

SEEDS Project meeting Humpolec, Czech Republic 16-18 June 2007

<p>ITALIAN DELEGATION</p> <p>Giovanna Barzanò - project co-ordinator</p> <p>Virginia Ginesi</p> <p>Gianfrancesco Musumeci</p> <p>Emanuela Brumana</p> <p>Maria Cristina Zarrella</p>	<p>CZECH DELEGATION</p> <p>Vlastimil Fiala (Chair)</p>
<p>NORWEGIAN DELEGATION</p> <p>John Rullestad</p> <p>Andreas Holvik</p> <p>Linda Velle Sjoen</p>	<p>UK DELEGATION</p> <p>Jane Jones</p> <p>Michaela Thomas</p>
<p>SPANISH DELEGATION</p> <p>Catalunya team</p> <p>Anna Babra Perez</p> <p>Xavier Buson Torroja</p>	<p>External Evaluator</p> <p>Carmo Climaco - Portugal</p>

Friday 16th

Vlasta welcomed all the participants to Humpolec and gave details of the programme organisation.

Giovanna referred to the meeting expectations and the need to be well focused as it was now time to 'bring in the oars' and make recommendations. She emphasised the need for good and extensive dissemination which was already substantial. Partners had been involved in a great many dissemination activities which are appended in a grid. There was strong feeling that dissemination is about learning in meetings, discussions etc as well as distributing products and that the team, according to Carmo, had done very well in this respect. Carmo also said that it would be useful to be more explicit in our references and provide a context for our products, explaining what was important so that others may learn from us.

Andreas felt that we should have more opportunities for group discussion in the meetings so that all would have a possibility to contribute and this was agreed for all future meetings.

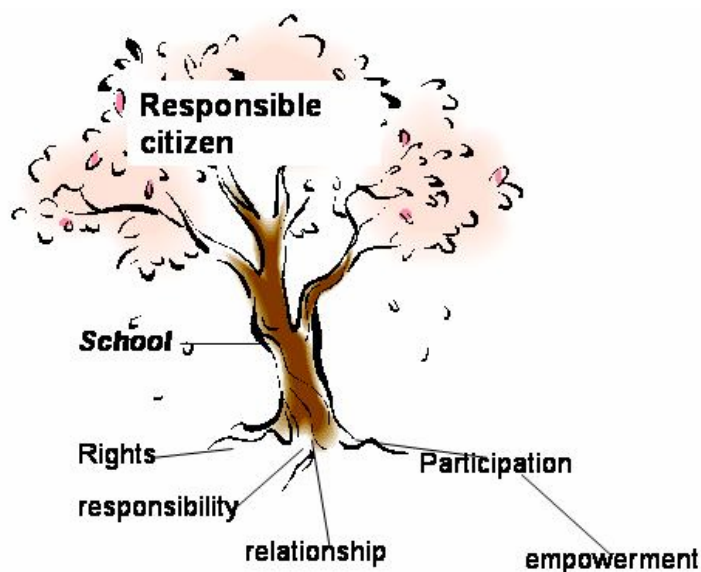
The meeting ended and a welcome dinner was held for all participants.



Saturday 17th

Norway made the 1st presentation with the film they had had the opportunity to make. Andreas explained that the purpose had been to try to show key constructs of the project in operation, of responsibility and participation, and that this was being developed in pupils' learning and their preparation for target tests. The film emphasized how different learning styles can be catered for and enhanced in the ways that the teacher organizes learning e.g. on the basis of group work, carousels, peer assessment and peer learning and teaching children how to be responsible for their own learning as far as possible. The film showed how this was being developed and the culture of trust that was necessary for this to take place. It showed how such an approach can be developed from a very early age, including playground democracy. The evidence indicated that the children took their tests very seriously but without fear. One to one tutorials enabled pupil and teacher to check on well being and set individual targets in a formative way.

In discussion, it was pointed out that such changes in roles and responsibilities take time to develop and require considerable support, training and resources for teachers. The transition to secondary schools was an issue and the extent to which secondary colleagues can operate such a system of individualized support given their pressures. Andreas said it was necessary to continue to dig deeper into the key issue of pupil empowerment as in the following diagram:



Questions arose about to what extent the tests reflected the specified learning and was there challenge beyond this. The group commented on how the cultural context of testing differs according to conventions and expectations, some systems being closer than others eg Norway and UK have both adopted a formative approach in school.

Catalunya, Spain

Catalan colleagues then showed a film that aimed to 'discover' the school culture in terms of aspects of the curricula debate about the citizenship dimension- respect for self, others, the world around us. The film featured a primary school case study where citizenship is deemed really important as regards participation in particular where it is asserted that learning citizenship is by doing. The organization of the school is crucial in supporting this view and aims to secure the participation of all members of the school community. The film showed key pillars of the approach identified as the following:

Tutorials: one to one and group tutorials to help develop aspects of emotional literacy

Cultural week- a high profile week of activities that include events, exhibitions, projects, games etc supported and organized by different groups of pupils, parents and the community at large

Friendly path-a community project to improve the neighbourhood and the school surroundings e.g. by the remodeling of space and lighting for a safer environment

Public Audience-this involves all 6th year pupils from various schools working together on how the Council and citizenship system of community participation operates. A plenary is held with the Mayor.

