



## **SPECIAL FEATURE**

### **CRITICAL THINKING & HIGHER EDUCATION**

#### **A Critical Approach to Global Citizenship in Initial Teacher Training in the UK**

Antony Stockford, Independent Researcher

James Shea, School of Teacher Education, University of Bedfordshire

Contact: [avs.services@btinternet.com](mailto:avs.services@btinternet.com)

This paper compares the evidence and robustness of a critical approach to global citizenship in the English Initial Teacher Training (ITT) sector of school-based training with that of Higher Education-based training. In recent years there has been a shift in market from mainly Higher Education provision to equal allocation of provision between school-based and Higher Education-based providers. It is core to the arguments in this paper that the impact to ITT provided via a Higher Education Institution (HEI) is likely, by virtue of their global recruitment of students, to take a critical approach to global citizenship to ensure that their international reputations are not only maintained, but enhanced. It is also likely that this will reflect in the content of the university-based courses. Additional to this is that the HEI ITT awards are made at Masters level, which school-based training is unable to offer. The paper examines the contrasts between the local paradigm for school-based training and the national and international paradigm of the HEI route. The comparison will further identify underlying issues of the pathways, which may impact on preconceptions of students entering Higher Education in particular and as such assist in informing policy approaches to developing a critical approach to global citizenship both by HEIs and of students.

To facilitate understanding of this paper for those not delivering ITT, some context and background to the education system and ITT in England and Wales, in particular, will help underpin our discussion. The reason for the focus being on England and Wales rather than the UK as a whole is that the legislation and guidance referred to applies primarily to England and Wales because Scotland adopts a different system of Initial Teacher Training. However, the principles apply across all the education systems in the UK due to the fact that some issues, particularly contemporary issues, are relevant to all UK school children.

In the UK, schools and teaching in schools have changed significantly since the beginning of the 21st century. These changes are the result of frequent legislative changes by successive governments aimed at reshaping education from a centrally controlled public service to a market based service. The current framework for education was introduced by the 1997 Labour government via a raft of acts during their time in office from 1997-2010 and their white paper 'Excellence in Schools' (Gillard, 2011). Initial Teacher Training was regulated by the Teaching and Higher Education Act of 1998 (see References), which in particular created the General Teaching Council for England (GTC) whose role was (a) to contribute to improving the standards of teaching and the quality of learning, and (b) to maintain and improve of standards of professional conduct amongst teachers.

This body was closed by the coalition government in 2009 who saw it as an ineffective means by which to establish standards of teaching. This act was coupled with the establishment of new Teachers' Standards (2011), the cessation of 'National Strategies' (2011) and the creation of a new National Curriculum (2014), as the educational secretary at the time, Michael Gove, attempted to create a more market based provision, arguing that each school needed to be an island catering to its own needs and competing with its nearest competitors. Although it seems incongruous to free up teachers and schools on one hand and to compel them with Teachers' Standards and a new National Curriculum on the other,

it was the concept of citizenship which was the driving force. British imperialism would be re-instigated through the English and history national curricula. British values would be embedded into the Teachers' Standards, 'not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs' (2011, DoFE). The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OfSTED) would be charged with ensuring a wider curriculum was available and taught at all schools. This was loosely seen as a euphemism for ensuring schools offered wider teaching of culture and did not restrict their pupils to limited perspectives of citizenship derived from religious or cultural beliefs. A circular from the Department of Education in 2014 offered non-statutory advice to schools on further promoting British values in response to concerns that some individuals were coercing schools into restricting the rights and education of their pupils – the so called 'Trojan Horse' affair. While schools and teachers would be able to innovate and change the way they taught, at the same time that innovation was limited to try to ensure it did not lead to narrow concepts of citizenship. However, as we shall point out, these safeguards have not been embedded firmly enough into a fragmented ITT service, leading to a variable delivery of citizenship in ITT depending on whether the service provider is HEI based or not (such as SCITT, Teach First and QTS only courses). Much of this change in classroom practice is reflected in pedagogical development as well as advances in technology. This is reflected in the programmes delivered in Higher Education where Initial Teacher Training is offered.

