

CHALLENGES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEARNING PROCESS OF EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL AND CIVIC COMPETENCE IN SPANISH EDUCATION FROM A PSYCHO PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

By

JACOBO CANO*

FRANCISCO ROYO MAS**

MANUEL FANDOS IGADO***

* Assistant Professor at National Institute of Technology, Trichirappalli, India.

** Department of Educational Sciences. University of Zaragoza.

*** Public Relations Officer, Master.D

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of violence, in its different forms and varieties; the peak of aggravated nationalists and extremists; poverty; the different movements of migration; the role of religion, the perception of the deterioration of politics; the need for an impulse of associated movement; the need to adapt to the roles that should confront the educational institutions and the social changes that are reflected in the different unions between people, are some of the aspects that offer us a necessary framework to approach an emotional, social education and to educate the future citizens, which will able the construction of a supportive, fair, peaceful society, and where, especially, freedom and equal opportunities are respected as fundamental rights.

The role and the objectives of the development of emotions and the social and civic competence are analysed, in a European context, stressing the need of a multidisciplinary and collaborative work from the psycho pedagogical field.

It is necessary to indicate that the fields of orientation are diverse, on a personal, academic, professional, family or social level with the perspective of the need to implement diverse programmes of intervention, in a preventative way and for the integral education of the individual students, aimed at all of the educational community – opening up to the formal, informal and not formal spheres – related to the emotional, social and civic competence.

Keywords: Learning, Emotional, Social and Civic Competence, Psycho Pedagogical Intervention, School, Roles of Teaching Staff.

INTRODUCTION

Context and Impulse of Education for Citizens

We are living in a changing world, dramatically dynamic, in which the role of education should become a capital aspect in the politics of different countries. We are facing challenges and opportunities, difficulties or risks, which should be evaluated according to fair measurement, and above all, that should be tackled with a preventative, collaborative, positive and multidisciplinary vision related to the community.

The phenomenon of violence, in its different forms and varieties; the peak of aggravated nationalists and extremists; poverty; the different movements of migration; the role of religion, the perception of the deterioration of

politics; the need for an impulse of associated movement; the need to adapt to the roles that should confront the educational institutions and the social changes that are reflected in the different unions between people, are some of the aspects that offer us a necessary framework to approach an emotional, social education and to educate the future citizens, which will able the construction of a supportive, fair, peaceful society, and where, especially, freedom and equal opportunities are respected as fundamental rights.

In this context, the authors find on a European level, at the start of the century, the Council of Minister's Recommendation to the State members for education for the democratic citizens adopted by the Council of Ministers on the 16th October 2002, in their meeting with

the Delegate Ministers, where this capital aspect is dealt with.

Three years on, the European Council has declared the year 2005 as «the European year of citizens for Education». On their behalf, the European network of information in education (Eurydice, 2005: 10) includes in the responsible citizens aspects such as «the confirmation of the rights and duties; civic values like democracy, human rights, equality, participation, associationism, social cohesion, solidarity, tolerance to diversity and social justice.

On a European level, we can confirm the growing need to include education for citizens in the values that we are indicating and in the democratic principles and social participation. We find a great diversity in the concrete goal of the proposals for the impulse in each one of the European countries (Eurydice, *la Red europea de información en educación*, 2005: 19).

On the one hand, we find the proposal of the inclusion of education for the citizenship like obligatory independent material in the majority of the cases (in an initial level and in the most advanced level of secondary: Estonia, Greece, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, The United Kingdom; in the Czech Republic, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia and Romania, only in Inferior Secondary Education; and France, Austria, Norway and Bulgaria is the superior Secondary Education).