Agenda 21-creative ideas to 'reduce-reuse-recycle' are developed in this project

Non-violence and Peace day on January 30th - which involved a range of collaborative activities such as games and shared breakfast, to promote conflict resolution and peaceable living

Festivities- such as at Christmas and for Carnival for all the community to enjoy

Literary Fair-a variety of activities such as exhibitions, workshops, music, drama and book exchanges.

Together, these activities are serving to involve the whole community in concrete experiences of citizenship and to develop a sense of belonging. Pupils are expected to and enjoy taking considerable responsibility, and this includes a yearly assessment of their school. Parents are very much involved in this creation of 'a road to multiple citizenship'. The key issue is of the school culture and school organization that supports this. The primary school is especially conducive to this. (See also the Powerpoint presentation and the commentary in English that is a translation of the Catalan film commentary).

Giovanna stressed that it was important to show problematical issues as well as 'what works' and to explore how students learn to master difference. She contrasted the idea of self challenge with a culture of homogeneity and the

way in which these can be explored in our case studies to better understand and expand our learning. We need to learn to compare and contrast and develop literacy in this respect. Jane said it was important to include dissent, argument and debate on the critical thinking skills agenda that was an essential part of responsible citizenship.

Czech Republic

Vlasta had been following up key issues arising from his previous case study research in his school. His presentation, entitled 'The way to the depth of the student's soul' (see also the Powerpoint presentation) described the instruments he had used and showed a grid of participants involved in the teacher-pupil interviews. He had then analysed the responses from both teachers and pupils.

The pupils showed a marked reluctance for change indicating a high level of satisfaction. Older students focused on issues of learning and teaching whilst the younger pupils often identified concerns about wellbeing such as food and cushions!

The research had proved to be very useful for teachers in learning about teacher research and interview protocols and about how home problems can impact on a student's progress.

Vlasta emphasized that SEEDS had provided a major stimulus for his research. He had become increasingly aware that school was an important part of the students' lives; indeed school is open early and late after school for the pupils with many available activities. The project was providing a forum for the pupil voice and a way for pupils to express themselves openly.

Carmo wanted to know to what extent the students had expressed themselves freely for this required a culture of trust. Vlasta could usefully make explicit how such opportunities for expression promoted aspects of citizenship education and how a culture of trust was developed. She affirmed that it was very exciting to observe a school changing and being self critical in a period of political change within the EU framework.

Italy

The Italian presentation comprised a model of multidimensional citizenship that showed a 'hectic' landscape of citizenship. Four 'seeds' of citizenship had been identified:

Researching- the school is a field of research and teachers researchers who can analyse the roles and views of the 'actors' through interviews, observations and case studies. It was found that Heads had a heightened awareness of teaching and learning issues in the case study schools and that the pupils had opportunities with adult guidance to criticize and make decisions. Rules by negotiation were important to ensure consistency and the meaning of welcome is framed by good communication, respect and cooperation. It is important not to underestimate the difficulties inherent in participation and the need for 'neutral fields' to support this.

Voices- these can be heard in all kinds of ways in the life of the school, and through children's interpretations of stories and fairy tales, through drama such as teachers exploring their professional roles, identities and space.

Inside and beyond-the interpretation of the case study goes beyond the rich description of inside and extends beyond to the larger school community. Inside the school, teachers and pupils need to adapt, learn to take responsibility, develop autonomy and yet understand the need for team work, cooperation and learning opportunities together. There is a space for dreams as a way to encourage creative thinking for solutions and initiatives.

Open box-in terms of organizational citizenship, key issues are to understand the school organization as a metaphor of citizenship, the visibility of 'rules' and the need to construe school governance as an 'open box' to signify transparency and options and opportunities. (see also the accompanying Powerpoint)

Carmo liked the 'open box' metaphor and suggested that the Italian team might now provide more detail about what was significant about the practices being described in terms of the citizenship landscapes.

She said that all the case studies from all the teams would benefit from a move from a descriptive level to a more interpretive perspective in concordance with the key concepts of the project. She appreciated all the presentations very much and felt there was much to learn from each other. Xavier commented that teachers should not always assume they best or better than the pupils. A prime example is ICT where pupils' knowledge and skill is very often in advance of their teachers'. This is where pupils can take a lead. Carmo said she should aim to be clearer about what we are proposing and to reduce ambiguity.

