Ubuntu Network: Teacher Education for Sustainable Development

Workshop: A sharing of DE experiences and planning for the future

- Outcomes and Key Points -

(11th September '07)

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11th September 2007

Feedback and report

On the 11th September, teacher educators and associates from the Ubuntu Network met in the Aisling Hotel, Dublin to discuss experiences and thoughts on the integration of development education into post primary initial teacher education in Ireland.

Particular attention was given to exploring development education experience in the academic year 2006-2007 (Ubuntu Network Action Research Projects) and emerging common areas of interest for potential future collaboration.

This document outlines the key areas of discussion that took place during the day.

Attendees

- Mella Cusack, CDVEC CDU;
- Audrey Bryan, UCD;
- Ann FitzGibbon Trinity College, Dublin;
- Ruth O'Doherty; Irish Aid;
- Mícheal Collins, Trinity College, Dublin;
- Fiachra Long, UCC;
- Helen Maguire, St. Angela's College;
- Amanda McCloat, St. Angela's College;
- Orla McCormack, UL;
- Deirdre O'Rourke, Mary Immaculate College
- Paul Conway, UCC;
- Ruth Gallagher, Amnesty International;
- Bernadette Collins, UCC,
- Anne Rath, UCC;
- Maria Campbell, St. Angela's College;
- Maria Finucane; College of Art and Design, LIT;
- Fiona King, National College of Art and Design;
- Tony Murphy, National College of Art and Design
- Roland Tormey, UL;
- Elaine Keane, NUIGalway;
- Barrie McEntee, Mater Dei Institute of Education;
- Matthias Fiedler, DICE;
- Elaine Nevin, Eco-Unesco;
- Deirdre Hogan, Ubuntu Network;
- Mags Liddy, Ubuntu Network

Apologies

- Roisin Corcoran, UL;
- Joanne Moles UL;
- Austin Gormley, Irish Aid;
- Jim Gleeson, UL;
- Carmel Hinichon, UL;
- Laura Purdy, UL;
- Angela Rickard, NUIM;
- Ethna Regan, Mater Dei
- Tom Roche, Just Forests

Discussion Point 1: Teacher educators' identity…'Who are we as teacher educators?'

A teacher educator's identity is strongly reflected in their teaching, and thus an understanding of who we are as teacher educators is relevant to our research on how to integration of DE into ITE… questions that we might ask include

- Who we are?
- What are our past experiences?
- What are our understandings of and attitudes towards various issues,
- What are our interests in relation to education,
- What culture have we lived in?
- And how do these shape us as educators?

This might be investigated through biographies of educators.

Many educators favour their '–ologist' identity than the 'educationalist' one.

Maria Campbell spoke of her project which used problem solving as a lens to engage with student culture. The two student groups were located in colleges with different cultures and structural identities and worked with teacher educators of different histories and trajectories. Results showed differences in the students approach to the problem solving assignment. One group of students focused more on micro, local, practical issues whereas the other focused more on the global, macro, activist issues. This may cause one to self reflect and be aware of how much our approach and identity influences the students that we teach. The group noted that it was interesting that the insight came not from looking at ourselves, but in comparing ourselves with others.

Matthias spoke of the 'Through Others Eyes' (http://www.throughothereyes.org.uk/), which among other things supports educators to question postcolonial identity of educators in the South and North, how we engage with indigenous knowledge, what are our assumptions and perceptions, what cultural baggage do we have etc.

Discussion Point 2: The Pedagogy of teacher education

The group raised the matter of the pedagogy of teacher education as being relevant to the research on the integration of DE into ITE. Limitations arising due to structural and political nature of institutions were mentioned e.g. large group lectures, short PGDE year.

An understanding of how students learn, and how students translate their learning into teaching practice and beyond were mentioned.

The opportunities for building capacity through peer work and collaborative staff development was mentioned.

Discussion Point 3: Inclusivity through listening as a pedagogical approach (process)

It is through listening to students' experiences that you begin to realise the wealth of learning that they bring (experiences from workplaces, travels etc). To provide a structure that facilitates students to bring their knowledge to the group promotes the ideology of inclusivity of all learners in the learning experience irrespective of culture, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, or learning abilities.

The teacher educator needs to be open to lessons that arise through situated experiences of the student teacher (e.g. student teacher telling of experiences in trying to engage with traveller child). Such an approach used in UCC resulted in a much richer learning experience with evidence that students became sensitises to the need to be inclusive of diversity in their own classrooms. Student often don't recognise the importance of experiential knowledge and so providing a safe forum where students can engage in dialogue about issues such as discrimination, multiculturalism, educational disadvantage etc results in a rich learning environment. It can be difficult to raise these issues when encountered in TP schools. It takes time to build up such a forum…requires a lot of extra work.

