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Citizenship and Non-Formal Education: The Effective Engagement Between The School and the Community (Contexts, Purposes and Dynamics)

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Abstract

Education for citizenship is a real challenge for all over Europe. European integration and new social needs require a commitment of all educational institutions to achieve the goal for an effective construction of an European identity and a common sense of citizenship based in equality, justice and peace.

School is, of course, one of the principal agents to contribute to this achieving. However, new social dynamics, of a postmodern society demand, go beyond the education system. Knowledge, values and skills overcome school walls and deeply emerge from some other educational contexts. There's no sense to educate in co-operation at school if pupils then leave the centre and exclusively find competitiveness at leisure centres, social programmes, sports, for instance. A whole and global community programme on education for citizenship is needed and it requires a common and shared framework for both schools and non-formal institutions.

Citizenship is a social dimension, so it needs to be educated in society as well. Throughout several programmes and alternative institutions, closely related and co-ordinated to school curriculum, we can really set up the chance to make citizenship something real and alive, and not only an abstract experience. In this paper we would like to remark some key-questions about postmodern society and its implications towards citizenship education. Then we also would contribute with some reflections and data about this community approach in Spain and finally we would explain some practical experiences on network programmes among educational agencies at the community which were carried out recently in this country and also were highly estimated by their participants.

Contexts

Recreational Education As Citizenship Education

Recreational education (as a non-formal education dimension) is eminently a type of citizenship education. In both its genesis and development throughout history and geography, the institutionalised act of educating children and adolescents in their free time has had a strong component of constructing citizenship. Recreational education is the outcome of a modern assessment of the educational needs of younger generations in wealthy European societies, where the gradual dismantling and transformation of the traditional social dynamics are paving the way for new opportunities for taking advantage of young people's lesser areas of freedom to promote the dynamics of educational action. A new context for education has emerged which attempts to contribute to the construction of new types of learning that are regarded as essential within the project of modernity.

However, despite the fact that one of the fundamental values of recreational education is citizenship education; conceptually speaking we should err in identifying one with the

other. We can claim that all recreational education is a type of citizenship education, although we may not be so sure that any type of citizenship education is a model of recreational education, since:

- Citizenship education encompasses all the contexts of a person's development and learning. A good citizen is characterised by knowing the rights and limitations of coexisting harmoniously with others in society, knowing the possibilities and limitations of acting within society, and the mechanisms that regulate the confrontation of interests between diverse people. These contents are inherent to all the spaces where they will construct their lives. Yet while some educational institutions, such as schools, take a reflexive approach, and the family promotes – or should promote – a more foundational approach, recreational education places citizenship and the values issuing there from as a fundamental axis for educational planning and action. This axis is expressed in a clear perspective of experience, taking the affective and emotional dimension of participants as the optimal framework for achieving the values that characterise this coexistence, this positioning within the societal framework or this conflict resolution. Recreational education then becomes a small-scale testing laboratory for the rules and attitudes that are regarded as valuable for achieving high degrees of individual freedom and social equality.
- Citizenship education is a type of institutionalised education. Just like practically all other types of learning that we undergo throughout our lives, citizenship has a type of content that these days is taught and learned in institutions. Schools are increasingly involved in the need to meet the challenge of identifying and promoting the essential citizen values, and even the media – aware of its enormous power to influence the shaping of citizen attitudes and behaviours – takes pains to develop deontological codes that ensure the dissemination of products that truly reflect the principles and values of a society boasting an up-to-date and functional sense of citizenship. However, beyond this perspective, recreational education attempts to invert the meaning of education. The position of the individual is not that of recipient of a highly elaborate, coherent message rather that of active participant in the construction of this message, which is constructed and reconstructed in each activity conducted at all times. Recreational education does not trace a path running from institution to recipient rather from recipient to surroundings, and precisely the surroundings themselves (physical, social, spiritual) are the ideal space where interactions that lead to the experience of citizenship and its appropriation are facilitated.
- Citizenship education takes place throughout people's entire lives. In such an ever-changing world, in which codes and meanings are constantly transforming and interacting, leading to new frameworks and outlooks, we cannot ensure that we citizens have understood the guidelines needed for successful coexistence and conflict resolution early in life. Unlike at other times in history, citizenship is emerging as an element in constant need of being redefined and elaborated, and this means that as adults we are motivated to remake our citizenship learning on an ongoing basis. The business world, the world of politics, the world of the family... all these spaces of adult action require a constant effort of reflection and reconsideration in light of the broad array of elements that are constantly arising in society. Yet recreational education, far from disregarding this new dimension, regards the

construction of an active stance towards the community in the younger generations to be a high priority, as it is aware of the importance of training and educational influence in the early stages of life. Recreational education starts from the principle of considering childhood, adolescence and early adulthood critical – and thus highly important – periods for educating people in civic values, and it conducts its activities as a large-scale game aimed at these ages.