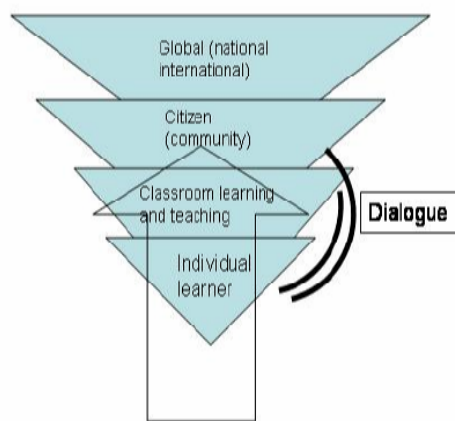
UK

As recorded in the Minutes from the Barcelona meeting, Jane and Michaela had worked on producing a conceptual overview of all the products to date, analyzing all the contents and the discourses. The key concept emerging was that of 'voices' and the polyvocality of the school, the many voices in the school. The presentation began with a mini-rendering of part of Shakespeare's famous monologue from *As you like it*, 'All the world's a stage', a piece that reflects the idea that throughout our lives we assume many roles and voices. The voices from interviews, questionnaires, observations, videos and presentations that have contributed to the project have created a project narrative that is cohesive in itself and that we have interpreted both differently and yet which we have constructed meaning about together, even though different cultures, genders, nuances and democracies are involved. Effective communication is at the heart of this as it makes collaboration possible.

The data have clearly shown the importance of democratic and visible leadership that respects the rights and needs of the 'followership'. Rights and the respect agenda come over strongly. The data are strongly exemplified by school and classroom practices that promote independence,

individualization and critical thinking as far as possible. Citizenship is, of course, a major theme and well evidenced in many ways in the data. The macro level of global awareness is not neglected and the data indicate that cultural contexts are not hermetically sealed but look outside of the box to think in terms of social progress and cohesion globally.

The use of voice also implies the right to silence and the entitlement to be heard respectfully. Pupils need time and silence to think and to be silent when they so chose. The school thus operates as a dialogic school, finding a balance of speaking, listening, hearing and silence. Michaela showed a model of how the dialogue cuts across the micro, meso and the macro levels of citizenship as in the diagram below;



This model shows how citizenship can begin with the smallest unit, i.e. the individual. Through dialogue in classroom and the school community individuals develop as citizens in the community at large and indeed become global citizens. This bottom up movement does however need a dialogue with wider communities to move to the highest level. Individuals will develop their citizenship competence to different levels according to abilities and the opportunities that are provided for citizenship education in different cultural contexts.

Andreas said that he was reassured and inspired by the findings that reflected well on the outputs of the projects and the work of the project team. Carmo said the excellent analysis had clarified the familiar and uncovered new challenges and validated the work of us all.

Feedback from Carmo

In addition to the points made after the presentations, Carmo said we needed to develop a feedback narrative as well as the regular meeting feedback that Giovanna found useful. It was agreed that colleagues would undertake both types of evaluation.

She thought we were well on the way to achieving our objectives.

The team then went to dinner in a country restaurant to celebrate their achievements.

Monday 18th

Most of the morning was devoted to reviewing the course and to establish which colleagues were attending when (details with Gianfranco). Giovanna said the course was feasible with 10 participants but that that high quality and well prepared course modules would be produced whether the course was held or not and would either way provide powerful dissemination material. John showed a project website he had used for another course he had run. The programme would be as outlined with one or two changes although we would remain flexible according to the needs of the participants. Carmo said it was important that course participants had colleagues from the project to help them develop through the course.

ACTION POINTS

Everyone

- **Everyone to send expenses to Gianfranco ASAP**
- **All colleagues individually to find 2 websites and 2 articles or book chapters and to prepare a summary and rationale of each one, half to one page, that explains what is in the reference and why it is interesting, by 1st October**
- **All to amend their contributions as submitted to the website if necessary and to write 1-2 pages maximum for each product answering the following questions by 1st October:**
 1. *What is the context of the product?*
 2. *What are the key points?*
 3. *How do these relate explicitly to the project objectives and framework?*
 4. *What is potentially useful and transferable to other contexts?*
 5. *What are the difficulties and problems associated with these issues?*
 6. *What are the possible ways forward?*
- **All to complete the meeting evaluation to be sent by Carmo by end June 2007**
- **All colleagues to consider their national contributions to the course and prepare an outline of the course module with associated active learning activities for which they are responsible by 1st October**
- **All partners to complete the dissemination grid sent by Vlasta filling in the details ASAP**

Tasks for other named people

- Jane and Michaela to suggest how to reorganize the website thematically within 3 weeks
- Andreas, Jane and Michaela to plan discussion groups for the next plenary

- Jane and Michaela to start to write recommendations (for the next plenary)

Future meeting dates

- Course and subgroup meeting 5-11, 8-11 November, Montegrotto, Italy
- Plenary meeting 21-24 February 2008 in Italy
- Final plenary meeting May/June 2008, in Portugal if this is possible.

At the end of the meeting, Giovanna said the meeting had been a very productive one and she thanked everyone for their precious contributions. Dissemination had been excellent, with a great many activities taking place and high visibility of films reaching a large audience and this should continue.

A vote of thanks was given to Vlasta for his organization, hospitality and excellent personal attention to detail. Everyone had enjoyed the meeting very much.

Jane Jones, proposed and seconded as Minute-taker

June 2007

