

Diversity-Conscious Arts Education: Culture Education Foundations for New Challenges in a Heterogeneous Society



Susanne Keuchel and Nadine Rousseau

Abstract The Academy for Arts Education developed – in cooperation with the University of Münster – the training concept DiKuBi (diversity-conscious arts education) that was funded by a 3-year-project of Germany’s BMBF (Federal Ministry of Education and Research) with the aim to link expert discourses on education and diversity by means of artistic-aesthetic experiential spaces. Methods and approaches of arts education allow a new resource-oriented perspective on the complex and therefore often strenuous (exhausting) subject of diversity. Existing intercultural training concepts, antibias and anti-discrimination methods focus mainly on the participants’ prejudices, which are mostly shortcoming-oriented. Most often one finds a theoretical-based attitude focusing on interculturality or transculturality. Multi-perspectivity of the arts, which do not differentiate between “right” or “wrong”, opens up various perspectives on these phenomena and offers positive, interesting and alternative approaches to diversity. In addition, arts education might be an instrument to approach diversity not solely on its cognitive level. In terms of individual development, it starts from each individual stance and provides scope for a playful approach, adapting one’s own positioning. Thus, the individual conduct in dealing with diversity is not limited but opens up future-related opportunities. The contribution focuses on the training concept of DiKuBi, its developing process, its practical contribution and its future chances for social cohesion.

Keywords Diversity · Arts education · Further education · Innovative training concept · Cultural professionals · Research project · Social cohesion · Heterogeneous society · Intercultural training

S. Keuchel · N. Rousseau (✉)

Akademie der Kulturellen Bildung des Bundes und des Landes NRW, Remscheid, Germany
e-mail: keuchel@kulturellebildung.de; rousseau@kulturellebildung.de

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Project Facts

Title: Diversity-Conscious Arts Education (German Title: Diversitätsbewusste Kulturelle Bildung (DiKuBi))

Concept and Implementation: Academy of Arts Education of the German Government and State of North Rhine-Westphalia (also: The German Observatory of Arts and Culture Education), Prof. Dr. Susanne Keuchel

Evaluation: Institute of Educational Studies at the University of Münster, Prof. Dr. Halit Öztürk

Project Term: From 2014 to 2017

Sponsor: Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Participants: 13–20 artists, arts educators and multipliers without functional educational training in each course unit

In light of increasing heterogeneity in society, facilitated by increasing globalisation, mediatisation, individualisation, mobility and migration, a desire arose at the *Akademie der Kulturellen Bildung des Bundes und des Landes NRW* (Academy of Arts Education of the German Government and State of North Rhine-Westphalia) to test diversity-conscious approaches in arts education. Such a proposal was submitted to the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The “DiKuBi – Diversity-Conscious Arts Education” project was funded and accomplished by the Academy of Arts Education under the direction of Prof. Dr. Susanne Keuchel within the scope of a joint research project in collaboration with the adult education/further training working group at the Institute of Educational Studies at the University of Münster over a period of 3.5 years.

When the Academy of Arts Education formulated the proposal for the further training development “Diversity-conscious Arts Education” in 2013 and began drafting the further training programme in 2014, many critical issues were still left unanswered: Does arts education require specific further training, or isn’t arts education in itself intercultural education? Back then, German academic discourse was primarily dominated by intercultural, transcultural (cf. Keuchel 2015: 50; Terkessidis 2002; Welsch 1992: 5; Yildiz and Hill 2014) or post-migrant approaches. At that time, the action-neutral perspective of diversity was very rarely discussed in arts education (Keuchel 2016a: 21p.). Critical questions were posed concerning whether a diversity-conscious and discrimination-critical perspective has to be the responsibility of political education as part of empowerment strategies and if sufficiently tried and tested offers already existed.

Today, only 4 years later, the issue of diversity in arts education has arrived in public discourse and is being discussed as an urgent need (cf. Heinrich 2017). Culture and arts education are viewed as an important pillar for social cohesion in the current general social climate (cf. Keuchel 2017: 21; Zimmermann 2017).

