



*The intercultural dimension of citizenship education:  
The North and the South in a postcolonial Europe*

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# Multicultural vs. Intercultural Education

- **UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education**  
(Expert Meeting, March 2006):

- **“Interculturality is a dynamic concept which**
  - refers to evolving relations between cultural groups
  - presupposes multiculturalism and results from intercultural exchange and dialogue on the local, regional, national or international level.”
- **Intercultural Education aims to go beyond passive coexistence, to achieve a developing and sustainable way of living together in multicultural societies through the creation of *understanding of, respect for and dialogue* between the different cultural groups**
- **Multicultural education uses learning about other cultures in order to produce acceptance, or at least *tolerance*, of these cultures.**

# European Commission

- *The intercultural school must nevertheless be thought through on a broader scale, because interculturality in the school focuses the whole problematic of citizenship* EC Study Work Group on Education and Training, 1997
- *... multicultural is merely descriptive, referring to the sole coexistence, within a country, of several cultural references, whereas, intercultural denotes dynamic interaction and exchange among cultures, caused by migration movements (which may be recent or some centuries-old)* EC Committee of Regions, 1997

# Council of Europe

- It is recommended that the *conceptual research on intercultural education* be re-launched (with a view to *adapting terminology and clearly defining the content and context of intercultural education*)

STANDING CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF  
EDUCATION, ATHENS 2003 (21-7)

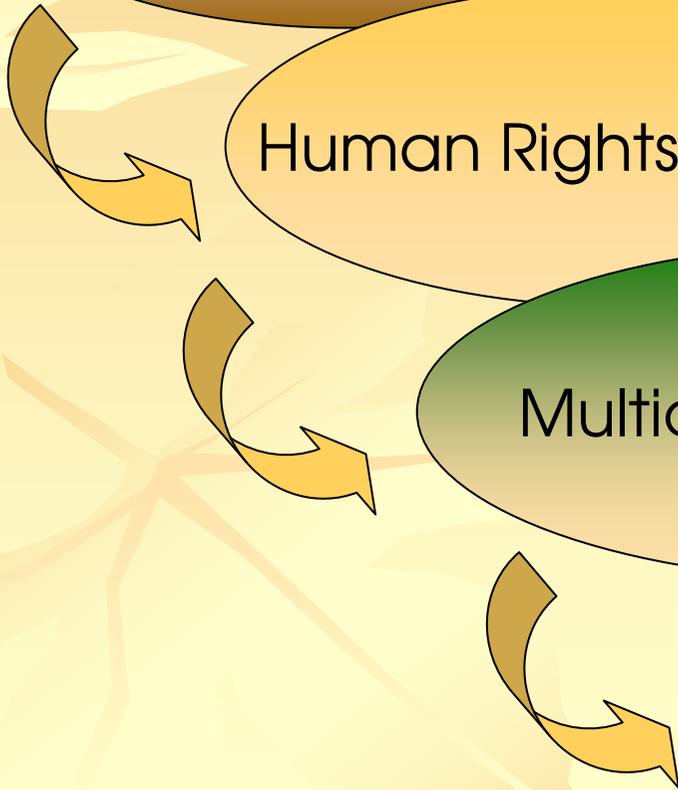
# *Paradigm Shift*

Democratic Education

Human Rights Education

Multicultural Education

Intercultural Education



# *National Documents*

## *PORTUGAL*

- (1974) – Democratic Regime (Carnation Revolution);
- (1986) – Entry into the European Union;
- (1986) – “... access to education and culture to all Portuguese children” (*Framework Law on the Educational System*);
- “Portuguese cultural values” (Secondary Education);
- (1989) – Social and Personal Education (interdisciplinary, non-curricular area of education);

# *National Documents*

## *PORTUGAL*

- (1991) – Multicultural Education » Department *Entreculturas* at the Ministry of Education;  
- European citizenship » School Exchange Programme
- (1993) – Intercultural Education Project (immigrants and ethnic minorities)
- (1995) - - Intercultural Competencies (New national syllabi in Foreign Languages)
- (1997) – Flexible Management of the Curriculum  
(Basic Education)
- (2001) – Civic Education (subject in Basic Education);  
- Citizenship Education  
(across the curriculum in Second. Educ.)

