Some Remarks on the Context and the Current State of Arts Education Research in Austria

Aron Weigl and Michael Wimmer

Abstract This paper is divided into two parts. The first part presents an overview of the societal, political and cultural context of arts education. Taking a historical perspective, there is a particular focus on interculturality as discussed and practised in Austria. The second part deals more closely with selected examples of arts education research carried out by EDUCULT.

Keywords Arts education · Cultural policy · Educational policy · Interculturality · Diversity · Research methods · Evaluation · Quality assurance · Society · History

1 Austria as an Exception

People from abroad might be inclined to wonder why there is such an extraordinarily rich cultural infrastructure – including world-famous museums, theatres and opera houses – in the small state of Austria. The main reason can be seen in the country's history. Up to 1918, Vienna was the capital of a multi-ethnic Central European empire with more than 50 million inhabitants. At that time, culture was seen as an essential means of holding together a complex and diverse political entity in which dozens of different languages were spoken and a variety of different forms of religious and cultural expression were current. After the First World War, the country was reduced to a small geographical area, with Vienna as its remaining political and cultural centre.

The weak sense of national belonging felt by the population of the then young Austrian Republic opened the way for culture to play a decisive role again – this time, not in the uniting of diverse elements within a "*Vielvölkerreich*" (multi-ethnic empire) but rather in the creation of a homogenous national identity in a nation which nobody wanted. The foundation of the Salzburg Festival can be seen as an

A. Weigl (✉) · M. Wimmer
Research & Consulting, EDUCULT – Institute of Cultural Policy and Cultural Management, Vienna, Austria
e-mail: aron.weigl@educult.at; michael.wimmer@educult.at

outstanding example of a cultural policy success story, transforming a small and insecure Austrian state into a globally recognized "cultural empire" with its typical Austrian retrospective approach (celebrating baroque architecture, Mozart, Strauss, the Spanish Riding School in Vienna or the New Year's Concert[1]).

Comparable cultural policy efforts were made after the Second World War, when Austria was suffering once again from the impact of a world war and sought to rid itself of its disastrous image in the eyes of the world, stemming from the involvement of many of its citizens in the cruelties of the Nazis (which were mainly concerned with the destruction of diversity). Again, it was culture which was brought into play – both at home, to reconstruct the idea of a common Austrian identity, and abroad – projecting into the wider world the image of an innocent country of singers and dancers at the heart of Europe.[2]

2   Contradiction as a Policy Guideline: A Cultural Empire with No Cultural Policy Research

In all these years, no significant cultural policy research was published. The first example dates from 1975, when an institute for empirical social research (IFES) investigated the cultural behaviour of the Austrian population in a representative way.[3] Put simply, the main results stated that the "cultural engagement of the Austrians would be low".[4] The social-democratic government at the time reacted to this by conceiving and implementing a "*Kulturpolitischer Maßnahmenkatalog*" ("Cultural Policy Plan")[5] which included a number of broad arts education measures. As the main institutional actor, the "Austrian Culture Service" (ÖKS)[6] was

---

[1] A few years ago, EDUCULT carried out research on the cultural image of Vienna among US-American scholars of culture. The feedback was on all the stereotypes Austria is confronted with from the outside; one respondent came to the conclusion that Vienna could be seen as the "representation of a former civilisation".

[2] In this respect, the film *The Sound of Music* in the 1960s can be seen as the outstanding contribution to cultural education for people outside Austria.

[3] Institut für empirische Sozialforschung (IFES) (1975): *Grundlagenforschung im kulturellen Bereich*. Wien. This research was part of a series of follow-up studies. In this regard, the last example of culture monitoring took place in 2007 with no consequences for further cultural policy-making. URL: https://www.ifes.at/sites/default/files/downloads/1192093299_23800007.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[4] At that time, a satirical magazine announced that – according to the IFES results – the trend in the Austrian population to read more than one book per year would continue.

[5] Published as part of the *Kunstbericht* (Bundesministerium für Unterricht und Kunst 1975) [Report on the Arts, Federal Ministry for Education and the Arts].

[6] The relevant webpage was removed after the closure of the institution in 2003. A reference can be found online at: https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20030708_OTS0135/neues-team-im-oesterreichischen-kultur-service-setzt-schwerpunkt-auf-zusammenarbeit-von-wirtschaft-kunst-kultur-und-bildung (last accessed 17th December 2017).

created. Its main task was to involve artists of all genres in school activities and to enable different kinds of cooperation between schools and the cultural sector.

At that time, school provision of music and fine arts education was largely highly retrospective. The main educational aims concerned the mediation of a specific Austrian cultural heritage traceable back to the old monarchy as this was regarded – alongside sport – as the principal means of strengthening national identity. However, with the Cultural Policy Plan, politicians also intended to promote a broader involvement of the younger population in contemporary art forms, which had been neglected up to that point.

Although at this time an increasing number of migrant workers were coming to Austria, mainly from Turkey and Yugoslavia, diversity was not seen as a political or educational issue at all. In addition, efforts not only to enable arts education activities but equally to reflect them were widely seen as negligible by most of the stakeholders. The reasons are obvious when it is considered that the cultural sector enjoyed high approval inside and outside of the country, particularly among the middle class, and found an audience automatically.

