'Id Est': Integrating Development Education into Student Teacher Practice, School of Education UCC

QUALITY REVIEW NOVEMBER 2020 CASE STUDY PUBLIC LEARNING PROJECTS AS INNOVATIVE, RESEARCH-BASED CLASS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AUTHORS

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Section One: Context, Origin and Overview

NAME	'Id Est', School of Education, UCC
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	Integrating Development Education into Student Teacher Practice
PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS	Development and Global Citizenship Education (DGCE)
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	'Id Est' aims to embed Development and Global Citizenship Education (DGCE) into the Professional Master of Education (PME) Programme in the School of Education, UCC
YEAR OF INRODUCTION	2014
TARGET GROUPS	Professional Master of Education (PME) students - Years 1 and 2
HOURS	Approximately 12 class contact hours per year with further individual support to an elective group of students who wish to further embed DGCE into their teaching practice and professional research portfolios.
MODULE TITLE	As yet, 'Id Est' is not a core module on the PME programme and it is offered to students as an optional 'extra' outside of the formal curriculum.
FUNDING	The project is funded by the Ubuntu Network. This national network of Teacher Education providers seeks to contribute to building a world based on respect for human dignity and rights informed by values of justice, quality, inclusion, sustainability and social responsibility. The Network is funded by Irish Aid and is an integral part of Irish Aid's Development Education Strategy 2017 – 2023.
LEAD STAFF	Dr. Stephen O'Brien and Dr. Gertrude Cotter

'Id Est': Integrating Development Education into Student Teacher Practice, is a project run by the School of Education UCC. The 'Id Est' Project has been running since 2014 and is led by Dr. Stephen O'Brien and Dr. Gertrude Cotter. Its main aim is to integrate Development Education into UCC's Professional Master of Education (PME) programme, with a view to building the capacity of student teachers to integrate Development Education into their classrooms and schools, and building the capacity of UCC's School of Education to integrate Development and Global Citizenship Education (DGCE) across its teaching and learning activities at local, national and international levels.

The School of Education at UCC is committed to the lifelong professional development, support and empowerment of educators. It offers and integrates a wide range of approaches to pedagogy that instil broad knowledge, values and skills which student teachers will carry into their personal lives and professional careers. One such approach is that of Development and Global Citizenship Education (DGCE). Through the 'Id Est' Project, we actively encourage

students to integrate DGCE into their Post-primary teaching. Nationally, the project aligns with Irish Aid's Development Education Strategy 2017–2023. Internationally, it aligns with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, specifically 4.7 which aims:

> By 2030, [to] ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Indeed one of the targets for SDG 4.7 is focused on the extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment.

Purpose

The lead staff were motivated by their life-long commitment to and passion for Critical Pedagogy and Teacher Education (Dr. Stephen O'Brien) and Development Education (Dr. Gertrude Cotter). Teaching is an epistemological act – we need to 'find our way' to promote better thinking and reasoning on the part of students/pupils. Teaching is a moral act too – we need to question the virtues of practice, power and broader educational values. And teaching is a deeply philosophical and spiritual activity where we are all tasked with discovering our own personal/professional educational vision. As we began to work together, we explored how Critical Pedagogy and Development Education are, in effect, part of a common transformative pedagogical tradition. Development Education is strongly influenced by critical pedagogy. It places Freire's concept of 'praxis' at the centre of its theoretical approach: "The action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it" (Freire, 2001/1968: 79). Freire argues that is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. They must also act together upon their environment - to firstly critically reflect upon their reality and then to transform it through further action and critical reflection. In our work we are acutely aware of increasing student interest and activism concerning climate justice, global citizenship, sustainable development, human rights, forced migration, homelessness, poverty and other related social justice issues. Such interest/protest promotes interesting educational themes that raise issues and questions about 'development' and prompt deeper learning engagement with the notion of a global citizenship responsibility. We feel strongly that education is a powerful force for change, enabling us to critically reflect on the way things are, to identify social injustices and unsustainable practices and to act collectively for a better world.

