Education in a global space: the framing of 'education for citizenship'

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Introduction

Over the past decade, in many Western industrialised countries, there have been increasing calls for educational provision to develop a more global orientation. It is said that global citizenship education will equip children and young people with the knowledge, skills and dispositions that will make them more aware of, and more engaged with, global issues and phenomena. This surge of interest in global issues is driven in part by policy initiatives from the education departments of UK countries, the UK Department for International Development (DfID) and many non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and there are similar developments in other countries around the world. Nevertheless, the roots of such policies also lie in global discourses and the publications and pronouncements of transnational organisations such as the OECD. Thus, while differences exist within the various educational jurisdictions, including amongst those that comprise the UK, we suggest that the reach of this global curricular trend has been largely homogeneous within the UK and elsewhere, with strong alliances between policy makers, politicians, independent educational centres and NGOs (for example, Oxfam). Scotland is typical of such trends.

All of the above raises the issue of how we define global citizenship, which has become a fuzzy catch-all phrase, often ill-defined and poorly conceptualised. Attempts to more clearly define global citizenship invariably pose some important questions. The first of these is 'what is global about global citizenship?' Such policy seeks to bring together different traditions, which have quite different lineages: environmental and development education, and human rights and citizenship education. In this article we explore this process of convergence, and in doing so explore both the global origins and the global implications of such discourses. A second question concerns the relationship between global citizenship and citizenship per se. Here we might also ask what kind of notion of citizenship is assumed in or promoted by the idea of global citizenship? In addressing these latter questions, the article analyses a number of key dimensions of citizenship. These include the tensions between social and political conceptions of citizenship, and the relationship between citizenship as competence and social practice, as educational outcome or as social process.

Converging lineages: the roots of global citizenship

The insertion of 'education for global citizenship' (EGC) into mainstream national curricula is both interesting and problematic, because it brings together lineages of at least three sub-fields of education, namely, environmental education (EE), development education (DE) and citizenship education (CE). These educational traditions are widely differentiated, though each has a strong common critical or transformative function. Space here does not permit a full exploration. Instead our

focus is to suggest that EGC is functioning as a point of convergence or a nodal point within official educational policy discourse. As a nodal point, EGC serves as a place of arrival of several strands of thinking which hitherto have struggled for mainstream formal curricular space, often being driven from outside formal education with support from NGOs and various forms of activism. Within this node, EGC on the one hand appears to allow diverse meanings to converge while subordinating some aspects of the constituent traditions. At the same time it is also creating distinctive new agendas or points of departure.

Lineage 1 – Environmental Education:

'Nature study … fieldwork … conservation education … environmental education … global education (1980s version)… education for sustainable development (ESD) / education for sustainability (EfS)… global citizenship education? '

Palmer (1998) chronicles the shifts in environmental education (EE) from nature study, through fieldwork, urban studies, conservation education and into the period in the 1980s, when environmental education sought stronger links with development education in order to take cognizance of the political dimensions of environmental issues. Gough (2002) lists a number of key education texts from the 1980s growing out of the EE field that encouraged pedagogies based on 'thinking globally, acting locally' – knowing and caring about the global dimensions and significance of environmental problems and issues. After the 1992 Rio Summit, the action report, Agenda 21, called upon education to work towards sustainability by acknowledging the interlinked nature of economic, social and environmental issues. This, it was envisaged, would be best achieved by encouraging community participation, partnership working among agencies, systems thinking, and so on.

Reid (2002) suggests that education for sustainability might be regarded as the `offspring' of environmental education and development education, although Sauve (2005) recognizes at least 15 trends in EE, representing a very large diversity of models, of which ESD is but one. Sauve and Berryman (2005) have 'witnessed a rising tide of almost purely instrumental views' within EE as it became more globalized post-Agenda 21. EE is a highly attractive concept that is likely to appeal to even opposed interest groups (Bonnett, 2002; Stables & Scott, 2002) with attendant dangers, for example the potential for taken-for-granted assumptions that development implies a Western [neo-liberal] economic view. Stables and Scott (ibid.) caution that efforts to pin down sustainable development are challenging (with already slippery terms 'sustainable' and 'development' being coupled in this way).