3 Challenged by Circumstance to Become a Pluralistic Migrant Society

The following years were characterized by different phases of migration, starting in the 1950s with Hungarians. With increasing labour shortages in the late 1960s and early 1970s, workers from Turkey and Serbia came to Austria, followed by Polish people fleeing the imposition of martial law in their country in the 1980s and people from Bosnia in the 1990s. The growing Viennese population brought to mind the "melting pot" society under the late monarchy. This time, however, right-wing populists – traditionally opposed to the cultural rights of state-acknowledged minorities, particularly the Slovene minority in Carinthia – made migration a major issue. They mounted a political defence of the "real Austrians" against the further development of the Austrian population as a migrant society.

While the school system reacted by implementing a new generation of programmes to meet the changing sociodemographic composition of the student body, most of the traditional cultural institutions remained hesitant to do so.[7] However, with more than 50% of the pupils in Viennese primary schools having a migrant background,[8] diversity can no longer be seen as a minority issue but as the represen-

---

[7] It was as late as 2015 that EDUCULT took part in the European cooperation project "Brokering Migrants' Cultural Participation" in an attempt to sensitize the main cultural institutions to this matter. Online: http://educult.at/en/forschung/brokering-migrants-cultural-participation/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[8] While exact data are not systematically collected, the assessment comes from a parliamentary debate from 2009: http://volksgruppenv1.orf.at/diversitaet/aktuell/stories/99029.html (last accessed 17th December 2017).

tation of a pluralistic migrant population. Educationalists have carried out a number of projects in relation to this diversity, and the results have at least partly been taken into consideration in relation to the shaping of education policies in general.[9] However, there is no comparable research corpus in the field of cultural policy or in the field of arts education.

When, in 2007, the Social Democrats and the Conservatives went into coalition with each other at the level of national government, education policy was driven by the personal involvement of Claudia Schmied, the Minister of Education, the Arts and Cultural Affairs, in the promotion of artistic and cultural activities. However, arts education was not explicitly part of the new education programmes, and the main focus was on the further development of cultural institutions. These were increasingly assigned to take better care of those young people who had, up to that point, been neglected due to their being socially disadvantaged and/or members of different migrant communities. Many of the cultural institutions established new education and/or mediation departments in an attempt to fulfil this task.

In 2007, the Ministry of Education, the Arts and Cultural Affairs assigned EDUCULT, as a newly established European research institution working on cultural and education policy with a particular focus on arts education, to prepare the first comprehensive report on arts education in Austria, entitled *Vielfalt und Kooperation* ("Diversity and Cooperation").[10] This document formulated a number of recommendations, including new approaches for arts education research. Some of these were put into effect, such as "Kulturelle Bildung zählt!" ("Arts Education Counts!")[11] which tried to assess the current state of arts education in all 6200 Austrian schools, but they were not discussed publicly. The fear that the results could provoke a major political conflict clearly made a broader public discussion among the stakeholders impossible.

Instead, a number of new programmes were implemented by KulturKontakt Austria, a non-profit organization working on behalf of and supported by the Austrian Ministry of Education, with the aim of providing arts education initiatives to stimulate a new generation of arts mediation programmes in schools.[12] However, the main achievement of the "Diversity and Cooperation" programme may have been in the symbolic character of its message, which described most of the main stakeholders in the cultural field as slightly changing their cultural policy priorities from production to reception.

---

[9] The paper gives an overview of current migration and integration research in Austria: http://www.iomvienna.at/sites/default/files/kmi_WP18.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[10] http://www.educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/vielfalt_kooperation_gross2007.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[11] http://educult.at/forschung/kulturelle-bildung-zaehlt/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[12] "Macht|schule|theater", a cooperation project between 15 selected schools and theatre initiatives trying to stimulate semi-professional theatre productions with students as part of their regular activities. As one of the few programmes, it was evaluated in 2010 by EDUCULT. URL: http://educult.at/en/forschung/machtschuletheater/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

When the impact of the 2008 financial crisis on the state budget became severe, new arguments were needed to legitimize the prioritization by the state of its cultural infrastructure. Gaining new audiences seemed to be a possible way to boost levels of acceptance. Accordingly, a series of new funding programmes were implemented, all of them aimed at providing better access to cultural institutions.[13]

As the Ministry coordinated education, arts and cultural issues, the Minister was able to stimulate new cooperative processes between schools and cultural institutions.[14] As part of this, KulturKontakt Austria announced the "(p)art" programme, which provided support for at least a small number of schools in their search for a cooperation partner. (p)art has also been evaluated by the University of Vienna".[15]

In an attempt to overcome the traditional class system in education provision, the Ministry implemented a new type of school ("*Neue Mittelschule*") and placed a particular emphasis on arts education. Additionally, the official role of the "Kulturkontaktperson" ("cultural contact officer")[16] was created for teachers who wished to assume responsibility for coordinating cultural activities in the school.