Following the election of a coalition government in 2010, the model for Initial Teacher Training hitherto based in HEIs was devolved to offer ITT and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) directly via a training school (School Direct [SD]), a consortium of schools (school-centred initial teacher training [SCITT]) or in partnership with an HE offering a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (TES, 2010). Understanding these models, the background and context will inform the conclusions for 'a critical Approach to Global Citizenship within Initial Teacher Education' in England and Wales specifically and the UK generally. To investigate this matter we will consider the following:

- The government context
- The societal mix in England and Wales
- Initial Teacher Training in England and Wales
- The school environment
- Classroom practice.

### **The Government Context**

From 1997 – 2010, the UK government pursued a multicultural citizenship policy. This meant that schools, in particular, were required to take account of these in the delivery of the softer elements of the education system, in particular personal and social health education (PSHE) and religious education. In more recent years, driven by repeated 'moral panic' stories in national tabloid media, there was an almost Orwellian atmosphere pervading education that resulted in the rise of a backlash to political correctness. Many commentators in the media led with stories and personal interest articles from citizens who felt their historical, cultural and religious tenets were being marginalized - a perspective enshrined by the rise of a political party known as the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) who are ideologically driven to repeal partnerships with other countries and groups of countries such as the European Union.

Teaching citizenship in such a bipartisan environment became exceptionally challenging and, in addition, many in-service teachers and beginning teachers did not have the structured knowledge or support to deliver citizenship within such an environment. This, in turn, has impacted on classroom and playground behaviours, which resulted in arbitrary judgements and labelling even very young and innocent children with adult behaviours tags. Distinctions between racism and partisan attitudes became so nuanced that it was beyond some teachers, let alone school age children, to distinguish between the two.

It is important at this point to recognise the separation of the global village with that of government policy in terms of multi-culturalism, which will be discussed as part of an approach to Initial Teacher Training in the UK. A key tenet of this paper is not the replacing or subsuming of one cultural approach with another culture; after all, the predominant culture is likely to be the indigenous culture which is likely to provide the core or normal values against which 'belonging' is likely to be measured. The approach will be to address the means in which Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England does or does not adopt a critical approach to global citizenship in classroom practice. The fundamental matter is being sympathetic to other cultures, but not necessarily to replace one's own. For example, here in the UK, teachers frequently use 'thumbs up' in the classroom to get feedback about levels of understanding. In Iran that gesture is perceived as vulgar. So does multiculturalism mean that something that we have used for many years should now be discontinued as deemed racist?

### **The Societal Mix in England Wales and Northern Ireland**

The population profile of the UK evolved significantly between 2000 and 2015. Half of all foreign born residents in 2011 stated that their year of arrival was during the period 2001-2011; these countries of birth were different from those of earlier migration groups. Many of the most recent arrivals may be students and temporary workers who will subsequently return to their country of birth (ONS, 2013: 18). A significant factor in schools in England is that of cultural demographics, which, allied to government policy from 1997, has made for turbulent times for teachers in the classroom, driven frequently by the learners' domestic situations resulting in a clash of cultures often seemingly taking antagonistic stances. This has inevitably created tensions in and around the classroom, the impact of which we will seek to explore in our discussion. However, it is important not to confuse language proficiency and culture; among recent arrivals (2007-2011), 84% were proficient in English, compared to 93% of those who had been resident for more than 30 years (ONS, 2014). It is also particularly noticeable that ethnic distribution is not uniform across England and Wales, in fact there are local areas where the ethnic population comprises a significant proportion of the total population, which may have cultural implications. Examples are Newham in East London, where 16.7% is White British; or Leicester, where Indian ethnic groups make up 28.3% of the total population. Conversely there are areas such as Allerdale in Cumbria where White British accounts for 97.6% of the population and Redcar in Yorkshire where <1% of the population is identified as ethnic non-white (ONS, 2012: 9).