- Citizenship education is a type of public education. Its public nature is rooted precisely in the fact that it helps to train people for handling the social realm pertaining to each citizen, which occupies all spheres of interaction and exchange amongst people and groups with differing ideologies, customs, languages and interests. For this reason, citizenship education cannot remain in the hands of a single institution, rather society as a whole must be responsible for it. To this end, the state plays a key role as a guarantor and promoter of this educational dimension, and through its policies aimed at the educational system, the family or the business world it ensures that citizenship is present and becomes a significant component to be borne in mind by the many stakeholders and agents. Yet the meaning of recreational education is rooted in and projected from social initiative. As we have said, the state may guarantee and promote this, but it would be hard pressed to generate dynamics in which citizenship values are constructed, experienced and reflected on in an authentic way. Many different social groups, according to many different criteria – religious beliefs, ideology, etc. – have also shaped a multitude of different ways of interpreting citizenship and citizenship education, and it is within this framework where, far from particularism, a social civic context for everyone may be constructed. This construction is based on the genuineness of volunteerism and the gratuitous nature of educational action in the majority of cases, which does nothing other than strengthen the idea that ownership of citizenship is from citizens and for citizens, as a necessary contribution that we must all make in the construction of a common good.

Trends In Recreational Education And Citizenship Education In Catalonia (Spain)

As reflected in other chapters in this work, this recreational education – which is profoundly citizenship-oriented – emerged and became widespread during the past century, and in our nation it has led to the shaping of diverse array of services that, based on a unique identity, have steadfastly pursued this notion of a critical, aware citizenry. This is not the text, then, for identifying and examining each of these options in depth, rather it is necessary to systematise certain ideas regarding the various predominant trends that have existed – and still exist – when understanding the mission of this educational context.

- Recreational education as a social movement – An initial trend that has taken shape within the framework of recreational education involves viewing its actions from the standpoint of a social movement. Recreational education, from this vantage point, does not wish to limit itself to a subsidiary role in social development rather it aims to take centre stage and act as an engine in what we understand as social transformation. Children and young people participate in activities with a dual meaning, in both the short and long term. In the short term, educational activities directly fuse with the goal of meeting the needs of the social milieu which are considered top priority from the scale of intrinsic values – the environment,

solidarity, the establishment of networks of social relationships and the like. In the long term, the goal is to prepare people with high social competencies that are capable of holding positions of responsibility within society, and from these positions to go on forging the project of values and citizenship that characterises them. This is a more community-based dimension of recreational education, and its structure is mainly founded on volunteerism. Underpinning this perspective lies an ultimate meaning of a social mission strongly committed to an interpretation of change in the social reality.

- Recreational education as membership in educational organisations – A second trend is related to membership in organisations. Recreational education is interpreted and promoted as a concrete form of membership that attempts to transform recreational into educational time. From this standpoint, one is keenly aware of the educational mission. The remaining social institutions with a strong educational component – the school, the family – are currently in crisis and in the process of repositioning their role and social function, and recreational education finds itself in a prime space and time to provide a citizenship education that is at times scarcely represented. In this sense, recreational education constitutes one piece in the complex mesh of educational bodies, of communities that understand that education in the 21st century will be a deinstitutionalised education that takes place through complex networks of resources, stakeholders and proposals, and that will cover all the factors and the entire life cycle of people. It is a perspective that, based on collaboration and co-operation within a framework of specific civic values, directly aims at the balanced growth and well-being of individuals as the best guarantee of a better society and future.
- Recreational education as a service-providing entity in the community – This is the third trend within recreational education, which reminds us how this social initiative frequently also aims to cover structural deficiencies in social sectors at risk. It is common, then, for recreational education to attempt to provide the support in the care of young children that the remaining educational institutions cannot provide given the complexity of the economic, labour and socio-cultural conditions of a large swath of the population. Here, recreational education assumes its more professional guise, because the demands of the environment in which it wishes to provide services requires this, and it ends up being a first-rate tool when promoting contexts in which citizenship has problems getting established not for ideological but for structural reasons. This recreational education ensures that many children and adolescents approach citizenship in a different way during their non-school hours linked to the school, or that these same children and adolescents find a quality space in their communities, neighbourhoods and towns, where the social dynamic itself has not managed to generate socio-cultural resources that enrich the youngest residents' free time. This approach to recreational education frequently verges on social work, yet despite this it does not cease to have a fully civic meaning due to both the social function it plays and the inherent axiological content of its content.