# *Multicultural / Intercultural*

- Multicultural education » “to educate to the values of ‘good relations’, tolerance, dialogue and solidarity among different peoples, ethnicities and cultures” D. 63/91
- Intercultural education » “to favour the integration of youth coming from minority ethnic groups in school and in the community, with the aim of promoting an effective equality of opportunities” Resolution of the Council of Ministers 38/93

# *Interviews with Policy Makers*

- *W - In fact, Portugal was ahead of any other country with the Entreculturas ... and no other country has it and at the time there were even many other countries which sent over delegations ...*
- *W – Intercultural dialogue is only possible on the basis of a sound knowledge of one's culture and a solid cultural identification; in other words, no one can create good cultural dialogue to follow the other person's heroism.*

# *Interviews with Policy Makers*

- **Z-** *There is always a concern about intercultural education within citizenship education, especially with two aspects, one of them is that intercultural education is education for everyone, not only for minority groups; another one is that intercultural education for minorities should not be separated from the general context of citizenship education.*
- **F-** *... Intercultural education, to be understood as such, should mean a change in paradigm, a paradigm of construction, of approach.*

# Teachers as 'Citizens'

- Teachers' identity (self-description; educator's role)
- Teachers' competencies (self-assessment competencies; research competencies; interaction competencies)
- Scope of agency (teachers' participation in civic life; strategies for student involvement; levels of agency)
- Conceptual framework (definitions of related concepts; familiarity with documents; theoretical knowledge; critical analysis)
- Teacher education (academic and professional education; needs assessment)

# Teachers as 'Citizens'

- Teachers don't dissociate their roles as citizens and as teachers;
- Citizenship education is perceived to imply a cross-curricular approach;
- Teachers view some subjects to be more closely linked to citizenship education issues (e.g., history, geography, languages);
- Some teachers may avoid controversial issues (e.g., racism, religion, etc.);
- Teachers who do not have any specific academic or professional education in the field rely on their own beliefs and values;
- Some teachers confessed they hadn't previously reflected much upon the issues raised during the interviews;
- Most teachers admitted that their own civic action in society had been sporadic, otherwise it had revealed a great impact on their teaching performance;
- Teachers stated that their impression was that their approach to citizenship education depended a great deal on their political ideologies;

# Teachers as 'Citizens'

- 7:330-345 FG-H7...*I often ask myself ahh ... whether that is what it should be, because I pass on my own values to my students. Is it what we want? I am not sure whether that is citizenship ... Therefore, there is a syllabus, coming from the Ministry, that is to be followed. Is it also what is expected from us?*
- (780) FG-F8: (...) *there is no pre-service training on project work methodology [Field Project] ... Besides, there is no space where teachers may link their various projects with subject knowledges which should be the aim of this work. There are no regulations supporting it, and I may give you an example, project work requires research ...*
- (850-865) FG-E4 ...*with regard to development programmes, the creation of a team within the Entrecultura was very important, and later on the ACIME, allowing me to discuss and address these issues in my daily life.*

# Teachers as 'Cultural Workers'

- Professional role in developing a multicultural society and/or multicultural nation-state (incorporation of diversity in schools; awareness of national and/or international policies; contribution to recognising multiculturalism; contribution to promoting intercultural dialogue; translating into practice)
- Impact on how students see themselves as intercultural citizens or on their participation in multicultural societies (empowerment of minority students in the class; public vs. private spheres; subject vs. extra-curricular activities; on-going vs. discrete activities; most effective strategies)
- Disbelief that their teaching has any connection with the development of a multicultural democracy (stressing on the universality of human beings; reinforcing national identity; mentioning institutional constraints)
- Conceptual Framework (definitions of related concepts; familiarity with documents; theoretical knowledge; critical analysis)
- Teacher Education (academic and professional education; needs assessment)

# Teachers as 'Cultural Workers'

- There seems to be a general concern about immigrants, but no well-structured school strategy to facilitate their introduction and integration in school life, except for some Portuguese language support classes
- Teachers do not show a structured knowledge of the official European and national recommendations, but when asked about the main concepts conveyed, they highlight namely 'respect', 'tolerance' as well as 'acceptance'
- Evaluation procedures, with regard to students, may vary and adapt, but that is not expected nor fostered: it is in the hands of the School Board (action is taken on the result rather than along the process)
- Many teachers stated that it is important to assess students' intercultural competencies but were rather unsure of how they should do it

# Teachers as 'Cultural Workers'

- J2 (p.1:19): (...) *this is the first year I have a class with all pupils white and Portuguese (...) when it is not so, talking about differences between them becomes obligatory.*
- H1 (p. 7:342) *They [Roma children] all should go to speech therapy.*
- R6 (p. 3:100) *Empathy is the first step. Only then can we start working towards the objectives, on the lessons and on what they must learn. (...) One should build up the teaching practice from that basis.*
- P1 (p. 6:297) *Their culture is lost at school, even though they eat their particular types of food at home, even though they speak other languages with their relatives at home, even though they don't celebrate Christmas at home, at school they must do all this because they are supposed to assimilate, and I disagree with that.*

# Teachers as 'Cultural Workers'

- H2 (p. 25:1211) *I am intercultural... (p. 25:1219) To be the water and not the glass, (...) because it is the water that takes the shape of the vase ... If the vase is very long, very large, the water must take that shape, without losing its identity as water.*
- R3 (p. 12:553) *I feel great sadness, because I feel a bit abandoned (...) I find myself carrying out a lot of absolutely pointless routines (...) [which] drain my energy in such a way that the joy and good things we could do with students are left halfway through.*
- J4 (p. 18:894) *... I should have some sort of training to be able to deal with these situations. [In the lack of it] Therefore, I resorted to my sensitivity.*