In retrospect, 2007–2013 can be seen as a peak in the provision of arts education by the state. This was reflected in a contribution to the *Bildungsbericht* ("National Education Report") in 2009, which, for the first time, included a chapter dedicated to arts education issues.[17] Additionally, in the context of the Austrian discussion of the PISA results, arts education became a temporary issue when the data allowed some conclusions to be drawn relating to cultural participation among young people.[18] After 2013, when the leading personnel in the Ministry changed, the first successes of a better structural cooperation between education, arts and culture could be identified.[19] As a consequence, the department of "Kunst- und Kulturvermittlung an Schulen" ("Mediation of Artistic and Cultural Activities in Schools") in the Ministry of Education has been massively limited in its activities; applied research

---

[13] Since then, arts and culture mediation are included as an important issue in each government declaration at state level; a number of regional governments have meanwhile followed this example.

[14] One of the main cultural and educational aims at that time was to establish a cooperative association between each Austrian school and a cultural institution or initiative.

[15] http://www.kulturkontakt.or.at/images/stories/medialibrary/Kulturkontakt/Kulturvermittlung/Evaluationsbericht_pART.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[16] https://www.bmb.gv.at/schulen/kulturvermittlung/leitfaden_kkpnms.pdf?674037 (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[17] Wimmer, Michael/Schad, Anke (2009): "Kunst, Kultur und Bildung: Kulturelle Bildung als Herausforderung an das Schulwesen. Ansätze, Erfahrungen und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten". In bifie (ed.) (2009): *Bildungsbericht 2009*, pp. 183–202.

[18] Wimmer, Michael/Nagel, Tanja/Schad, Anke (2011): "Zur Teilnahme junger Menschen an kulturellen Angeboten". In Eder, Ferdinand (ed.): PISA 2009. Nationale Zusatzanalysen für Österreich. Vienna.

[19] Meanwhile the old dilemma has continued, where the relevant representatives of the education sector, when confronted with arts education activities, send the actors over to "the other side", suggesting that colleagues from the arts funding sector should take care of things (and vice versa).

on policy-making is no longer an issue of importance. No further work on data collection was commissioned, and the public discourse was discontinued.[20]

Since the termination of the Austrian Culture Service in 2003, KulturKontakt Austria has been established as the main public funding body for arts education on a federal level. It took over the "Cultural Budgets for Federal Schools"[21] programme, which had already begun in the early 1990s, and attempted to contribute to the process of "autonomization" of schools. As there was a suspicion that it was always the same few schools making use of such schemes, EDUCULT was assigned to carry out a research project under the title "Who makes use of the programme?".[22] Between 2006 and 2014, KulturKontakt also enabled a programme priority on "Interculturality and Multilinguality".[23] With the funding of related projects, KulturKontakt wanted to examine the ways in which multilingualism might contribute to an up-to-date concept of interculturality. An evaluation of the activities was not foreseen.

On a broader scale, in 2015 the social scientific Institute for Research and Consulting (SORA) prepared relevant research on "Cultural Participation in Vienna",[24] which came to the (simplified) conclusion that everything is fine as far as the cultural behaviour of the Austrian population is concerned. In the study, a separate chapter on arts education can be found which is more a reflection of the status of theoretical considerations than a source of tailored data. Some recently collected data on multilingualism by an initiative of the Austrian Chamber of Labour and other partners is more significant. It came to the surprising conclusion that there is no notable difference between local and migrant youngsters in relation to their participation in traditional cultural institutions.[25]

When talking about arts education and its accompanying research, it has to be understood that, until now, Austria has had no landscape of private stakeholders such as foundations. While we can see how private foundations in other countries have a significant interest in carrying out arts education projects that fulfil certain quality criteria, in Austria it looks as if existing public funding bodies are satisfied by project activism. A deeper interest in what can be learned and drawn upon for further development is not expressed, at least not publicly.

One of the rare examples of significant private involvement is the "Verein Wirtschaft für Integration" ("Business for Integration Association"), which has

---

[20] https://www.bmb.gv.at/schulen/kulturvermittlung/index.html (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[21] https://www.kulturkontakt.or.at/html/D/wp.asp?pass=x&p_title=5787&rn=152123 (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[22] http://educult.at/forschung/wer-nutzt-das-schulkulturbudget/ (last accessed 7th December 2017).

[23] https://www.kulturkontakt.or.at/html/D/wp.asp?pass=x&p_title=5061&rn=152409 (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[24] SORA (2015): Kulturelle Beteiligung in Wien. Vienna. URL: https://www.wien.gv.at/kultur/abteilung/pdf/studie-kulturelle-beteiligung.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[25] Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte (2017): *Migration und Mehrsprachigkeit – Wie fit sind wir für die Vielfalt?* Policy Brief 3. Vienna.

been running the public speaking competition "Sags Multi!"[26] ("Say it in Different Languages!") for the last 10 years. This project allows students with migrant backgrounds to experience multilingualism (which will be – the organizers strongly believe - increasingly necessary for Austrian economic prosperity in the future) as an asset and not as a stigma. While the competition always leads to tremendous presentations, the programme itself has never been evaluated in terms of its possible impact on actual school development.