The proportion, meaning and scope of each of these trends amongst the main recreational educational institutions in Catalonia varies, and this variability depends on a wide range of factors. For example, those groups that have traditionally constructed their services upon a social base made up of the well-to-do classes have tended to view recreational education as a social movement. In contrast, those groups that have attempted to serve the

less favoured social sectors have tended to situate themselves from a vantage point more similar to that of an entity providing community services.

History also plays a key role. Although under the Franco dictatorship the predominant trend in recreational education was the development of a social movement with a clear social mission of fighting against the dictatorship and constructing an alternate social model, with the arrival of democracy there tended to be a trend more toward membership in organisations, which in some cases, based on the development of the welfare state, led to service-providing entities.

What we can be certain of is that nowadays all three trends remain vital, to a greater or lesser extent, within the scene of each collective, and although it might be difficult to find a functional equilibrium between each perspective, no institution appears to want to give up any of them. The other thing of which we can be relatively certain as well is that regardless of this equilibrium, all three trends need to be reinterpreted in light of a social reality that is increasingly more well-versed in post-modernity.

- Today it is difficult to define a social movement in modern terms. It is becoming difficult to believe that commitment, steadfastness and faith in a project, which in other eras have been the foundation of the organisational culture of certain recreational educational institutions, are still the organising elements today. Those who have traditionally opted for this path find themselves precisely with a lack of commitment, steadfastness and meaning amongst the young people they are serving. This could lead to erroneous thinking, such as that the option of recreational education as a social movement is no longer relevant as a type of citizenship education and a means of constructing citizenry. Yet numerous successful experiences in the field of civic action – these groups' responses to humanitarian catastrophes, their involvement in a variety of initiatives promoting peace and social justice, and others – tell us that this is not so. Perhaps what is needed is to not give up on this type of action but to reformulate it and adapt it to the emergent and real needs that younger generations are clamouring for. Perhaps the idea is not to offer spaces for education and social action where participation is understood as an exclusive life option rather where it is viewed as a fabric made up of specific proposals that in light of the fragility of our youngest citizens' living conditions are feasible and leave a mark of authenticity in their scale of values based on the specific actions undertaken.
- These days it is difficult to define membership in educational organisations in terms of modernity. It is difficult for people to join organised forms of social relations that imply significant efforts. Group membership requires an important investment of time, as well as a desire to belong to a stable collective. When many adolescents and young people take stock of efforts vs. results, joining is not subjectively perceived as a source of short-term benefits compared to more occasional activities. Nevertheless, in order to understand the keys to this reality, we should not aim our sights only towards the recipients of recreational education. The children's and young people's membership-based organisational structures at times respond to a closed methodological pattern that does not allow the activity to become flexible in more accessible terms without losing the meaning and purposes underlying it. What is more, it is worth pointing out how from a clear vantage point of modernity, the world of recreational education has gradually working towards becoming more formal

(training requirements for educators, development of educational programmes and projects, etc.). In some ways, the aim was to overcome the bias of lesser status it had always suffered from when traditionally framed within the field of formal education. Yet simultaneously, a broader interpretation of the current educational trends, envisioned in terms of inclusive education and learning communities, are promoting an opposite trend toward the gradual deformalisation of formal education. In order to be attractive as an activity based on organisational membership, recreational education must redefine the symbolic culture sustaining and identifying it as a measure enabling it to connect meaningfully with the specific needs of its possible recipients and as yet another step towards repositioning it within the complex network of education.

