

Citizenship Education from Schools

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Abstract:

The characteristics of current society and the interest about citizenship education in the context of lifelong learning are essential for a study that aims to describe and understand the development of social and civic competence in the educational field. A Delphi study can make a proposal in which the social and civic competence is composed of 89 items organised into five areas: knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours. In the same way, the study of a school in Seville discovers didactic strategies and organisational processes that benefit the development of the various components of this competence.

Keywords: social and civic competence; lifelong learning; educational research.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Approaching the problem

Immersed in a complex and rapidly changing socio-political context, this work focuses on the increasing interest in citizenship education and lifelong learning.

The defence of social equality and rights, as well as the image of the human being as an active citizen are not new. Nonetheless, the characteristics defining our current society might have created a new perception of education as a socialization agent and an endless supply of resources in order to face the changing situations occurring in different societies.

Setting the abovementioned matters as the main driving forces of our research, the general objective is to describe and to understand the development of the social and citizenship competence in the educational field. This general objective leads to the following specific aims:

- To identify the elements constituting the social and civic competence.
- To analyse the didactic aspects regarding the social and civic competence.
- To describe the organisational and relational processes creating difficulties/facilities for the development of the social and civic competence.
- To identify the significant strategies and resources for the development of the social and citizenship competence.

Precedents and theoretical foundation

1.2.1. Lifelong learning and key competences

Nowadays, lifelong learning seems to be a need created by the countless changes that we must face. We have left behind a period of time when education was equal to providing schooling. Now we identify it with lifelong learning, an education thorough life that covers formal

and informal education (Morales, 2006). Education has become, according to Ferrández (1996, p.3) “something magic and always incomplete.” Education in the sense of lifelong learning becomes a key aspect for the development of current societies.

Lifelong learning can be defined as a global project covering the learning process of an entire life in its multiple aspects, whose main goal is to contribute to the essential development of individuals. Professor Ferrández makes an interesting proposal with respect to four essential areas in lifelong learning. Apart from the approach about Adult Education, the mentioned author applies these four essential areas to the entire life, giving more or less emphasis to the four of them according to the educational stage. He subsequently keeps the aforementioned optimistic view (Figure 1).

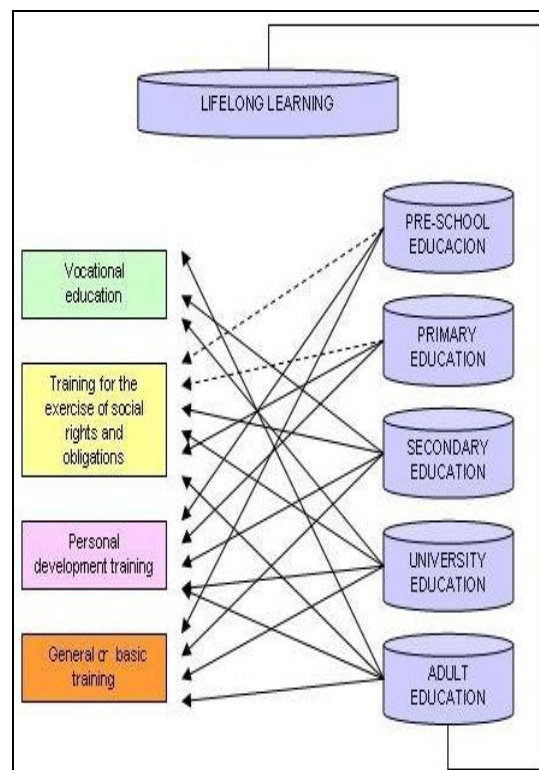


Figure 1 areas in Lifelong Learning (Ferrández, 1996:11).

This perspective gives sense to an education directed to the exercise of

social rights and obligations in every educational stage during lifelong learning. This is because socialisation - which is understood as the ability to exercise our rights and obligations in the society - constitutes one of the essential areas of lifelong education.