To sum up, in Austria we can find a number of excellent projects dealing with arts education in a diverse environment. All of them are based on the efforts of individual teachers, who are often limited – at least to a certain extent – to reinventing the wheel again and again. It can be assumed that the next generation of measures fostering school autonomy (which have recently been passed by Parliament) will further increase the responsibilities of individual teachers. On the one hand, they are confronted with the fact of increasing diversity in their classrooms, and on the other, they have to face right-wing populist political rhetoric which demands cultural homogeneity inside and outside the school. Up to now, the number of right-wing FPÖ voters among teachers in a conservative education environment has remained relatively low, even taking into account the impending retirement of the generation of "'68 revolutionaries".[27]

4   Qualification and Training

This short analysis of the wider arts education picture shows that, until now, there has been little relevant arts education research in Austria. Obviously, there is a certain systemic defensive attitude on the part of the arts scene when faced with scientific claims. The conviction is still dominant that the arts (and, by extension, arts education) are an act of individual expression which can't be measured.

For a long time, this attitude has dominated the academic world, both in Austria and beyond. In most of the arts universities, there are strong and important departments for arts teacher qualification and training which have, so far, been highly divided between the different art forms. These departments manage to equip graduates with an impressive set of art-specific didactic approaches, but – in comparison – their capacities for the reflection of practices related to cultural diversity are underdeveloped. With the implementation of the Bologna process, Austrian higher education institutions for the arts have also come under increasing pressure to develop from "Institutions of Higher Education" ("*Hochschulen*") to universities, thus improving their academic capacities.

One of the outcomes of this shift is a stronger emphasis on the academic basics that arts teachers should be equipped with. Because the various training courses are

---

[26] http://www.sagsmulti.at/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[27] https://derstandard.at/2000059451367/Gewerkschaft-warnt-erneut-vor-Lehrermangel   (last accessed 17th December 2017).

highly specific to specific branches of art (music teacher, fine arts teacher, etc.), broader concepts of multi-aesthetic arts education are more often seen as a threat to specific expertise rather than as an enrichment. Up to now, only a few prospective teachers are acquainted with arts education as a more comprehensive approach, dealing with the arts in their various forms of expression in schools. The systemic lack of provision of teacher training in arts education that has a particular focus on diversity goes together with an equally systemic lack of taking arts education into account as an integral component of overall school development. When dealing with the increasing diversity of the pupil body, the difficulties experienced by arts educators of all kinds, e.g. in terms of communication or social cohesion, are similar to those faced by teachers of other subjects. Specific forms of arts pedagogy for diversity only exist in a fragmentary state.

Also, extracurricular arts education cannot yet be regarded as a field whose professional nature is reflected in the availability of appropriate qualifications and training measures. Nevertheless, there are a number of academic courses that also include aspects of arts education. The Institute of Cultural Management in the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna provides the opportunity to engage in Master's studies in Cultural Management. In the 2017 academic year, it provided a new focus on arts, culture and audiences, including aspects of arts education.[28] At the University of Applied Arts in Vienna, the ECM initiative provides a Master's degree in Exhibition Theory and Practice[29] which, in relation to "Kunst- und Kulturvermittlung" ("mediation of arts and culture"), includes a number of relevant arts education issues. Beyond that, the University of Applied Arts was also involved in the initiative "Another Roadmap for Arts Education",[30] a cross-university initiative that tried to counteract the UNESCO initiative on globally fostering arts education[31] by raising awareness of the neocolonialist approach of documents like the "Road Map for Arts Education".[32]

At the Anton Bruckner Private University in Linz (Upper Austria), a Master's qualification in Music Mediation ("*Musikvermittlung*")[33] has been implemented, mainly in order to equip professionals working in music institutions with tailored education tools. Additionally, in Kufstein (Tyrol), a School for Applied Science ("Fachhochschule") runs a Master's course in Cultural Management,[34] which deals, at least indirectly, with audience development and, in that context, also with extra-curricular arts education issues.

---

[28] https://www.mdw.ac.at/ikm/kulturmanagement/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[29] http://www.dieangewandte.at/ecm (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[30] https://www.zhdk.ch/en/researchproject/426616 (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[31] http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/multimedia/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Arts_Edu_RoadMap_en.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[32] https://www.zhdk.ch/en/researchproject/426616 (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[33] https://www.bruckneruni.at/institute/musikpaedagogik/fachbereiche/musikvermittlung/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[34] https://www.fh-kufstein.ac.at/Studieren/Master/Sports-Culture-Events-Management-VZ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

5   EDUCULT as One of the Few Arts Education Research Institutions in Austria

Within the Austrian academic world, no significant representation of arts education exists, and the number of applied research institutions in the field remains modest. One of the very few institutions is EDUCULT, in which the current authors are involved and which conduct systematic research into arts education projects in Austria and abroad.