Secondly, we can check other proposals that are more closely linked of some form to the education for citizens in other areas that are more or less related. It is necessary to indicate that the education for the development of the social and civic competence should not be exclusively focused on specific material, as in this way, the educational potential could be lost that the said competence can be found included in other areas. In Europe, we find different models in the sense that we are indicating: introduction to the scientific world in the French community of Belgium, the environment in the Czech Republic, Cyprus, the Netherlands, Hungary and Slovenia; regional geography and basic scientific-technical training in Greece, Latin in Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary and Bulgaria; health education in the Netherlands and Latvia; national history in Slovakia and social aptitudes in Iceland.

Finally, it is possible to consider the education for citizens or the relative training in this sphere as a transversal area, just as it was picked up on in the LOGSE (Organic Law of General Order of the Spanish Educational system), but, still being able to be interesting the approach of the theory level, it runs the risk of not taking off in practice for lack of concrete tasks or for being too vague in taking on these challenges.

Further on, three important objectives are outlined that have already been considered on a general level considering the education for citizens (Eurydice, *la Red europea de información en educación*, 2005: 23) and that allows us to raise a great range of possibilities and the importance of the field taken on for the development of the social and civic competence:

- Firstly, to develop a political culture based on human rights, democracy and the role of social and political institutions, as well as to evaluate the cultural and historic diversity.
- To continue the importance to develop values and attitudes to exert the citizens in a responsible way, from the respect, listening, the resolution of peaceful arguments, within the social plurality.
- Finally, it is necessary to develop active participation of the students, favouring their involvement in school life and in their representative fields, to participate subsequently in the construction of a fair society, from a political point of view and favouring equal opportunities.

In Spain, just as is picked up on by Eurydice (2005: 56), the autonomous regions have improved the concept of citizens bound to solidarity, the intercultural understanding and the own cultural diversity on a general level, although it is also true that the political and social debate about different ideological visions has increased and no agreement exists or a consensus between all of these approaches, but on the other hand, the diversity. However, being able to consider this diversity as a wealth in itself, it is necessary to make an effort, from our point of view, to achieve a consensus in the fundamental aspects, now that definitely, the last objective goes in line with educating future citizens that contribute in an effective and

responsible way to the construction of a fairer society, where the value of coexistence is a right that everyone has. If we focus on Secondary Education, some countries, in those which education for citizens is offered as an independent subject in the curriculum, a special educational programme for teaching staff has been established for those that teach. The necessary support has not been formally defined, given that it spans from specific activities to economic help for concrete projects (Eurydice, *la Red europea de información en educación*, 2005: 61). It is necessary in this sense, to increase the educational opportunities, not only on an attendance level, but from a point of view of the opportunities that the Information and Communication Technologies offer.

Educational Framework for the Development of Social and Civic Competence

From the intervention of parents, as those mainly responsible for the education of their children, to the educational sphere (on a formal level, not formal or informal) from the youngest to the oldest age, previously, throughout your whole life, the development of social and civic competence should be dealt with as a priority, given that part of personal happiness and success in the construction of a better society is at stake.

Next we will have a brief overview of the Organic Law of Spanish Education (LOE, 2006) where we find in Article 1 the following principles that make reference to the material we are dealing with, within the framework of the values of the Spanish Constitution (1978), which will allow us to judge the importance that this aspect has:

- Equality, that guarantees equal opportunities, the educational inclusion and the avoidance of discrimination and act as a compensating element for personal, cultural, economic and social inequality, with special attention to those that are disabled.
- The transmission and putting in practice of the values that favour personal liberty, responsibility, democratic citizenship, solidarity, tolerance, equality, respect and justice, as well as that they help to avoid any type of discrimination.
- Flexibility to adapt education to diverse abilities,

interest, expectations and needs of the students, as well as to the changes that the students and society experience.

- The educational and professional orientation of the students, as necessary means for achieving personalised education, which provides an integral education in knowledge, skills and values.
- The shared effort by the student, families, teacher, centres, administration, institutions and society as a group.
- Education for the prevention of conflicts and for the peaceful resolution of them, as well as non violence in all personal, family and social spheres.
- The development of equal rights and opportunities and the promotion of effective equality between men and women.