# Teachers as 'Transformative Intellectuals'

- Teachers' construction and reproduction of knowledge (epistemological frameworks; approaches to curriculum; strategies for enabling new discourses; hidden curriculum)
- Teaching/Learning as a transformative process (teaching/learning aims; pedagogical strategies; teaching/learning materials; transforming perspectives and attitudes)
- Teachers' commitment to transform society (context recognition; types of action; direct and indirect action; ideologies of transformation)
- Teacher Education (academic and professional education; needs assessment)
- Teacher's Assessment (intercultural educator's role; intercultural educator's competencies; critical awareness of challenges and possibilities)

# *Teachers as 'Transformative Intellectuals'*

- There is a great range of opinions as far as approaches to curriculum are concerned: from dealing with conflict and disobedience in the classroom to constructing the curriculum around multicultural/intercultural issues
- Most interviewees report inviting 'new' discourses into their classrooms while others are reluctant to discuss certain issues like racism, slavery or religion
- Most teachers aim to develop critical thinking
- An overwhelming majority of teachers see learning and teaching as a transformative process but a few express their awareness of learning themselves from their students
- Most teachers claim to use dialogue as their main strategy
- There is little active political participation among Portuguese teachers

# Teachers as 'Transformative Intellectuals'

- B3, 48-52: *...we've visited temples of other religious confessions in Lisbon, not only in order to see the religious practice, so to speak, but also in order to learn to respect people of other faith, other way of understanding the divine, other way of viewing and interpreting the world.*
- B4, 270-274: *In fact, we are not given much space since our main concern is our students' achievement at school, they are restricted, subject to the national exam, so my first concern will be this one, has to be this one.*
- C4, 262-265: *Personally I don't feel uncomfortable about any topic whatsoever, yet we have to be very careful with what we say in the classroom because of the students' parents.*

# Teachers as 'Transformative Intellectuals'

- D5, 433-436: *I've always tried to introduce this issue [slavery] in such a way that it doesn't hurt nor insult their dignity and to explain about slavery in a manner that does not harm anyone when it is being discussed, especially with the students of African origin ...*
- B2, 269-275: *it is quite easy for a teacher to get the society to change at this level, as we deal with a lot of people, and if we could change something in the way these people think and act, then they also could, provided they themselves see the importance of this issue, they could easily change other people*
- J2, 164-167: *we have to expand the knowledge or get the children to interpret things from different angles so that they would themselves be able to choose whatever they feel the most appropriate for them.*

# *The Teacher as an 'Intercultural Educator'?*

**CES:** *What does s/he do, that so-called intercultural educator?*

*Or what is s/he supposed to do?*

- **P4** – *I do not know of anybody in that position. But we all have the duty to do it, whether as teachers or not, I think. Because, in the case we are not teachers, we are parents and are, therefore, intercultural educators, because our children also live in a community which is diverse, and that is very good.*

*What does an intercultural educator do? S/he helps her/his pupils to understand and live with the cultural differences which they will find in their surroundings.*

# *The Teacher as an 'Intercultural Educator'?*

- *O2, 291-293: I think that an intercultural educator is an educator who could actually teach a student from anywhere in the world. S/he is an expert in various cultures ... and educator of the world.*
- *D1, 17:838- Well, interculturality, that is a little bit, say, ...at the margins [of the syllabus], isn't it?*
- *D1-That I find it important, it is obvious. But how should one do it? ... Assessing is very subjective...*

# *Teacher Education in the field*

- **Some teachers recognised that taking up the role of citizenship educators without formal education is risky**
- **... that they mainly rely on their sensitivity and common sense in order to deal with intercultural issues**
- **... that advanced training or postgraduate studies help them deal with controversial issues and avoid individual or subjective approaches**
- **... that teacher development programmes and assessment of teachers' practices were of primary importance**
- **... that their engagement in civic life had an impact on their professional performance**

# *Teacher Education in the field*

- Teachers demand an improvement in their status, by being shown more respect for their role;
- Pre-service and in-service teacher education should be co-coordinated by higher education institutions, yet together with schools and their teacher training centres as well as in connection with community associations
- Support is to be balanced between theory and practice
- Structured knowledge about European and national recommendations is required
- Definition of related concepts is urgent
- Specific preparation in intercultural communication, intercultural interaction and conflict management should be helpful

# *Questions for Discussion*

- Which are the main aims of citizenship education?
- What is the point in including an intercultural dimension in citizenship education?
- How could the teacher be a 'transformative intellectual'?
- What are the possibilities and the risks involved?
- Do you agree with the main needs identified by this project for teacher education?
- What could be done to meet those needs?