EDUCULT is also involved in European cooperation. One related project was the Arts Education Fact Finding Mission in 2010.[35] This project aimed to develop a structural tool to close the information gap about resources, to provide data for facilitating a more evidence-based policy and to empower practitioners to discuss funds and resources. One objective of the exploratory part of the study was to analyse the target groups that cultural institutions are focussing on. At that time, practitioners were just starting to take into account the cultural diversity of their arts education programmes. As noted in the EDUCULT report, "One institution focuses on citizens with a migrant background 'due to a new cultural policy tendency'".[36]

This new tendency was also detected by another project called the "Arts Education Monitoring System" (AEMS).[37] This project used policy analysis to set up a European structure to enable the comparison of national European data on the resource input into arts education. Empirical data collection was also part of the research design. One of the findings is related to the consideration of diversity in cultural policies. According to the Austrian report, the Viennese city government focused on the cultural participation of migrants and minority groups in the context of its cultural policy for the first time in 2010. The aim was to implement "projects to enable migrants to access cultural institutions".[38]

While cultural diversity was only addressed marginally in previous studies, the European cooperation research project "Access to Culture"[39] provided a deeper understanding of the role cultural diversity plays in arts education practice. The project was a policy field analysis. It aimed to examine the gap between social reality and political normativity in the field of cultural access and to develop a set of recommendations for the European Union. The partners intended to improve European thinking on this issue and to interlink national discourses and the European dimension. As a result of the project, recommendations were formulated.

[35] http://educult.at/en/forschung/european-arts-education-fact-finding-mission/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[36] EDUCULT (2011): European Arts Education Facts Finding Mission. Final Report, p. 55. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Report_Fact_Finding_Mission_EDUCULT.pdf (last accessed 10th February 2018).

[37] http://educult.at/en/forschung/aems/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[38] EDUCULT (2012): Arts Education Monitoring System. Report Phase One – EDUCULT, p. 13. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/AEMS-Report-Austria_Educult.pdf (last accessed 10th February 2018).

[39] http://educult.at/en/forschung/access-to-culture/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

Researchers compiled and assessed indicators relating to access to culture and cultural policy implementation measures, applicable to all countries of the Union and beyond.

One chapter of the report analyses the access to culture from the perspective of social inclusion and cultural diversity. In relation to Austria, the analysis points out that most arts programmes and initiatives which include people with a migrant background and other minorities "are only implemented in Vienna, while rural areas still need to develop targeted policies to improve social inclusion".[40] Another chapter is explicitly dedicated to arts education as a major issue for the improvement of access to culture. In this context, the increasing inability to define culture is mentioned. "For arts education, which is based on such a fluid 'liquidised' and iridescent definition of 'culture', it has become difficult to find a clear set of priorities".[41] Thus, on the one hand the content of arts education is in transition. On the other hand, the composition of cultural institutions is problematic for their own arts education activities. "Middle-class origins may impede communication with other social groups not personally represented within the institutions".[42] For recognizing cultural diversity in arts education programmes, developing the diversity of the cultural institutions seems to be crucial.

The EU-wide cooperation project "Brokering Migrants' Cultural Participation"[43] – in which EDUCULT was involved – addressed exactly this finding as a research question. It aimed at providing support for cultural institutions to become brokers and mediators of the relationships in societies currently marked by diversity and to open themselves to the newcomers to a national culture. In this context, migrants' cultural participation was conceptualized as participation by recipients of cultural productions, as participation by cultural producers and as participation by recipients, whether migrant or non-migrant. One major result is a self-evaluation tool for cultural institutions, which focuses on finding out how they can improve their relevance in a migrant society. In doing so, not only programming and communication but also cooperation with migrant initiatives, the migrant composition of the staff, the participation of migrant experts on the board and the consideration of migrant suppliers are all seen as major quality criteria. The benchmarking tool has four levels to which a cultural institution can assign itself. For classification purposes, comprehensible descriptions of situations are given. For example, in the category of institutional vision and policy, the first of four indicators applies to how the institution perceives its role in migrants' cultural participation. At a basic level, the cultural institution sees the promotion of migrants' cultural participation as a sociopolitical rather than a cultural goal due to demands from policy-makers or

---

[40] EDUCULT et al. (2015): Access to Culture – Policy Analysis. Final Report, p. 95. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Final_Report_Print.pdf (last accessed 10th February 2018).

[41] Ibid., p. 103.

[42] Ibid., p. 107.

[43] http://educult.at/en/forschung/brokering-migrants-cultural-participation/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

society. At the lower intermediate level, a commitment to the notion of "diversity as richness" and a dynamic understanding of culture alongside the pursuit of sociocultural goals can be recognized. At the upper intermediate level, the cultural institution sees itself as a cultural space for interaction, participation and cooperation. Moreover, diversity policies are used as a tool for internal change. If all these conditions are met and the cultural institution considers itself an organization that should fully reflect society's diversity – a fact which is echoed in policy documents – it can assign itself to the advanced level. In this way, seven different categories are addressed (institutional vision and policy; visitors/audiences; programming, repertoire, collections, narrative; partners/collaborators; staff; boards, governing bodies; suppliers) and respectively connected to certain indicators.[44]