Following that, the Spanish educational system would be orientated towards obtaining a series of objectives (Article 2) from which we choose the following:

- Plain development of personality and of the student's ability.
- Education of rights and fundamental freedoms, in equal rights and opportunities between men and women and in the equal treatment and non discrimination of disabled people.
- Education in the exercise of tolerance and freedom within the democratic principles of coexistence, as well as the prevention of conflicts and the peaceful resolution of them.
- Education in the individual responsibility and in merit and personal effort.
- Education of peace, respecting human rights, common life, social cohesion, cooperation and solidarity in towns as well as the acquisition of values that express respect towards human beings and the environment, in particular the value of green spaces and sustainable development.
- Education in respect and acknowledgement of the linguistic and cultural plurality in Spain and of cultural diversity as a rich element of society.

- The preparation for the exercise of the citizens and for the active participation in economic, social and cultural life, with a critical and responsible attitude and able to adapt to situations.

From three years in infant education, the authors select certain abilities that allow them to achieve their general objectives, just as is outlined in Article 13.

- Observe and explore their family, natural and social environment.
- Relate with others and progressively acquire elemental guidelines of coexistence and social relations, as well as train them in the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

From the primary education objectives (Article 17) they stress the following:

- Know and appreciate the values and rules for coexistence, learn to behave in accordance with them, prepare yourself for the active exercise of citizenship and respect human rights, as well as the pluralism of a democratic society.
- Development of individual and group work habits of effort and responsibility, as well as the ability to trust oneself, critical thought, personal initiative, curiosity, interest and creativity in the learning process.
- Acquire skills for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts, which allows them to cope with autonomy in the family and domestic sphere, as well as in social groups that they relate with.
- Know, understand and respect the different cultures and differences between people, equal rights and opportunities between men and women and non discrimination of disabled people.
- Know and value their natural, social and cultural surroundings, as well as possible actions for taking care of themselves.
- Develop their affective abilities in all personal environments and in their relations with others, as well as an attitude against violence, prejudice of any type of sexist stereotypes.
- Encourage road safety education and attitudes that try to prevent traffic accidents.

As regards obligatory Secondary education, in Article 23

the authors find the following that deal with the topic more directly:

- Take responsibility for their duties, know and exercise their rights with respect to others, demonstrate tolerance, cooperation and solidarity with people and groups, practise in dialogue the reinforcement of human rights as common values of a plural society and prepare for the practice of a democratic citizenship.
- Develop and consolidate disciplinary habits...
- Value and respect the difference between the sexes and the equal rights and opportunities between them. Reject stereotypes that mean discrimination between men and women.
- Strengthen their affective abilities in all personal spheres and in their relations with others, as well as rejecting violence, prejudice of any type, sexist behaviour and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Develop an enterprising spirit and self belief, participation, a critical attitude, personal initiative and the capacity to learn to learn, plan, make decisions and take on responsibilities.
- Know, value and respect basic cultural and historical aspects for yourself and others, as well as artistic and cultural heritage.

From their point of view, it seems interesting to use the proposal by Marina and Bernabeu (2008: 31) in which they clearly expose the new fundamental factors related with the content of social competence:

- Awareness of social connections.
- Personal autonomy: responsibility, self-control, assertiveness and moral competence.
- Communication, understanding and empathy.
- Cooperation and collaboration
- Resolution of conflicts
- Prosocial feelings: solidarity, altruism, compassion, helpful conduct.
- Respect of everything brave.
- Political responsibility and participation.

As Marina and Bernabeu (2008: 29) indicate, content of

social and civic competence are from various types: psychological and social abilities, values (ethic), habits (of thought, emotion and behavioural), reasoning (moral, analytical, systemic) and knowledge.

Inter-personal competence understands all types of behaviour that an individual should dominate to be able to participate in an efficient and constructive way in social life, and to be able to resolve conflicts when necessary, both as an individual and as a group, in both public and private environments» (Education and Training, 2010, in Marina y Bernabeu, 2008: 27-28).