These statistics serve to indicate that the identified population in England and Wales is variable in geographic distribution and ethnic mix. The UK Department of Education publication 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' (DfE, 2014) indicates that in state-funded primary schools, 29.5% of pupils are from minority ethnic origins; in state-funded secondary schools, 25.3% of pupils are from minority ethnic origins. This has increased from 28.5 and 24.2% respectively since January 2013 (DfE, 2014: 2). As a result, ITT programmes in England and Wales should take account of this. While many Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) tend to gain their first post within the Training Partnership local area, unlike many countries, an NQT is not limited or directed in terms of the geographic location for their first teaching post, and having completed their NQT year, NQTs are free to move to any location that recognises the teaching qualification that they have achieved - to enter the so called market of school provision.

### **Initial Teacher Training in England and Wales**

Initial teacher training routes in England and Wales are: Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE); School Direct (SD); Teach First and School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT). They are all school-based routes resulting in qualified teacher Status (QTS: a requirement for teaching in state-maintained schools) and require a minimum of 120 days placed in a school, according to the phase that they are planning to teach. The qualification options are an Honours Degree course with QTS or a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). In the Secondary Education Sector, teachers are required to have a first degree in the subject that they wish to teach. The honours degree route is for people wishing to teach in the Primary sector as there is no subject specialism here although their subject preferences should be supported by their post-16 level 3 qualifications. Level 3 is more widely recognised as General Certificate in Education (GCE) or 'A' levels. However, a route into teaching in the primary sector is available via a

PGCE qualification. The PGCE is a university-awarded qualification and SD, Teacher First and SCITTs must partner with a university that offers the PGCE qualification. The schools-centred routes may offer a QTS only option with the requirement that they have an appropriate Honours degree. Once again, a market is established in which multiple providers offer a range of qualifications (all have to offer QTS) and different staffing and locations of training from twilight school-based training by practicing school teachers to university-based Masters level instruction by university lecturers.

The Initial training of teachers is inspected by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted). A principle focus of the inspection is to find 'evidence of how the ITE partnership meets the statutory initial teacher training criteria or the Early Years ITT requirements, and all relevant legislation, including that related to promoting equality and diversity, eliminating discrimination, and safeguarding' (Ofsted 2014: 11).

There are two issues being referred to by Ofsted. The first is that recruitment for ITT should reflect the diversity of ethnic grouping in England and Wales. This is identified as British and Ethnic Minorities (BEM). The second is that the training provided by any PGCE programme, in particular, should equip NQTs to engage all learners of whatever cultural, family and ethnic background. NQTs in England and Wales are not directed to or required to teach in any particular geographic area or school profile, although the government offers incentives to encourage them to do so. These incentives may focus on inner city schools, schools that have an ethnic majority mix of pupils, or even a school identified as requiring classroom behaviour management foci.

Because the PGCE can be a level 7 qualification, this means that the teaching and the assessment of the assignments submitted by trainee teachers in the university is undertaken at Masters level. This of course places the focus on developing critical skills, particularly those of critical reflection. These skills are developed by understanding learners, by recognising the impact of culture, and by adapting pedagogical strategies that engage them. The trainees are also introduced to critical research practice, which often motivates trainees to study further and complete a Masters in Education.

The University of Bedfordshire (UoB) is well known for its ethnic mix of national and international students across all courses, from undergraduate to PhD. The trainee teachers on the PGCE Primary and Secondary programmes in the University's Department of Teacher Education also fully reflect the ethnic diversity that is demonstrated across other departments of the university. For teacher education, a critical approach is fundamental to the training offered to the PGCE students, as the 'client base' is the trainees on the PGCE programme, the partnership schools offering placements and the pupils in those schools. Along with high recruiting standards, this has placed the university as one of the top ITEs in the country with in excess of 95% of all graduates of the programme securing a teaching post before their course has finished. This suggests that they are very well prepared for teaching pupils of all ethnic, gender and ability mixes.