Discussion Point 4: Gaining a perspective on student teachers…'how do student teachers construct their identity'?

How do student teachers form their own identities? It seems from research (Roland mentioned Rose and Gerry in NUIM) that identities form around subject areas. "Teachers' status and self-image may be closely bound up with their identity as a teacher of subject X, depending on the perceived status of X in the curriculum. Students who have recently completed a degree in their chosen subjects are perhaps likely to identify with that subject (i.e. to see themselves as geographers rather than as a teachers of geography)" in Teaching Social Justice, P147.

Provide a space for students to present their views, confidentiality and anonymity issues?

Gain an insight through portfolio entries, biographies?

Discussion Point 5: Understanding the Attitudes of Student Teachers to Diversity and Development education

There is interest here in conducting a comparative attitudinal survey across teacher education colleges.

Studies in this area could provide insight into strong and weak notions of social justice. Audrey explained that on the whole, there seems to be a strong willingness among student teachers to engage in active learning methodologies and generalised support for the values within, but when you scratch below the surface and interrogate the ideas and

individuals' roles in local and global justices…you being to see the cracks in students attitudes.

Can we really say that the interventions that we are bringing are having an impact?

Is it realistic to think that students can bring DE into teaching practice? Or is this something that will emerge later in their careers when they have dealt with other more immediate challenges?

Discussion Point 6: Entry Points for DE

We need to remain mindful of how we brand DE. Presenting it as primarily an issue of values and ethics will alienate those who see social justice education as 'fluffy' and 'ideological' or that are opposed to the ideas – ultimately it is these people that we must engage with, rather than 'preaching to the converted'. We need to think more politically ourselves.

Entry points mentioned for DE included:

- **Promoting DE as Good Teaching –** might be a place to start building something, the skills – linked to Teaching Council Professional Skills.

- **Using Intercultural Education** – it seems that diversity is a way to get people to engage people in development issues, and extended out to the global. There is immediate need to support students to overcome intercultural challenges.

- **Exploring through MUVE (multiple user virtual environment) – '**second life' for teaching DE issues (TCD have funding to buy an island on second life). Ann Fitzgibbon provided some background to a TCD project (funded by IA).

- **Through film, media and imagery –** book or film as an entry point for discussion on issue. Mella ran day in service for teachers on film and citizenship…required a lot of preparation but very rewarding. (Ask Mella for materials?)

- **Core V Optional DE** – DE as an optional or a core module/intervention was briefly touched upon. NUIG gave example of making diversity ed/ intercultural ed/ dev ed a foundational theme underlying all aspects of the H.Dip.

Discussion Point 7: An overarching framework for the integration of Development Education into existing programmes

Is there an overarching conceptual framework that could link together case studies of the integration of subject specific DE into ITE?
We can look at this in terms of the challenges we face as teacher educators within institutions, both…

- Structure of teacher education – large group lectures, how we frame teacher education (the content), overcrowded curriculum
- Cultural ideology of the institution –

Consider it in terms of Bernstein's ideas of strong and weak framing. Strong boundaries and hierarchies that exist within teacher education (e.g. between methods, psychology etc) make it more difficult to integrate anything new. Development education, by its nature, does not fit well into strong framing (where educators and students have little flexibility in how or when modules are structured)…to engage students with the complex issues of social justice require the integration of several kinds of subject knowledge together with a flexible creative approach to teaching methodology

Discussion Point 7: Relationship between DE and ESD

It was noted that clarification was needed on the relationship between DE and ESD.

Actions arising from the Workshop

- Extension of date for research proposals to Oct 1st -

- Development of E-mail discussion groups on 4 themes

    o Who am I as a teacher educator?
    o Attitudes of student teachers to issues of diversity and development education
    o Film, imagery and media as an entry point for DE
    o Intercultural education and DE

Individual Interest Areas – for current and future work

During the course of the workshop, participants stated their interests in relation to DE and projects in the future. This table provides a summary of this.