- It is also difficult to base an approach to recreational education from service-providing institutions on the modern view to reality. This is true first and foremost because some of the initiatives we can find within this realm may not be precisely defined as services rather more as business activities with profit-making motives. The emergence of what is called the “third sector” as a space for enterprise frequently leads these initiatives – especially those related to summer activities – to be bereft of the value of social transformation and/or organisational membership which might otherwise characterise them. In addition, we find that the perception of a benefactor state that attends to the needs of the least favoured segments of society is gradually vanishing. Under determined conditions, it is quite easy to identify situations in which the public administration, when it subcontract recreational entities to provide services in marginal areas, does not take on co-responsibility. It does not regard it as an underlying project integrated with other social initiatives, rather the aim is to cover urgent needs in the short term as opposed to developing an authentic citizenship education that promotes community development. Finally, we should point out how behind certain conceptions of recreational education from the standpoint of service provision there is disguised a vision of inclusion that, depending on circumstances, could lead to practices favourable to exclusion. There is a significant difference between the activities these entities provide to sectors with a reasonable purchasing power and those offered to the poorer classes. A post-modern interpretation of recreational education must contribute to denouncing these possible differences in criteria and act as an engine of exchange and inclusion aimed at all social sectors, since all social sectors – not just some of them – need high quality recreational education in terms of citizenship as we have set forth.

Purposes

Dimensions Of Cultural Diversity

In its discourse and practice, recreational education has included cultural diversity as an objective, a content and a strategy – both institutional and pedagogical – of its actions. The reasons behind this inclusion can be found in the demographic transformation – immigration from non-EU countries – that has taken place in our country during the last decade. However, it would be an erroneous analysis to believe that speaking about cultural diversity has been limited to speaking about immigration. The reality in Catalonia, viewed in its entirety, necessitates a broader approach to cultural diversity:

- The internationalisation of relationships amongst groups, peoples and persons has accentuated a scenario from which we cannot escape, marked by a continuum of

values and ways of understanding life that are constantly intersecting thanks to transport, communications and the speed with which information travels. Any citizen of Catalonia is, by default, a citizen of the world, a world which is within his or her reach on a daily basis, and these citizens today are facing the challenge of accepting a citizenship education that provides them with the personal elements and resources that enable them to find their place within this crossroads of cultural diversity. However, finding one's place on this playing field does not mean doing so neutrally – as that would be impossible – or uncritically. The cultural diversity resulting from the internationalisation of relationships could be viewed from many different perspectives and with different underlying objectives. Because of this the need emerges for education to project a perspective that is coherent and consistent with the key values of a citizenship understood in terms of human rights. Thus, recreational education, as a type of school for citizenship, must be capable of providing activities and projects that enable participants to reflect on our community's relationship with the rest of the planet, to identify on what terms co-operation and co-development that are valuable for all players can emerge, to act to pressure the governments locally and to collaborate with the people from elsewhere.

- However, Catalonia is also experiencing firsthand another process that is profoundly marked by cultural diversity and in which education must also invest significant resources: European integration. A new dimension of citizenship has emerged, European citizenship, and with it the need for it to go hand-in-hand with a process of redefining the cultural identity of Catalans in which, from a dynamic and flexible standpoint, a feeling and a self-concept imprinted with Europeanism can be included harmoniously. A Catalan citizen belongs to a united socio-political space still under construction encompassing more than 350 million people, in which the diversity of cultural forms and contents is quite high. Nevertheless, following the same line of reasoning as that being conducted on a planet-wide scale, the gradual Europeanisation of society and individuals can be viewed from a variety of angles, with the concomitant emergence of a range of possible future scenarios and diverse correlations of forces that could drive European construction in one direction or another. A citizenship education that is sensitive to the cultural diversity resulting from membership in the European Union must flee from a conception of Europe as a market of freely-moving products, goods and services, and it must delve deeper into a perspective that backs the potentiality of positive, shared values that define a more or less common landscape of freedom, equality and diversity for everyone. Recreational education, within this context, must be capable of providing elements for raising awareness in this new stage of citizenship, and to set into motion processes that facilitate the acquisition of this conception linked to the above-mentioned values of citizenship.
- As it draws nearer to the particularities of our own daily lives, cultural diversity must also make us sensitive to the reality in Spain, a complex framework in terms of this issue. On the one hand, we have yet to find a formula allowing for full integration of the Gypsy people into Catalan society, a process revolving around a social group that has become invisible in light of all the other emergent factors that are currently playing a part in our concept of culture. Likewise, as members of a community that has undergone profound intercultural transformations over the second half of the past century, there are still many questions yet to be answered from the standpoint of

