

Pupil voice and the development of the educational relationship: aspects from the international scene

EXTRACTS from the Presentation by

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The United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child, 1989

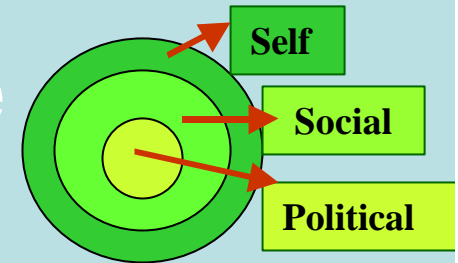
Article 12: children have the right to participate in decision-making processes that may be relevant to their lives and to influence decisions taken in their regard – within the family, the school or the community....

Democracy is not only a form of government, but primarily a form of shared experience (Dewey, 1918)

Respecting children's views does not automatically mean they should be endorsed. But a process of dialogue and exchange needs to be encouraged so that children can learn to assume responsibility and become active citizens.

Democratic competencies in the educational context

(Himmelman, 2002)



Democracy	<i>...a form of living</i>	<i>...a form of society</i>	<i>...a form of governance</i>
as...	Aims of democracy learning		
School levels	“Self-Learning” (self-development, self-experience, self-responsibility, self-control...)	“Social Learning” (social cooperation, communication, respect towards others, rights & responsibilities, pluralism, conflict resolution, civil society)	“Political Learning” (forms of participation, rights & responsibilities in a complex political system, human rights, human dignity, power, control, decision-making processes)
Primary	XXX	XX	X
Secondary I	XX	XXX	X
Secondary II	X	XX	XXX

X = degree of focus

Involving pupils so that they learn to become active citizens

2005 – European Year of
Citizenship through Education

Some research background related to pupil voice:

- a historic neglect of pupils as a source of evidence (*Fullan, 1991*)
- the limitations of seeing pupils simply as sources of data (*Fielding, 1999*)
- the role of pupils in self-evaluation (*MacBeath, 1999*)
- the potential contribution of pupils to school improvement (*Rudduck et al, 1996*)
- the role of pupils as partners in their own learning (*Groundwater-Smith, 1998*)

(MacBeath et al, 2003)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN LISTENING TO PUPILS

The desire to hear what young people have to say is genuine

The purpose of the consultation is explained to the pupils involved

The topic is not trivial

Pupils are confident that expressing a sincerely held opinion, or describing a feeling or experience, will not disadvantage them



Young people are able to understand the wider context in which their views are placed

Feedback is offered to those who have been consulted

Young people know what will happen to what they say

The “participation ladder”

**(after Schultz Jørgensen,
2004)**

Children have the initiative in decisions and are supported by adults

Adults and pupils contribute to the decision on an equal basis

Adults ask pupils to express their opinion and then make the decision

Adults decide what is going to happen; pupils are involved in matters of lesser importance

Adults decide what is going to happen; pupils take part by “singing and dancing”!

Adults decide what is going to happen and pupils are asked if they agree

Adults take all the decisions, but pupils are informed and explanations are given.

Adults take all the decisions and the pupils are informed.

participation



joint decision



consultation



symbolic involvement



decoration



manipulation



“gentle” control



control

A different scale of pupil participation (Duerr, 2004)



Parliamentary participation, open participation, project-based participation, simulation games on participation, problem-solving participative approaches

Participation in decision-making, initiation of action, implementation of solutions and evaluation of outcomes

Consultation on the definition of problems and the preparation of decision-making processes

Cooperation with others in implementing programmes

Involvement in designing strategies or planning

Contribution through attendance at meetings and work

Contribution of some sort – resources or materials

Basic information and passive reception of decisions

Fields for practicing pupil participation

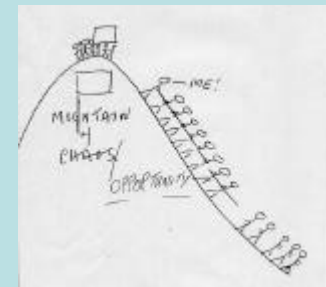
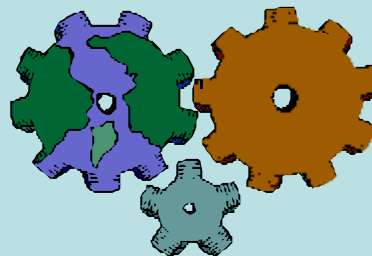
- Participative structures
- Participative learning
- Participation in the social life of the school
- Participation beyond the school



3 types of tools for involving pupils

(MacBeath et al, 2003)

<i>Direct</i> consultation tools	<i>Prompted</i> consultation tools	<i>Mediated</i> consultation tools
Questionnaires, interviews, conversations, podting views in “mail boxes”, logs	Sentence completion, video replay of extracts from lessons, photo prompts or other material inviting comparison, data from surveys	Drawings, paintings, photos, making a video, posters, role-play



SPOT CHECK: how do you feel?

CONCENTRATING	1	2	3	THINKING ABOUT OTHER THINGS
ALERT	1	2	3	DROWSY
RELAXED	1	2	3	ANXIOUS
WISHING TO BE HERE	1	2	3	WISHING TO BE SOMEWHERE ELSE
HAPPY	1	2	3	SAD
ACTIVE	1	2	3	PASSIVE
EXCITED	1	2	3	BORED
TIME PASSING QUICKLY	1	2	3	TIME PASSING SLOWLY
FULL OF ENERGY	1	2	3	VERY LITTLE ENERGY
SOMETHING AT STAKE	1	2	3	NOTHING AT STAKE
SOCIABLE	1	2	3	LONELY
EASY TO CONCENTRATE	1	2	3	DIFFICULT TO CONCENTRATE
CHEERFUL	1	2	3	IRRITABLE
EASY TO BE CREATIVE	1	2	3	DIFFICULT TO BE CREATIVE



And what about the teachers?

% of Italian teachers feeling that their preparation is inadequate or very inadequate in relation to:

	<i>Pre-primary school</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	<i>Lower secondary</i>	<i>Upper secondary</i>
Subject matter	53.4	41.7	13.6	12.5
Subject teaching	59.5	73.4	61.2	60.1
Overall teaching methodology	58.2	70.5	63.7	67.3
General educational issues	48.2	53.5	62.0	69.1

(After Cavalli, 2000)

While teachers are expected to...

(MIUR, CGIL-CISL-UIL)

Set up a variety of effective and stimulating learning opportunities for sts while mastering subject content, teaching methodology and metacognitive approaches	Assess sts' performance; manage and engage in schoolwide and self-evaluation , aiming for school improvement
Master the 5 learning domains (know, do, live together, be, learn: <i>Delors</i>)	Work collaboratively and in teams ; develop the School Plan ; undertake system functions ; take on " middle leadership " roles
Use ICT and multimedia technology	Develop and practice individualised teaching
Communicate and liaise effectively and sensitively with sts and the entire school community	Involve families in school life
Reframe and gauge their own professional role within European society	Put their own CPD into action, while also engaging in institutional INSET