

PRODUCING CITIZENSHIP AS SHARED MEANING
Produzir Cidadania como Significado Compartilhado

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“From these pages, I hope that at least the following can persist:
my trust in people, and my faith in men and women and in the
creation of a world in which it will be easier to love.”
(Freire, 1970 - Pedagogy of the Oppressed¹)

Abstract

This article discusses the Creative Chain (Liberali, 2006a) for citizenship education in the “Citizenship Action Project: Reading in Different Areas” (PAC-LDA). It approaches the concepts of sense, meaning, and answerability-responsibility (Bakhtin, 1992) as the basis for citizenship production. The analysis of data collected in the 2006 activities of the project suggests that shared meanings contribute to the view of citizenship in the Creative Chain of Activities as a desirable attitude (Kymlicka & Norman, 1997).

Key-words: *sense and meaning; answerability-responsibility; citizenship; Creative Chain.*

Resumo

Este artigo objetiva discutir a Cadeia Criativa (Liberali, 2006a) para a produção da cidadania no “Projeto de Extensão Ação Cidadã: Leitura nas Diferentes Áreas” (PAC-LDA). Aborda os conceitos de sentido, significado e responsabilidade (Bakhtin, 1992) como base para a produção de cidadania. A análise dos dados coletados nas atividades de-

¹ All the translations were done by the authors.

envolvidas no projeto em 2006 sugere que significados compartilhados podem contribuir para a visão de cidadania como atitude desejável (Kymlicka & Norman, 1997).

Palavras-chave: *sentido e significado; responsabilidade; cidadania; Cadeia Criativa.*

1. Introduction

The purpose of this article is to discuss the production of the meaning of citizenship in the Creative Chain (Liberali, 2006a and b) of a project entitled *Citizenship Action Project: Reading in Different Areas* (PAC- LDA), developed by the research group Language in Activities from School Contexts (LACE²), part of the Post-Graduate Program in Applied Linguistics and Language Studies³ from the Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC –SP⁴). In Brazil, teachers are said not to be prepared to work with citizenship. According to recent research conducted by Tânia Zagury in the *First International Forum for Citizenship Education*⁵, for instance, 59% of Brazilian public and private school teachers do not feel capable of working with sexual education and 53% do not feel ready to discuss drug problems with their students. However, 76% would like to discuss these topics in their classrooms. Therefore, there should be programs for teacher education which could contribute to empower teachers to work with citizenship in their schools. That is the aim of the *Acting as Citizens Program* (PAC⁶), which will be discussed in this article.

This article is organized in the following way. Firstly, we present PAC, which is the focus of the context of the collaborative

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⁵ Data collected from “Professores não estão preparados para tratar de cidadania”- article by Alan Meguerditchian at <http://aprendiz.uol.com.br/content.view.action?uuid=a4e09cea0af4701000f102d3f9e67716>

⁶ Programa Ação Cidadão.

methodological procedures developed. Secondly, we discuss the philosophical and theoretical background of the Vygotskian concepts of sense and meaning, the Bakhtinian concept of answerability-responsibility⁷ and the concepts of citizenship. Then, we illustrate the analysis with some excerpts from the PAC-LDA 2006 activities to exemplify how shared meanings of citizenship were developed through answerability-responsibility. We conclude the article by bringing some considerations on this shared production of citizenship.

2. Acting as citizens program (PAC)

PAC is an Extramural Program developed by PhDs, Doctoral students, MA students, undergraduates, participants, and fellow researchers (LACE Research Group). As pointed out by Liberali (2006a and b), this program is mainly supported by an attempt to turn school into a place where different possibilities/options are produced for kids and adults who have, as their life experience, contexts of violence, abuse and crime (Athayde & MV Bill, 2006). In other words, PAC aims at the development of citizenship, here understood as desirable citizenship (Kymlicka, 1995 and Gentili & Alencar, 2001), which is context-bound, and seen in opposition to legal citizenship, which takes all humans as equal and bearing the same rights and duties. That view of citizenship is embedded in Brazilian contexts of extremely different realities. This program has developed different social projects, such as:

- a) Meetings with teachers, students, parents, principals, coordinators and researchers to discuss school needs and dreams;
- b) Reading in Different Areas Project⁸ - LDA;
- c) Multiple Worlds Project - MM;
- d) Play –Learn Projects⁹ - AB.

