



This paper is taken from

Identities and Citizenship Education: Controversy, crisis and challenges. Selected papers from the fifteenth Conference of the Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe Academic Network

London: CiCe 2013

Edited by Peter Cunningham
Technical Editor: Angela Kamara and published in London by CiCe,
ISBN 978-1-907675-20-1

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Juanes García, A., García, T. & Pérez-Manjarrez, E. (2013) 'Citizenship Education and Social Justice. From Theory to Practice', in P. Cunningham (ed.) *Identities and Citizenship Education: Controversy, crisis and challenges*. London: CiCe, pp. 505 – 510.

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This paper does not necessarily represent the views of the CiCe Network.



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Acknowledgements:

This is taken from the book that is a selection of papers given at the annual CiCe Conference indicated. The CiCe Steering Group and the editor would like to thank

- All those who contributed to the Conference
- The CiCe administrative team at London Metropolitan University
- London Metropolitan University, for financial and other support for the programme, conference and publication
- The Lifelong Learning Programme and the personnel of the Education and Culture DG of the European Commission for their support and encouragement.

Citizenship Education and Social Justice. From Theory to Practice

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Abstract

This paper reports findings from a theoretical debate between Citizenship and Social Justice Approaches for education. The study analyzes educational alternatives, from theory to practice, based on three main concepts: Social Redistribution, Cross cultural Recognition and Social Participation. These pedagogical alternatives are based on social dilemmas, regarding topics such as cultural diversity, gender and democracy. The implications for global citizenship education are considered, as are also theoretical considerations of how dilemmas reveal complex dynamics of social performance and understanding.

Keywords: *Social Justice, Citizenship Education, Cosmopolitan, dilemmas, classroom*

Introduction

Education is a continuous process throughout life that not only occurs in educational institutions, because not only is the passive accumulation of data and cultural information. As noted by Martha Nussbaum (2010) education should raise challenges to the intellect becomes active and competent, equipped for critical thinking.

For these reasons, our research, we want to give importance of education for citizenship, understanding that in today's globalized and constantly changing, it is necessary that all human beings have an education that enables them to understand, and interact in any social space and cultural cooperation with others, and above all respect and engage in a network of sociability broader context. This means educating young people to exercise active citizenship oriented toward a more just world.

The main objective of the study is the theoretical and practical education of citizens aimed at social justice. For this it is necessary to raise a theoretical reflection on the theoretical frameworks of citizenship, social justice, and the relationship between them, then point out a review of the different pedagogical approaches from different school subjects built around this kind of education, and finally expose concrete alternatives. To do this, particularly since the present work, for pedagogical dilemmas and reflections, are provided educational key, grounded in the theory and in practice, to all those interested in working actively in this area.

Citizenship and Social Justice

At present there are many researchers working from different theoretical perspectives on the need for a change in the general direction of education that is being offered, but mostly it is working on the need to educate ourselves as citizens aware of the needs, injustices and deficiencies of our societies understanding is needed of the other stocks besides myself and my surroundings, to be active and productive part of this society. This trend is called global or cosmopolitan citizenship.