On national level, EDUCULT contributed to the implementation of the European Framework on the Implementation of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning.[45] In the realm of cooperation between selected schools and cultural institutions, EDUCULT carried out a participatory research project dealing with the acquisition of cultural competences. The result was "Learning in, with and through Culture"[46] which gives students a more active role, not only in educational practices but also in critical reflection on them. Other examples of arts education research by EDUCULT were conducted in Germany where projects like "Kultur.Forscher!" (Culture. Researchers!)[47] tried to implement a new methodology of aesthetic and artistic research[48] in all aspects of everyday life in school. Recently a number of schools from Berlin, Bern and Vienna came together with the intention of working with each other to improve their cultural profiles. This project, named "Schule Inklusive Kulturelle Bildungs" (School Including Arts Education),[49] was assisted by EDUCULT to deliver respective data for quality development and a handout for teachers who are willing to follow this approach. In all these cases, the participation of a population of diverse students was seen as a kind of new normality within all aspects of the different practices. In the related theoretical considerations, there was

---

[44] Cf. Interarts et al. (2015): *Benchmarks for Diversity Management in Cultural Institutions.* URL: https://mcpbroker.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/benchmarking-tool-with-logos.pdf (last accessed 10th February 2018).

[45] Education and Culture DG (2007): *Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning. European Reference Framework.* URL: https://www.google.at/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwiu64bS1PrXAhXIZlAKHdCKDe0QFggvMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.erasmusplus.org.uk%2Ffile%2F272%2Fdownload&usg=AOvVaw33FW_ZhGZ30MBMb_jMGqqE (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[46] http://educult.at/en/forschung/lernen-in-mit-und-durch-kultur/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[47] EDUCULT (2011): *Programmevaluation Kultur.Forscher! Kinder und Jugendliche auf Entdeckungsreise.* URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/KuFo-Abschlussbericht2011_lang_final.pdf (last accessed 10th February 2018).

[48] Cf. Kämpf-Jansen, Helga (2012): *Ästhetische Forschung. Wege durch Alltag, Kunst und Wissenschaft. Zu einem innovativen Konzept ästhetischer Bildung* (*KONTEXT/Kunst – Vermittlung – Kulturelle Bildung*). Marburg.

[49] http://educult.at/en/forschung/schule-inklusive-kulturelle-bildung/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

a shared feeling among the various partners that diversity can no longer be seen as the "big exception".[50]

6 Research Approaches

When it comes to approaches to exploring cultural diversity as an important aspect of arts education, some main foci can be mentioned. Social science methods dominate the research, whether it is about analyses of the field, of certain programmes, or of the aims and effects of arts education. In principle, studies in the field of arts education that summarize and compare various arts education activities on different levels – as, for example, in the context of school – are rare but significant. One example is the already mentioned Austria-wide study "Diversity and Cooperation", while the project "Ruhratlas Kulturelle Bildung"[51] was an example of a research-driven overview of arts education activities in the Ruhr area in Germany – enabled by a private foundation. It has to be acknowledged that these pilot projects have not yet found public stakeholders willing to receive relevant data for more evidence-driven policy-making in the field of arts education – especially with regard to cultural diversity.

Political field analyses at the levels of polity, politics and policy are a fundamentally important approach to understanding the political framework of arts education. These were used, for example, in the aforementioned EU projects "AEMS" and "Access to Culture", which also addressed questions of cultural diversity. For geographically or otherwise restricted work, e.g. sector-specific surveys, research focuses on the mapping of political programmes and/or actors/actor groups. The actors and stakeholders are often the starting point of the research design and at the centre of research itself, not least when it comes to the analysis of individual programmes.

For this reason, actor-oriented methodological approaches are often used. Actor-network theory[52] provides a good starting point when it comes to relational ties within a network. Therefore actor-network theory (ANT) seems to be an appropriate research basis when the field of arts education is characterized by different groups of actors whose interactions represent the core of such analyses. Therein, problematization, interessement, enrolment and mobilization of allies are the four key categories of how network processes can be analysed. This approach seems also

[50] EDUCULT (2017): *Flickwerk Kultur. Eine Handreichung zu Kultureller Bildung an der Schule.* URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/FLICKWERK-KULTUR_final.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[51] Wimmer, Michael/Schad, Anke/Nagel, Tanja (2010): *Ruhratlas Kulturelle Bildung. Studie zur Qualitätsentwicklung kultureller Bildung in der Metropole Ruhr.* URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Ruhratlas-Kulturelle-Bildung.pdf (last accessed 10th February 2018).

[52] Cf. Latour, Bruno (2005): *Reassembling the social. An introduction to actor-network-theory.* Oxford.

suitable for researching questions of cultural diversity, even if this has not been done yet.

The same requirements apply to the grounded theory approach, situation analysis, developed by Clarke.[53] It is based on the actor-network theory but focuses on the analysis of the overall situation and less on the negotiation processes within a network. Rather, the first step is to capture the relevant human and non-human actors. Secondly, connections between actors are described by forming social worlds. Thirdly, positional maps show different approaches, perspectives, discourse, etc. that may occur. This theoretical approach is used in the same way in analyses of individual programmes as well as in larger-scale studies which, on the one hand, address the field of arts education in relation to, for example, a specific funding situation or something similar. On the other hand, it brings together different perspectives of various actors and stakeholders and enables an understanding sociological processes in complex structures. Thus, it offers a valuable tool for also considering aspects of diversity.[54]

Contribution analysis is used primarily to approach the frequently raised research question about the quality and the impact of arts education programmes or projects. By means of one or more theories of change, connections between the input, output, outcome and impact levels of a programme or project can be established. In doing so, one approaches the research of effects very carefully. Using plausibility chains, the probable effects of arts education activities should be presented without assuming one-dimensional causal links.[55] Nevertheless, effects of arts education experiences on individuals have been largely excluded from research so far.