Motivated by common theoretical perspectives and a deep commitment to student-centred learning, we set about supporting student teachers to engage with local and global development issues. Our objective was to create a space for students wishing to explore how these issues could be addressed in their traditional subject areas and disciplines. We wanted to work with PME students in the specific curricular domain of DGCE in order to promote

positive changes in their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. We hoped that the student teachers would begin to explore and understand the value that such transformation could bring to their teaching, to their identity and practices as teachers, and ultimately to the personal, social and civic growth of the pupils with whom they share their learning experiences. Our intended 'deeper' educational outcome is to help build a world based on respect for human dignity and rights and that is informed by values of justice, equality, inclusion, sustainability and social responsibility. Our intended 'practical' outcome was, and remains, to support teacher educators to embed into their work a living understanding of and commitment to education for global citizenship, sustainable development and social justice, so that they can integrate into their teaching, and into the schools where they work, perspectives and actions that encourage the collective building a more just world.

Section Three: Design

Development Education is intrinsically a 'bottom-up' and collaborative approach to education. This was evident in the planning, and indeed all stages, of the development of this project. At the initial stages we invited students to meet with us, we provided information about our proposed approach to this work and asked them what might work within their busy schedules. The students also took part in some initial activities, simulating what might happen in a Post-primary level Development Global Citizenship Education classroom. We found the students to be responsive, enthusiastic and engaged. Indeed, we can say that the students themselves were and continue to be our inspiration. There is a great appetite for this work among student teachers (particularly in these times) and we feel that we have a responsibility to respond to their lived realities and their earnest desire to create a more fair and equal world.

In our work we were inspired by the long-term efforts of the *Galway One World Centre* and their expansive experience of running 'The Global Teacher Award' (GTA). We closely collaborated with its Education Officer, Ms. Vicky Donnelly, and we even incorporated the Global Teacher Award into our project. This was attractive to students wishing to have some formal recognition for their efforts – school principals have come to acknowledge student teachers' GTA achievements and have employed student teachers for the purpose of enhancing the social and civic profile of their school communities. Ms. Donnelly has contributed greatly to the successful delivery of our 'Id Est' project workshops and, in turn, has also contributed greatly to our own capacity building and understanding of how we might approach the ongoing development of our work.

Apart from the dedicated twelve two-hour sessions with student teachers (incorporating the GTA), we also explored where Development Education could be incorporated into the core curriculum so that the wider PME student cohort could be exposed in some ways to DE principles and practice. As time went by, we also developed internal partnerships in UCC and we still work closely with CIRTL, the Centre for Global Development, and the Civic Engagement team. Our work is aligned too with UCC's Strategic Plan 2017-2022 and Academic Strategy (2018 -2022). For instance, one such UCC goal is to embed "a global perspective in all of UCC's activities", while the University's Civic Engagement Plan promotes "active community and regional engagement". Our project is a particularly good example of a successful 'connected

curriculum', a concept which currently informs UCC's academic strategy. Not only does it have a global reach in terms of content and practical action-based projects, it also encourages civic and community engagement, sustainability, as well as inter- and trans- disciplinarity.