Within EE, terms such as 'global' and the 'eco-citizen' have already been used in an effort to bring greater coalescence between DE and EE sometimes under EfS and ESD umbrellas. Gough and Scott (2006) provide examples of what they term a technocratic approach to solving the human-environment 'problematic' through an emphasis on the 'environmentally-responsible citizen'. Critics suggest that some calls for EE to widen its scope and enter a new paradigm in the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development are more like efforts to 'close a circle' (Sauve & Berryman, 2005). This potentially means the loss of the diverse approaches that characterized the tradition in its earlier radical form, through a desire for consensus around pre-ordained aims and technocratically measurable

progress through quantifiable indicators. All of this 'essentially presents education as an instrument for the conservation of the environment, which is reduced to the status of resource for economic development, itself seen as an essential precondition and goal for social development' (ibid., 2005, p. 230). However, some socially critical approaches within the sub-field of EE are ready to accept a form of 'education for global citizenship' as a goal (Huckle, 1999), and pressure is mounting in policy circles to embed it in initial teacher education and schools' curricula internationally. Thus for EE, the arrival of EGC may on the one hand be yet another attempt to 'close the circle', or potentially, an attempt to use the construct of sustainability more strongly to 'extend citizens rights and responsibilities across time space and generations and species' (ibid., p. 39).

Lineage 2 – Development Education
'Third-world pedagogy … development education … global education … global citizenship education?'

Scheunpflug and Asbrand (2006) trace how 'Third World pedagogy', 'development education' and, more recently, 'global education' have a clear historical lineage, with one approach leading on to the next. They assert that global education (GE):

'has established itself as an educational field which provides a 'pedagogical reaction to the developmental state of world society' working within the normative premise of overcoming inequality by being orientated towards a model of global justice … the aim of global education is to support the learners' development in terms of acquiring adequate competencies for life in a world society, preparing for an uncertain future and acquiring competencies to deal with complexity and uncertainty. (p. 35)'

As we have seen with EE (above), DE educators and theorists have also expressed their unease with 'sustainability' and worried over the possibility that social justice in third world countries might be diminished by an overly environmental focus. Scheunpflug and Asbrand (2006) suggest EfS needs the perspective of global education to bring worldwide issues of justice alongside the concerns of environmental education, and because sustainable environmental protection needs to take on board that we live in a complex globalised world. Despite these commonalities, the two fields (DE and EE) have maintained fairly distinct fields of practice, though some advance the view that EGC may be a nexus for their convergence.

As the DE field has become more professionalised and government-funded in the UK, it has become more obviously global. Indeed, 'global education' has virtually superseded DE as a term. In contrast, Hicks (2003) suggests a more nuanced nomenclature, with 'global education', 'global dimension' and 'global citizenship' working as a triad of constructs for all forms of the DE tradition. O'Loughlin and Wegimont (2007) suggest that global and development education, and awareness-raising on development issues has recently 'come in from the cold' because there is now a recognition that a global development agenda requires an informed and educated public in the developed world. This trend, supported by transnational initiatives such as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, for example, inspires Scotland to hope that 'by 2014 people in

Scotland will have developed the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to live more sustainable lives' (Scottish Executive, 2006). Within this frame, DE (now 'global education') may be one small step away from accepting EGC as a keynote idea, affording more legitimacy to the field and greater policy leverage. But this approach may render DE less political, a view supported by Marshall (2005) who found NGO-based global education activists both welcomed the opportunities to come in from the margins and link with the higher-status citizenship education, and also worried that it might ghettoise DE and/or lead to a loss of its critical edge. A more reformist and activist notion is offered by Oxfam (1997), who see the global citizen as someone (among other things) who is 'outraged by social injustice' and 'is willing to act in order to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place'. The latter emphasis on the affective and political response to issues and events is reminiscent of more traditional NGO-led 'global education'.

Lineage 3 – Citizenship Education
'Civic education (modern studies)… citizenship education … education for citizenship … international education (and perhaps entrepreneurial education)… global citizenship education?'

Citizenship education rose to the surface of educational policy debates in England with the Crick Report (Advisory Group on Citizenship,1988) and various curricular reforms in the UK more widely. Citizenship has become strongly coupled with 'global' by those who wish to harness it as a response to globalisation and for those who wish to give education for citizenship (in Scotland, where it is not a 'subject') or 'citizenship education' (in England, where it is a subject area) contemporary relevance. Davies et al. (2005) explore the differences between citizenship and global education. They suggest that such a coming together is timely with the demise of the welfare state and current perspectives on globalisation. According to such thinking, EGC would allow us to look beyond old barriers that have separated citizenship education and global education.

