

Towards an Understanding of the Means-Ends Relationship in Citizenship Education

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Abstract

While it is clear that all educational undertakings consist of ends and means, the relationship between the two is far from straightforward. This article proposes a framework for understanding the relationship in the context of citizenship education. Qualitative research was undertaken of three educational initiatives in Brazil: the schools of the Landless Movement, the Plural School framework in the city of Belo Horizonte, and the Voter of the Future programme, run by the Electoral Tribunals. Case studies were carried out of each, involving documentary analysis, interviews and observations. Analysis of the relationship between ends and means in each case gave rise to two key frames: the first, 'proximity', refers to the extent to which ends and means are separate or unified; the second, 'rationale', refers to the grounds on which means are chosen. Finally, the implications of this framework for understanding curriculum are drawn out.

Key words: Aims of Education; Brazil; Citizenship Education; Curriculum; Curriculum Theory.

Introduction

It has often been argued that the curriculum should have clear aims. According to this view, curricula should not be allowed to drift without clear direction or to be maintained in schools through a blind adherence to tradition, and instead should be coherently linked to the goals to be achieved. This position is characteristic of the technical-rational approach to curriculum planning associated with Tyler (1949). Learning experiences, according to this approach, are

to be established in relation to explicit objectives, then organized so as to achieve the maximum effect, and finally evaluated and modified if necessary. A related, but distinct, position has been put forward by philosophers of education such as Hirst (1974), who have argued that curriculum design can only be rational if the starting point is a set of clear aims. In this way, Bramall and White (2000) criticise the National Curriculum of England and Wales for ‘put[ting] the cart before the horse’, with explicit aims either being absent, or being tagged on to what is essentially a content-led curriculum. A difference between these two groups is that the former proposes explicit instructional *objectives*, usually of a behaviourist nature, while the latter do not require such specificity in their aims.

Aims or objectives-led positions have encountered strong opposition. Firstly, there has been widespread rejection of the mechanistic nature of behaviourist approaches associated with Tyler (e.g. Dwight & Garrison 2003; Kliebard 1970), and of models such as *means-ends analysis*, developed principally in the field of artificial intelligence. Yet, even in relation to the more humanistic conception of Hirst and others, it has been argued that it is not necessarily desirable for curriculum design to begin with aims. Some instead have argued for content (e.g. Hurst 1984), others for principles (e.g. Kelly 2004). Standish (1999: 48-49) proposes overcoming the ‘debased form which objective characterizations can take’ through an ‘oblique and indirect literary approach’. The dispute here, in reality, relates to the explicitness, formulation or uses made of the aims, and not their existence. Inherent to the notion of an educational undertaking is an intention, aspiration or ideal, whether this is conscious or not. While there may be good reasons for opposing planning by objectives or clear statements of aims, it would be nonsensical to deny the existence of ends in education.

Given that education consists of ends and means, the crucial question concerns how the latter are related to the former (bearing in mind, as Dewey [1916] argued, that we must avoid assuming a simple monodirectional relationship between the two). Tyler (1949: 65) proposes some ‘general principles in selecting learning experiences’, such as the need ‘to practice the kind of behaviour implied by the objective’, the importance of enjoyment of the activities, and the requirement of readiness of the students. In general terms, the ‘planning by objectives’ approach favours the use of empirical research to determine whether means are adequate for attaining ends. Others (e.g. Hirst 1974) have argued that empirical research is insufficient and that there are logical constraints on our choices of means. Sockett (1973), critiquing the Tyler position, proposes five ways in which means emerge from ends: the

contingent relationship; the logically necessary; the logically constitutive where the means are seen to be either a *part* or an *instantiation* of the end; and the logically limiting where statements of certain ends logically preclude certain means. These analyses are important in showing the limitations of the Tyler model, but do not fully map the variety of (possibly non-logical and non-behaviourist) ways in which means can be derived in practice. Wise (1976) in his analysis suggests that instructional activities cannot be derived automatically from objectives, and suggests that they normally stem from a combination of ‘memory, precedent and imagination’ (p.284). There are many ways in which this process may occur, some conscious and explicit, some unconscious and implicit, some coherent and some arbitrary (a point also made by Walker [1971] in his *naturalistic model*).

This article explores through empirical research the different ways in which curricula can be related to their overarching goals, putting forward a conceptual scheme through which the relationship may be understood. While there has been significant research on the ways curricula are transformed in their implementation or enactment in schools and classrooms (e.g. Snyder et al. 1992; Thornton 1995; Benavot & Resh 2003), there are few studies assessing the prior transposition of ideals to official curricula. Much of the writing on ends and means is purely conceptual and does not make reference to actual contexts, aside from hypothetical examples. Analysis of empirical cases is necessary to enhance our understanding of these relationships. The study, therefore, follows Goodson's (1994: 29) call to observe closely the realities of curriculum:

In their different ways both the prescriptive theorists and those with an action orientation have ignored what *is* in pursuit of what *might be*. It is time both came to grips with the ongoing realities from which all sides seem to be in full flight.

The means-ends relationship is here explored in relation to experiences of citizenship education. This latter term is here understood as denoting any educational undertaking that aims to enhance political knowledge, skills and values, to promote understanding of citizens’ rights, encourage political participation at local, national or global levels, or develop forms of citizen identity or allegiance. Citizenship education encompasses the full range of political positions, although in most cases today it is linked, at least nominally, to ideals of democracy.

Conceptions of citizenship are commonly understood in relation to two models: the ‘liberal’ and the ‘civic republican’ (Kymlicka 2002; Heater 1999). The former sees the citizen as a bearer of rights guaranteed by the state, with the option, but not the obligation, to political participation. In the civic republican view, however, participation is a requirement of the citizen and is seen as a fundamental part of the good life. In reality, conceptions of citizenship (and citizenship education) can be located on a continuum of both rights and participation: socialist approaches, for example, have maximum requirements in both social rights and participation, while libertarian approaches keep both rights and obligatory participation to a minimum.

