

NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Rethinking Citizenship Education in European Migration Societies

Political Strategies - Social Changes - Educational Concepts

Conference Paper

Contribution to Workshop 6, Session 2: Artistic Migration and Mobility – Impacts on Cultural and Citizenship Education

„Mobility and Change: Performing Practice as an Educational Concept“
Maria de São José Côrte-Real, PhD Columbia University /
Researcher at CIED, School of Education of Lisbon

Lisbon, Portugal, April, 26-28, 2007

www.bpb.de/nece

In a time of rethinking educational paradigms, while the *Education for All Global Monitoring Report of 2006*, published by UNESCO, states that although “the number of children with access to education is growing, the quality of education remains low in most countries of the world”, mobility and change should be valued as main promoters of good knowledge and action at school. Migrant processes, and resources, inherently fostering mobility and change, may be of crucial importance in the new educational paradigm that contemplates creativity and citizenship among its great aims. The presence of arts in education has been reported for long as a major promoter of this aim. The contact between migrant artists and school environments in structured ways may be a key procedure for such an enterprise. Mus-e, the Yehudi Menuhin project, for example, is but one of such experiences, with very good results in different parts of the world.

Among the art expressions that may effectively be developed at school, performing practices in particular are especially suited for the promotion of mobility and change in education. With such an assumption in mind, the Post-Doctoral research project *Performing Practices and Education for Citizenship at the Basic School*, departing from key subjects of the European Art History, is developing a pilot-project in two schools of the Northern outskirts of Lisbon, where the population is densely multicultural. This communication presents for discussion some aspects of this project which involves eight performing agents, a composer, ten tutor teachers and one hundred and fifty-three children from six to ten years old. The project is supported by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, the Municipality of Loures and the SONAE Sierra Company. It is developed, under the supervision of Prof. Carlos Cardoso, within the academic realm of the Center for Interdisciplinary Educational Studies.

NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Different meanings and stages of mobility and change work in this pilot-project as conceptual structures, which are seen as extraordinarily effective in the educational process within the Basic School system.

Performing practices centered on musical and theater phenomena are being used as vehicles for a European oriented intercultural strategy for Education. An opened process was proposed for artistic creation and work at school simultaneously using and fostering mobility and change in at least four different perspectives:

1. Using European cultural change as a conceptual driving force for education
2. Using migrant mobility in local communities as a school resource
3. Fostering individual and group mobility on intra- and inter-schoollevel
4. Fostering change in the organization of the school culture

The new educational concept proposed in this pilot-project is deeply embedded in European cultural references of recent, past and present experiences. On the other hand, the on-going flux of creative, performing and social activity, which involves teachers, children, performing agents and school coordinators, depending on municipal, associative and industrial company agents and actions, makes it a real arena for the building of citizenship procedures, which seem to be so needed in the emerging European intercultural scenario. From the four different perspectives identified one may draw a number of central theses, for the advocacy of *Performing Practices* as a successful *Educational Concept*, such as that:

- Main overall concepts extracted from successive art periods in Europe since the seventeen century work together as a meaningful and well-balanced structure for the bases of a comprehensive intercultural and creative educational approach.
- The use of migrant performing artists as school resources promote social inclusion, development of self-esteem and perception of difference mechanisms among children and adult school population that not only rehearses citizenship behavior at school but also at local real society.
- Performing art education procedures and requisites foster individual and group mobility among different school population arrangements that engage in multilevel relationships which cover realms ranging from different traditional curricular domains such as literary and numerical ones, among others, to those of rational and emotional meaning so crucial for the development of the new citizenship profile required.
- The changes that schools need to produce to embrace this pilot-project work themselves as exercises of creative citizenship that render the enterprise successful.