⁷ The expression *otvetstvennost* is the Russian word for answerability-responsibility, which will be better explained below.

⁸ Leitura nas diferentes áreas - LDA.

⁹ Aprender Brincando - AB.

Essentially, the paper discusses LDA, which is a collaborative project in education that takes as a starting point the problems with reading presented by Brazilian students and, specifically, the bad score in the national exams. Its main objective is to work with the critical literacy of the social genres (Bakhtin, 1992/2000). It uses two main procedures: Teacher Support Teams – TST (Daniels & Parrila, 2004) and the Creative Chain of Activities¹⁰.

In LDA, the TST comprises three or four teachers from each of the 24 schools that belonged to the Program in 2005-2006. The TST, which are supported by the researchers from LACE and the supervisors from the State Secretariat of Education (SSE), autonomously discuss and work, with their school staff, reading in different areas and ways of critically and transformatively acting in their communities. In order to do it, LDA develops a number of activities: workshops with researchers and TST; HTPC¹¹ meetings with TST and school staff, mainly teachers; classes involving these teachers and their students; and the projects developed by students in their communities. Liberali (2006a and b) considers each of these activities pieces of the Creative Chain under consideration for this paper. Although one can still find instances of reproduction combined with attempts at creativity, LACE's aim is the creative production of new cultural outcomes, having argumentation as the tool in this production of meaning.

The study was conducted in a critically collaborative way as the basis for the transformation of the schools through the process of researching. As pointed out by Magalhães (2006), collaboration in research is essential for the development of the school as a whole. So, researcher and practitioner become involved in the process of producing meaning for the context under study. Excerpts from recorded/transcribed and photocopied/digitalized materials were carefully selected based on the emphasis of this paper, that is, to present the production of citizenship as a shared meaning.

¹⁰ This concept will be better explained in the following sections.

¹¹ HTPC (horário de trabalho pedagógico coletivo – joint pedagogical work time) - These are pedagogical meetings officially determined by the government for teachers to jointly discuss aspects of their pedagogical activity.

The chosen episodes from two workshops, one HTPC meeting, one class, and Citizenship Acting Events were first analyzed by the lexical choices that defined the thematic content produced during the activity. Argumentative discursive characteristics (Toulmin, 1958; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1958; Dolz, 1996) were also studied, with emphasis on the presentation of points of view, the supports, the counterarguments, the conclusion, suggestion and/or deal. The concepts of sense, meaning, citizenship and answerability-responsibility served the discussion about how citizenship was being creatively produced in the Chain of Activities composed by LDA.

3. The philosophical-theoretical background

This section discusses the concepts of sense and meaning, answerability-responsibility and citizenship.

3.1. Sense and meaning

The Vygotskian concepts of sense and meaning will be presented from a Spinozian perspective and their importance for the concept of Creative Chain will be highlighted. In Spinoza's (1677) ontological foundation, the entire universe emanates from the immutable core of an infinite and single Substance, that is, indivisible, eternal with infinite attributes in itself. This definition characterizes a monist view, that is, every mind and everybody, every thought and every movement, past or yet to come, are aspects of one single being – the totality.

Human beings, constituted by mind and body, are a finite part of the Substance. Moreover, they are an integral part of nature, their intellect is eternal as part of the Substance's infinite intellect. However, due to the finitude of human nature, a human being does not have an adequate but only a confused and partial knowledge of things (Spinoza, 1677). In addition, human beings share a common drive for self-preservation and seek to maintain the power of their being, which Spinoza calls *conatus*. Human beings' *conatus* always varies, that is, their effort to raise the potency of acting or, still, an internal,

indestructible force of the preservation of existence varies and the *conatus* may increase, inducing the formation of adequate knowledge. An idea is adequate and perfect insofar as it represents knowledge of the Substance. Ideas are partial or inadequate when they do not express the essence of the Substance. In this perspective, human beings in their finitude will never have an infinite notion of things. Hence, in order to get close to adequate ideas, human beings need other human beings who, by combining their partial ideas, empower these ideas and allow a wider proximity to the adequate ideas of the totality, which are in the Substance (Liberali & Fuga, 2006).