For this study, qualitative research was carried out with three educational initiatives in Brazil that have contrasting conceptions of citizens’ rights and participation. Brazil is a country characterized by severe socio-economic inequalities, and, in spite of the existence of a formal democratic system, by the effective political marginalization of large segments of the population. Since the end of the military dictatorship in 1985, there have been significant efforts to promote active citizenship, through formal and non-formal education (Gandin & Apple 2002; Gentili & McCowan 2003; McCowan 2006; Wong & Balestino 2001). These efforts have been spearheaded by diverse social movements, local governments committed to social policy reform and progressive wings of the Catholic Church inspired by liberation theology. The first of the initiatives assessed here is the Landless Movement (MST, Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra), a social movement for agrarian reform which runs a large network of schools, characterized by a commitment to the workers’ struggle and the creation of a socialist society. The second, the Plural School (*Escola Plural*), is an initiative of the municipal government of Belo Horizonte, aiming to address social exclusion by creating a more democratic school system in the city. Lastly, the Voter of the Future (*Eleitor do Futuro*) programme, an initiative of the Electoral Tribunals, aims to equip young people for responsible and well-informed citizenship in a liberal democracy. These initiatives have very different conceptions of valued citizenship and prescribe different means of achieving them; they also have very different experiences in implementing the programmes. In each case, the relationship between means and ends is assessed, leading to a reflection on the means-ends relationship in general.

The term ‘means’ is used here in the *subjective* sense (what the actor thinks will achieve the goal) rather than the *objective* sense (what will actually achieve the goal) – signifying that adjectives such as effective/ineffective can be applied to different means chosen (Brezinka 1997). This study is based on an understanding that, despite a number of constraints, curriculum design involves a degree of choice, and that this choice is based on forms of rationale (whether explicit or not). As Brezinka (1997: 203) states: ‘Obviously means are not chosen arbitrarily, but rather based on the knowledge and assumptions about causal relationships currently available to the actor which he regards as credible’.

The research

This article is based on a larger study of the three initiatives, covering their underlying orientations, curricular programmes, implementation and effects. The article will draw on only part of the data, that relating to the orientations and the curricular programmes. The research, undertaken in June-September 2005 and May-September 2006, involved data collection in three states of Brazil: Rio Grande do Sul (MST), Minas Gerais (Plural School) and Amapá (Voter of the Future). The initiatives were chosen on the basis of their intrinsic significance and because they display contrasting political and educational approaches. For each initiative, in addition to a general overview, two schools were chosen for in-depth research. Documents were collected, including official curriculum statements and pedagogical materials at national, state and school levels. Interviews were conducted with three coordinators or officials of each initiative, and, in the six focus schools, with the head teacher, three classroom teachers, and three groups of students aged 11-17 (a total of 51 interviews). Observations of classes and other activities were also carried out.

From the qualitative data, the aims and the curricular programmes (means) were identified. In this study, the focus is not on specific learning objectives contained in curricula, but on the overarching aims or underlying principles of the actors, relating to moral, political, epistemological and ontological beliefs. These aims are sometimes explicit, being directly expressed by the initiative, or implicit, derived from general statements. Clearly, the individuals involved in the initiative and the various documents have subtly different views: these differences are acknowledged, while at the same time attempting to identify common principles. Those elements of the aims and curricular programmes that relate to citizenship

are given prominence, for example understandings of rights and duties, political participation and civic identity.

In terms of the curricular programme (involving content, method, relations and structures), none of the three initiatives has a single curricular document providing an authoritative reference point. The ideal curriculum envisaged by each is formed by a variety of actors (mainly in co-ordinating bodies, but with some teacher input) and expressed in a range of documents, including national and state publications, school level documents and teaching materials. Interview data is also drawn on to enhance the understanding of certain aspects.

In the analysis, the aim is not to show the historical process by which the curricula were derived, in terms of the planning and writing of curriculum documents, and the contributions and deliberation of different individuals and groups (as in Walker 1971). Instead the focus is on the *relationship* between the ends and the means. It is important to note that this relationship is not necessarily evident to those creating the curricula.

This is an exploratory study, and the theoretical framework that emerges from it is intended as a springboard for further research, rather than a definitive conclusion. In this instance, the means-ends relationship is explored in relation to citizenship education specifically, but is understood as applying to other forms of education. There now follows an assessment of the means-ends relationship in the three cases. For each, there is a description of the ideals and the curricular programmes, followed by an analysis of the relationship between the two. The accounts of each initiative are necessarily brief and in the space available cannot do justice to the complexities of their beliefs and practices. Only those aspects which are most relevant to the means-ends question are raised.

The Landless Movement (MST)

Aims and ideals

As outlined above, the MST is a social movement aiming to achieve land reform in Brazil. Since its founding in 1984, it has focused on occupying idle farmland in large estates, leading to the permanent settlement of landless families there (MST 2001). Over the years, the movement has established a large network of primary¹ schools in these communities as

well as a variety of other educational activities² (McCowan 2003; Caldart 1999). The schools are officially part of the public network, and are state-funded, but are run according to the movement's specific political and pedagogical principles.