Their PGCE course is constructed with three pathways, which are The Professional Teacher, teaching the subject specialism, and the school experience. Each pathway feeds and informs the others, thus fully integrating them to ensure that the trainees do not exceed the threshold standards required by the teaching standards administered by the National College of Teaching and Learning (NCTL) for the Department for Education (DfE, 2015). The teacher standards are comprised of two parts. Part One covers eight standards relating to teaching and teaching practice and Part Two covers Personal and Professional Conduct. Training teachers must pass all of Part One and all of Part Two to be considered for the granting of QTS.

Part One has, as its focus, teaching and learning in the classroom and as such is core to inculcating a critical approach to global citizenship for initial teacher training. It is key to appreciate that elements of the training are not 'ticked off' as done and dusted. All elements are continually revisited in a variety of

contexts and circumstances such that a critical understanding and appreciation is developed as a core attribute for a practicing teacher.

Evidence of a 'critical approach' to global citizenship in the ITT programmes at the University of Bedfordshire may be shown by the focus of the taught units, which are linked to provide a critical and integrated approach.

The core vehicle for providing the platform of an embedded approach is the Reflective Teacher unit within the PGCE programme. This is undertaken at Masters level and hence requires both a critical approach and outcome for the assignment. The focus here is ethnic groups, minorities, cross cultural awareness; and the interpretations, expectations and implications for teachers and learners. The syllabus content for this unit has a focus on the 1, 2, 5, 8 in Part One of the Teacher Standards and Part Two of the teacher standards. This is further supported by the Professional Teacher unit, which focusses on the government's Teachers' Standards required for a trainee teacher to be awarded QTS, particularly Part Two of the standards, which focus on Personal and Professional Conduct. The ITT inspection framework (Ofsted, 2014) requires that trainees are recruited from and are trained to teach a broad range of communities, and the features of the training reflect this. In addition, these trainees are expected to experience a contrasting range of school placements with an extra emphasis on schools facing challenging circumstances.

For example, trainees are taught knowing when they should or should not look directly into the eyes of pupils, particularly when 'taking them to task'. Peterson (2004) suggests that reasons for this are that Western cultures see eye to eye contact as positive; Arabic cultures believe that prolonged eye contact shows interest and helps them understand the truthfulness of the other person. On the other hand, Peterson suggests that in Japan, Africa, Latin American and the Caribbean countries, you should avoid eye contact to show respect. This cultural difference may well be connected with the value assigned to respect and honesty. Respect is highly valued in non-Western cultures, but seems to be less so in Western cultures. This was developed further by Delfos & Attwood (2004). They developed the intercultural theme to help illustrate working with people with Asperger's, and indicated that for Moroccan children it is a sign of a lack of respect if a child looks into an adult's eyes during a conversation. Bearing in mind the extreme increase in migrant movement, children brought up in this culture may be judged as being 'confrontational' in an English classroom if they adopt this approach.

The UoB's PGCE programmes focus on a range of communication strategies adopting a dialogic paradigm, which challenges those teachers and learners who are brought up with a didactic model of the teacher as the knowledgeable other. Drawing on the dialogic nature of language, authors have stressed the educative potential of teacher-pupil interaction that enables students to play an active part in shaping the agenda of classroom discourse (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984; Voloshinov, 1986). There are didactic strategies (Van der Stoep & Louw, 2005) that enable 'personalization' and may offer a familiar model for cultures where a high level of interaction between teacher and learner is not the norm. Again, this is not a dominant culture model in England and Wales, and the pedagogic paradigms will tend to use Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1967) and Kolb (1975), who take a constructivist approach.

It is key that teachers are trained in the use of a range of pedagogic methodologies and are able to critically adopt and implement these according to the learners, the learning environment and the subject matter being delivered. This then exemplifies a core approach which underpins the PGCE Initial Teacher Training at UoB. Another core approach is that of communication. Again, the process of communication can vary significantly according to culture. This was explored by Desmond Morris in his book *The Human Animal* (Morris, 1994). There is recognition that communication is verbal and non-verbal, and Homans (1961) likens communication in small groups (a class) to a social transaction '*in which the reward each gets from the behaviour of the others is relatively direct and immediate*' (Homans, 1961: 7). Hence the cultural perceptions and expectations of the parties to the transaction (the teacher and the class) will impact on the learning that takes place (or not, as the case may be).

