinational. The authors consider that citizen education must include consciousness of different views of the world. They suggest that schools should explore and celebrate diversity and provide opportunities to have experiences beyond the boundaries of the centres. Kinnock (2002) offers another explanation of global education: 'global education is about enabling people – young people in particular - to understand the link between their own lives, and those of other people throughout the world' (Kinnock, 2002, p.xi). In general, it is characterised by an approach based on human rights and a concern for social justice (Osler & Vincent, 2002, p.1). Different domains are incorporated to this approach, such the key concept of global citizenship to human rights, sustainable development or intercultural education.

Normally, citizenship education involves political literacy, the development of critical thinking and certain attitudes and values, and finally an active participation (Crick, 1998). From the viewpoint of the global dimension, among others, the Public Enquiry Policy recommends eight key concepts that emphasise the global dimension to the curriculum: diversity, global citizenship, values and perceptions, human rights, interdependence, sustainable development, social justice and conflict resolution (DFC, 2005). Another example is the Intermón Oxfam proposal on global citizenship (Intermón Oxfam, 2005): this draws attention to understanding issues such as poverty, social justice and sustainable development, being aware of global responsibility for human rights, the environment and social cohesion. Many projects have similar concepts and proposals to develop critical evaluation of representations of global issues and their impact on people's attitudes and values.

On the ethical dimension, it is clear that global citizenship has a strong relationship with civic values. Three important international documents can be identified. First, the report

of the UN Commission on Global Governance (1995), *Our Global World*, calls for neighbourhood ethics. Second, the report by the World Commission on Culture and Development (UNESCO, 1995), *Our Creative Diversity*, stresses both pluralism and common global ethics. Third, in 1997 the InterAction Council proposed a *Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities* to the United Nations, based on the conviction that global problems demand global solutions on the basis of ideas and values respected by all cultures and societies. This framework values social justice and understands its importance for ensuring equality, justice and fairness for all within and between societies. The point is not only to recognise the impact of unequal power and access to resources, but also to develop the motivation and commitment to contribute to a more just world. As Drower and Williams (2002) argue, a global citizen is someone who accepts an obligation to do things in order to advance global goals. This is an active citizen. From the perspective of citizenship education, Osler and Vincent (2002) observe that this area appears to need further development in many countries.

In Spain a new Education Law, *Ley Orgánica de la Educación* (LOE), was passed in May 2006 (BOE 04-05-2006). It proposes a specific subject on Citizenship to be implemented over the coming years. At the moment there is not yet experience of citizenship education as a separate compulsory subject. It is usually integrated with other subjects (History, Latin) or offered as a cross-curricular issue (Eurydice, 2005). In practice, there are some experiences of work in schools concerned with preparing young people to participate as cosmopolitan citizens, capable of shaping the future of their communities. The NGOs are effective in providing support for global education, and their contributions appear significant in providing materials, packs, and web-based resources to support global education in the school sector. Two recent proposals for citizenship education intend to work at all educational levels (Cives, 2005; Intermón Oxfam, 2005). Intermón Oxfam (2005) edited a proposal on the global dimension, based on the four education pillars developed in the UNESCO Report *Learning the Treasure Within* (Delors, 1994): learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. It also includes a fifth, learning to transform, focusing on future actions. Cives' proposal covers a broad range of knowledge, skills, and values that are highly relevant for this topic (Cives, 2005).

The following section describes the current situation through three case studies, selected because of their tradition of pedagogical innovation and their involvement in civic values.

Describing the cases

The three schools are located in the Basque Country; all have a long tradition of working on the implications of social justice. Their boards of direction are aware of the importance of action and how this can improve the world for future generations:

- *Colegio Corazonistas* is in Vitoria-Gasteiz, capital of the Basque Country. It is a religious school which is developing a program supported by an NGO.
- *School St. Ignacio* is located in San Sebastian. It is also a religious school, developing another project provided by an NGO.

- *Centro de Formación de Somorrostro*. In this case, the school organised an NGO in the school.

Different methods have been used to gather data. First, interviews with teachers, members of the school organisational group and interviews with NGOs who specialise in this area. Secondly, content analysis of the materials produced by NGOs and the schools. Our research question is to determine the evolution of the organisational aspects of global citizenship education.