The MST subscribes to a predominantly Marxist view of history, seeing the widespread poverty and inequality in Brazil as the result of the historic and continuing exploitation of the workers by an economic elite (MST 2001). The *Politico-Pedagogical Plan* of the MST's Treviso³ School starts with the following passage:

We live in a capitalist society, structured according to a neo-liberal regime. A society in which profit is above all else, leaving human values to one side, reinforcing social and cultural inequalities, increasing exclusion and undermining the foundation of society, that is the family⁴. (Treviso School 2001: 3)

The response, therefore, is primarily a transformation of the economic system leading to collectivization of wealth. With resources distributed evenly, political equality becomes a possibility, but the MST in this case advocates not a centralized state, but a radical democratic system, albeit with hierarchical structures of representation. In this, the MST distances itself from some other Marxist movements, as shown in the following statement from the booklet *Principles of Education in the MST*:

We have already learnt that social transformation is a complex process, which cannot be reduced to a simple seizure of political or economic power. It implies a process of a number of other changes that will be capable of building a new type of power, no longer oppressive or repressive like this one.... (MST 1999a: 7)

The aim for the MST is 'the transformation of those "torn from the land", those "poor in every way" into citizens, prepared to fight for a dignified place in history' (MST 1999b: 5). The movement, therefore, sees the citizen as someone who 'fights' for his or her rights, instead of automatically receiving them. Following Freire (1972; 1994), political participation for the MST is linked to the notion of becoming a 'subject of history', of having the capacity for transforming the world, and being aware of that capacity. As the headteacher Vicente stated, people must be, 'Subjects of their own history, profoundly

knowledgeable of their own reality and able to intervene in that reality' (Interview with Vicente).

The MST does make some allowance for difference in its conception of citizenship, and is energetic in supporting the equal participation of women in decision-making in the movement (McCowan 2003). On the other hand, there is a large degree of universality in the MST's conception. The movement's utopian vision is one of equality and solidarity, in which all people work for the good of society as a whole. In this, the individual is to a large extent subordinated to the *collective*, a notion that is of great importance in the MST, in contrast to the current individualism and fragmentation of society.

The overarching aim for the MST, therefore, is the creation of a new socialist society, fundamental to which is the transformation of alienated, individualist people into active, empowered citizens who are 'subjects of history', and act in the interests of society as a whole.

Curricular programme

Education is strongly present in the MST's vision of change in society. First of all, the current school system is seen to support injustice:

Education is organized and developed so as to guarantee the structural continuance of the neo-liberal system, forming mere workers, without the ability to make a critical reading of society or to form their own conceptions, that is to say, an alienating education, one that has as an ally in this task the mass media, principally television. (Treviso School 2001: 3)

A form of schooling must therefore be developed to foster the new society based on socialist and humanist values, and be organically linked to the movement for agrarian reform. As the teacher Nilda states, 'It is a school that has a history of struggle'.

MST schools maintain the 'traditional' subjects of Maths, Science, Portuguese, History and so forth, yet aim to transform their nature, and combine them with a range of activities outside the classroom. Six elements emerge from the data as distinctive to the MST

approach. The first of these is the integration of political elements into the conventional subject disciplines. By way of an example, the history component of Milton Santos School for the 6th grade is as follows:

From the basis of the current Brazilian reality, search in the past for explanations for the happenings of the current time, awakening in the learners interest for the themes which allow them to situate and position themselves in Brazilian reality. The black community, oppression, women, concentration of land ownership and exploitation are the principal themes worked with in the 6th grade. (Milton Santos School 2005)

This passage shows the movement's emphasis on the historical roots of current problems, the interpretation of events in relation to the class struggle, and the efficacy of popular uprising. However, the political elements of MST education go beyond lesson content:

To consider democracy a pedagogical principle means, according to our educational approach, that it is not enough for students to study or discuss it; it is also necessary ... to experience a space of democratic participation, educating oneself through and for social democracy⁵. (MST 1999a: 20)

For this end, emphasis is placed on students organising their own school activities. They must do this, firstly, because it is their right to have a say in their own education, and secondly because it is a valuable learning experience. The citizen abilities of political organization and participation are thus acquired through participation in these activities in school. The most radical examples of this are seen in the MST teacher education courses (Caldart 1997), but it is also common in primary and secondary education. Students are expected to participate in the *school council*, the highest body of management of the school, along with teacher and community representatives. They are also intended to form *pupil collectives*, which discuss student issues, and if necessary take them to the General Assembly (MST 1999b).

The emotions must also be engaged in political education. Central to MST activity is the *mística* (literally, mystic, or mystical), a term referring to ceremonial activities which engage the heart and the imagination. The *mística* is described as follows:

The *mística* expresses itself through poetry, theatre, bodily expression, chants, music, song, MST symbols, work tools, and the recovery of the memory of the struggles and of all the great people who have struggled for humanity. It becomes a celebration and aims to involve all those present in a single movement, to experience a single feeling, to feel themselves members of a collective identity...which goes beyond themselves and beyond the MST. (MST 1999b: 23)

The *mística*, therefore, is intended to galvanize the members of the movement in united action, spurred on by images of the future (the goals of land reform, justice, the socialist society) and of the past (previous struggles, MST martyrs and revered figures).

Next, there is a strong emphasis on work, particularly agricultural work, performed in a collective and co-operative manner. There are two ways in which work is to be incorporated in the school curriculum: firstly, by equipping students for employment (that is, productive self-owned labour), and secondly by including work as an educational method (MST 1999a: 16). In relation to the latter, schools are encouraged to organize work-related activities within school hours, such as tending to the vegetable garden, cleaning, decorating, handing out school meals and preparing the *mística* (MST 1999b: 15). The agricultural work also undertaken inside and outside school serves to foster positive rural values and identity, and to gain skills and knowledge in agricultural techniques.

In terms of pedagogical approach, MST education is characterized by an adherence to *dialogue*. In the Freirean sense, dialogue involves a radical alteration of the relations between teacher and student, and of the process of knowledge construction and acquisition:

From our pedagogical practices we could verify the truth of the principle that says: no one learns through somebody else, but also nobody is educated alone.... That is to say, it is not only the teacher-student relationship which educates: it is also the relationship between students and between teachers.... Everybody learning and teaching amongst themselves.... The collective educates the collective. (MST 1999a: 23)

There are also efforts to integrate the local knowledge of the community and the rural population with academic school knowledge.