In other words, it is through these experiences that new meanings are produced collectively through the process of combining different senses. These concepts can be viewed in a Vygotskian perspective of meaning and sense. According to Vygotsky (1934), the meaning of a word is a conventional social production with a relatively stable nature. By means of these elements, human beings appropriate productions from precedent generations. Sense is defined as the *sum of all psychological events that this word activates in conscience* (Vygotsky, 1934: 181). Its fundamental aspect is fluidness and dynamism. Senses are constituted by instability and the space-time restriction. In this respect, senses are the individual aspect in conscience, which might be the way meanings, which are historically established, are internalized and externalized by each individual.

The concept of Creative Chain (Liberali, 2006a and b) can help deal with the relationship between senses and meanings. In accordance with Spinoza (1677), there are, in absolute, no criteria that can determine that a viewpoint is relatively more valid than another. In this perspective, the Creative Chain implies partnered endeavors in an activity, producing shared meanings which will be subsequently shared with new partners through the senses that the participants in the first activity take to the new one. Therefore, new meanings are creatively produced, carrying some aspects created in the first activity, and recreated throughout the new one. In this way, it is possible to connect Vygotsky's and Spinoza's ideas for, in the search for shared meaning, the partners are getting closer to the adequate ideas of the totality, which increase their *conatus*.

3.2. Answerability-responsibility

Answerability-responsibility in the Creative Chain is linked to the consideration for the production of shared meanings requiring responsive reactions. In other words, it presupposes the overcoming of the dogmatic perspective of individual senses and crystallized meanings in the production of creatively shared meaning. Sobral (2005:20) points out the aspect of answerability-responsibility, discussed by Bakhtin through the Russian word OTVETSTVENNOST, which states that an utterance is produced by a dialogical relation with other utterances handed down through discourse, linked “in the chain of speech verbal communication” (Bakhtin, 1992: 319).

The concept embodies the idea of answerability in as much as it conceives the utterance as constructed while taking into account possible responsive reactions. That is, the other is the co-participant simultaneously creating and being created by the utterance. Responsibility, on the other hand, could be interpreted as the act of being accountable for the care or welfare of others. Besides, it also includes the capability for making rational and ethical decisions on one’s own behavior.

According to Clark & Holquist (1984), based on Bakhtin’s ideas, answerability-responsibility is related to the action of responding to the world’s needs and is accomplished through activities the subjects get engaged in. Moreover, it includes the otherness as a fundamental category of value that makes all actions and creations possible. Such a responsive attitude also implies a concrete action endowed with intentionality by a concrete subject. This concept suggests that the answerable-responsible being is not only responsible for his/her own actions but also for the others’. Since human beings do not live alone, as isolated consciousness, a person’s creative work is always a dialectical answer to another.

This notion characterizes PAC’s movement in a Creative Chain, that is, a reciprocal transformation. By questioning the other, the individual questions him/herself, and in a certain way, one may organize one’s perception and experience as a way of understanding them and,

thus, producing new meanings. This comprehension implies a judgment of value, a sort of responsibility in relation to the meaning under construction, a reciprocal enrichment and a possible change in one's point of view.

3.3. Citizenship

PAC's main work is based on the concept of citizenship as the creation of environments which stimulate discussion to make participants recognize their stances as historical subjects and, in that way, usually put aside from society. For the group of researchers, real citizenship should be relatively independent of legal questions about what constitutes a citizen (Torres, 2003). It should be seen as a building process, which is organized by understanding that values and practices that constitute actions should be constantly re-evaluated. Moreover, it would be misleading to view citizenship as a status which embraces political rights and pre-given duties. This research group understands citizenship as a challenge of ethical nature, which establishes citizen praxis, aiming at diminishing the distance between the promise and the reality of a global democracy.

According to Kymlicka & Norman (1997), citizenship could be understood in two dimensions: legal condition and desirable attitude. The latter refers to an active search for rights and duties that are beyond those given by law. Taking the second dimension into consideration, practicing citizenship would be directly related to the values that constitute citizenship as an ethical field (Gentili, 2001: 72). In other words, it is a kind of social and political practice based on values such as: freedom, equality of condition, solidarity, tolerance, autonomy, respect for the differences and identities, and insubordination to totalitarian powers.