Name and Institution	Named areas of interest (as stated in AM)	Interests in DE Projects (as discussed in PM)
Audrey Bryan, UCD audrey.bryan@ucd.ie	Representation of development issues in the curriculum and in the structural features of local and global injustice	Continuing to do work in the attitudinal area. (also conscious of data overload)…how to put data to use – probing the knowledge acquired, critical reflection upon ones own teaching practice.
Maria Campbell St. Angela's College mcampbell@stacs.edu.ie	Tensions between macro (broader issues) and microelements of teacher education.	Role of the media, role of imagery in development education. Professional development of teacher educators for teaching social justice
Bernadette Collins UCC bernellam@eircom.net	Intercultural education and use of film and novels in development education	Continuation of the book/film club in UCC
Micheal Collins TCD mlcollin@tcd.ie		Continue work on the development website. Consider the changing perceptions among student teachers when they become exposed to development issues. (pre and post) – comparative study between colleges.
Paul Conway UCC Pconway@education.ucc.ie	Entry points for student teachers and teacher educators to understand issues of development and globalisation.	Presenting the Ubuntu Network as a project in Spring 2008.
Mella Cusack CDVEC CDU mella.cusack@cdu.cdvec.ie	Links between Citizenship Ed, DE and ESD.	
Matthias Fiedler DICE mfielder@cice.ie	Capacity building of staff in the areas of intercultural and development education	- Self reflection within the sector (how good are we at development education?) – unpacking cultural baggage – UK (Through Other Eyes initiative) have pilot units on the website. - Media link - Staff development in DICE - Attitudes of Student teachers already done in primary sector.
Maria Finucane College of Art and Design, LIT Maria.Finucane@lit.ie		- Working collaboratively with NCAD - How DE can have an impact on our teaching approaches and methods, and how that springboards into the classroom on TP - Continue work in the coming year on the themes used last year
Ann FitzGibbon Trinity College, Dublin aftzgbbn@tcd.ie		- Use of NUVEs (Multiple User Learning Environment)
Carmel Hinichon UL carmel.hinchion@ul.ie	Development education through the teaching of English	
Elaine Keane NUIGalway Elaine.Keane@nuigalway.ie	Education and Society, Social Justice, Intercultural, Educational Disadvantage.	Seeking to bring in experiential learning through: - Introducing service learning as a reciprocal learning experience through 'community of knowledge' group. - Weekend of workshops with Galway traveller group and refugee group. - Intercultural seminar group with research element.

Fiona King National College of Art and Design fiona.l.king@gmail.com	Understanding how DE can be integrated into Art and Design	- Practical implementations of DE e.g. introducing Hard Rain project (Mark Edwards)… photojournalism, visual impact and text of each picture Other media to disperse between images e.g. drawing, print
Fiachra Long UCC Flong@education.ucc.ie	Multicultural issues as they arrive in the classroom, resulting challenges on teachers	The intercultural forum will continue. Intervention will depend on the interests of the incoming student cohort. Investigate reports that eastern European students are so far ahead in maths education, and why so easily take on the Irish language.
Helen Maguire St. Angela's College hmaguire@stacs.edu.ie		Bring the development education work more into teaching practice. Measure the transfer of learning into 2nd year teaching practice.
Barrie McEntee Mater Dei Institute of Education barrie.mcentee@materdei.dcu.ie		- Continue Global and Social Justice Week in March and continue review of existing literature (in Columbian missionaries and Dangan Park) - Possibly seek to get management involved - Attitudes of Student teachers to diversity and DE
Amanda McCloat St. Angela's College amccloat@stacs.edu.ie		As with Helen.
Orla McCormack UL orla.mccormack@ul.ie	Linking DE with Curriculum studies through active learning methodologies	Take results and revisit the intervention, consider changes. Consider use of student biographies. Consider how we can assess impact of intervention.
Elaine Nevin Eco-Unesco ecounesco@eircom.net	Environmental education for youth	
Joanne Moles & Laura Purdy UL joanne.moles@ul.ie		Student teachers attitudes to diversity and 'the other' in the classroom and how this reflects on their approaches to teaching
Tony Murphy National College of Art and Design murphyt@ncad.ie		- Changes in curricular level, and potential for using DE to heighten issues at this level. - Develop links with LIT and Cork. - Some way of tracking attitudes (changes) during the course of the year.
Ruth O'Doherty Irish Aid Ruth.ODoherty@dfa.ie	Integrating development education into teacher education, getting the Irish Aid message across.	
Deirdre O'Rourke Mary Immaculate College deirdre.orourke@mic.ul.ie	Understanding concrete integration of DE into teacher education.	
Anne Rath UCC arath@education.ucc.ie		Identity of teacher educators. How student teachers construct their identity as teachers. 'Self study' to look at our (within the network) identities
Roland Tormey UL Roland.Tormey@ul.ie	Skills of development particularly critical thinking and emotional competencies	- Comparable study of student teachers attitudes to diversity and DE across colleges - Comparable study of emotional intelligence across colleges - Case studies of subject specific DE using Bernstein model