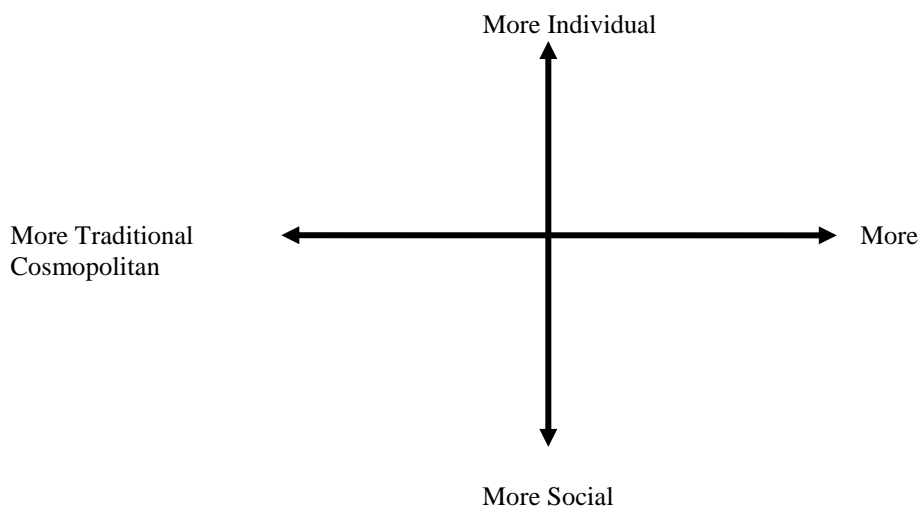
Why cosmopolitan citizenship? Banks *et al* (2005) say democracy and diversity should be the basic principles and concepts for educating citizens in a global age, as only democratic values such as human rights, justice and equality, ensure the actual experience freedom, justice and peace. From this perspective, democracy is understood as a process of understanding the existence and respect for the values described above, acceptance and respect for difference. But in addition to the need for a critical and active role in society in the ongoing pursuit of social change and improvement-diversity, from this point of view involves the recognition and representation of all parts of society, moreover, as Nussbaum points out (2010) no democracy can be stable but has citizens who are educated in this democracy. In this sense, education for citizenship dimensions incorporates local, national, regional and global, which is describing a cosmopolitan democracy and therefore cosmopolitan citizenship (Osler and Starkey, 2003).

The traditional view of citizenship is understood as a passive approach, self-centered and pro-social bit, which means that citizens understand themselves as passive subjects whose best representation of their own citizenship is best known attitudes citizenship such as the enforcement of laws, exercise their right to vote and pay taxes (Cortina, 2001; Freijero, 2005; Moro, 2007). A traditional citizen is focused on their own problems and tends to resolve individually, takes little interest in the problems of your neighborhood, community, country or other regions of the planet, also considered as a dispersion diversity of cultural identity, so it does not recognize or hard to recognize the importance of the rights of minorities, but you are native to their country and are part of their own cultural past (*eg* some countries indigenous cultures in South America). The traditional citizenship is based on the specific ways and customs of a society who have not been and are not challenged or refuted by people belonging to that culture, simply perpetuate.

On the other side is the cosmopolitan view of citizenship (Osler, A. 2011, Berman and Philips, 2000), characterized by being an active approach people (Crick, 2002), citizens openly pro-social attitudes and low self-self-centered. From cosmopolitan citizenship people are oriented towards the promotion and realization of human rights, and in search of Social Justice, participate actively in the democratic process beyond voting exercise, such as being part of their local boards, its people, their neighborhood, community groups, etc... Cosmopolitan citizens recognize and vigorously defend human rights (Nussbaum, 1999). In cosmopolitan citizenship works collaboratively to solve social problems in the pursuit of social justice, which implies a recognition and celebration of difference and diversity, which also entails the adoption of a global and universal regarding rights and duties, recognizing the value of the context (Trotta, Jacott and

Lundgren, 2008, Argibay, and Celorio Celorio, 2009), this implies that care about the difficulties and differences in all levels of society even if some of them are geographically distant from themselves. Recognize and represent the diversity within their own culture, country and ancestry.

This view of citizenship implies the place people on a Cartesian plane where social intersects with cosmopolitan.



As has been observed, the conceptualization of cosmopolitan citizenship includes in itself the most important dimensions of Social Justice: Representation, Recognition and Redistribution.

The cosmopolitan citizenship cannot be understood without Social Justice, in fact and as mentioned above, one of its objectives and main features is the quest for it. But how to relate the two? Keep in mind that citizenship and social justice are two different conceptual structures have in common but important and specific objectives that complement the training time to talk to people.

Educating citizens for social justice

There are various strategies that have been built, and are in the exact and natural sciences, and humanities. It's interesting how no matter the discipline, there is a common orientation to change the system of objectives to make them a tool to reflect on cultural, social and political (Arbaugh & Brown, 2005).