St. Ignacio School is located in San Sebastian. Some time ago they worked on cooperation and solidarity, but this was irregular and reactive, such as commemorating Gandhi's death, or campaigns to raise money for an international charity project.

In 2001, the school decided that this was far from sufficient. They realised that solidarity is an attitude and that other strategies were needed to develop this. At that time they had the opportunity to collaborate with a teacher experienced in international cooperation. A team of six people was organised, whose first aim was to consider how they could involve students at the school. How could they help students to become active citizens? They decided on a project called *Munduko hiritarrok*, a three-year program with documents to work on different subjects that had been developed by a local NGO, Alboan.

During the first year, rights and duties are studied. The second year is focused on participation. Finally, the third year is devoted to education for peace. In each year the school also participates in an international cooperation project: this project gives the thematic core to the year's work. It allows students to use real evidence, data and information from a different country, and an opportunity to connect their participation with a real problem. In this sense, they have to look for solutions and to analyse consequences.

The school intends to achieve a solidarity style. The project has been enlarged and many activities are offered to the whole school community, pupils, parents and staff. Participation has now grown to 1,600 pupils and 400 families. Teachers hold a share in the whole and work on these topics within their own subjects.

The second case study is the Sagrado Corazón School (Vitoria). In 1999 it started an educational experience to help pupils become more sensitive to North-South relationships, called *Change the South in your Mind*. This was organised with the NGOs coordinating committee.

The main purpose was developing a critical mind, through an active methodology. The NGO proposed the topics, documents and teaching consultancy/coaching, since when improvements have been made each year. At present it is a global project for the whole secondary cycle, using an interdisciplinary model that integrates the different subjects.

Each year focuses on different thematic and social realities, from a close to a more distant perspective.

1st year: *Enlarge your world*: an overview on human rights.

2^o year: *Wear just clothes*: focused on fair trade and children's work.

3^o year: *Look who we are*: through food and actions, globalisation is studied.

4^o year: *Change the south in your mind*: different aspects of southern countries are analysed. At this point the study of options and proposals to change problematic situations is addressed.

The project is strengthening. A team of five teachers are responsible for coordination, collaborating with other 36 teachers and external counsellors. In the first phase, the coordination team prepare the topics and the documents for common reflection. Later they coordinate the programmes, activities, implementation and monitoring. The project is thus a gradual process, including a broad variety of programmes with different topics and timing. Some programmes take a week, whereas others are developed over the whole course.

To design units involving many different subjects much time is devoted to meetings and working groups that designing materials to teach global citizenship across the curriculum. These work teams change the ordinary life of the school.

Active methods are used to question and challenge assumptions and perceptions. Students develop multiple perspectives and new ways of seeing events, issues, problems and opinions; they imagine ways of life based on familiar experiences: food, brothers and sisters, toys and games. Similarities are emphasised as well as differences.

The third school, the Centro de Formación de Somorrostro, is located near Bilbao. The school manages an NGO, Bultzapen, that works in partnership with a farmers' association in Paraguay. They have been awarded a prize by the Basque Government for international cooperation.

The concern with social justice provided greater emphasis to aspects of citizenship education. Bultzapen has been offering secondary students workshops during their free time since 1996. The learning opportunities are based on the students' intrinsic motivation: it is non-formal learning in cooperation with formal education.

The major topics are human rights, economic issues, development, democracy and sustainable development. The development of values, skills and understanding is reinforced through active learning. A horizontal approach is adopted: negotiation and debates play a central role and each participant contributes. They enable students to gradually change their viewpoint, and in some cases, older students become tutors

Bultzapen also organises initiatives in the life of the school. Each year a week is dedicated to a different development project, and the whole school becomes involved in different activities: lectures and talks, information groups and fundraising for particular charities.