Within the field, different theories of citizenship (liberal, republican, cosmopolitan) provide starting points for ways of working towards justice, democracy and sustainability (see Huckle, 2008). Huckle argues for environmental and ecological citizenship. For the latter, because citizens' actions in the private as well as public sphere (through consumption for example) are seen to affect other people in far-flung places, we therefore have non-contractual, non-reciprocal and unilateral duties to others. By this view, new forms of EGC would require the individual citizen to see the private sphere as political.

This approach entails some risks. Firstly, the approach rests on the view that it is possible for individuals, through education, to come to 'reasonable agreement' or understanding about what needs to happen and who needs to do it, if they are to fairly respond in their context by, say, reducing their carbon footprint. Secondly, the risk is that ecological citizenship focuses more on the private sphere where folk are expected to privately and voluntarily 'do the right thing', while larger structures and processes potentially continue with 'business as usual'. Lastly, even if teachers were ready to take on a values-laden approach to citizenship, coming to understand what is 'the right thing' with students may be especially problematic when we need to juxtapose all competing perspectives. On the

ground, Evans et al. (2009, p. 29) comment that within citizenship education and EGC, notions of social justice are less evident in teaching and learning practices related to beliefs and values. They also recognize, while offering a more comprehensive framing themselves, that EGC is often seen as a means to build 'a competitive workforce and contribute to the economic growth of the nation' [by] 'preparing students with the knowledge, skills and competencies required to compete in the global economy' (p. 23).

Lineages converge

The construct of lineage outlined above shows how each educational sub-field has made a curricular turn towards the global. This is captured best perhaps by the rhetorical policy slogan of 'education for global citizenship' as the current nodal point where the various discourses converge. We suggest that there is clear evidence in these three lineages of such a convergence in practice, but particularly in official educational policy circles. Rhetorically, the official turn seeks to bring three educational traditions together under one umbrella, using constructs such as the global dimension and education for global citizenship. As noted, as each of the three traditions potentially arrives and accepts or resists EGC, there are concerns, losses and new points of departure.

Foremost amongst these is a potential for ECG to be used to tacitly advance particularly western perspectives over other cultures' views. In supporting the view of globalisation as an already arrived entity and attempting to educate graduates and pupils to participate in the global market economy, it could be argued that the official take on the curricular global turn is, in fact, a localised feature of modern Western countries that perhaps seeks to transcend and occlude other alternative, local ('non-global' or anti-globalisation) perspectives. Jickling and Wals (2008) have earlier worried over a similar educational initiative (education for sustainable development), seeing its expression as part and parcel of 'the powerful wave of neo-liberalism rolling over the planet, with pleas for 'market solutions' to educational problems and universal quality-assurance schemes, [which] are homogenizing the educational landscape' (p. 2). While EGC may be offering a sincere and well-intentioned set of purposes for education, we need to look closer and more critically to see if it is functioning as an ideological concept that travels well, but is working (sometimes inadvertently, but sometimes deliberately) as a tool of Western modern imperialism; to homogenize and prescribe goals, thereby reducing 'the conceptual space for self-determination, autonomy, and alternative ways of thinking' (p. 4). Buying into this homogenization could mean that 'many educators have become agents in a trend towards economic globalization' (p. 6). The curricular turn towards the global may be offering a particularly western perspective on the world. It is interesting to note that the language in policy documents largely fails to foreground how they are located in a particular part of the world. Gough (2002) suggests that failing to acknowledge the 'global dimension' in education as a 'culturally shaped' representation of a reality 'is an imperialist act – an act of attempted intellectual colonization' (p. 1228). He goes on to ask 'how can we think globally without enacting some form of epistemological imperialism?' (ibid.). This critique reminds us to check whether our ethnocentric positioning prejudices our reading of the global curricular turn.

Dimensions of citizenship

Such reflexivity also raises questions about citizenship – notably the question of what sort of citizen should be developed by education systems. There are a number of key dimensions of citizenship that may be explored in this context, and which are highly relevant to the above discussion about the directions in which ECG is travelling.