Lifelong learning policies developed by the European Union have always benefited education aimed at the exercise of citizenship. Since it was created, the European Union has made an effort to develop a quality education in every member state, as it considers each of them plays an important role in social and economic progress. The attention paid to education by the European Union has increased over the last decades, and among the main documents emphasizing this issue we can find: the White Paper on 'Growth, competitiveness, and employment or the White Paper on Education and Training - Teaching and Learning - Towards the Learning Society. On the October 23rd 1995 the European Parliament and the Council of Europe announced the decision n° 95/2493/EC establishing 1996 as the "European Year of Lifelong Learning". This meant the first important milestone in the area of Lifelong Learning developed by the European Union, although it is not the most transcendental. Six years later, with the so-called "Lisbon Strategy" the member states committed themselves and became aware of the importance of lifelong learning for the development of society.

With regard to this new work approach, the European Commission issued in November 2000 the Memorandum on lifelong learning, which launched a wide debate about this concept in Europe. The results obtained by this initiative were gathered in the Communication issued by the European Commission Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality (COM, 2001). In this

Communication appears a globally accepted definition of the concept of lifelong learning is provided and it lead us to attribute four main goals to it: personal fulfillment, active citizenship, social integration, employability and adaptability. Undoubtedly, this has been a key document in the framework of lifelong learning.

From this moment on, different official documents have underlined the need to follow the indications of this document. However, it was only in 2006 that a significant progress was made in lifelong learning, thanks to the elaboration and implementation of some initiatives gathered in two important documents:

Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15th November 2006 establishing an action program in the field of lifelong learning.

Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18th December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning

Since it identifies and defines precisely the key competences for lifelong learning, the second document established definitively the guidelines to follow in the field of lifelong learning (Figure 2).

According to Monereo & Pozo (2007), the concept of competence points out the potential resources allowing the integration and the usage of knowledge, abilities and skills of an individual in order to face a range of usual tasks or problems in the different social contexts or scenes where he/she lives. Therefore, competences allow us to interact efficiently in different life areas and to face a problem-situation with actions where knowledge, abilities and skills are used simultaneously and in an interrelated way (Zabala & Arnau, 2007). For this reason, the dialogue of

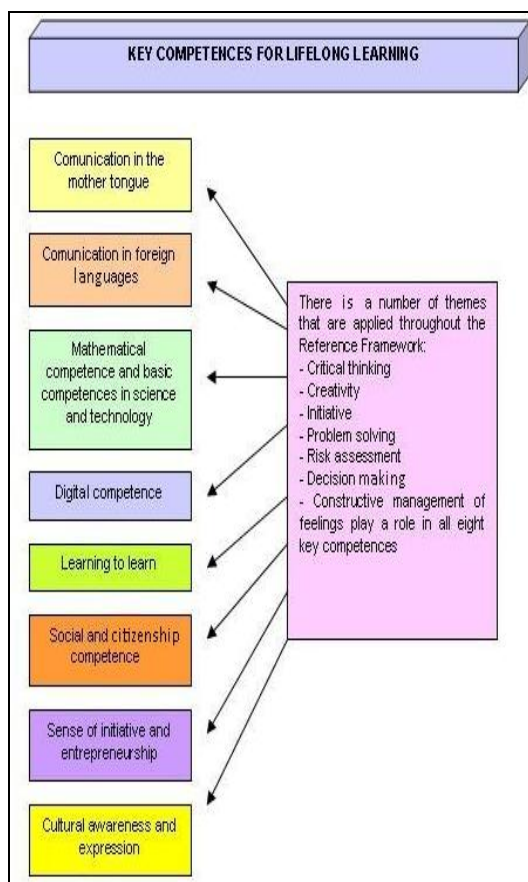


Figure 2. Key Competence for Lifelong Learning.

competences brings us to the idea suggested by Delors (1996), which indicates that personal and professional behaviour is the result of the intersection of different ways of learning linked to three aspects: To know, to do and to be. The first aspect activates the knowledge, the second activates the skills or abilities, and the third the attitudes, the values, the habits and the rules.