### The School environment

There is currently (2016) no coherent national integration policy for immigrants and migrants entering the education system. The current government guidance is via the Home Office rules (Home Office, 2015) which addresses the aspect of entry to the UK and does not address entry into education. Spencer (2011) writes:

While local authorities are closest to many of the issues raised by the presence of migrants within their communities they do not control some of the levers that affect integration outcomes. It is central government that determines the extent of migrants' rights to participate; has the capacity to inform national media and public debates; funds most English language tuition; can incentivise civil society leaders to contribute to this agenda and ensure, for instance, that local authorities have an evidence base to inform their interventions is developed on a local perceived political and demographic needs. (Spencer, 2011: 6)

An example of this is the County of Lincolnshire, which has, by virtue of its agricultural focused industries, long experience with migrant workers and families who provide education-focused information for migrants and immigrant. The actual implementation of the child into the maintained education systems is devolved to the schools (Lincolnshire County Council, 2015).

Limited guidance is provided although The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) does attempt to offer some guidance with their leaflet 'School Level Policies for Migrant Education - Pointers for policy development' (OECD, 2010). Work that one of the authors has carried out for the Chartered Institute for Educational Assessment (CIEA) does not suggest that schools have developed policies focussing on migrants and immigrants entering their schools.

Schools are required to provide a high-quality provision that meets diverse needs and fosters equal opportunities, and this is inspected by Ofsted under the framework for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The principles of the inspection focus on pupils' and parents' needs by

- taking account of pupils' and parents' views in the planning and conduct of inspection
- drawing on pupils' and parents' views to inform inspectors' judgements and the outcomes of inspection
- minimising risk to children, young people and adults by evaluating the effectiveness of schools' procedures for safeguarding
- evaluating the extent to which schools provide an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation (Ofsted, 2012: 14)

For the most part, schools are focussed on their pupil catchment area and then on how they comply with government policy and the demands of the Ofsted inspection framework. School funding is allocated against a range of criteria covering such things as the number of pupils on roll, pupil allocations, examination results, pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and gifted & talented pupils. This tends to mean that schools focus on the operational aspects of a school year framework rather than extending beyond that. Certainly, the Ofsted framework provides a national benchmark, but it is a measure rather than a process, and this does not, apart from possibly a school development plan, result in critical practice across a school. In addition, schools are operating in a market and thus rather than sharing resources or creating regional plans in cohesion with local authorities who fund and run other social provision and services, they are expected to each produce a separate plan of action. This means some schools have an excellent plan demonstrating best practice whereas some schools have no need to produce any plans. However, both



types of schools will be responsible for training teachers and without additional instruction from their HEI partner such teachers can be left bereft of good practice and instruction.

### Classroom practice

What actually happens in the classroom? The majority of Initial Teacher Training practice takes place in the classroom and inevitably the exposure here will impact on the degree to which a critical approach is developed by the training teacher. Again, such an approach will be influenced by the cultural demographics and mix in the classroom, the school catchment area and any specific local government policy and guidance. To understand the level of influence that the school-based pathway might have on developing a critical approach and how that may modify trainee teachers developing a critical approach to global citizenship, some explanation of the range of the pathways is necessary.

The Teach First (a charity) and SCITT initial teacher training pathways were devised and promoted by the Coalition Government of 2010-2015. The rationale was that new teachers are best taught by practicing teachers. Industrially, this is known as *Sitting next to Nellie*, which refers to an on-the-job training model. This pathway offers QTS and employment at the end of the course. However, being purely an employment-based route, there is no academic qualification. The training programme offered by any school participating in this pathway must address the Teaching Standards as it is the achievement of these standards that results in the granting of QTS. The school-based pathways depend heavily on mentors in the placement schools for supporting and guiding the trainee, although there may be training available, not all mentors or schools take it up.

Schools are quality controlled by the SCITT that they belong to; Teach First participating schools by the Teach First organisation and School Direct by their partner university although the focus is on compliance with the teacher Standards and not wider issues directly.