For example in the teaching of mathematics, a subject that has not traditionally been considered as promoter of social learning, efforts are focused on creating a crisis for the idea that it is a neutral subject, which does not project to the student values and society; for this, for example, have been introduced in the classroom dilemmas in relation to the

ethical consequences of decisions made on a mathematical basis (Bishop, Clarke, Corrigan, & Gunston, 2006). At the other end of the sciences, there are proposals from the social sciences and humanities courses to promote reflection among students, about everyday actions oriented toward justice, and being active citizens, has been raised using vignettes to pose scenarios familiar to students inside and outside of school, to position themselves against unjust or participatory situations in civic life (Barnatt, et.al. 2007). Similarly, there are strategies based on reading or creating little stories, with which the student may face specific situations and specific responses to various scenarios, this has enabled students to learn and imaginatively positioned to situations involving a choice about social justice and citizen participation.

This leads us to consider three central aspects in the training of citizens for social justice: a) that education should not be limited to the reproduction of content but projected towards understanding and development of concepts, skills and attitudes basic prosocial student development in society, b) teaching the subject itself cannot be isolated from the others that make up the curriculum, let alone the different realities in which they live / including students; And finally, c) Whereas modern societies live in a constantly changing, accelerated by global technological and socioeconomic processes, one has to consider that education is global, that is, you have to rethink the content and strategies to raise education according to local and global issues living world and students, respectively. A school and a teaching practice that does not take into account the processes of migration, changes in social conceptions as gender and family, as well as global values as intercultural recognition, socioeconomic redistribution and rethinking of the ways of social participation , is simply obsolete.

Pedagogical Proposals

We propose the use of dilemmas, i.e. hypothetical situations that reflect the different characteristics and problematic of societies, that can be posed to students as scenarios to resolve or reflect. The dilemmas are a way to recover the theoretical discussion and make the / as students approach the concepts of citizenship and social justice, adopting a certain perspective, as their experiences in different contexts of social reality, and the learning acquired in the classroom.

As Soep point, Mayeno Kurwa Saavedra (2009), based on the cases of real people in difficult situations, and in this case, situations or scenarios can be created by teachers and society awareness of Social Justice ("the co-creation of critical thinking in a reflective environment") and make it easier to interventions based on these examples.

So working with these dilemmas is twofold: First, to promote reflection among teachers about their teaching and their own representations of social justice, on the other hand, rise close to reality scenarios of students and / or the world, in which students can position themselves based on their life experiences and the contents learned in the classroom.

Among the various components that constitute the category of redistribution, it is essential to consider the sub-dimension of poverty, since it is precisely in that began to relate the redistribution, it seems that poverty or social sectors such differentiation represents one subdomain of the clearest examples to use in class. Thus, in the classroom, it may be a problem with alternative solutions, and present the problem leaving open solution to be the students themselves who may pose thoughts or alternative solutions. The dilemma may be proposed as follows:

Poverty in the redistribution

In a school has planned a day trip to a major museum of the city, as an extracurricular activity for two groups of 1° secondary students. The Principal and the teaching staff know that there are five students whose families cannot afford to pay the cost of that activity. What should they do? "

As can be seen, this dilemma is a situation that can occur in the centers and be a problem that prevents access by all children alike to the same opportunities. You can also use any economic inequality that exists in the school among students, as basis for raising the debate between them, without necessarily having to be the situation of the excursion.

Another example, now, with dimension of Recognition is the next:

For there to be a family, according to your opinion, the most important thing is to have:

- A) A marriage made by a woman and a man, with one or without children.
- B) A couple of people, of either sex, who decide to form it.
- C) A bond between people who share a common living place.

Conclusion

It is very important for schools to participate actively in the development of social justice and citizenship. Moreover, it is also important to create spaces for reflection in schools around issues of social justice and citizenship.

It is essential to know that Citizenship and social justice are not taught only in the classroom, the teacher teaches with their behavior.

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