In light of European approaches about lifelong learning, it is said that key competences represent a multifunctional and transferrable package of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for individuals' personal fulfillment and development, inclusion and employment. They should have been conceived to be taught at the end of the compulsory education and they should act as the basis for a later training as a part of lifelong

learning (Group report of key competences, 2004).

The concept of competence appears for the first time in the Spanish educational system, connected to vocational training, in the Organic Law 5/2002 on Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training. Nevertheless, the idea of competences as described before is introduced in Spain with the Organic Law of Education (LOE, 2006). Competences are defined as essential aspects, considered as curricular elements and defined as goals that should be accomplished by the end of compulsory education in order to achieve personal fulfilment, to exercise active citizenship, to integrate adult life in a satisfactory way and to be able to learn during the entire life (Royal Decrees 1513/2006; 1631/2006).

According to the European Union proposal, basic competences are defined in the Royal Decrees establishing the minimum education:

- Linguistic communication.
- Mathematic competence.
- Knowledge and interaction with the physic world.
- Treatment of information and digital Competence.
- Social and citizenship competence.
- Cultural and artistic competence.
- Learn how to learn.
- Autonomy and personal initiative.

1.2.2. Citizenship, social education and training: Social and civic competence

The concept of citizenship can contain a range of different definitions adapted to the context and events. This research shares the vision given by Professor Pérez Luño (2002): Citizenship is defined as a concept belonging to a democratic society that grants the exercise of rights and implies the responsibility of duties. It is a concept closely related to the freedom

and equality of the human being, free of impositions, and which aims to consider men and women as active and responsible actors in the social context. Taking the educational approach as a starting point, Karen O'Shea elaborates in 2003 a Glossary of terms for Education for Democratic Citizenship, taking as groundwork the reports, studies and programs developed by the Council of Europe about this topic. She highlights the double dimension (juridical and socio-cultural) of the term citizenship referring, on the one hand, to the personal status of an individual whose rights and duties are legally recognized and, on the other hand, to the role played by the individual. This states the values and rules of behaviour with regard to other members belonging to the same community. To understand citizenship as a concept with a double dimension is to recognize the importance of its accomplishment, to highlight participation, and the need to look for a way to grant peaceful coexistence fostering shared rules and values as well as the development of common awareness. So, citizenship is a way of life where it is necessary to share values and norms in order to cope with the common responsibilities of a social life. This final concept directly connects with the social and citizenship competence defined in European politics. It is rather difficult to offer a unique, globally accepted definition of the social and citizenship competence, as it is somewhat a simplistic approach far from the conceptual richness typical from this concept. Conceptions offered by multiple authors about the elements and structures of this competence prove the variability of elements and structures that it encloses depending on the perspective or approach taken by every author. In the Spanish scene, we find the approaches of Marco (2002), Escámez & Gil (2002), Moreno

& Luengo (2007), Marina & Bernabeu (2007), and Bisquerra (2008), while in the European scene it is worth mentioning the proposals of Veldhuis (1997), Audigier (2000), Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald & Schulz (2001) and Hoskins, Villalba, Van Nijlen & Barber (2008).

Despite the differences, the common pillar of the social and citizenship competence is the education geared to the application of the social dimension of citizenship. This sort of education is currently in great demand. We are witnessing the increasing significance of education as a key aspect for the development of skills, abilities and attitudes granting a peaceful coexistence and the rights and duties of human beings. Without a doubt, the theories suggested by authors such as Bolívar (2003, 2007), Calvo de Mora (2004), Domingo, (2004), Morillas (2006), and Santisteban (2004) among others illustrate the general feeling of a society under continuous changes that delegates more and more to educational institutions and recognize them as the ideal areas where to practice and to live democracy and values granting coexistence and respecting differences.

