

Instrument and Strategy Analysis:

Spanish Research Summary

The aim of Work Package 4 is to analyze, from an instrumental and strategic perspective, the contents of national documents from Denmark, England, Portugal and Spain. By “instrument analysis” we mean the identification and description of the instruments provided by the National Government for developing intercultural education. We have considered as instruments for our analysis education policy documents, the curriculum and programs and projects in the four countries, Denmark, England, Portugal and Spain. By “strategy analysis” we mean the identification of those strategies found in the instruments for implementing intercultural education.

The purpose of the analysis is to identify convergent and divergent aspects with regard to intercultural education, in order to detect gaps in the documents, to identify guidelines for the implementation of projects and activities in the classroom and the requirements of teacher training programmes.

Instrumental analysis findings:

In Denmark, participatory democracy (the active participation of students in democratic contexts) is also promoted. The term “bildung” is used to mean the understanding of oneself in a social context and in a democratic society.

In England, democracy is linked to participation and citizenship. Democratic values and democratic ideas are essential in order to achieve a “highly educated citizen democracy”.

The term democracy is used in Portugal to mean the equal opportunities given to students in accessing education, providing them with the experience of democratic life. Also, they promote a democratic school environment by encouraging students to participate democratically in the life of the community.

Like the other two countries, Spain promotes a participative and democratic society, respecting democratic principles of coexistence and democratic values. The democratic and plural character of Spanish society, as a member of the European Union, is noted.

With respect to the term citizenship, Denmark makes no specific reference to the term, although it can be observed that citizenship education is covered by more than one area of the curriculum.

In England, the promotion of citizenship as a mandatory subject is one of the most important achievements of the government. Students are encouraged to participate in society as active, informed, critical and responsible citizens.

Portugal describes the school as a site of citizenship, where they try to raise awareness of citizenship and promote their cultural and civic enrichment. Citizenship education is covered by more than one area of the curriculum.

In Spain, the term citizenship is also covered by more than one area of the curriculum, and is promoted to assist children with the assimilation of civic knowledge in order to become responsible citizens. They require an active citizenship, characterised by co-operation and critical reflection, in order to create a responsible civic awareness.

Finally, with respect to the term intercultural education, in Denmark, foreign language education emphasises international and transcultural understanding (an intercultural dimension is closely associated with the teaching of a foreign language). The term is often interchangeable with the term international, though intercultural education is mostly used in the context of communication and interpersonal relationships.

The term “intercultural” is not used in the official English documents.

Portugal promotes contact among children from different social groups, respecting cultural heterogeneity, and new areas are created to promote the social integration of all individuals within their community. It also provides the opportunity to learn two foreign languages and promotes values such as solidarity and co-operation.

In Spain, some of the aims in the curriculum are connected with the intercultural dimension. The term “intercultural variety” (explicit in the documents) is understood within the context of a society which is a melting pot of cultures, and communication is the key for the interchange of cultural patterns.

Strategy analysis findings:

The strategies have been organised around three axis: curriculum, educational community and programs.

With regard to the *curriculum*, we have found an explicit reference in policy documents to strategies for implementing the concepts being studied: intercultural education, citizenship and democracy. However, we have noticed a lack of specific actions to match such strategies, which would allow a specification of measures to be developed. The agents –mainly teachers but also students- are in a difficult and weak position if they are required to develop the concepts being studied in an educational context.

The strategies which were found to be more clearly developed are those that relate to the concept of intercultural education and, more specifically, to the creation of new subjects in the curriculum, as is the case in Portugal and England, and to the re-conceptualisation of the already existing subjects, as is the case in Denmark and Spain.

The strategies which were found to be less clearly developed are those that relate to the concept of citizenship, perhaps due to the difficulty of establishing the boundaries of the concept of democracy.

We found that the strategies proposed for implementing the concept of democracy are more closely related to the participation (of parents and students) issue that has been clearly perceived in the four countries.

Another issue that deserves our attention is the fact that the subjects that take into account the concepts being studied are Foreign Languages, Civics and History. Even though special attention to cross-curricular issues is considered in the curriculum, and taking into account that such concepts should be considered central to the purposes of education and essential to the well-being of democracy, the creation of new subjects or disciplines with the same status as others may well be considered.

With regard to the *Educational Community*, the strategies found in policy documents are related to permanent teacher training, and specifically linked to teaching approaches. However, in general, we have identified only a small number of strategies linked to teacher training. Policy documents refer, in the section on teacher training, to the title or grade teachers must achieve in order to teach.

Portugal specifies in a precise way the strategies to be implemented in teacher education, such as (1) training teachers with respect to social matters in order to foster a critical attitude, (2) training teachers to stimulate their innovation and research, (3) training teachers to develop their self-learning capacities, (4) training teachers in different methodological methods or approaches.

In Denmark, the strategies proposed in the field of teacher education are guided towards ensuring that all teachers are qualified to work within the international dimension.

Spain, on the other hand, does not propose any explicit strategy in order to implement the concepts being studied in the field of teacher education.

Within the axis of Educational Community, we have also found strategies for the implementation of the concepts being studied, which are related to the participation of parents and students in the educational community. However, we have noted that the documents refer to such participation without a clear specification of the actions required to develop such strategies. Again, we feel that the documents reflect strategies but not specific actions required to develop the strategies. In the field of Educational Community, the strategies found are more closely related to the concepts of citizenship and democracy, rather than the concept of intercultural education.

With regard to *programs*, the strategies found in policy documents relate mainly to the concepts of intercultural education and internationalisation, rather than the remaining concepts. On the other hand, those strategies focus mainly on immigrants.