One important issue concerns the distinction between a social and a political definition of citizenship. In the context of Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence*, Biesta (2008) has argued that through notions like the 'responsible citizen', citizenship is mainly defined in social rather than political terms (i.e. doing good work in/for the community, where community itself is predominantly understood in terms of sameness). This is significant because social relationships within a context of sameness are distinctively different from political relationships – particularly if we read politics in terms of democratic politics – in that political relationships relate to plurality and difference, not sameness. Public policy on citizenship in many countries worldwide highlights a significant distinction between reasons that concern social integration and cohesion (and thus focus on the construction of communities of sameness) and reasons that relate to the democratic quality of governance (where the emphasis is more on how to live together in/with plurality and difference). In the first conception, citizenship tends to be seen as a social identity, whereas in the second it is a political identity. Biesta (2008, 2009) argues that the notion of citizenship that is predominant in Scottish education policy is characterised by functionalism (i.e. aimed at the creation of social integration through communities of sameness), individualism (i.e. citizenship is seen as a quality of individuals, they need to have the right set of dispositions (the notion of 'civic competence') and focused on consensus. Westheimer and Kahne (2004), indicate the (potential) problems with this social definition of citizenship:

'no one wants young people to lie, cheat, or steal … the visions of obedience and patriotism that are often and increasingly associated with this agenda can be at odds with democratic goals … even the widely accepted goals – fostering honesty, good neighborliness, and so on – are not inherently about democracy' … to the extent that emphasis on these character traits detracts from other important democratic priorities, it may actually hinder rather than make possible democratic participation and change. (p. 244; emphasis in original)'

To support their point, Westheimer and Kahne report on research that found that fewer than 32% of eligible voters between the ages of 18 and 24 voted in the 1996 United States of America presidential election, but that 'a whopping 94% of those aged 15-24 believed that 'the most important thing I can do as a citizen is to help others'' (ibid.). It is easy to draw the conclusion that 'youth seems to be 'learning' that citizenship does not require democratic governments, politics, and even collective endeavours' (ibid.).

A second issue concerns the emerging understanding of citizenship as a competence (i.e., as a set of skills and dispositions that individuals can possess) rather than as an ongoing practice, as something people do (see Biesta, 2009; Lawy & Biesta, 2006). The tendency in much educational policy literature is to see

citizenship first of all as a competence. This then defines the task of citizenship education as that of fostering the acquisition/development of these competences (which is, for example, what is currently being developed at European level; in UK citizenship education this approach is known in terms of the acquisition of so-called 'citizenship dimensions'). Jickling and Wals (2008) see this approach as a deficit model of transmissive education of the citizen. This separation of process and outcome is problematic. If we think of citizenship as guaranteed by individuals with particular qualities, competencies or dimensions, then, at least educationally, citizenship becomes an outcome of an educational and/or developmental trajectory. If, on the other hand, we think of citizenship as something that constantly needs to be achieved (and this can never be guaranteed) then we need to emphasise the process character of citizenship. This has implications for education. In the outcome perspective, global education becomes the producer of global citizens; in the process perspective the first question to ask is whether citizenship practices are possible within schools and society more generally, and only then can we bring in education to ask what people learn from such practices, what they might learn, and how this learning might be supported and developed (see Biesta, 2010).

With regard to the idea of education for global citizenship there are, therefore, important questions to be asked about the kind of citizenship that is being promoted – and it may well be that the particular lineages that have prominence in particular contexts bring with them particular notions of citizenship, either more political or more social, either more individual or more collective, either more focused on the acquisition of competences for future citizenship or putting more emphasis on opportunities for civic action in the here and now.

Conclusion

In this article, we have noted the convergences in the lineages of environmental education, development education and citizenship education under the umbrella of global citizenship education. We have pointed to the role of EGC as rhetorical policy slogans that reorient three traditions to some of their own ends and to some new ones. We have commented on the manner in which this policy nexus brings NGOs, governments and international (economic) development together within a perspective on the world that is very much of its time and place in the west. This in turn demands a form of citizenship which is predicated on critical political activism, rather than upon social compliance. If we think of citizenship as something that constantly needs to be achieved (and this can never be guaranteed), then we need to emphasis the process character of citizenship.

Our genealogical analysis of EGC, combined with our reflections on the nature of citizenship, offers a fresh perspective for educational practitioners. More critical practices of EGC may serve to counter hegemonic views of globalisation and narrow social conceptions of citizenship. In the headlong rush to 'close the circle' (Sauve & Berryman, 2005) under the global citizenship umbrella, we would warn again the erasure of the rich tapestry of eco-socially critical approaches found in the lineages of EE, DE and CE.

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