Consequently, citizenship education is understood as a current need born from the characteristics of our society, which emphasizes the requirement of active citizens, aware of their rights and responsible for their duties.

Therefore, policies and actions in the area of citizenship education become more relevant and they are promoted by European, national and regional institutions.

For that reason, the Heads of State and Government of the member states from the Council of Europe officially launched in the second summit celebrated in Strasbourg the 10th and the 11th October 1997 the project "Education for

Democratic Citizenship” (EDC) due to the importance given to the topic and in order to achieve their goals.

Apart from the educational policies promoted by the Council of Europe, the Parliament and the European Council have developed parallel initiatives supporting active European citizenship closely related to the first ones, as they underline the necessity of fostering active citizens’ participation in Europe: “Community action programme to promote European Citizenship” or the programme “Europe for Citizens”.

Regarding Spanish educational policies, it is worth mentioning the last three laws regulating the educational system, as they undertake a socialization work and agree to underline the importance of teaching values granting a peaceful coexistence, the need to engage the educational community in the organization and performance of the educational centre, while they also emphasize the concept of equal education for all the students. However, the Organic Law of Education 2/2006 (LOE, 2006) introduces a new aspect in Spanish educational policy: it is the first time that Citizenship Education is considered a compulsory and independent curricular subject.

The Autonomous Community of Andalusia is developing a series of actions, closely connected with different areas of citizenship education. In the Andalusian Law of Education (LEA 17/2007) we can find multiple references to the development of students’ social dimension as a part of their entire education, the importance of educating in democratic values, the need to foster participation among the educational community in the organization and operation of educational centers, as well as the perception of learning as a lifelong process. Moreover, a broad set of educational actions (annual or biannual)

are promoted by encouraging the educational centers to work in what can be thought of as citizenship’s culture: Peaceful coexistence, Peace Culture and Non-Violence; Coeducation; Environmentally friendly actions; and Educational innovation.

2. Design and methodology

The present study is placed in an interpretative paradigm whose main goal is the analysis and the interpretation of reality in order to understand it. Methods are subject to the identification with a determinate research paradigm, as well as the essential characteristics of the analyzed data and the techniques used. Therefore, a qualitative approach is taken due to the set goals, and the main techniques and strategies followed for gathering information are, in first instance, the Delphi study and the case study. Figure 3 shows the different phases and instruments used in the design and development methodology of the study.

2.1. Delphi study

In order to define the elements constituting the social and citizenship competence as well as its structure, we decided to use the Delphi method. According to Linstone & Turoff (1975, p.3), Delphi is defined as “a structuring method for group communication process, which manages to allow a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a problem.” Consequently, it can be said that the Delphi method “is a systematic and interactive process aimed at obtaining opinions and, if possible, consensus among a group of experts” (Landeta, 1999, p.32).

As it has been pointed out, its characteristic features are:

- The anonymity of opinions, granting also

to the participants the confidentiality of their responses.

- Feedback during the process, as participants know the objectives of the research, the reasons of their election and the final results.
- Statistic measure of the group response (García Llamas, 2008).

From this initial consideration, the Delphi method is the most satisfactory way to define the group of elements of the social and citizenship competence and their structure. It is possible thus, to differentiate two phases with two rounds each. In the first phase or preliminary phase, we asked for the participation of a group of professors (15) from the University of Seville, Granada and Huelva, engaged in the development of the research project "Educational Centers and Citizenship Education" approved and sponsored by the Regional Ministry of Economy, Innovation and Science of the Andalusian Regional Government (P07-SEJ-02545). Afterward, in the second phase more experts were consulted. They were classified as specialists, according to the typology of Landeta (1999), because they were individuals with knowledge and experiences related to the studied topic. This group of experts (36) was composed of book authors specialized in the topic here studied, directors of research projects, agents working for associations specialized in this field, and instructors with a great experience in the area.