It is necessary for the same reason that each educational centre continues enabling opening to the neighbourhood and community, understanding in the widest sense, so that the students also learn by doing, experimenting and practising different actions in the specific construction of society, developing a new personal, emotional leadership, centred on the person, emphasizing the importance of an integral emotional education (Hué, 2008).

Contribution to the Orientation and Development of Social and Civic Competence

We are seeing the importance that the development of social and civic competence has in the curriculum. We are aware that the teaching staff in general takes on an important challenge by tackling the said competence, given that just as Marina and Bernabeu stress (2008: 140), there are key elements:

- Awareness of collaboration in the construction of a better world, so that the students are happy and good people.
- Search for the practical dimension, mobilize for action and commitment.
- Favouring the resolution of conflicts in an appropriate way.
- Strengthen interdisciplinary education (Psychology, Philosophy, Economy, Law, History, etc.)

The bond between the teaching staff and the Department of Orientation should be very strong, from the perspective of collaborative work. And furthermore, it is important to do an evaluation of the wide concept of orientation and diversity of environments, which although they still risk being

falsely defined, vaguely classified by task, role and functions, can be approached in a more or less direct way (Cano, 2006).

For that, we are going to cite some references – without meaning to be exhaustive – that allow us to prove how the environments of orientation are diverse, on a personal, academic, professional, family or social level with the perspective of the need to implement diverse programmes of intervention, in a preventative way and for the integral education of the students, aimed at the whole educational community.

An individual's knowledge is the fundamental basis for the development of a person, to the time that the orientation should be aimed at, in a practical way, resolving different existing problems in professional development or in any other life environment, given that it can affect them emotionally and, as a result, academically and socially. Along this line, García Hoz (1968: 193-194) establishes that personal orientation is the process of helping an individual so that they have enough knowledge of themselves and the world so that they are able to resolve problems in their life.

From their point of view, (1995: 11) specifies the following about orientation, from where we emphasize the concept of freedom, dignity and responsible citizenship:

(...) it would be in essence, to guide, to drive, to indicate in a processed way to help people to know themselves better and the world that surrounds them; it is an auxiliary to an individual who clarifies the essence of their life, so that they understand that they have significance and with the right to freedom, personal dignity, within a climate of equal opportunities and acting in capacity of responsible citizenship, in both their working activity and their free time.

Bisquerra (1996: 152) has indicated the psycho pedagogic orientation as (...) a continual helpful process, in all of its aspects, with the aim to improve the prevention and the human development throughout life.

Goldman and Newman (1998) continue showing that in an orientated quality teaching practice will have as its horizon, amongst others, the following aspects:

- Develop leadership, self esteem and group work skills for the students.
- Increase the involvement of the students in the improvement process of the school.
- Encourage critical thought for the creative resolution of problems.
- Develop skills for relations with more than one person.
- Increase student responsibilities, their decision making ability and their participation at school.
- Train the teaching staff, families, students and community in general, so that the process of quality leadership promotion expands within the community's schools.

From their point of view, Vélaz (1998) specifies that the orientation is a mix of knowledge, methodologies and theory principles that are based on planning, design, application and evaluation of the preventative, understanding, systematic and continued psycho pedagogic intervention, which is aimed at people, institutions and the community context, with the aim to enable and promote integral development of individuals throughout the various stages of their lives, with the involvement of different educational agents – for orientation, tutors, teaching staff and families – and social agents.

Benavent (2003: 54) defines the most ambitious psycho pedagogic orientation form as a multi-disciplinary scientific field, applied and prospective, which objective is to offer innovative and efficient help for human self-fulfilment.

The authors agree with Santos Guerra, where the prologue of the Santana manual (2003) confirms that the orientation function is paradoxical as it deals with a solvent action, that tends to disappear, becoming progressively unnecessary. It tries to achieve that the person is more and more independent, freer and independent, as is observed with a very close link with the development of social and civic competence. It concludes indicating that the orientation is not about creating obedient and conforming people, but rather the contrary. This point of view compliments that it is a good type of orientation that is more and more

unnecessary for whoever needs help to start something or at a determined moment.