As a consequence this is a practice-based pathway, and the breadth and depth of the trainee experience will depend upon the school, its ethos and the staff of the school in which they are training. Schools are graded following an Ofsted inspection, which provides an overall snapshot of the school. If following the inspection they are graded as 'outstanding' or 'good', then the school may only be inspected with a 'light touch' inspection every 2 or 3 years. This means that the inspection only samples practice in the school and does not mean that the all of the teaching practice is of the same level.

The School Direct pathway, whilst also an 'on the job' model, is partnered with an ITT university and the trainee participates in that university's PGCE qualification programme. This means that they attend the same academic sessions as the university registered trainees. Some of the SCITTs also offer this as an option but the main pathway matches that of Teach First.

Returning to classroom practice in a school and the contribution to ensuring a critical approach to global citizenship, depends upon a range of aspects. These include the geographic location and demographic mix for the school catchment area. It further relies on the school policy and most crucially, the knowledge and competency level of staff within the school in terms of global citizenship and whether they are able to deliver this as part of their initial teacher training programme.

The experience of other schools or institutions will inevitably contribute to this as awareness is often informed by experience. Hence if a mentor, for example, within the school has taught at a school with a significantly diverse ethnic pupil population then there is a strong likelihood that that experience will be shared with the trainee as part of the programme. If on the other hand, the mentor has only ever taught in that particular school or a school where there was little diversity, then it is very possible that global citizenship issues are not particularly identified.

Not infrequently, cultural issues in a school are subject- rather than environment-driven and addressed via aspects of Geography, History and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). The National

Curriculum for England and Wales (DfE, 2013) requires schools to make provision for teaching PSHE although the content is not proscribed., which means that global citizenship may not be included.

### **Is there a critical approach to citizenship in Initial Teacher Training in the UK?**

A 'critical approach to citizenship in Initial Teacher Training' is rather 'like the curate's egg; good in parts' (Du Maurier, 1895). Universities are, by their very nature, institutions that examine research and teach with a global perspective. Universities again take a critical approach to their research and teaching, with a key outcome being that their graduates have developed critical thinking skills. Initial teacher training undertaken in a university PGCE programme will hence always have to take a critical approach and further; the Ofsted inspection framework focuses on ethnic mix and diversity both in terms of students and their teaching practice. HEI PGCE programmes draw on and visit a wide range of school placements enabling students to share good strategies and place them within a critical understanding of global citizenship.

A school environment is often inward looking as the school focus is local in nature drive by the immediate needs of that environment - resources will be deployed on a localised needs basis. Certainly if the school is located in an area of ethnic diversity or ethnic mobility, then it is reasonable to expect that there is an understanding of global citizenship, which is likely to be reflected in school policy. That the understanding is critically driven is not necessarily the case. This is because the school-based ITT pathway must immediately raise questions of robustness and critical practice. It is a locally focussed pathway which as it is centred on a school which is required to offer the trainee a post at the end of the programme. What mechanisms are there to assess and moderate whether a critical and global approach is taken? What part does variation of ethnic demographics play in the experience?

Whilst much of the teaching in schools models Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, it tends to use the model of the pupil as the knowledgeable other in peer support. This is of course valid in the subject context, however unless the school has a significantly diverse and multi-ethnic population, a critical approach, sublimated or otherwise, is unlikely to be inculcated in the communicative interaction. This then would rely on the teacher providing that input and again, unless the teacher has an essentially analytical, diagnostic and inclusive approach to their pupil cultures and their environment, then a critical approach to citizenship is unlikely to be in evidence. Indeed when inspected by Ofsted the inspectors will evaluate the cultural development of the pupils which requires 'evidence of understanding and appreciation' (Ofsted, 2015): 36); 'interest in exploring and understanding' (Ofsted, 2015: 37) which demonstrates a very superficial expectation by the inspection of schools.

To conclude, it is reasonable to suggest that the University ITT route provides the most consistent critical approach to global citizenship, as wholly school-based ITT which offers only a QTS outcome are entirely dependent on the experience and expertise of the staff within the schools and the localised needs of those particular schools.

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