The results of the first round were analyzed and considered for the elaboration of a second proposal and thus for a second round. For this reason, we were creating a nuance thanks to the punctuations given by every expert to the structure and to every element, calculating the arithmetic mean of punctuations. By revising the assessments, we decided to eliminate those elements whose arithmetic

mean was inferior to three. The results obtained in the first phase and the suggestions made regarding the structure of the competence lead us to a new search for answers in specialized works. It brought us to the idea of creating a new structure based on European works (Veldhuis, 1997; Audigier, 2000; Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001; Hosking *et al.*, 2008). With this new proposal, the second phase of the Delphi study was initiated, and positive results were achieved after two rounds of consultations.

2.2. Case study

A case study is, according to Vázquez & Angulo (2003, p.18):

"an area where the researcher interacts with people whose actions and relationships are going to be analyzed. In this sense, a case study consists of (and is defined by) a social environment with a dual relation: On the one hand, because a case is always a context where individuals or actors live and interact and, on the other hand, because the understanding of a single case means listening to the stories, problems, doubts and uncertainty of the individuals belonging to the case."

It is important to remember that case selection must not respond to typical or representative cases because, as Stake (1983, p.17) indicates, "it is not likely that the sample of a single case or some cases constitute a reliable representation of the others." Therefore, the cases with more opportunities for learning are the most advisable, as they enable us to understand the key aspects of our research more deeply.

For this reason, we decided to choose a Primary Education center according to our criteria:

- Number of immigrant students in the center.
- Previous knowledge of the development

of activities related to our objective.
-Accessibility and availability for

participation.

META-CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Elements of Social and Civic Competence	The categories, subcategories and elements included here refer to the key knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours, which constitute the basis of the social and civic competence.
Didactic Aspects	Citizenship Education requires methodologies and didactic principles fostering the achievement of the goals set. These didactic aspects are gathered in the categories and subcategories of this meta-category.
Organizational and Relational Processes	Under this category are gathered all the categories related to organisational and relational processes determining the development of citizenship education in educational centres.

Table 1. Definition of Meta-categories

These criteria brought us to the Pre-school and Primary Education center San José Obrero, in the north of Seville. An educational centre characterized by the high number of immigrant students (more than twenty nationalities) with a broad range of activities and projects developed around the topic of peaceful coexistence and intercultural environment, and willing to welcome us in order to carry out our study.

The process of gathering information goes from the first contact with the centre in order to introduce the study, to the presentation of the final report when the work is finished. Works begin in this way in October 2009, after the first meeting with the Principal of the centre. From that moment on, the study organizes a series of periodic visits. One or two days a week we get completely involved in the centre. This allows us to understand the existing interactions between members and the centre's operating rules, to find out individuals to provide us with key

information, and to access the documents regulating the course of action of the centre. These periodic visits become essential for our integration in the educational community and thus for granting smooth interviews, as well as for broadening the possibilities of selecting the observation scenarios.

Non-structured and semi-structured interviews, documents' analysis, as well as the examination and the field notebook correspond to the instruments used in our study.

The information gathered through these different instruments is arranged so that it is possible to understand the data obtained. When the material is organized and homogeneous, the content is analyzed in order to, according to Tójar (2006), reveal the given meanings (the evident ones and the implicit ones). For that reason, the elements are classified and codified in categories representing the global sense more clearly.

As a result, a categorical system is

developed and it is formed by the three meta-categories explained in the Table 1. As the key instrument for categorization, codification and later interpretation of the results, we use a computer software program for qualitative analysis called ATLAS.ti.

3. Results

Thanks to the Delphi study, we could identify a group of 89 elements organized in five dimensions representing the social and citizenship competence. As a result and as shown in Appendix, we find 30 types of knowledge subdivided in political knowledge (11), social knowledge (9), cultural knowledge (5) and finally economic knowledge (5). Moreover, a group of 17 skills, 8 attitudes, 19 values and 14 desired behaviours are outlined. All these elements obtained a punctuation above 3,59 in a scale of 5 points, being values the category with the most homogeneous and obtaining a higher punctuation during the different phases and rounds of the Delphi study.