In the following, the concept, its emergence, imperatives, experiences and innovations of the concept shall be presented, and a first final summary shall be drawn. Therefore, first we will explore how the role of arts education in times of social

transformation and pluralisation may have changed. On points two and three, we give a broad view on the structure and approaches of the further training concept, referring to the requirements that arose in the previous part. On points four and five, we offer insights into the testing process of the further training concept and explore the incorporating practical experience and findings from the evaluation. We describe further steps and consequences taken, resulting from the implementation of the further training concept on point six, and finally we present a concluding assessment of the capacities that diversity-conscious arts education has.

1 On the Origin and Necessity of a Further Training Concept DiKuBi

The overall social situation has significantly changed in recent years (cf. Beck 1992; Giddens 2002). We have long been able to observe social pluralisation processes, Germany as an immigration society (cf. Hell 2005), digitalisation (cf. Zacharias 1991), as well as the differentiation of milieus (Keuchel 2015: 51) and social classes, of youth cultures and subcultures within the context of individualisation (cf. Beck 1992), the growing chasm between rich and poor (cf. Nachtwey 2016; Below, von 2002) – all the above are trends that are leading to a broader diversity of opinions, attitudes and lifestyles in society.

What is new, however, is that extremist ideas and positions are being met with approval in large swathes of society and racist views are finding acceptance in public domain. Right-wing populist views have become socially acceptable (cf. Collard 2016), youths are becoming radicalised for their alleged religious convictions, and their statements damaging to humankind are being met with increasing approval (cf. Universität Bielefeld 2012).

And so, in the face of this development, what is the role of arts education? Besides aiming to enable cultural participation for all, arts education also sets itself the goal of having an emancipatory impact. Arts education as it was established in the 1968 generation as “new arts education”, which “educates in culture”, as opposed to the old principle, which “trains in art” (cf. Liebau and Zirfas 2004), represents the claim to subject reinforcement and self-education. This aim of focusing on self-education and in this case on a youth culture lifeworld orientation (cf. Braun and Schorn 2012) was formulated in a time that predominately featured homogeneous group constellations with very similar cultural experiences and values due to an essentially normative social structure. It poses the question, however, of whether these approaches are still transferrable today and whether a democratic understanding of values and a regulatory framework needs to be taught or negotiated in advance in order to initiate self-development processes within groups. One could also critically scrutinise the youth lifeworld orientation: In an increasingly fragmented and milieu-ghettoised society increasingly dominated by commercial arts offers, does it make sense to exclusively address the issue of lifeworld orientation or shouldn't it rather be more about opening up lifeworlds and getting to know alternative lifeworlds?

Little attention is afforded to internationality in the sense of incorporating artists and artworks from other cultural spaces into arts education practice, as documented by an empirical analysis of some 460 best-practice projects (cf. Keuchel 2016b: p. 10). In practice, people with a migrant background are often reduced to their family's cultural background as well as stereotyped (cf. Terkessidis 2002) and in "consciously interculturally oriented educational offers often unintentionally invited to exotic foreign discoveries" (Keuchel and Dunz 2015: 186, see also Keuchel 2012).

What do this observation and the social transformation mean specifically for arts educators, artists and multipliers in their daily work and in their engagement with lifeworlds, of those who want to reach them? And what does this mean for the basic tenets of arts education? Must these principles, as they were developed in the 1968 generation, be revised in part (cf. Keuchel 2015: p)? Or is there a unique potential already existing that needs to be identified for an increasingly diverse social structure? These questions form the background for the idea to examine a DiKuBi further training concept.

2 On the Structure of the Further Training Concept

The DiKuBi further training concept, as it was tested is divided into three course weeks, with a practical project testing phase between the second and third course weeks (Fig. 1).

The three course units took place at the Academy of Arts Education. The practical projects were developed by the participants themselves in the second course week for their own work context and implemented before the third course week, to enable the third and last course week to be used for presentation and reflection on these projects.