This idea evokes the concept of citizenship as a social notion in which human beings should have rights and responsibilities over each other's welfare. It also means to make collectively binding decisions, which requires a certain amount of reciprocal trust, empathy and understanding. This symmetric mutuality among people increases human

beings' power of action or their *conatus*. From Spinoza's (1677) ideas, the desire of "coming to be" evolved from the meetings with other human beings. In this inter-action, reciprocal actions can increase the power of *conatus*, generating disposition to assume the initiative of practice and knowledge. As stated by Spinoza (1677, IV, XVIII, note), "*to man there is nothing more useful than man — nothing, (...)*".

These concepts are important to understand the social integration in the whole dimension of the Creative Chain, producing shared meanings. That is, everybody takes part in the production of collectively binding decisions, which means that all the participants do not simply bind themselves, but dialectically bind the others, just as they are bound by the others.

4. PAC- LDA: Producing Citizenship in the Creative Chain

PAC has tried to enlarge the power of acting of the students, teachers and researchers involved, aiming at the transformation of their partial ideas about the issues dealt with in the activities of the Creative Chain of LDA. Through debates and discussions, PAC aims at promoting the analysis and questioning of the senses attributed to the concept of citizenship in order to get closer to the space-time bound common and shareable notions that prioritizes collective over isolated ideas and actions.

As stated in this article, it is important to understand that in PAC – LDA, the concepts of sense and meaning, answerability-responsibility and citizenship are essential. In the discussions held in the workshops, HTPC meetings, classes and in the events with the whole community, the idea of creating a new, transformed world as the basis for citizenship is always the aim.

4.1. Workshops: one step in the Creative Chain

The workshops with researchers, supervisors, and teachers were organized as places to work with reading and TST development. Besides,

they were also used to contribute to the preparation of discussions for the school meetings. In these workshops, the TST, formed by teachers of different schools, gathered to discuss how to critically read different genres in their own subject areas; to discuss teaching-learning approaches to discursively engage in social practices through reading; and to develop tasks to work in the communities with their students.

To introduce the topic of citizenship acting, during the first workshop of 2006, the researchers discussed and recovered the main objective of the project with all the participants. The lexical choices of the researchers indicate a view of citizenship from the perspective of desirable attitude and a claim for the TST to assume a position towards their reality. The important lexical choices are underlined.

R: sometimes we talk less about Citizenship; however, the critical stance is the foundation of this project. What we have in mind is to work with you, the students as people of possibilities who will conquer other things, will construct other realities. We do not think of you as “the poor little ones”, we think of you as privileged people, just as we think of your students as privileged. And privileged is not a characteristic of the person who “has got everything” but of those who have opportunities in life and take them.

The researchers’ claim for action and ways of presenting and emphasizing citizenship as the goal infuses the TSTs with responsibility and motives for an answer. The verbs (work with, construct, conquer) and the pronouns (we and you) can be viewed as a request for answerability-responsibility which is emphasized by the choice of addressing the TST not as “the poor little ones” but as the “privileged” ones. In a way, a new sense of citizenship is being presented: citizenship as “opportunities”. In this perspective, they are encouraged to become agents of their own reality.

TSTs cannot escape the responsibility or they may have to consider themselves as “the poor little ones”. So, there is a claim for action, participation and responsibility. TSTs were requested to decide

what kind of educators they would like to be: those who reproduce reality and are submissive, conformists, or the ones who are ready to accept new challenges.

Very concerned about the idea of developing reading in different areas as a way for getting students engaged in the process of community reconstruction, the TSTs were immediately involved by the suggestion of preparing the Citizenship Acting Event in each of their schools. In the following workshop, after TST evaluated their communities' needs and discussed with the other teachers in their schools, TSTs presented their topics for the event.

In the example below, extracted from the second workshop of 2006, it is possible to see how engaged in the chain of activities for transforming the community the TST members seemed to be. They thought not only about how to work with the students, but also about how to make it possible for the students to put this idea forward, which is the basis for the creative chain.