Here we can appreciate the results obtained in the case study regarding every meta-category described above:

a) Results from meta-category “Elements of the Social and Citizenship competence”

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the elements from the social and civic competence according to how much they appear (in percentage) after the data analysis. It is worth mentioning the high percentages obtained by values and skills, both with more that 30%, in comparison with the low percentages of behaviours and attitudes, below 10%. Finally, the aspect of knowledge is in the middle with a 16%.

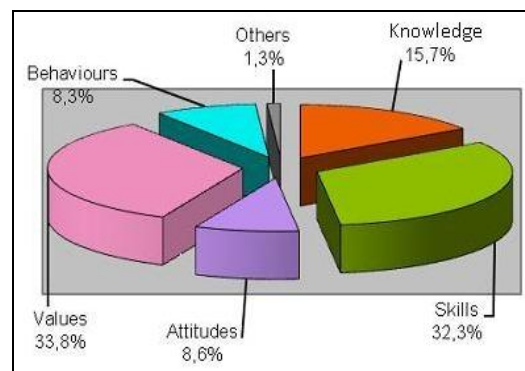


Figure 4. Results meta-category “elements and civic citizenship competence”

The educational centre chosen gives more relevance to the development of values, which constitute the core of the competence. The “respect for difference and diversity” is the most highlighted value, which makes sense if we take a look to one of the educational purposes of the centre underlining the necessity of:

“Taking diversity as educational model by integrating activities for the development of the student in the curriculum, always taking into account his/her own personality, social, economic and ethnic aspects, as well as health, eating and hygienic habits” (P1: Educational purposes).

From this broad perspective, where diversity is considered as an educational model, all members of the centre must “respect and value cultural, sexual, ethnic differences, etc. as a source of personal enrichment” (P2: Educational Plan of the centre).

Moreover, taking into account the high number of immigrants in the center, it is really important for peaceful coexistence “to respect freedom of thought as well as religious and moral convictions” (P3: Plan for peaceful coexistence).

Therefore, results show an educational center where attention is focused on fostering knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that help individuals to work and live in a multicultural environment,

always being respectful with differences and rejecting prejudices. For this reason, it is very important to work on communicative skills, as they enable students to exchange opinions and experiences. This makes them understand each other's reality, interact with other students and build a common reality together. In order to understand and respect each other, it is vital thus to learn to listen, to see from the perspective of other people, and to take into account their needs and worries because, as Camps points out (2008, p.145), "to respect the other is to take him/her into account and to attempt often to understand him/her."

b) Results from meta-category Didactic Aspects

The meta-category Didactic Aspects has 17 categories illustrated in Figure 5.

Dialogue appears as the most highlighted didactic strategy with a 20%. We find three other didactic strategies with inferior percentages close to 10%: group work, the link between theory and the reality where students live, as well as active participation in class. Another group of didactic aspects have percentages between 7% and 5%, such as "helping classmates," the usage of "textbooks," "meetings" in class, "debates" and "games." Finally, we find a group of aspects with a percentage between 3,5% and 0,8%, such as "positive support," the "creation of habits or routines," "search of information," going on "trips," "elaboration of material by the instructor," "observation" as assessment strategy, "elaboration of material by the students" and the "written exam" as another possible assessment strategy.