Common characteristics

The recent UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the Centre for Educational Policy Studies document (entitled *The tool for quality assurance of education for democratic citizenship in schools* (Birz ea et al, 2005)) was a response to the compliance gap between the policies and practices of EDC. It presents a specific instrument to evaluate EDC in schools, thematically structured in three main areas: curriculum, teaching and learning; school climate and ethos; management and development. Four possible stages and scenarios are mentioned (p.94):

- Level 1 refers to a scenario where EDC is not formally placed in the school policy or curriculum. A few teachers initiate EDC in their class.
- Level 2 concerns EDC in the national curriculum. EDC is part of the curriculum; some teachers are trained in it, meeting regularly to coordinate their teaching, although there is not active head teacher involvement. Students participate from an early stage.
- Level 3: at this level a school EDC policy exists, but characterised by top-down decision-making. Some students begin to be engaged with the community, and a student council functions.
- Level 4: at this stage EDC concerns the whole school and all school actors are involved.

Following these scenarios, the case studies show an evolution from the first steps towards the latter. Particularly, this change is seen in curriculum, teacher, learning areas and management. For instance, all projects started with isolated experiences by a few teachers. After a few years, work teams between teachers and other stakeholders have been created and the whole school supports the work of those teachers. Another important element is that the curricula reflect concerns around social justice and human rights. The three schools' mission statements and other school policies are in keeping with those principles, since the school curricula aims to promote spiritual, moral and cultural development. These principles were mentioned in the official mission statement, and later the citizenship project was developed.

Our interviews showed the aim of the programs was for young people to develop their understanding of their role as citizens within local and global contexts and to extend their knowledge of the wider world. The objectives included understanding issues such as poverty, social justice and sustainable development. The main goal was to prepare young people to engage as individuals in a global world. There was throughout an emphasis on values and responsibility. Responsibility involves the ability to respond to the fragmentation and individualisation of our societies. These aims generally reflect the strong influence of those international reports on these topics (UNESCO, Council of Europe, UN).

The Council of Europe Documents stress the importance of an adequate place for EDC in the school's goals and curriculum plans (Birz ea et al, 2005). In these cases these areas of the framework are well developed. A plan exists in every school. Secondly, these plans set out the practical steps to be taken to achieve these goals. Third, most staff are aware of this and apply it in their own professional role and responsibilities in the

classroom: enduring values, developing pupils' integrity and autonomy and helping them to be responsible and caring citizens capable of contributing to the development of a just society. However, more research is needed in order to assess the impact of those projects.

It is natural and important that when children and young people learn about global issues they may want to act to change things. In order to help develop those characteristics, the cases are in contact with real projects. This relationship between schools and international cooperation projects has been successful in motivating students. These international projects have been used as key topics in social events, open to all the school community and used to raise money for charity. Those experiences provide invaluable contributions to what they learn in classrooms. They explore new issues and question assumptions, and for the event, they develop responsibility.

Pupils begin to appreciate that they belong to a wider community and recognise that they have an active role to play. It will be interesting to continue research on this aspect, as it can be observed that among the Spanish population feelings of identity decrease around far and abstract references such as the European Union or the Latin American Community (Villanueva and Maiztegui, 2005).

The three projects promote learning-centred methods. In fact, global citizenship projects work as a cross-curricular issue across the different subjects or workshops. They encourage students to look for information, present it and talk about subjects. The group explores the themes and feelings through the topic - it could be a country, a theme such as food or clothes. The main methods are based on research, personal study, and collective work, combining theoretical and practical approaches. Experts also support them: 'knowledge, attitudes, values and key competencies for citizenship education cannot be truly and effective without diversified educational methods' (Osler & Starkey, 2004, p.16). This approach encourages critical thinking and a better understanding of issues around the root causes of global inequality and poverty.

Students critically assess information available to them and challenge cases of discrimination and injustice. Objectives focus on developing skills to evaluate information and different points of view on global issues through the media and other sources. These situations offer opportunities to discuss a range of moral and social issues, including racism and prejudice.

Citizenship education requires the engagement of the whole school community, and changes the dominant organisational culture. These cases explain how school development planning is a collaborative process, involving a variety of participants (governing body, head teachers, teaching staff, local community). As Birzea (2005) proposes, they try to develop cooperative relationships between schools, parents and communities. They show how to create new links with other stakeholders such as NGOs, and to develop a positive ethos through the involvement and participation of all staff, children and young people, as well as the wider school community. However, it is more complex to develop these types of relationships between families and schools or with other secondary schools.

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