TST5: most of the time what we think that is obvious, is not obvious... So, most of the children think like that: "I am not going to throw away this trash because it is not my trash... it's not my business, right?" And we have to bear it in mind ... that from the moment this child ... or anybody ... we ourselves ... we adults ... see dirty things on the floor... "oh it's not mine ...it's not my business" ... not only the trash problem but other types of problems. We leave it there ... "it's not my business" But from the moment we become aware and change, it becomes an example ... and this example ... it is going to influence other people ... (isn't it true?)... This would be our aim and I hope that we can make these students aware of not only throwing trash in the trash bin... but other problems too... and the kid becomes ... an example indeed .. for other people...

In the excerpt, the discussion revolves around the topic of Citizenship Acting chosen by the school, that is, dealing with trash. This issue is seen just as an excuse to develop an idea of citizenship

acting which will be implemented in various aspects of life: “not only the trash problem but other types of problems” and “not only throwing trash in the trash bin... but other problems too”.

The first thing that is evident is the TST’s concern for the concept of citizenship as being obvious. The Shakespearean doubt, here represented as “obvious or not obvious”, establishes ground for the exposition of senses in the construction of a shared meaning of citizenship. What was first seen as obvious is then questioned both towards children’s actions and their own: “from the moment we become aware and change, it becomes an example ... and this example ... it is going to influence other people ...”.

This questioning revolutionizes the concept of citizenship into a new meaning that presupposes answerability-responsibility, which can be seen by the use of the expressions “influence other people”, “make the students aware” or “the kid becomes ... an example indeed...for other people”. This idea also reveals the concept of Creative Chain, since it involves the creative processes of meaning-making from one activity to the other in an intentional way.

In the same workshop, teachers also saw the importance of developing citizenship not as a separate topic from their subject area. On the contrary, they saw that this is not an attitude apart from the actual subject area teachers are working with. In this direction, they planned to get students to understand how the contents of the subject areas they taught could help develop a better perspective of society. For example, when working with a comic strip about a character whose major attitude is not taking a bath and whose pet is a pig, the TST wanted to discuss how this character helps understand the problem of littering and, at the same time, what the organization of the narrative is in the comic strip.

In the discussions, the TSTs took responsibility and answered the request by creating different meanings and possibilities of Citizenship Acting Projects/Events to be developed in their own schools. With this, the Creative Chain was established and new meanings of how to act creatively were being produced. The discussions held in the workshops were essential for the development of the HTPC meetings.

4.2. HTPC meetings: the Creative Chain gets in the school

The HTPC meetings were events organized in each school to discuss issues concerning the school staff and students. PAC used these events to develop its ideas with the whole school. The teachers who belonged to the TST had no hierarchical position in the school, but were accepted by the school principals as the conductors of these meetings. The idea was for the TST to develop teacher education procedures for a) teaching reading in different subject areas and b) developing ways for critical participation in the communities. These meetings were coordinated by the TST, with the support of the researchers and/or supervisors from the Secretariat of Education during both the preparation and the conduction of the meetings themselves.

Just as in the workshops with the researchers, the objective of working with citizenship production through the teaching of different subject areas with the use of reading was shared with the colleagues in the schools. The HTPC meetings were moments for the TST to work in their schools with the senses of citizenship they developed from the meanings produced in the workshops.

In the following example, the TST member presents the objective of the HTPC that the TSTs have prepared. They were planning to work with comic strips. However, the TST discussed how everything that is done in the classroom should keep in mind a greater purpose that puts education as the means for social transformation. The TST expects the group to join the effort of reconstructing the nearby reality in relation to aspects connected with the use of water.

In the city where this study takes place they have rivers and streams that have been destroyed by the bad use of the resources and by the littering that is deposited everywhere with no control. Even near the school, the students have part of an important river which supplies water to the city and which is completely dirty with litter from the community. In this direction, in the following excerpt, we can see one of the TST members discussing the importance of having the content as an “excuse” for the real important aspect of the project: Citizenship Acting. The italicized expressions in parenthesis correspond to the analysis of argumentation developed by the authors.

TST2: Well, I came to speak about the project, the Comic Strip project, but indeed we are going to use comics as if it were a kind of “excuse” to get to a final action, that is, hopefully, the Citizenship Acting Event (*point of view presented*) that we will have on October 23. We are going to have students’ activities to show how engaged they can be in the classroom. (...) And we’re presenting to you some ideas that we had for your work [in History, Math, Sciences, everything]. Afterwards, if you also have ideas, you can discuss them. So we’re showing to you [talking to the students who are present in the meeting].... (*supports with description of actions and suggestions*) Through reading, we aim at developing an active student ... so that he can read and understand the message and suddenly things can change (*position reinforced using reading as the focus as support*).