When it comes to researching arts education in the context of institutions, neo-institutionalist approaches allow a deeper theoretically based research design. Certainly, schools are such an institutional framework worth considering,[56] but this relatively newly applied approach could also be a promising starting point in the context of the arts mediation activities of cultural institutions.

For all research projects, the focus is mostly on dialogue-oriented, qualitative research methods. In particular, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and various forms of large group surveys such as round tables or other discourse formats are used. Quantitative surveys, which are nowadays being implemented almost exclusively in the form of online surveys, are carried out where feasible and sensible. Linking and thus triangulating qualitative and quantitative data describe the great challenge of arts education research.

---

[53] Clarke, Adele (2009): *Situational analysis. Grounded theory after the interpretive turn.* Thousand Oaks.

[54] See, e.g. http://educult.at/en/forschung/freie-darstellende-kuenste-und-kulturelle-bildung/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[55] See the concept for impact of culture: Goethe Institut (2015): *Kultur wirkt. Mit Evaluation Außenbeziehungen nachhaltiger gestalten.* URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Kultur-wirkt_Brosch%C3%BCre.pdf (last accessed 17th December 2017).

[56] See, e.g. http://educult.at/en/featured/kulturelle-bildung-und-schule/ (last accessed 17th December 2017).

Still little developed but nevertheless promising, judging by previous experience, is a strongly participatory research approach including artistic research methods. The aforementioned project "Learning in, with and through culture" is one that works in relation to these methods. Pupils were included as researchers in this project. Using artistic-creative methods, they developed the research questions and collected their own data and were involved in the data interpretation. As the study report was written by the specialist researchers involved, finding adequate forms of outcome presentation that also integrated the non-specialist researchers would be one of the goals in linking arts education and artistic research. In this way, diverse perspectives can be included, not only in the research process but also in the production of deliverables. The whole scientific procedure is in its infancy and needs further application in research practice.

7 Final Remarks and Recommendations

Following the recommendation of Anne Bamford in her compendium, *The Wow Factor: The Global Research Compendium on the Impact of the Arts in Education*,[57] that bad arts education is worse than no arts education, the quality aspect of each related initiative is crucial. In Austria, the interest in measuring the quality of arts education activities and programmes can only be described as not yet developed. Therefore, arts education research has to put stress on developing tools for quality analyses which have to define diversity as a major issue. The category of transculturality has to be recognized when analysing, planning and applying approaches, while indicators could be openness and process orientation. When it comes to the modes of mediation, interaction and sense-oriented approaches are valuable indicators. Ideas of human and social development are equally important to consider, as well as the ratio of self-determination and hierarchy. The grade of participation in decision-making processes, co-creative production and learning communities are describing ways of collaboration, while the level of the participants' cultural diversity reflects a certain structure of participation. The thematic approaches can be indicated by the way in which transcultural developments and hybrid arts are considered.[58]

Also, consideration on different levels is necessary. In addition to basic research on the processes and effects of arts education, studies on the structures and framework conditions of arts education as well as the evaluation of individual programmes and projects are needed. Only by combining these different levels of knowledge can one succeed in creating a broader overall picture. While basic research can be done across national boundaries and knowledge about processes and effects of arts

---

[57] Bamford, Anne (2006): *The Wow Factor. Global research compendium on the impact of the arts in education*. Münster.

[58] Cf. Weigl, Aron (2016): *Auswärtige Kulturpolitik für Kinder. Künstlerisch-ästhetische Bildung als Herausforderung transkultureller Beziehungen*. Wiesbaden, p. 307.

education from other countries can be used, special research into national and regional framework conditions and arts education activities that highlight respective specificities is a prerequisite of further quality development in this sector in Austria. Nonetheless, transnational research projects can also be initiated in questions relating to structures and programme models, in order to be able to make comparisons or to support regions with lack of specialist expertise in the development of their arts education practice.

Greater political commitment is needed to further develop the field of arts education in Austria as a whole. We have to take into account that there is only a weak tradition of making use of research, especially when it comes to the field of arts education. This result is only a slim evidence base for decision-making processes which would allow a more structural and transparent approach. Therefore, political consultation is an important task for arts education although it requires that many actors in the field work together to make knowledge-based political decisions and to bring decision-makers into contact with the findings of arts education research. Quality-based evaluations of individual programmes need to be implemented in order to improve policies and their impact on the field.