Finally, the movement sees student participation outside the school as an essential learning experience:

[I]t is good to bear in mind that the pedagogy which forms new social subjects, and which educates human beings, goes beyond the school. It is much bigger and involves life as a whole. Some educational processes which sustain the Landless identity could never be realized within the school. (MST 1999b: 6)

These forms of participation include popular mobilizations such as land occupations and protest marches, or participation in support work for other MST communities and attendance at movement gatherings and conferences.

The MST curricular programme is, therefore, characterized by attempts to modify the nature of schooling, while maintaining a conventional school format within the state system. It does this by integrating political content into lessons (relating to land reform and the wider social struggles), diversifying school activities to include co-operative work and movement rituals, transforming teacher-student relations and structures of management, and encouraging political activities outside the school.

Relating means and ends

What is the basis on which the MST chooses its curricular programme? In the movement literature, reference is made to the fact that curriculum implies a selection of content, and that this selection is inherently political. The MST is clear about the principles which orient its choice in terms of curriculum content:

At base we can affirm that it is also a question of using in this specific dimension the principle of social justice, that is to say, to select those contents which, on the one hand, relate to the equal distribution of knowledge produced

by humanity, and on the other hand, which have the pedagogical potential necessary to educate citizens for social transformation. In other words, we must analyse each piece of content to be taught, asking ourselves to what point it contributes to the concretization of the other principles which are dealt with in this booklet. (MST 1999a: 15)

This final concept of *concretization* is important. The MST holds to the idea of overarching principles that are made concrete in educational practices. The concretization is supposed to occur on the basis of the practical experiences of educators:

They [the elements presented in the booklet] are a systematization of different experiences aiming to implement our pedagogical principles, and to make our schools a space for forming the Landless. We have already seen that the process of pedagogical construction is necessarily dynamic and must be constantly reflected on by all of its subjects. (MST 1999b: 45)

However, while educational approaches are supposed to be derived from practical experience, there is also strong influence from key thinkers – particularly Paulo Freire, but also others such as Anton Makarenko (1978) and José Martí (1961) – and from current ‘orthodoxies’ of educational theory in Brazil such as social interactionism, interdisciplinarity and participatory evaluation.

The key point, however, is that the means chosen, whether through practical experience or the weight of authority, are intended to be in *harmony* with the ends, in the sense that they must be undertaken in the same spirit, or following the same principles. For example, the movement places great emphasis on co-operativism as a basis for organizing work in society: it consequently requires that its educational activities be organized in a co-operative way, i.e. through collective classroom learning, student participation in decision-making, collectives of teachers rather than top-down management, and so forth. Part of this ‘harmony’ is that values must be exemplified by the teachers:

In order for a value to be incorporated in the lived experience of people, it must be observed by the students in the lives of the educators. Witnessing is

therefore important, that is to say, the teacher's way of being and of relating to others is also part of her pedagogical practice. (MST 1999b: 24)

However, there are times at which ends and means remain separate. This can be seen in the place of work in the curriculum: as seen above, the practice and the values of unalienated work are incorporated into the school day (harmony), yet the movement also aims to equip its students with knowledge and skills for participation in the job market in later life (separation). There is also a separation of ends and means in the MST in that the educational work in general is intended to help achieve the extrinsic goals of land reform and changes in economic and political structures in society.

Lastly, there is another sense in which the means and ends merge completely. The movement facilitates the participation of students in political activities outside the school, such as protest marches and land occupations. Here the students are learning and developing as citizens (means) at the same time they are exercising their citizenship (ends) – as advocated by Mill (1991) and Pateman (1970). There is no separation here between the preparation and subsequent performance.

The Plural School Framework

Aims and ideals

The Plural School (PS) initiative, on the other hand, is formed around a notion of social inclusion. As the Barroso School conference document (2004: 9) states: 'the commitment of the school is with the structuring of an inclusive society'. Society is seen to be characterized by the exclusion of certain segments of the population from valued arenas, from access to key services and from the exercising of political power. The overarching aim is to reverse this situation, making these arenas available to all. The term 'plural' here refers to the plurality of experiences of the different schools in the municipality, and not to 'pluralism' in its general political sense. 'Inclusive school' would be an equally good description of the initiative (a point made by one of the respondents, Luciana, an official in the Municipal Secretariat of Education – SMED).

The PS is the initiative that places most emphasis on difference in its varying forms. While there are universal entitlements, the differences between citizens are acknowledged and supported. Instead of people adapting to the requirements of society, society is seen to have to adjust to accommodate different forms of people:

We seek to construct a school in accordance with the plurality of cultural experiences and the necessities of the learners, a school which recovers its condition as a time and space of socialization, of lived experiences and construction of identities. (Barroso School 2004: 11)

In relation to rights, the PS, like the MST, supports a conception of these being ‘won’ by the people through the struggle:

So we see in the case of Belo Horizonte today, the participatory budgets,...where the community mobilizes itself and goes to the plenaries to fight for the building of a crèche, for the building of a clinic, this means, this is being a citizen, but the group must be together and there, in search of a right.... (Interview with Luciana)

Importantly, rights and participation for the PS are not attributes of a future state, once adulthood has been reached, but are enjoyed by children too. The framework is opposed to the traditional view in which:

The separation between time for education and time for action, time for childhood and time for adulthood, made time in school have meaning only in as far as it was a *preparation* for other times. Childhood and adolescence stopped having meaning as periods in themselves, as specific ages of the lived experience of rights. The child and the adolescent are not recognized as subjects of rights in the present. (SMED 2002: 16. Original emphasis)

The Plural School, therefore, shares with the MST an opposition to the formal political equality of liberal notions of citizenship that are inattentive to power imbalances in society. However, the response of the PS is distinctive in looking for forms of inclusion, and in its valuing of difference and diversity.