Citizenship is presented as the aim for the development of “active students” that work so that “things can change”. Similarly, reading is understood as the means (“Through reading”) for that. In her introduction, the TST member presented a point of view and supported it with the suggestions and actions taken. TST explained that, through reading, students may have a chance of understanding the ideas and “maybe” change something. The position is supported by the idea that the students should have a responsive attitude towards the texts they read. Besides, they are expected to “change things”. In this sense, they are seen as people with answerability-responsibility. In this case, we see answerability-responsibility in the action performed by the TST member and in the creation of a chance for the students to do the same. All this illustrates the work of the Creative Chain.

Moreover, we could say that the TST member was also, in a way, provoking the teachers to accept responsibility for the project in the same way as the TST members did. The TST called them all to join the effort of creating a new perspective for the school, that is, to answer to the claim of working in order to change the surrounding reality. In this sense, the TST made it clear that teachers would also have to assu-

me responsibilities for changing and improving things. Although the TST had already prepared some tasks for the project, teachers were also invited to include and rethink how they could contribute to it. This underlines the collaborative idea of shared meaning production and emphasizes the intentional production of meaning in chain.

4.3. Classes of different subject areas: the Creative Chain in the classroom

The discussions conducted in the HTPC meetings aimed at preparing the actions to be taken in the classrooms. These actions were part of the plans to develop the project that would be concluded in the Acting as Citizenship Event. All the school got involved and prepared tasks that would fit their subject areas and the discussion of reading as a means to transform a problem in the community. They developed these tasks within their own classrooms.

In the example that follows, we can see a lesson planned by a TST to deal with eating problems. In it, the way the senses of students about eating habits are elicited is exposed, as well as the manner in which they are called to justify their positions. Besides, the topic is planned to be discussed in a more scientific perspective, having Math problems to support the understanding of how the body works. The underlined expressions support this interpretation.

Situation of Action

What do you think about the exaggerated way Magali eats?

Why does she eat like that? Do you think that Magali eats correctly?

() yes () no why?

How many calories does a person need to eat per day to be healthy?

() 1200 cal () 500cal () 2200cal () 5500 cal

What do you understand by gram or kilogram?? Write the symbols.

The word choice connected to food - exaggerated, eat correctly, healthy - revolves around the topic chosen for the Citizenship Acting Event, which was concerned with the new hot food table the school would start using and the problem of eating habits expressed by the students. In this case, the questions provoked reflection that was based not only on the understanding of the narrative, the concepts of grams, kilograms, symbols, but mainly on the idea of healthy food habits.

The idea of the discussion was to ask students' opinions about the topics under discussion ("Do you think..." "What do you think...?" "What do you understand by gram and kilogram?"). The students were called to present their senses about the subject in a way which created possibilities for the development of new meanings. Besides, it demanded students' answerability-responsibility for they needed to assume their views and support them.

Besides making questions referring to the content of the comic strip, Science and Math, the teacher in class posed questions referring to how they could reflect about eating habits.

T: What kind of food is more important for our nourishment?
(*controversial question*)

St1: salads, fruits. Things that have proteins and vitamins
(*position taken*)

St2: the worst ones. (*position taken*)

T: But why do you think so? (*question for support*)

St1: Because they are good for your health. (*support with explain*)

T: And why are they healthy? (*question for clarification and expansion of support*)

St1: Because they have proteins that are good for the bones.

St2: Vitamins that are good for different things too.

T: What about you, L? What have you chosen? (*reposition of controversial question*)

St3: I *prefer* French fries but they are not really healthy. *I know*.

In the excerpt, students are called to take positions and to present their ideas with supports from scientific concepts. Their senses are questioned and the meaning is produced collectively. Having to answer these questions, students assume responsibility over their attitudes: “I prefer French fries but they are not really healthy. I know.” There is not a right or wrong imposition but a debate based on their knowledge.