identity. Any citizen living in Catalonia today feels the need to take a stance on issues related to citizenship and politics, such as the role of the Catalan language in society (once the post-Franco era transition was surmounted), and must reflect on the value and relationship our community must uphold with the other peoples in Spain. In coherence with the diverse elements we will take up during the discourse, any citizenship education must provide tools for understanding the value of the language from a perspective of openness and flexibility, by affirming identity without harming diversity. It must also ensure the possibility of seeing opportunities for personal and collective enrichment, from the socio-cultural realm, in the fact of belonging to a political and economic structure like that of Spain. Recreational education, an engine of citizenship, has much work yet to do in this terrain, by strengthening the role of Catalan in all its activities as an organising and cohesive factor for all participants. At the same time, it can contribute to generating positive images of the different groups and peoples making up the state of Spain, thus overcoming at-times limited vision of the structural debates.

- However, as we have said from the outset, the most determining factor when analysing cultural diversity from the specific vantage point of peoples and neighbourhoods in Catalonia today is the presence of non-EU immigrants. The recent arrival of families and individuals from Latin America, from various countries on the African continent, from the most eastern regions of Asia (from our perspective), and others to Catalan soil has opened up a heretofore unknown dimension of cultural diversity, which to a great extent has eclipsed the other dimensions set forth above. And here, citizenship education, in terms of cultural diversity, finds its true calling. This is true first of all because the new demographic reality has redefined the debate on the very values underlying citizenship. What does equality mean amongst peoples who uphold different cultural perspectives? How can we contribute to the freedom of everyone, regardless of their origin or beliefs, without this jeopardising the basic principles of coexistence and the essential values of human rights? What model of civic society can ensure social cohesion and inclusion of all of us who at this point in make up this complex social, political and cultural reality we call Catalonia? This is a vital debate for the present and the future, and one in which education takes centre stage to play a key role. Recreational education needs, from its community perspective, to contribute to providing answers to these questions, both from a theoretical standpoint and from its actual daily practice, by opening its doors to educators and children from newly arrived families, by introducing a dynamic vision of the construction of identities into the educational activities and projects aimed at everyone, and by forming citizens and networks of co-operation with other entities around them which work towards this goal.

Objectives

Having reached this point, and in light of the necessary multi-disciplinary perspective of the relationship between citizenship education, recreational education and cultural diversity, a question arises as to the model of society and education that is most compatible with this analysis. From all the different angles, we believe that the model that best adapts is the one set forth from the perspective of interculturality. However, interculturality precisely not viewed as a model but as a dynamic project opened to multiple dimensions, flexible and subject to the specific, concrete needs of the

communities within which it works, yet sustained by principles and values that are tied to the construction of a peaceful coexistence based on equality, freedom and diversity.

We understand interculturality as a model of society which promotes three main purposes:

- The fight for equal opportunities for everyone when living together in and sharing the same space and time
- Respect for cultural diversity
- The creation of social environments that make possible mutual exchange and enrichment amongst people from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds, thus combating discrimination stemming from prejudices and stereotypes.

Although other social models of managing cultural diversity, such as multiculturalism, the melting pot or cultural pluralism, share with interculturality the defence of equal rights and respect for diversity, what is certain is that there are differentiating nuances when it comes to understanding the key factor to interculturality: the desire to provide spaces for exchange, enrichment and understanding, and the active and preventative stance when fighting for equality and against discrimination.

Without a doubt, interculturality starts from the need for interdependence amongst all the members of a given society, and it is this very interdependence that marks the course of going slightly beyond the confirmation of reality itself (cultural pluralism) or managing the inevitable dissonances when persons from different cultural or ethnic heritages live together. And recreational education, in its guise as citizenship education, can become a privileged space for contributing to the development of this perspective. This is why we assert that:

- Interculturality is not a discourse (like the melting pot) but a practice which is carried out in daily life, with future plans that encompass the best of the past. Recreational education, from this dimension of dailiness, can contribute immensely to strengthening and serving as a foundation for this practical dimension of daily interaction.
- Interculturality is not constructed in the abstract; rather it is practised by specific people, with specific names, in specific neighbourhoods, with the desire not to settle with what they have been dealt out but to go beyond the quest for better rates of equality and social justice. Recreational education can open these specific spaces in the community, transforming entities into veritable engines for facilitating interaction amongst everyone.
- Interculturality is not the responsibility of either politicians or the public administration but of civil society. It is devoid of official status and emerges from the spontaneity and creativity of members of specific communities. For this reason, recreational education, via the different groupings and organisations under which it is organised, as one of the most characteristic shows of the strength of a civil society, can play a key role in constructing this social model.
- Interculturality is not the exclusive responsibility of adults but of persons of all ages. In this sense, recreational education, especially that addressed to children and young people, opens the door to new generations coexisting peacefully alongside each

other, thus sketching an optimal scenario to facilitate their growth and acquisition of intercultural values in a society in which a few years hence they will be the lead players.