Curricular programme

The PS represents an attempt to radically alter the nature of schooling. Since school is an important source of exclusion, it is also a key site for reversing the situation. Luciana states:

... I think that in a country like ours, a crucial thing is to have an inclusive school, a school for everyone, guaranteeing the right to education. And to guarantee this school for all...these children, young people and adults that we see as having a trajectory of exclusion, whether in the family, in their own lives, means that...the traditional school won't do, it means rethinking the organization of pedagogical work, the organization of time, the organization of spaces, so that school welcomes all. (Interview with Luciana)

To ensure the full citizenship of all members of society, therefore, school must be made inclusive, and must function in a way that will allow all students to participate outside in the wider society. The transformation that the PS intends for the school aims to be deep and comprehensive:

Changing the vision of the curriculum does not imply just changing the contents and programmes, but thinking of a new 'school knowledge' and of 'school culture' in a wider way. (SMED 2002: 45)

Perhaps the best-known feature of the PS is the introduction of 'learning cycles'. These are a means of combating the chronic levels of grade repetition among certain social groups, ensuring that students progress together as an age group (Dalben 2000). The traditional eight grades are replaced by three cycles of three years (the extra year enabling students to start at the age of six rather than seven). These are childhood (6-8), pre-adolescence (9-11) and adolescence (12-14), with the curriculum tailored to the specific stages of development of the child/adolescent in each cycle. The PS does try to make other provision in conjunction with the cycles, to provide extra support for those who are falling behind their peers and those with special educational needs.

In addition to this overhaul of the grade system, the PS represents a radical new approach to knowledge and the subject disciplines. The epistemological position adopted ('social interactionist constructivist', in the words of the deputy head Rita) makes necessary a challenge to those aspects referred to by Bernstein (1971) as *classification* and *framing*, particularly the former. Moves away from traditional subject divisions and towards an integrated curriculum are to be achieved through the use of projects – such as that recommended in SMED [2002] on advertising of children's toys, aiming to develop media awareness – and through the *transversal themes*:

The proposal is that this curriculum should be constructed from the basis of a collective definition of the themes that represent the problems put forward by the current situation, not in parallel to the curriculum subjects, but transversal to them.... (SMED 2002: 27-28)

This forms part of an attempt to bridge the gap between remote academic lessons and the needs of the local community, reconciling 'popular culture' and 'historically accumulated knowledge' (SMED 2002: 67).

Related to the challenging of subject boundaries and control of knowledge is the emphasis on Freirean dialogue, see previously in the MST, leading to 'increasingly horizontalized relations' being established in the school (Barroso School 2004:14).

It is necessary that a dialogical relationship is established in the classroom, where all can put ideas forward, ask, exchange, negotiate meanings, share. It is necessary to break with the monological pedagogy in which only the teacher speaks.... (SMED 2002: 66)

The principle of dialogue makes necessary changes in forms of assessment too. As stated in SMED (2002: 40):

The instruments of evaluation, however varied they may be, must reflect the philosophy of the Plural School, being an expression of a pedagogical relationship based on dialogue and the collective search for solutions. In this way,

the evaluative process ceases to be an instrument of sanction, becoming an instrument of the construction of a more plural educative process.

Another element is the importance given to the participation of students in school:

It is necessary to continue calling the pupils to participation. Participation as an integral part of the school community, with co-responsibility, commitment and interaction between the different instances of the segments involved in democratic management, through the incentive to the creation and integration of *grêmios*, newspapers, radios and pupil assemblies.... (p.29)

The *grêmios* are pupil associations, elected by the pupils themselves, which organize cultural, sporting and political activities in the school and act as a forum for pupil discussion and for representing student views.

The concern of the PS for social exclusion relates to a number of factors. Firstly, there are socio-economic ones – the poorest in society, many of whom live in *favelas*, who have traditionally been unable to attend school. There is also significant focus on the issue of race, particularly the discrimination and exclusion of the Afro-descendent population (emphasized in the interview with Luciana). To a lesser extent, there is also a concern with issues of gender (e.g. SMED 2002: 56). However, an area which stands out in the programme of the PS is the attempt to integrate those with special needs and disabilities into the mainstream classroom. This is pioneering work in Brazil, where these students customarily attend special schools or receive no education at all. LIBRAS (Brazilian sign language) translators are employed so that deaf students are able to accompany the lesson within the same classroom. The municipality runs a Centre for Pedagogical Support for the Visually Impaired as well as a computer programme to give blind and visually impaired students access to IT. There is also pedagogical support for students normally considered to have behaviour problems (Barroso School 2004: 26).

These efforts are intended not only to uphold the rights of people with special needs, allowing them access to education of quality, but also to provide learning opportunities for other students, through coming into contact with people who are ‘different’, and from whom they are normally segregated. SMED (2002: 67) proposes the following objective:

To offer to the pupils the conditions and possibilities for living together in plurality, considering the differences between races, classes and gender, developing attitudes of respect and mutual consideration.

Some of the elements of the PS curriculum programme, therefore, are similar to those of the MST. Both, with strong Freirean influence, aim to introduce dialogue in the classroom, to install participatory structures so that students and the community are involved in decision-making, and to integrate local and academic knowledge. A distinctive feature of the PS, however, is that there is a more concerted effort to transform school ‘spaces’ and ‘times’, leading to changes in the grade system and subject disciplines. There are also more concrete steps to include all types of students in the same classroom. However, there is much less emphasis than in the MST on the development of political knowledge, skills and values that will enable current and future political action and participation.

Relating means and ends

The link between participation within and outside school is shown in the following passage:

[A]ll [the politico-pedagogical plans] propose the development of the citizen for participation in society. All these proposals note that school will develop these collective subjects in as far as they make them participants in the construction of humanized school spaces. (SMED 2002: 15)

Like the MST, therefore, it requires *harmony* between ends and means, since the aim of constructing the inclusive society is seen to require teaching and learning to be conducted in an inclusive and participatory manner. Importantly, these means appear to be adopted on the basis of a *moral imperative*, rather than empirical evidence to show that they are appropriate for achieving particular ends.