Working with student teachers on DGCE is both stimulating and a real privilege. Student teachers come from a wide range of backgrounds and academic disciplines. Their insights into local and global issues are always illuminating and foster deep collaborative forms of learning. At the core of our learning are the three interconnected concepts of the 'connected curriculum', 'sustainability' and 'research-based' teaching. Sustainable development and the SDGs underpin the formal curriculum in our project. At the same time, we have incorporated a culture of research-based teaching into our own work and into student practice in their classrooms. Students are invited, and in turn invite their pupils, to participate in this work as a research ('action'-based) project each year and we have published some of the results of this research work. We hope, through these projects, to encourage a 'multiplier effect' in schools - principals, Boards of Management, parents and employers want teachers and pupils to be actively engaged with society and to be actively involved in direct action that is solution-focused. These educational partners are looking for teachers and pupils who are thinking about deeper values such as respect, compassion, resilience, justice and integrity. From an institutional perspective, such values are prioritised in UCC's Academic Strategy and Graduate Attributes' mission. We are purposively driven by the educational (epistemological, ontological and philosophical) concern with developing amongst student teachers and their pupils practical 21st Century skills, such as: critical thinking; creativity; collaboration; communication; digital literacy; independent thinking; and the broader ability to become socially and civically responsible in this world. We like to think that the 'Id Est' project places all of these skill attributes at the centre of its work and that it specifically prioritises the need to foster amongst student teachers and their pupils a desire to become effective global citizens who are willing and unafraid to acknowledge and challenge inequality.

Section Four: Implementation

Each year students are involved in evaluating the project, mainly through focus group discussions and online surveys. Students advise on the future development of this work, and their ideas and suggestions are very much welcomed and serve to help with our design and implementation into the future. For instance, this year (2020 at the time of writing) students were asked to help in the development of a proposed five credit module which we would like to see incorporated as an elective module in the PME programme. We are currently developing this module in response to very strong student feedback on this issue.

Each year PME students are invited to participate in a series of classes on a range of themes and concepts such as social justice, global citizenship, power, sustainable development, financial and trade justice, human rights, equality and forced migration. Students are enabled to introduce ideas of social, economic, environmental and political justice into their teaching practice, as well as their research portfolios. Together - educators, PME students and pupils in their classrooms - explore such complex issues and co-develop skills, knowledge, values and attitudes which can lead to action for positive social change. Development Global Citizenship Education (DGCE) also teaches students how to engage with innovative and

democratic learning methodologies which help them and their pupils develop critical, creative and collaborative approaches to solving local and global justice issues.

There is a constant linking of the local and the global in our work together. This is manifest in the aforementioned Global Teacher Award (GTA). To gain the GTA the students must carry out a practical ('action'-based) project. Each year we take an innovative approach to project work and we also support students in this work through class visits, tutorials and individual and group discussions. The nature of this project varies depending on the needs and interests of the students. In 2018, for instance, many of the student teachers in our 'IdEst' project were Art teachers. Having introduced them to the core concepts of Development Global Citizenship Education in core lectures, and having engaged them in dialogical learning with guest lecturers from both the Galway One World Centre and Trocaire, we set out to work with the students to curate an exhibition at the Glucksman Art Gallery, UCC. The exhibition was called 'We Make the Road by Walking' – this has been captured in sound, radio and image at this website: http://idestexhibition2018.idestucc.com/. This art exhibition is a journey through DGCE from the perspectives of Post-primary and Third level students and it showcases the creative work carried out by pupils in classrooms all across the Cork region. To prepare for the exhibition we facilitated two extra workshops with renowned professional curator Mr. John Rafftery and we also secured the professional expertise of Mr. Tadgh Crowley, senior curator with the Glucksman Gallery. In other years of 'Id Est' projects, we incorporated DGCE into student teachers' Professional Research Papers; we facilitated students in assisting in, and running, a major DGCE conference at UCC (see http://representing-education.gertrudecotter.info/); and we enabled students to present and implement targeted DGCE lesson plans and incorporate these into their 'live' teaching practice portfolios. All these projects are showcased on the 'Id Est' website: see www.idestucc.ie.

One of our main challenges with such work has been to find space within the existing (very busy) core PME curriculum. To address this particular concern, our current project objective (2020-2021) is to pilot a full Development Global Citizenship Education module which we have designed this year. Our hope is that a DGCE module will ultimately be developed and integrated as an optional/elective module in the PME. While we cannot guarantee this, our 'Plan B' is to develop a Certificate course for student teachers which they can take over two years (with 12 x two-hour classes in total and an assessment that requires the participants to plan, deliver and evaluate - from theoretical and practical perspectives - at least three DGCE lessons in their Post-primary school setting).