- Interculturality is not enclosed within the initials or walls of any specific institution, rather it bursts forth in all spaces and at all times. For this reason, the construction of interculturality from recreational education is not restricted to any specific entity, and it contaminates all the educational institutions in a given area, which might view the project of interculturality as an opportunity for exchange and a common project.

In short, what we wish to justify is the fact that, unlike other cultural practices, physical activity and sports have an incalculable intrinsic value when developing the project of interculturality, since these practices in and of themselves remind us that:

- All human beings are equal in essence and different in existence – The fight against discrimination must follow this principle, which lays the foundations of a discourse focusing on the social construction of difference and alerts us to possible cultural biases. Constructing interculturality does not only mean taking account of the cultural aspects of diversity.
- The past is only meaningful if it is capable of projecting the present towards the future – Cultural identities become dynamic only if they are capable of contributing to improving the conditions that inequality has brought about, identities-in-formation that go beyond the needs of cultural legitimisation and/or resistance.
- Recreational education should not necessarily be viewed as a wall but as a bridge – Despite the differences in class, the different cultural baggage, the different conceptions of time, free time and values not to mention languages, recreational education can facilitate spaces and contexts that promote interculturality, both within the dimension of a specific community and from a broader dimension of a planet-wide scale.

In the following sections, then, we shall focus more on activities stemming from a citizenship education within the framework of recreation that regards cultural diversity from the intercultural vantage point.

Levels Of Complexity

The educational and learning strategies that a recreational education centre could generate in order to achieve respect for cultural identities, to fight for social equality and to combat discrimination within an intercultural social framework could be situated on three integrated levels of complexity:

- Knowledge and discovery of the other – Recreational education implies a privileged space for providing an intercultural citizenship education based on promoting curiosity and openness towards new cultural realities. Unlike schools themselves, there are neither limits nor prescriptions from a predetermined curriculum; instead, free time provides the opportunity to include cultural diversity as a fundamental content from an updated perspective, that is, connected with children's and young people's immediate reality. Exploring and investigating the wealth of the multiple forms human beings have adopted for interpreting life and actively adapting to it is an objective that is in consonance with this level.

- Acknowledgement and ties with the other – Beyond mere knowledge, recreational education may provide opportunities for the children and young people participating in it to draw closer to all the elements related to cultural diversity not only cognitively but also affectively. Having an attitude of acknowledgement towards diversity in general, and cultural diversity in particular, enables contact with realities different than one's own to be viewed up close employing an empathetic process that arouses enjoyment in being in an intercultural framework on all levels (both micro and macro), and it facilitates the forging of ties with symbolic elements and people that are themselves defined as bearers of a different identity than the other.
- Managing coexistence with the other – Knowledge and acknowledgement, however, are only meaningful if we contextualise them within a framework applicable to everyday life, that is, to peaceful coexistence. The more behavioural – conative – dimension of human nature must also be considered, precisely as a third element that enriches, integrates and give meaning to everything we think and that cultural diversity makes us feel. By managing coexistence within frameworks of cultural plurality, one learns, and thus intercultural citizenship education undertaken in one's free time may be an advantageous framework for experiencing this learning, in a climate of pedagogical action that promotes dense, intense projects through activities that test whether the different personal and collective resources of pluri-cultural groups can be successful.

Dynamics

Following the lines of the discourse developed in this text, we can claim that the major purposes of an intercultural citizenship education in free time – in terms of cultural diversity, the fight for social equality and the fight against ethnic or cultural discrimination – must be manifested in the different dimensions in which this interculturality must be viewed, that is, everything ranging from the most global factors related to processes of internationalisation to issues related to the cultural diversity derived from the latest processes of immigration. Thus, we can discern a continuum of complementary working dynamics that, from a standpoint of social movement, service-providing entity or membership-based organisation, weave a series of motivating, updated proposes that meet the needs of not only collectives but also individual children and young people in Catalonia. Below we shall outline some of these, in an attempt to devise what we could term an *“intercultural citizenship education curriculum in free time”*.