SMED (2002: 65) states explicitly that the objectives of the curriculum follow on necessarily from the politico-philosophical orientations:

The proposal of general objectives for the curriculum, consistent with an educational framework which aims to value diversity, plurality and the differences of socio-cultural experiences, must start with a critical analysis of the concept of curriculum....

The criterion for choosing the means is therefore its being 'consistent' (*condizente*) with the underlying orientations. These orientations are both epistemological (social interactionist constructivist) and political (social inclusion). The curricular activities emerge from these 'general objectives'.

However, there are occasions on which means appear to be derived in ways other than being consistent with these principles. For example, there is acknowledgement of empirical research as a basis for curriculum design:

We start from the supposition, *confirmed by the human sciences*, that within the period of basic education (7-14) there are smaller cycles of socialization and formation that must be respected and pedagogically organized. (SMED 2002: 21, italics added)

This might be considered an appeal to authority as much as empirical evidence, with the sciences being invoked as an indisputable source. There are also other occasions (e.g. (SMED 2002: 25) in which 'researchers' are called on to justify particular activities. Vygotsky and his 'zone of proximal development' are invoked by Barroso School (2001: 10).

The PS, in summary, while showing different ways in which means are derived from the overarching aims, is characterized particularly by a need for the school to model the ideal society it is intended to create. There is little evidence, on the other hand, of educational activities being organized to achieve separate and future goals in creating democratic citizens: the democratic ideals are brought into the present and into the school.

The Voter of the Future programme

Aims and ideals

The third initiative, Voter of the Future (VF), was established in Brazil by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal in 2002, supported by UNICEF. It is run by the Regional Electoral Tribunals (TREs) in each state, usually in partnership with selected schools and other civil society partners. The initiative is characterized by strong support for liberal multi-party democracy. However, it sees that the existence of formal structures does not guarantee a successful democracy, and that there are serious problems with its functioning in Brazil. These problems are principally those of electoral corruption and clientilism, and are caused by a combination of unscrupulous, self-interested politicians and an apathetic and ill-informed electorate. As Amanda, a co-ordinator in the Federal District, states:

Our country is suffering various crises in the political sphere because of a lack of awareness. So we need to motivate these pupils to reflect more, not to exchange their vote for basic provisions.... (Interview with Amanda)

The system, according to this view, is basically good, and if the people can act in a moral, responsible and critical manner, then society will function justly and well. The necessity of political participation for all citizens is made clear in the introduction to a storybook for schools created by the TRE in the Federal District:

We understand that school has a mission to transmit basic knowledge in relation to the matters outlined above [citizenship, rights and duties etc.], reducing, in this way, the number of politically disinterested people, that is to say, those people who are proud to say that they don't like politics and leave their participation as citizens to others, and end up sorting out their lives any old way. (TRE-DF 2004: 1)

This passage confirms the notion of participation as a duty (in contrast to the other two initiatives, where it is seen as a right), and restricts participation to 'conventional' channels of liberal democracy. In relation to this electoral participation, there is a strong emphasis on political parties and their policies rather than candidates (responding to

relatively weak awareness of the former and a strong dependence on the personalities of the latter in Brazilian politics). As the Roraima document states: ‘To vote for ideas, programmes, proposals and work, and not to vote for promises and people’ (TRE-RR 2004: 5). The initiative is careful, however, not to favour any specific political party:

...the objective is to create in these adolescents, our future voters, awareness of the importance of the vote.... but with one observation, with care not to influence them in their party political choices, we leave these party political choices in the charge of other values, you see, of the family, of other groups the adolescents are linked with. (Interview with Antonio, a judge in Amapá)

The moralistic aspect of the initiative is seen in *Learning to be a Citizen* (TSE 2003) (the publication outlining the main aims and activities of the programme): among the six objectives of the initiatives are those to ‘inform young people of good and bad electoral practices’, and to ‘alert young people to the vices that disfigure and contaminate the objective and the essence of the right to vote’ – the polarized moral perspective contrasting particularly with the constructivist Plural School.

Furthermore, VF does not see elements of individual and group identity as being of significance for citizenship. The citizen in this initiative is understood to be the possessor of a set of rights protected by law, and a set of duties to respect the law, irrespective of differences. While there is opposition to discrimination against particular groups or individuals, there is no attempt to address the exclusion of particular groups by providing differential treatment: attention is focused on allowing individuals to assume and exercise their full set of rights and duties along with all the others. In addition, and in contrast to the other two initiatives, citizenship is to a large extent seen as a future state, one attained once formal right to vote has been granted, and for which children must prepare themselves⁶.

Curricular programme

Voter of the Future, therefore, is characterized by an adherence to the structures and principles of liberal democracy, with an awareness of the current abuses and malfunctionings of the system, and proposing in their place upholding of the law and active, responsible

citizenship. Education is seen as a means for individuals to develop the necessary knowledge and moral qualities to participate effectively, and keep those in power accountable.

VF is different from the other two initiatives in that it is not a full curricular framework, instead consisting of particular activities run in schools at specific periods of the year. It therefore inserts itself into an existing school curriculum, without attempting to transform it.

Learning to be a Citizen (TSE 2003: 5) proposes that the programme should involve the following activities:

- Classes, lectures and seminars
- Visits to the legislative chambers, the judiciary and other organs of public administration
- Other participatory forms developed in the community: essay, poetry, music and drawing competitions; presentations of drama and dance; demonstrations, campaigns, mobilizations, treasure hunts, games and marches.

This analysis will assess the three types of activities outlined here, as well as a fourth, mock elections. The ‘classes, lectures and seminars’, referred to above, are to be delivered by schoolteachers, TRE officials or judges, and can address issues of ‘citizenship, rights, duties and the fundamental guarantees of the individual in society, using, for this, the Federal Constitution, the electoral code, electoral law and the Statute of the Child and Adolescent’ (TSE 2003). According to the Roraima state programme (TRE-RR 2004: 7): ‘The methodology will consist of interactive classes and/or lectures, with distribution of specific texts and utilization of audiovisual resources.’