We would like to acknowledge the incredible support we receive from our colleagues in Ubuntu who represent most of the Third Level institutions in the country. Regular sharing of support, and dialogues around constant challenges and creative good practices, has added greatly to the success of our 'Id Est' project. The Ubuntu Network is a constant source of support, as is the Journal *Development Education Policy and Practice* wherein we often present and disseminate our work to the wider scholarly community.

Section Five: Review/Evaluation

Evaluation is a key concept in Development Global Citizenship Education. Staff and students are continually discussing the success and challenges of particular approaches to the work, our own learning and the learning of their school-based pupils. **Qualitative** feedback is very important. We invite feedback at the end of each class, through a class debriefing and we also assess student learning through feedback in their learning portfolios and an end-of-year online survey. In their school lesson plans student teachers are required to offer a reflection on each class presented on a DGCE theme. This offers them an opportunity for critical reflexive practice and it offers us as educators a portal to understanding their real-world learning with their pupils. To illustrate, one student wrote that she was learning about enabling pupils to reach conclusions for themselves – helping them to critically reflect rather than accept everything they hear:

> I was so tempted to tell them everything rather than ask them questions about the work and let them reach conclusions about these pieces [artwork related to forced migration] themselves. Doing so, however, was so worth it.

Student teachers are much more aware of the importance of global citizenship education in contemporary Post-primary schooling. They place important value on the Global Teacher Award which, they feel, enhances their opportunities for employment and positively impacts their broader educational work. Unexpected learning outcomes for students and staff are always emerging from this initiative - one strong learning outcome relates to our own collaborative teaching efforts and the value that our individual strengths and interests brings to this process. Our work is enhanced by debriefing more immediately after each class and by our own capacity building, networking and regular discussions through which we constantly strive to improve our work. An important student outcome which we became more and more aware of is that students are supported greatly in this project to become more deeply aware of their sense of 'teacher identity'. They are learning 'who they are' as teachers and are constantly supported in this search by peers/allies in the GTA classroom. As they transition to the workplace too they are developing 'their ontological space' as professional educators and are more accepting of the complexities and joys of facilitating DGCE in their teaching practices.

From a **quantitative** perspective we assess the project by recording the numbers who participate in the Global Teacher Award, the number who indicate they understand the 'basics' of DGCE and the number who teach DGCE in Microteaching or School Placement settings. We can assess too the quality of work (showing improved 'global citizenship literacy') through assessment processes relating to classroom portfolios and research projects. We like to investigate how many student teachers intend to learn more about and teach DGCE post their qualification. We are particularly interested in the number of student teachers identifying personal changes in values, attitudes and behaviours arising from Development Global Citizenship Education engagement (examples here include changes in

consumer patterns, engaging in activism, challenging perspectives, engaging in more 'controversial' classroom discussions).

Undoubtedly the main observation made by students is that there should be an elective Development Education module in the PME. Student feedback is always positive. The reputation of our work has been acknowledged too by our peers around the country. We are regularly asked to give presentations at the Ubuntu Network dialogue days and to publish our work. This allows us to showcase the 'Id Est' project and to engage student teachers and more experienced practitioners in the development of this work. We are always open to new ideas and suggestions. The quality and importance of this work is often acknowledged, as is our desire to embed a module in the PME curriculum. Our work was most recently acknowledged by the School of Education when we were asked to present our work as a case study exemplar to the 2020 Quality Review team. The final report from this process is both complimentary and encouraging. In this report, Ms. Seánín Hoy (PME student 2018-2020) recounts her experiences of the 'Id Est' Project. This testimony is given in full below:

> The impact Id Est has had on the development of my personal and professional identity as a teacher has been truly transformative in terms of my thinking, in my approach to teaching, in my world view and in my values and beliefs for present and future education. I have begun to see teaching as synonymous with opportunity, opportunity to inform and to nurture young people in their creative and innovative thinking and very importantly to encourage and facilitate critical and independent thinking. The experiences I had with Id Est has developed a stronger sense of accountability and confidence as a teacher, leader and advocate. I now identify as a Global English teacher. I am a listening and questioning being and I want to give importance to these areas in my practice and to encourage these traits in others. I recognised myself in the mission of Ubuntu, in the community values, in the desire to raise awareness and in the collective mission for making the world a kinder place to live in. The project reinforced the value of collaboration and inclusion in teaching and learning, working together to examine the real world we live in. In my practice we go beyond using textbooks to looking at real life, we look at fictional works as a means of exploring deep and contentious issues from an objective position but then we relate it to our own ideas and experiences and what is happening in the world we live in. I find what is of most value is giving students a safe space to interrogate the world, to share their thoughts and feelings and to question the validity of power and how the decisions those in power make, impacts on people's lives including their own. I started to think of the concept of storytelling and the human right and human need to tell our stories, share our experiences and how this collective narrative promoted community and wellbeing, encouraging empathy and kindness. Speaking to people living in Direct Provision was both inspiring and challenging. I discovered my own empathy, I had to reflect deeply on how I felt hearing their stories, I had to explore my own accountability and realise my influential position as a teacher to affect change - to see that from that day onward, my teaching could never be the same again, that I had a responsibility once I heard these stories to pass them on, to inform, to talk about what is happening in our community and to say No to injustice. Teaching through the lens of DGCE takes planning, preparation,

commitment and a degree of humility to relinquish control. It takes patience to allow multiple perspectives and multiple disagreements to occur, it takes a willingness to stand by your own morals and principles to say to colleagues, school management, parents and others that these conversations are not just worth having, they are essential. DGCE is the very essence of modern education in terms of accountability, collaboration, wellbeing and inclusion. Inviting all the members of learning communities to engage in challenging conversations is truly (in Freirean terms to) an invite to 'read the world'. The students are unanimously responsive to lessons which invite and encourage discussion and debate, where their voices are respected and given the recognition they deserve. Moreover, genuine relationships and communities have grown in our classrooms as the students learn how to challenge themselves and each other with respect and empathy and how to act together to fight social injustice. In our classroom we talk about global inequalities, racism, sexism, human rights, oppression and resilience. Students are encouraged to ask their own questions, they are given time and space to reflect. We discuss and deliberate about issues such as Direct Provision and the Global Refugee Crisis. Students air their opinions in a safe environment and we hear multiple perspectives. It is interesting to see how young people deliberate and persuade each other to listen to one another, to reach conclusions about the quality of life as opposed to existence, about issues of inclusion, and the celebration of difference. In a DEIS school setting, in particular, issues of asylum seeking, war, neglect and oppression are very relevant to students' own experiences. We talk about such issues from a position distanced from the personal but close enough to give a voice to the students who often feel too afraid to speak out against oppressive behaviours. Ubuntu has given me the tools and the confidence to realise as educators our everyday contributions in the classroom - those small invitations to our students to engage in DGCE can and do have significant effects as lessons ripple beyond into the wider communities.

Section Six: Conclusion

In conclusion, we see Development and Global Citizenship Education as a deeply important field of study but one which needs more recognition in Third level education in general. While there is welcome reference to 'global reach' and 'citizenship' in strategic plans and while students are very interested in global themes, DGCE is not, as yet, integrated within university curricula. Our hope is to highlight the value of and interest in this area of study. As educators our hope is to foster graduates who are ready to embrace the challenges of today's interconnected world. Education must be enabled to play its crucial part in raising critical global citizens who are committed and empowered to contributing to a better, more equal world.

References

Freire, P. (1968/2001). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York. Continuum.