In this sense it is necessary to review if this impulse of the development of civic competence, as the authors said above, is also in the orbit of informal and non formal teaching. An example in this sense is the notable effort that companies dedicated to education, training and working training. Master-D represents an example in this respect, which from its own point of view is a company which: we advise, prepare and train people so that they triumph in the achievement of their personal and professional goals, an effort that is perfectly aligned with the vision that we are studying here, of a role of a leader and which in this company has substance in its own intervention model: the P8.10 system.

Finally, it is necessary to remark how some people contemplate the orientation with scientific discipline; other as a concept, like service or like professional practice, in the line of the liberalization and flexibility that the authors previously mentioned. In any case, it seems relevant to stress that the orientation should be conceived as a technical and psycho pedagogic intervention: because professionals with specific techniques carry it out, supported by knowledge, also techniques, derived from some scientific knowledge, coming from different fields like Medicine, Psychology, Sociology, and Pedagogy. It tries to personalise and optimize the educational process of each student, procuring a better development of their academic, personal and professional possibilities, just as García Nieto explains (2004: 40).

Conclusion

Education in a formal environment, not formal and informal overlap, coexist and complement each other in order to tackle the development of skills linked to the social and civic competence.

In order to improve the collision of the development of social and civic competence, it is necessary that they come to an agreement, enable a consensus and dynamize the collaborative work, on a local, national and international level, between the educational authorities, the different educational authorities in any of their levels that they offer to the whole educational community,

foundations, centres of educational investigation, non governmental organizations and social agents.

The challenge of evaluating the degree of achievement in the long term still exists, not only for the content of the conceptual level in material for civic education, but rather above all, those that make reference to the attitudes and the procedures and ways to act in everyday life.

The key is to find possible relations between specific culture of a centre of an educational community, as regards the type of relations that are established, its organised structure and the different ways to resolve conflicts and everyday situations, and on the other hand, the influence that the integration of education for citizens could stem from the curriculum and in each individual centre. Nowadays, more than ever, it is necessary to develop schools with mechanisms for democratic participation within each one of the members of the said community.

It is essential to encourage respect for religious beliefs in education for citizens.

The authors consider that a close collaboration is necessary between the educational system, open to a community dimension, and at the same time, involving families, as these are fundamental to bring about successfully the integral education of citizens in the future.

Finally, it is necessary to indicate that the environments of orientation are diverse, on a personal, academic, professional, family or social level with the perspective and the need to implement diverse programmes of intervention, in a preventative way and for the integral education of students, aimed at the whole educational community.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Manuel Fandos is the Public Relations Officer in Master-D. He has been the Head of the Educational Innovation, Product and Mastervision Departments in Master-D. He has a Ph.D in Psycopedagogy by the University of Huelva, he is also a Graduate in Educational Science by the UNED and in Clerical Studies by the Pontifical University in Salamanca (Spain). He is a Graduate in Theology by the Regional Centre of Theological Studies in Aragon and in Teaching by the University of Zaragoza. He also has a Postgraduate course in Adult Education and is a teacher for teachers and a free time monitor. He is a member of the research team Agora, which is included in the Andalusian research plan (HUM-648). He has been Head teacher in several public schools, and has also worked as a continuous training consultant in the Teachers and Resources Centres of Ejea de los Caballeros, Calatayud and Juan de Lanuza de Zaragoza (Spain) and psychopedagogue for the Spanish Ministry of Science and Education. He has also worked as an Associate Teacher in Manchester University (England) and a University teacher of Experimental Teaching, New Technologies and Methodology and Didactics. He was Head of the department of Experimental Teaching in Fono-Leng Aragon (an Institution which is a member of Manchester University).