Given the pioneering field of diversity, the interposition of a practical phase was considered particularly important. The intent was to test the diversity-conscious concepts developed during the further training under real conditions and find out whether they really meet the demands of heterogeneous target group constellations, promote diversity-conscious attitudes and help deal with diversity.

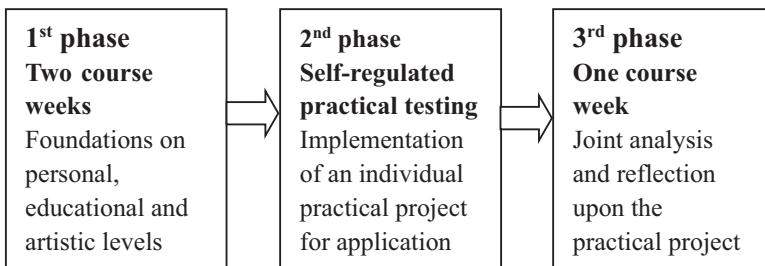


Fig. 1 Further training structure. (Source: Keuchel and Öztürk 2014)

There was a conscious effort to ensure that the further training participants themselves were members of heterogeneous target groups. Selection criteria was based on gender, age, experience with “intercultural” projects, origin in terms of nationality, migration background (rural or urban areas) as well as different federal states and including art and cultural professionals from different artistic disciplines. This made it possible to test their ability to handle diversity even during the further training itself.

The last of the three course units employed an alternative configuration of further training participants. It incorporated only art and cultural professionals from one specific region to test joint collaboration concepts in the practical phase as well as promoting and networking the mutual collaboration in the region. There was a conscious decision in this case to involve a rural region, where until now no cooperation concepts relating to diversity perspectives existed.

Emphasis was also placed on a certain degree of heterogeneity in terms of the lecturers. It was important not to just teach one viewpoint or perspective. Accordingly, while there was one responsible lecturer for the entire 3-week course unit who took on a moderating and reflective role, they were flanked by various lecturers from science, practice and different art disciplines.

3 Objectives, Content and Methods of Further Training

While further training programmes often operate on the premise of achieving a verifiable increase in expertise, the objective and approach of the DiKuBi further training is primarily to develop the personality of the participants, in this case strengthening an inner attitude and one’s own position within the context of diversity. Authenticity, appreciation and openness, the ability to endure irritation and the ability to reflect one’s own actions and assessments are skills that are seen as key in dealing with heterogeneous groups.

“Since there are no “right” or “wrong” solution strategies when it comes to addressing the issue of diversity in terms of concrete situations, no competence models were developed. Instead of clearly quantifiable learning objectives, the focus is on raising awareness of the issue of diversity and strengthening one’s own attitude towards it. At the same time, the further training participants work on their confidence and on developing empathy for others” (Keuchel and Dunz 2015: 189).

The DiKuBi further training goes one step further. Taking one’s personal attitude as a basis, it focuses on educational processes and artistic action. The result is a multilayered engagement with diversity on three levels – the personal, educational and artistic levels.

3.1 Diversity Awareness on a Personal Level

Initially, the current principles and discourses are presented, and a joint knowledge base is established. The participants address cultural concepts (cf. Keuchel and Wagner 2012: p), social categories of diversity as well as construction and discrimination mechanisms (cf. Feagin and Feagin 2011) and identity concepts (cf. Delianidou 2010). The further training, for example, addresses how representations of diversity in public and in the media influence perception and help shape reality. This stands in contrast to creating an awareness for the many different cultural backgrounds and facets that constitute individual identities.

Personal development is hereby stimulated by exercises and methods that facilitate changes in perspective, stimulate self-reflection and raise awareness for entry barriers and discrimination in everyday life. At the same time, alternative courses of action are tested out; new communication patterns are trained. The basis for these exercises are, as already illustrated, the current theoretical principles of diversity such as identities, stereotypes, discrimination concepts, transculturality or, for example, post-migrant positioning. None of these – controversially debated – discourses are framed as being exclusive. Instead, they are presented and practically experienced, so that the participants can form an opinion themselves as to which of these theories are practical and applicable for them.