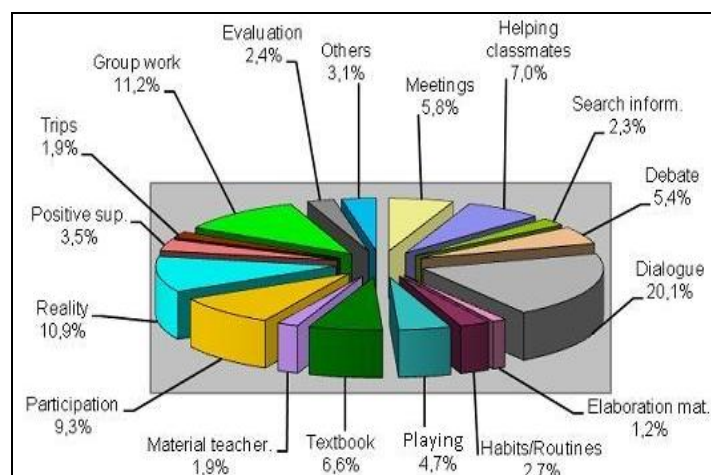


Figure 5. Results meta-category "Didactics aspects".

Teachers use dialogue every day in class so that students intervene by giving their opinions, talking about their experiences, etc. Dialogue is thus the main tool used by teachers and, according to Bisquerra (2008), the most effective for citizenship education. Dialogue is for most of them the key instrument in order to recognize previous ideas, to know if students have understood the concepts, to get closer to the reality where they live, as well as to foster interactions between classmates.

Besides, teachers usually "take advantage of conflicts in order to discuss in group over the possible ways to solve them" (P2: Educational Plan of the centre). Working in groups is another frequently used didactic strategy. Observation done in class and interviews to teachers illustrate that it is usual to work in groups and that this way of working enables students to adopt different roles, to learn how to share, to discuss, and to take decisions in common.

Another didactic strategy allowing students to understand new concepts, to identify attitudes helping them to learn, and to develop the necessary skills in order to become somebody in life, is a strategy that links what we want to learn-explain with reality. It tries to foster understanding and to assure that students are able to use the attitudes, skills and knowledge achieved together with their classmates and teachers at the center. Therefore teachers work for “taking students’ interests, daily life facts and their previous experiences as starting point” (P2: Educational Plan of the centre). In order to achieve

it, “content is always presented within a context based on situations close to students” (P2: Educational Plan of the centre), and “activities will be set according to the following principles; students’ interests, their knowledge and even their own personal experiences” (P2: Educational Plan of the centre).

c) Results from meta-category Organizational and Relational Processes. The meta-category “Organizational and Relational Processes” has nine categories, and thanks to Figure 6 it is possible to see how often they appear in the educational centre chosen.

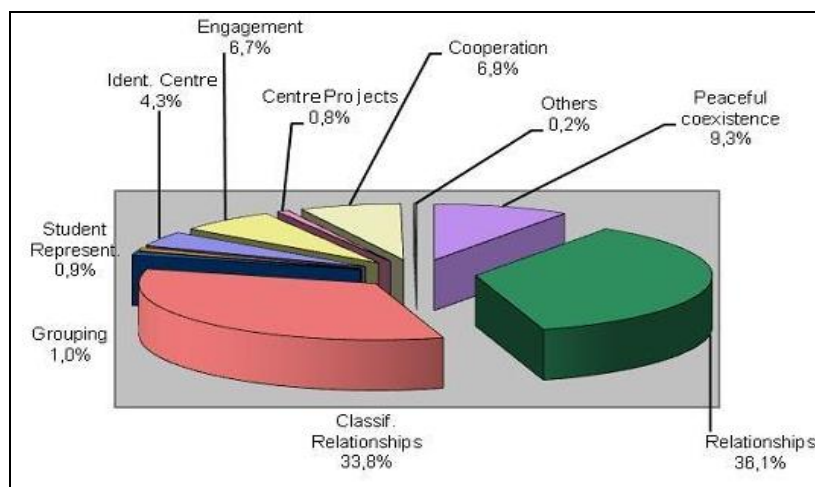


Figure 6. Results meta-category “Organizational and relational processes”

As it can be appreciated, relationships between members of the educational community are very important in the centre, as well as their classification according to certain aspects studied later in this work. With percentages inferior to these underlined categories, the category peaceful coexistence is the most highlighted, which allow us to foresee that coexistence based on rules, conflict resolution, and punishments is one of the main topics in the daily life of this centre. However, cooperation and group work, as well as engagement in the

educational program of the centre are two other aspects with relevant percentages that illustrate how the centre organizes and regulates its management. Finally, less representative percentages for the rest of the categories are shown.