At this point, it is important to emphasize the connection between different societal sectors. It is not only about the cross-sectional area of education and culture but also about the fields of youth welfare, social issues and so on. As mentioned above, our societies are facing a diversification which fundamentally links arts education with matters of interculturality and transculturality. The great diversity in primary schools in Vienna is a fact that influences everyday school life, not only concerning language issues but also concerning cultural attitudes. Judging by our research results,[59] arts education research which includes intercultural and transcultural aspects can play a supporting role at political, administrative, institutional and individual levels, even if there is no guarantee of this. Therefore, it might also be necessary in Austria to take this potential into account and to foster research projects dealing with questions about diversity and postcolonial approaches.

Last but not least, we should outline the relationship between cultural and civic education which might be the key to preparing young people for a meaningful life in a diverse, increasingly conflictual and unprecedented world in which we all – inside and outside of the school – have to learn to renegotiate borders, be they geographical, mental, cultural, social or political.

As this text was being written, a new right-wing Austrian federal government was sworn in. In its programme, there are two priorities which sound promising. One is about "inspiring children and young people about arts and culture", and the other is about the intention not just to fund but also to evaluate state-funded cultural projects, which might lead to a more evidence-based approach in the sector of arts education as well. Also, there is a rather frustrating priority which relates to the future of Austria as a migrant society. It is migrants in particular, alongside other disadvantaged groups, who look set to lose the most from any new government

---

[59]You may find an overview here: http://educult.at/en/forschung/ (last access 17th December 2017).

approach to identifying a "homogenous Austrian identity" – which of course has nothing to do with the realities of diverse societies of the twenty-first century, neither in Austria nor in other parts of Europe.

References

Bamford, Anne. 2006. *The Wow factor. Global research compendium on the impact of the arts in education*. New York: Münster.

Bundesministerium für Unterricht und Kunst. 1975. *Kunstbericht*. Vienna.

Clarke, Adele. 2009. *Situational analysis. Grounded theory after the interpretive turn*. Thousand Oaks.

EDUCULT. 2008. *Vielfalt und Kooperation*. Self-published. Vienna.

———. 2011a *European arts education facts finding mission. Final report*. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Report_Fact_Finding_Mission_EDUCULT.pdf. Last accessed 10 Feb 2018.

———. 2011b. *Programmevaluation Kultur.Forscher! Kinder und Jugendliche auf Entdeckungsreise*. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/KuFo-Abschlussbericht2011_lang_final.pdf. Last accessed 10 Feb 2018.

———. 2012. *Arts education monitoring system. Report phase one – EDUCULT*. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/AEMS-Report-Austria_Educult.pdf. Last accessed 10 Feb 2018.

———. 2017. *Flickwerk Kultur. Eine Handreichung zu Kultureller Bildung an der Schule*. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/FLICKWERK-KULTUR_final.pdf. Last access 17th December 2017.

EDUCULT et al. 2015. *Access to culture – Policy analysis. Final report*. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Final_Report_Print.pdf. Last accessed 10 Feb 2018.

Goethe-Institut. 2015. *Kultur wirkt. Mit Evaluation Außenbeziehungen nachhaltiger gestalten*. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Kultur-wirkt_Brosch%C3%BCre.pdf. Last Accessed 17 Dec 2017.

Institut für empirische Sozialforschung (ifes). 1975. *Grundlagenforschung im kulturellen Bereich*. Vienna.

Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte. 2017. *Migration und Mehrsprachigkeit – Wie fit sind wir für die Vielfalt?* Policy Brief 3. Vienna.

Kämpf-Jansen, Helga. 2012. Ästhetische Forschung. Wege durch Alltag, Kunst und Wissenschaft. Zu einem innovativen Konzept ästhetischer Bildung (KONTEXT / Kunst – Vermittlung – Kulturelle Bildung). Marburg.

Latour, Bruno. 2005. *Reassembling the social. An introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford.

Sievers, Wiebke. 2012. *Migrations- und Integrationsforschung in Österreich: Literaturdatenbank und Forschungsstand*. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (ed.). Vienna.

SORA. 2015. *Kulturelle Beteiligung in Wien*. Vienna.

Weigl, Aron. 2016. *Auswärtige Kulturpolitik für Kinder. Künstlerisch-ästhetische Bildung als Herausforderung transkultureller Beziehungen*. Wiesbaden.

Wimmer, Michael, Tanja Nagel, and Anke Schad. 2011. Zur Teilnahme junger Menschen an kulturellen Angeboten. In *PISA 2009. Nationale Zusatzanalysen für Österreich*, ed. Eder Ferdinand. Vienna/Salzburg.

Wimmer, Michael, and Anke Schad. 2009. Kunst, Kultur und Bildung: Kulturelle Bildung als Herausforderung an das Schulwesen. Ansätze, Erfahrungen und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten. In *Bildungsbericht 2009*, ed. Bifie, 183–202. URL: https://www.bifie.at/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/NBB2009_Band2_Kapitel-B3.pdf. Last accessed 17 Dec 2017.

Wimmer, Michael, Anke Schad, and Tanja Nagel. 2010. *Ruhratlas Kulturelle Bildung. Studie zur Qualitätsentwicklung kultureller Bildung in der Metropole Ruhr*. URL: http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Ruhratlas-Kulturelle-Bildung.pdf. Last accessed 10 Feb 2018.