In addition to lectures, *Learning to be a Citizen* outlines four possible workshops to be conducted with children in schools. The first recommends for teachers to:

Organize the children and adolescents in a circle and ask each to speak about the last experience of exercising citizenship he or she had, describing the space or environment in which the scene occurred. (TSE 2003: 17)

Students here develop their conceptions of citizenship by drawing on their own experience, but the teachers are later encouraged to ‘correct’ them in accordance with the legal definitions. The other three workshops follow a similar format, focusing on the following themes: citizen rights, election campaigns and voting.

However, the most prominent activity in the programme is the mock election. These elections are sometimes for school officials such as class representatives, but the programme literature (e.g. TRE-DF 2005; TSE 2003) recommends using mock political parties, based around forms of rights, namely: life and health; liberty, respect and dignity; sport and leisure; public security and combating violence; and education, vocational training and culture.

In the Federal District, the mock election is intended to take place as follows:

The pupils will organize themselves in parties and will defend their public policy through campaigns, within and outside the school, through drama, music, marches, among other things, in interdisciplinary work. At the end of the year, on a day to be confirmed, there will be an election of the parties of public policy, using the voting machines. On the day of election there will be a counting of the votes and the immediate announcement of the winning party. (TRE-DF 2005)

A few of the students also have the chance to develop their skills not only as voters but also as candidates, preparing and delivering a political campaign. In some cases there are parallel elections for the real candidates at municipal, state and federal levels.

Another important form of activity in the VF is the competition. Poetry, music and art competitions are intended to develop skills of general expression and communication. However, most common are essay writing competitions, on topics such as, ‘My future is the vote’, ‘The vote and your citizenship’, ‘I won’t sell my future’, and ‘I am citizenship’ (TRE-AM 2003: 9). Also important in the programme are visits to public institutions, the two most common destinations being the municipal legislative chamber (*Câmara dos Vereadores*) and the TRE itself. In some cases, the visit includes some form of debate.

The official curriculum of VF is clearly different to that of the MST or PS in that it contains very little reference to structures or relations in the institution, or to teaching methods, pedagogy or pedagogical relations in class. The absence of these elements from the official curricular programme does not, of course, mean that they are any less present or influential. The lack of explicit attention to them is likely to mean that the ‘conventional’ structures and relations of school will predominate. In terms of participation, the programme does not prioritize the involvement of the community, nor is there is mention of involving students in the construction of educational activities, although their opinions are seen to be valued in classroom activities.

Relating means and ends

Voter of the Future has a clear notion of its own aims and objectives, and states these explicitly. It also distinguishes these from the means of achieving them. However, there is no discussion of, or indication given as to the link between the two. Unlike the other two initiatives, VF does not require harmony between the underlying principles and the way the educational activities are carried out. It has a set of goals in terms of knowledge, skills and values to be developed in students, and establishes a set of educational activities to achieve them (separation of ends and means). The latter largely consist of simulations, whereby competences developed in the school can be later transferred to real-life situations (e.g. mock elections will enable students to vote effectively in later life).

As stated in Santos Dumont School programme (2005: 4), after the mock election, the students are supposed to be able:

To identify the best candidate to vote for, through his or her political proposals and his or her suitability for the job, using as a base the characteristics of the pupil representatives and teacher councillor.

It can be argued that there is a certain arbitrariness about the choice of educational activities in VF – that there simply is not a justifiable link between ends and means. There appears, for example, to be little justification for choosing essay competitions as a means of promoting citizenship, rather than, say, preparing a group presentation on the subject (apart from the

incentive to participation provided by the prize). On the other hand, it might be argued that there is a form of harmony in action. Since VF can be seen to have competition and competitiveness as key components of its political belief system (rather than the co-operativism of the MST) it therefore makes sense to have competitive educational activities. In the same way, the fragmented and individualist nature of its curricular programme can be seen to stem from its fragmented and individualist understanding of citizenship.

Towards a theory of the ends-means relationship in curriculum

These cases highlight two key aspects of the relationship between ideals and curricular programmes: firstly, the proximity of ends and means, and, secondly, the rationale for the choice of means. 'Proximity' here is used to signify the extent to which ends and means are unified or separate. Three basic forms can be observed:

Proximity -

- Separation
- Harmony
- Unification

Separation is the most common form in which means and ends relate to one another (and much discussion of means and ends assumes that they are always separate). In this form, aside from the necessary relationship of causality, there is no other required point of contact between the overarching ideals and the educational activities employed to achieve them. This form is seen in the VF programme, and to some extent in the MST. (It is important to note that a single curriculum can simultaneously display a number of forms of proximity and rationale). Examples of this form elsewhere can be seen in Davies (2006) in relation to the promotion of economic understanding in citizenship education, and Ryder (2002) in relation to citizenship and science.

With the harmony form, however, elements considered important in the ends are embodied in the means. As discussed above, this form is shown strongly in the PS and MST, whereby means conform to principles contained in the ends such as inclusion or co-operativism. Harmony is seen commonly in efforts to *democratize* schooling (e.g. Apple & Beane 1999;

Carleheden 2006; Gandin & Apple 2002; Kaplan 1997; McCowan 2006), whereby the school embodies or 'prefigures' the democratic society desired. It can also appear in a negative form, as seen in the *correspondence* of hierarchical oppression in schools and capitalist society of Bowles and Gintis (1976).

The MST is the only one of the three to show 'unification', through which citizenship is learned through the act of being a citizen itself. Here, the ends become means, in a cycle of continuing development. Unification can also manifest itself in another way, when the process of learning itself becomes the end, the experience of opening the mind being seen as an ideal state of being (this form is not observed in these three initiatives, but is common elsewhere, e.g. Dinkelman 2003). We can therefore distinguish between two forms of unification: 'ends-become-means' and 'means-become-ends'. It might be argued that the harmony forms above are also examples of unification, since participation in processes of deliberation in school, for example, is an actual exercising of citizenship, school being an arena of society. However, it is important to maintain some distinction between activities inside and outside educational institutions, since the latter are not just one of many social arenas, but are usually established for the purpose of preparing people for different forms of participation in the wider society.