Respect For Cultural Diversity

Knowledge and discovery

FAR- WE must advocate the need to critically reposition the different schemas of approaches to cultural diversity we currently use. First, we must reappraise the past of peoples with whom we are unfamiliar. Secondly, we must view the present of predominant societies in a relative light in order to ensure that a future conception of cultural identities is less biased and more egalitarian. Trips to exhibitions on ages-old cultures deserving historical understanding could be planned, while at the same time workshops encouraging awareness-raising on the “universal” components of our most daily cultural habits could be held (our ways of dressing, eating, listening to music, seeing films...), which are the product of what we could call a “cultural colonisation” for commercial purposes.

NEAR- We must take advantage of the presence of citizens who have recently arrived from abroad to promote a dynamic vision of their processes of cultural identity, while reflectively doing the same with our own processes. First, it is important to make it clear that identifying with a cultural group in one's country of origin is not the same as doing so here. Furthermore, we should point out how Catalan identity itself is difficult to define. In other words, the "we" is not so homogeneous, nor is the "they" so different. Gatherings with recent immigrants can be held – even better if they are parents of children or young people at the centre – so they can tell stories from their lives. Workshops, too, can be held to grapple with the complexity and wealth of one's own identity, beyond dysfunctional stereotypes.

Acknowledgement and ties

FAR- We must facilitate the acknowledgement of cultural identities that are in the minority or that have traditionally played a lesser role in our land. Twinning with recreational groups and institutions abroad can be of great help in achieving this objective. Through international organisations of recreational entities we can, by simple contact using technologies – videoconferencing, e-mail, snail mail, chat rooms – provide value to certain realities within cultural diversity that would benefit both the foreigners – in terms of the ties – and Catalan boys and girls themselves.

NEAR- Efforts must be made to promote the presence of children and young people from recently arrived families into our recreational education centres. This is the best strategy for promoting acknowledgement and ties with these citizens using contact and exchange mediated by the educators. Thus, we must also consider the need for including educators from these families into the centres, and we must consider the languages used by means of a language plan – outlining the use of Catalan, introduction of children's native languages for telling stories, posters and communications with the families, ... – as well as create spaces where the children and young people from these newly-arrived families may reflect on their own cultural identities.

Managing coexistence

FAR- We must encourage trips to discover cultural realities outside Catalonia. Especially with groups of young people, this type of activity can be a strongly motivating factor while at the same time a first-rate educational tool. Everything involved in carrying out this type of project (creating expectations, preparation, comparing and contrasting a reality outside one's normal parameters) contributes to raising participants' awareness of the scope of cultural diversity and the importance of feeling responsible for appreciating the artistic and cultural heritage of our planet, all of this within a framework of coexistence with people who are culturally different within one's own context. The experience of finding oneself in a space other than one's own, through pure empathy, fuels reflection on the construction of foreigners' identities here in Catalonia.

NEAR- We must promote work on prejudices and stereotypes in the cultural diversity that has announced itself upon the arrival of new immigrants. There are a multitude of workshops, role-plays, experiments and debates that could be highly useful for achieving these objectives. It is very difficult for a group of children or young people to live together in harmony if their members are caught up in preconceived and stereotyped images of their peers. Reducing the distance between the image, which has been inherited from

other contexts – the family, the media – and the reality of persons near one is fundamental for ensuring that young people learn how to coexist peacefully.

Fight For Equality

Knowledge and discovery

FAR- We must promote discovery of the vast array of international organisations that are devoted to the fight for equality. By means of role-plays we can encourage knowledge of and improvement in the image of institutions such as the UN (somewhat discredited since the US's war against Iraq), UNESCO, and others. With young people, we can work using texts such as the UNDP, where the close and deplorable relationship between cultural differences and social inequality on a planet-wide scale is patently clear. The goal is to reassess the mechanisms that the international community has at its disposal to promote the citizenship and social justice that underpin human rights.

NEAR- We can either make or host visits with delegations from these international organisations in Catalonia. Discovering these delegations could promote a sense of proximity, and seeing that there are other people from one's own country involved could be a source of motivation. It is also coherent within this strand to discover the different organisations and groups of immigrants living in Catalonia, especially those individuals that have organised themselves in order to fight for their rights within our society.