Interactions between teachers and students are more frequent in a centre like this, where students are highly valued and teachers are always close and attentive to their needs. Together with these interactions, it is also important to mention contacts between teachers, as both types are defined by

a smooth and efficient communication, fostering cordiality and cohesion, as well as granting a proper work sphere and the creation of affective bonds. The Principal of the centre provides us with the key elements that, according to him, make the existence of a warm environment in the centre possible, always taking into account communication and cordiality in relationships.

“For him it is essential that the centre’s environment is relaxed and that teachers communicate with each other, that they share resources, that they laugh and that they plan activities together. To sum up, that thanks to everybody, they feel like a big family. The Principal makes this possible, and he considers so far that teachers are satisfied with their work and their workmates. Talking and feeling like an important part of the scene in order to achieve common goals is, according to him, essential to maintain that atmosphere” (P37: Interview nº 22: Principal).

With regard to peaceful coexistence, we could highlight that everything related to the determination and performance of coexistence rules from the centre and the classroom are considered as main aspects.

During our experience in the centre, it has been possible to understand that teachers, depending on their cycle, adapt and interpret co-habitation rules in order to redefine them later according to every single classroom. Therefore, it can be implied that the creation of co-habitation rules is a process engaging different members of the educational community, giving them more or less importance depending on the moment. Every group-class elaborates thus their own co-habitation rules, participating

actively in taking decisions, which is for Escámez & Gil (2002) essential for citizenship education. In this way, students become engaged with responsibility in the class and this is the only way to make them accept rules and follow them.

4. Conclusions and Discussion

As a consequence and regarding the objectives established, the development of this research has given us the opportunity to:

- Offer a definition of the social and citizenship competence, composed of 89 elements divided in five dimensions: knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and desired behaviours. At the same time, we have seen that not all the dimensions have been equally relevant within the competence. Values seem to be the central aspect, and the rest make sense once they are placed around it. The most highlighted dimension after values is the dimension of skills. We have also proved that some elements are more important than others: values such as self-respect, and respect for the others, responsibility, tolerance and solidarity; skills such as being able to give arguments, to debate, to listen, to solve conflicts in a pacific way, to live and work in a multicultural environment and to cooperate and interact with the rest are essential elements of the social and citizenship competence.

- Identify a group of didactic strategies fostering the development of the social and citizenship competence. The most important are: dialogue, connection between theory and reality of the student, group work, class participation, debates and games.

- Discover organisational and

relational aspects boosting the education of active citizens in the educational centre such as: cooperation and group work in the educational community, engagement, identification with the group of values and rules of the educational centre, active participation of all members of the centre for co-habitation, always encouraging peaceful conflict resolution, the creation of common rules and the existence of relationships based on cordiality, smooth communication, and coordination.

All these aspects make possible the good development of the social and citizenship competence with an organizational model in the centre. This model is based on communication in order to make decisions, consensus towards activities, teachers' engagement with the definition and accomplishment of the educational goals, coordination and flexibility in the distribution of spaces and times, as well as an approach to the social and familiar reality. To sum up, an organizational model based on democratic values transforming all members of the educational community in active and essential actors for the management of the centre. Hand in hand with this organizational structure, didactic strategies where the student is the main character of the learning process, connects theory with reality understanding his/her role, works in group, and uses the dialogue as main tool to solve conflicts, are the basis for citizens education.

The educational centre is the ideal environment for citizenship education when it is understood as a place where to share, to communicate, to learn, to play, to teach, to enjoy, to discover, to decide, to work hard, to participate

and to build a network of positive relationships helping all members to give the best of themselves and to receive the best of the rest for the achievement of new goals and to move forward as a more fair society.

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