These classes prepared the students to act during the Citizenship Acting Project/ Events with the community. In these events, they were supposed to discuss, present alternatives, question the audience and call for actions in relation to the topics chosen.

4.4. Citizenship acting events in the Creative Chain

Learning different subject areas is essential for any student, but for those living in very deprived communities, this may be their chance for overcoming the unbearable conditions they live by. In this perspective, the Citizenship Acting Events were planned as opportunities for the whole group (researchers, supervisors, TST, teachers, coordinators, directors, school staff, students, parents and the whole school-surrounding-community) to exercise citizenship through answerability-responsibility attitudes. Many different events were conducted during 2006. Some examples are described below.

Following ideas on the role of education, as presented, for instance, by Freire (1970) and the PCN (Brasil, 1998)¹², the Acting as Citizens Events worked with major topics of interest for the whole community. In one of the schools, students prepared a show to make the community aware of the problems they would face in case they kept wasting the water the way they did. In order to make everyone interested in the topic, each group prepared a different type of activity. Students from grades one to four prepared poems, games, and recreations of comic strips. The ones from grades five to eight organized musicals, plays, debates, and presentations of rap, samba and “pagode” with themes

¹² Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais.

about water. The kids themselves created these tasks joining everyday concepts to the scientific knowledge they had discussed in classroom. Another school discussed about sexual problems and early pregnancy and prepared workshops with the whole community - a moment when students and teachers would discuss different topics with the audience.

In a third school, students prepared a special day for the launching of a hot food table, as already mentioned in the examples from the classes above. Some of the students assumed the functions of monitors and they were supposed to help the others with the appropriate use of the machine and with the manners of serving food in a healthy and non-wasteful way. When a student had just disposed the rest of his food, a monitor addressed him about his action. The conversation recorded was as follows:

Monitor: Did you realize how much food you're throwing away?
(*controversial question*)

Student: I can't eat anymore. (*statement of a fact*)

Monitor: Why then have you disposed so much food in your plate? (*question for explanation*)

Student: I don't know. (*lack of support*)

Monitor: Next time, try not to dispose too much food on your plate. (*suggestion*)

Student: ok. (*acceptance*)

In the excerpt, the monitor questioned student's attitudes ("Did you realize...?" "Why then...?") and, although the student was not really required to give supports and more elaborated answers, the power of answerability-responsibility was already there. Both (monitor and student) were exercising their possibility of presenting their senses to create new meanings together, assuming the risks of participating and trying to change reality through suggesting and accepting a form of acting. We can see students assuming their roles in society, taking positions, debating and finding their own voices. In this perspective, they exercise answerability-responsibility in the production of their citizenship.

5. Concluding remarks on the Creative Chain for citizenship production

PAC's main work is based on the creation of environments which stimulate discussion to make participants recognize their stances as historical subjects. As discussed by Torres (2003), in citizenship viewed through the eyes of Social Movements, especially in Brazil, with Freire, democracy was based on the organization of programs *of* and *with* the people and not *for* the people.

Considering education towards citizenship, the starting point is in human beings themselves, in their "here" and "now", which constitute their social historical situation, either emerged or immersed in reality. It is just from the perception of their limited lives that they can challenge the situation and act over it (Freire, 1997). In this revolutionary process, Freire (1997) states that dialogue imposes itself as a way through which human beings find their own meaning. In addition, dialogue means the meeting of reflection and action, inseparable from those who take part in the dialogue, and orient themselves to the world in need of being transformed and humanized. Dialogue cannot exist without a deep love towards the world or human beings, towards citizenship building. Moreover, when we observe the activities developed in the network created by PAC – LDA, we can see that love (Freire, 1997), or citizenship (as discussed here), is, at the same time, the ground of the dialogue and the dialogue itself and this should bring together responsible responsive individuals.

In this perspective, we could discuss the activities developed by PAC-LDA as intended on the development of citizenship as virtue, as something which can be learned and which expresses an exercise of partial freedom. We should also reflect on how these virtues are being produced in order to create love (Freire, 1970, as in the initial quote of this article). As pointed out by Comte-Sponville (1995: 244), in a very Spinozist way: it is through love that human beings, though never the same, have a chance to participate, as much as they can, in immortality.

Recebido em: 07/2008; Aceito em: 10/2008.

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