Contemporary Art And Citizenship Education: The Cross-Curricular Studies

Unlike the previous phenomenon of modern art, contemporary art strives to return to society and everyday life, while thematizing current social, political and economic issues that the individual faces here and now. One of its more common topics is sustainable development, and the accompanying issues of environment, globalisation, migration, intercultural exchange, values, relation to others etc. All these topics are part of the concept of active citizenship, which is why understanding contemporary art calls for active citizenship. This particularly goes for relational art/socially engaged art/participatory art practices, which demands active participation from the part of the viewer. This paper inquires into the possibilities of connection of contemporary art and citizenship education in elementary schools. Contemporary pedagogic doctrine highly encourages cross-curricular teaching; I have therefore focused my analysis on the curricula of the subjects of Art education, and Citizenship and patriotic education and ethics (hereinafter: CPE), determining that from this perspective their link is quite troublesome. The absence of contemporary art from the curriculum of Art education has been warned upon on many occasions, but the problem of its curriculum seems to be of conceptual nature. Only by a more intense inter-institutional link between schools and contemporary art galleries and museums can the common goals of art education and citizenship education be realized. L. Vigotski said that Art has always been perceived also as a part and means of education, that is to say as part of a long-term altering of our behaviour and demeanour (Vigotski, 1975, p. 319). The aesthetic experience and response to it can lead a child to re-evaluation and reflection of its relations, values, expectations and even confrontation with its prejudice, which makes it potentially morally educative (Halstead, Pike, 2006, p. 64, 65). Due to its interdisciplinary nature, the suitable choice of an artwork, makes it easily linked with all contents and objectives of citizenship education. P. Hills-Potter has already showed that art can induce people into participation in society and impart a relationship required for active citizenship, especially an empathic
The paper will therefore strive to show potential cross-curricular links in content on three examples of participatory practices (Proletarians of All Countries, Beggar Robot and EU/Others), which thematizing one of the general objectives of the CPE Syllabus: the perception of the stereotypic representation of the others and of the different. The paper also warning from the pedagogic perspective against the often neglected fact that contemporary art is experienced here and now.

**Method**

The methodology was qualitative. Qualitative analysis of slovene Art education syllabus and Citizen and Patriotic Education syllabus. Qualitative analysis was used to compare the content of contemporary art practices with the objectives of CPE Syllabus. Key studies of three contemporary artworks: Serkan ?zkay? s installation entitled Proletarians of All Countries, Sa?o Sedla?ek?s artwork entitled Beggar Robot and site specific installation entitled EU/Others by ?ejla Kameri?.

**Expected Outcomes**

The analysis shows that we are entitled to wonder whether the pupils of the third triad in Art education lessons actually come into contact with contemporary artistic practices, and if so, to ask ourselves in what way they deal with them. This is the point where we reach the issue of cross-curricular teaching. Comparison between Art education syllabus and the syllabus for CPE implies that the goals, such as developing the ability of analysing and assessing works of art, or understanding the artworks of national and international cultural heritage, are in fact not to be connected, since they are not foreseen in the proposed version of cross-curricular teaching. On the other hand, the contents of contemporary artistic practices mentioned above can be associated with all of the general objectives of CPE, specially to the following operative objectives for the 7th grade: they should understand the importance of mutual tolerance for the benefit of community; they should understand the origins of the notion of others and of the different; they should be able to recognize stereotypes and prejudice in the media and the everyday life, while developing a critical stance to them; they should understand the importance of tolerance and mutual respect for the culture of coexistence, they should develop the ability to express opinions. Key studies confirm Vigotsky?s thesis that the ?new? art offers endless possibilities for a ?new? man ? contemporary art can show us the way forward, the way out of crisis (environmental, interpersonal, of values etc.) Contemporary art need only be followed, understood and experienced.

**References**


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