Acknowledgement and ties

FAR- We must undertake actions that pave the way for an understanding of the notion of "world citizen" (as long as this implies a recognition of universal human rights), and convey the fact that not all citizens of the world currently enjoy the same conditions of equality in terms of a variety of factors: quality of life, international mobility, educational opportunities, and so forth. Participating in international campaigns against the exploitation of child workers, as this is totally unjustifiable, or forging ties with groups of women who fight for equality in countries that are hostile to gender equality are just some of the activities that might generate this dual mutual benefit both for those living in quite different realities as well as for those promoting these actions locally.

NEAR- We need to promote equal conditions for the children from newly-arrived families when gaining access to resources and contexts for recreational education. When granting economic aid, for example, the parents' legal situations must not be taken into account. Efforts should be made – by means of peers, with the participation of cultural mediators – to explain and make all the information on recreational education arrive to groups of new citizens so that they may enjoy an effective freedom of choice. We must also facilitate participation by representative of groups of foreigners in the tasks of discussion, planning and design of educational activities in recreational education institutions.

Managing coexistence

FAR- One very attractive idea involves organising summer camps in Catalonia with children and/or young people experiencing extraordinary circumstances (natural catastrophes, wars) in their home countries. This is a costly activity in all senses of the word, yet it activates and mobilises not only the recreational education institutions but also the group of communities where these centres are located. Living alongside these other citizens encourages contact and poses the challenge of living together for

constructing conditions of equality with peoples who are at a disadvantage through no fault of their own. The affective ties that tend to be forged transform the way the participants in this experience look at the world.

NEAR- We must become involved in holding activities on the different factors that affect or have affected peaceful coexistence in neighbourhoods or towns in Catalonia in light of the presence of newly-arrived citizens. It is important to promote debates, especially amongst young people, on issues related to the fight for equality for immigrants. By means of a variety of dynamics, recreational education can become a fruitful space for providing information and free and open debate on these issues.

Denouncement Of And Fight Against Discrimination

Knowledge and discovery

FAR- The reality of discrimination on a planet-wide scale must be made known by means of the discovery provided by an analysis of documentaries on the issue and exchanges with foreigners that come to the recreational education centre to provide testimony on matters in their countries. We should understand how modern technologies – Internet, for example – can enable and facilitate groups of xenophobes and racists to realise their objectives. Through workshops, we must raise awareness of the importance of the content of certain foreign films and international video games as elements that convey discriminatory values.

NEAR- We must promote knowledge of circumstances of discrimination in our own surroundings. Methodologies such as a research project – going to search for data provided by neighbourhood or town interlocutors – or reading news about one's immediate environs can be employed. It is important to encourage a broad view of discrimination and realise that it exists in everyday life. Through debates or colloquia with people affected, we can meet the need to reflect on possible solutions. At the recreational education centre, we can hold thematic days related to the fight against discrimination (International Day against Racism, International Women's Day, etc.).

Acknowledgement and ties

FAR- We can appraise and support the entities and organisations that fight against discrimination on an international scale. Through them, we can enter into contact with specific cases that we can learn about and that can serve as a stimulus for our action supporting a positive solution in accordance with the principles of human rights. Exposure to these specific cases favours a vision of the problems, although one must be very careful when conducting these activities (especially with very young participants) since we run the risk of generalising the examination of a specific case to a population as a whole.

NEAR- By means of practical group exercises, we must uncover the possible discriminatory attitudes that all of us are capable of bearing, not only for reasons related to culture, religion or ethnicity, but also in more general terms. Awareness raising through other spaces is an important step prior to a change in attitude. If there are children or young people from newly arrived families in the recreational education centres, we can take advantage of this by creating positive dynamics based on games that facilitate an inclusive climate where everyone is accepted.

Managing coexistence

FAR- Situations of discrimination can be simulated through role plays that demonstrate the real consequences of many phenomena that take place regularly and that often remain outside our radar due to a lack of information. Reproducing real situations of discrimination with regard to the international trade balance – the great continent game – or the odyssey withstood by thousands of foreigners wishing to enter our soil – the immigrant game – can contribute to experiencing real situations that would otherwise, due to their distance or degree of abstractness, remain remote from being able to be known and understood.

NEAR- We must provide tools for the personal growth of all children when facing possible situations of discrimination. By means of techniques that encourage assertiveness, recreational education can help children and young people learn to handle conflictive situations using an optimal personal and emotional equilibrium. In many cases, in terms of discrimination, peaceful coexistence will depend on the personal resources we all have at our disposal.