In addition to proximity, the relationship involves some form of rationale or justification. In some cases this is a deliberate and conscious justification; in others, the means are chosen without a clear consciousness of their relationship to the ends, but nevertheless with an unconscious rationale. The following forms can be derived:

Rationale -

- Empirical evidence
- Authority/tradition
- Moral imperative
- Logical connection

'Empirical evidence' refers to instances in which the means are chosen on the basis of an observed link with achieving the ends. This might be based on personal experience: for example, teachers developing particular practices through their years of experience in the

classroom. Or it might be based on rigorous scientific research. While the former was present in both the MST and the PS, the latter form was rarely observed in the three initiatives. In contrast, some elements are adopted due to the weight of tradition or authority, with means adopted on the basis of continuity with past practices, or faith in a perceived source of wisdom, such as Paulo Freire. Here, the judgment of the teacher or curriculum designer is subordinated to that of the source of authority. In some cases, the distinction between empirical evidence and authority is not clear-cut. Academic research, itself consisting of empirical studies, is often accepted by others on the basis of the authority of the body or individuals conducting the research, not on the empirical evidence itself (as seen in the PS). Tradition can also exert an influence through what Walker (1971) calls the 'implicit design' of the curriculum, those elements about which conscious decisions are not made, and which therefore lead to a maintenance of existing forms. The continuance of 'conventional' subjects in the MST and PS can be attributed to this type of influence.

On the other hand, many of the activities of the MST and the Plural School are established on the basis of a moral imperative to conduct education in a 'democratic', 'co-operative' or 'inclusive' manner. This form of rationale must always work in the 'harmony' mode of proximity. With the moral imperative there is not necessarily any empirical evidence that the means will achieve the ends: they are seen to be the best because they follow the same principles. This raises an intriguing scenario: in the (admittedly unlikely) event of empirical proof that authoritarian schools were more successful than participatory ones in forming democratic citizens, from the moral imperative perspective they would still have to be rejected.

The choice of mock elections as an educational activity in VF is based neither on empirical evidence, authority nor moral imperative. It stems from a perceived connection of necessity between the practice of a skill and its acquisition. Since it is seen not to be logically possible for someone to be able to exercise a skill without having first practiced it, valued activities must be transferred from society into school. There is here an appearance of unification between ends and means, since the student is learning to do something while doing it, although in reality there is a separation of training and subsequent performance. Within this, there are different levels of simulation. In VF, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, students vote for the real candidates. This is very close to unification. In Amapá they vote for pupil representatives, using the same skills, but with different destination. This is a more distant

level of simulation. As seen above, this form is in fact recommended by Tyler (1949: 65) as one of his ‘general principles in selecting learning experiences’. It also corresponds to Sockett’s (1973) ‘logically necessary connection’.

The scheme of forms of rationale can be applied to all types of curriculum. In relation to a common categorization of curriculum design (e.g. Kelly 2004; Ross 2000), the ‘content’ approach might be seen to base itself on a rationale of tradition, the ‘product’ approach on empirical evidence, and the ‘process’ approach on moral imperative. All these forms of rationale are relevant primarily to the separation and harmony modes, since unification requires no rationale (it is justified by being identical to the end).

*

These reflections form the basis of a theory of the means-ends relationship in curriculum. The purpose of this framework is to elucidate the ways in which curricula relate to overarching aims in practice: it, therefore, has an analytical rather than prescriptive function. There is no attempt here to evaluate the efficacy or desirability of different forms of proximity and rationale. Such judgements would depend on complex epistemological and moral questions that cannot be fully addressed in this paper. In any event, it is important first to develop a clear understanding of the different forms, and map the relationships between them.

This is an initial, exploratory study, and the theoretical framework presented here must be developed by further empirical research and theoretical discussion. A number of other questions could be addressed. One of them is the location of *praxis* within the framework, being a dialectic of understanding and action, in which means are not decided beforehand, but are developed during the process of implementation. The discussion above tends to assume a monodirectional movement from ends to means, but in reality the former can also be modified in light of the latter, as argued by Dewey (1916) and more recently by Dwight and Garrison (2003) and Suissa (2006). Further analysis also needs to be made of the relationship between elements of proximity and those of rationale, the position of knowledge, skills and values in the framework, and the significance of aims being conscious and explicit or not. Further forms of rationale – such as ‘intuition’ – may also be proposed.

Understanding the complex relationship between ideals and curricular programmes guards us from two pitfalls in approaches to curriculum. The first of these involves a denial or lack of awareness of the existence of ends and means in education, through a belief either that the establishment of clear aims is sufficient in itself, or that practice can be engaged in without thought for ends. In the second, attention is paid to both ends and means, but a simplistic notion of the derivation of the latter from the former is assumed, usually a purely empirical link from scientific research, or one of logical necessity. The conceptual tools of ‘proximity’ and ‘rationale’ can go some way towards elucidating the multi-faceted nature of this relationship, thereby contributing to our understanding of the often tenuous link between educational intentions and results, and providing greater clarity in the construction of educational programmes.

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¹Notes

Primary (or *fundamental*) schools in Brazil have eight grades, corresponding officially to the 7-14 age group.

² This study will only assess MST primary schools, and not other forms such as secondary, technical higher, adult and non-formal education.

³ Pseudonyms have been used for institutions and participants.

⁴ Quotations from documents and interviews have been translated from the original Portuguese by the author.

⁵ This phrase is not here used in the mixed-economy, welfare state sense of ‘social democratic’, but of democracy in a social setting.

⁶ The publication *Learning to be a Citizen* does show alternative orientations, emphasising the rights of children as well: this is likely to be due to UNICEF influence.

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