3.2 Diversity Awareness at an Educational Level

The second level of reflection in the further training sees participants addressing heterogeneous groups in educational work. Concrete assistance is provided on planning and implementation concerning the development of the practical project for their own respective work context. The focus here is not on the thematic content of the projects but much more the “how?” of implementation. The participants focus on the requirements and needs of different target groups as well as possible entry barriers or sensitive issues. Framework conditions such as institutional ties and cooperation partners, the spatial situation, temporal units, material and working methods are analysed with respect to the target groups. When it comes to the implementation, the further training shows ways to attract people for projects and how to establish a diversity-conscious group culture of interaction but also demonstrates that rules and limits need to be negotiated in the collaborative work. Part of the professionalisation of the facilitator includes raising awareness for a discrimination-sensitive and diversity-conscious language and manner of addressing children, youths and adults in the educational work (cf. Leiprecht 2008). In addition to the ability to reflect upon speech patterns, it becomes clear that the use of diversity-conscious language requires practice. An awareness “that in a group, the individual

viewpoints of the individual can be independent of their culture stimulates the further training to a respectful, culture-sensitive culture of interaction and dialogue” (Keuchel and Dunz 2015: 191).

The third course phase serves primarily to reflect upon the practical projects. The practical experiences can immediately be reflected in the further training group, and different perspectives can be reflected upon in a collegial exchange, for example, how participants’ view of their own work and target group has changed as a result of the further training course, whether there were difficulties in implementing the project developed in the further training course, which successes they had and which strategies and measures contributed to a successful implementation. With regards to their own role, it is interesting to find out whether the participants perceived themselves differently, whether they identified (linguistic) patterns or behavioural patterns that they would like to continue to work on.

Over the course of the entire further training, the participants are repeatedly confronted with their role as a pedagogical guide in the educational process. Self-awareness begins by addressing the issue of identity. One’s own biography, individual strengths and lifeworlds and desires and fictions are a reference to the multidimensionality and individuality of identity constructions and thus pave the way for the transfer for the educational work. New opportunities to perceive diversity are developed playfully and creatively, making encounters between people more natural than before. This engagement helps to break down insecurities and misunderstandings and support the ability to better deal with otherness and difference, as well as to better understand and control group dynamics.

Supplementary to academic discourses, games, exercise and methods that have been tried and tested in inclusive and diversity-conscious arts education are taught in practical form. Some come from intercultural training (cf. Nohl 2006) and some from creative group work or performative pedagogy. All forms have been tried and tested in adult education and in creative work with children and youth groups. With numerous methods for group processes, the participants receive a basic set of instruments they can use in educational work.

Although the further training focuses on the inner attitude of the facilitator, the transfer of the content and practical exercises presented is also addressed and discussed, which is why every thematic block is accompanied by such an assessment at the meta level. The exercises and methods are analysed in terms of their applicability to different age groups, group sizes and learning contexts, while possible variations and alterations are equally discussed. Limitations and challenges for groups, particularly within the context of diversity, need to be treated sensitively, since negative experiences can lead to resistance or reinforcement of prejudices. Thanks to the participatory approach to the assessment at the meta level, the further training integrates a research element that uniquely takes account of the pioneer work in the field of diversity-conscious arts education.

3.3 Diversity Enrichment at the Artistic Level

In several respects, the creative and artistic approaches of the further training represent a unique feature of the further training – on the one hand, aesthetic changes in perspective are initiated in productive creative processes leading to reflection on one's own artistic systems and the respective educational communication. On the other hand, the reception of diverse subcultural, international or transcultural forms of expression help to expand one's view of artists, cultural spaces and artwork outside the canon. Examples from different fields (e.g. afro-cosmopolitical literature, Arabic sound landscapes, dramaturgy and image composition in Indian or Nigerian film, fashion and design etc.) are discussed by the participants in terms of their irritation potential, assessing them as art, and participants address reception habits and the power of assessment. An awareness is created for exoticism and ascriptions of works of artworks and artists from certain countries. Over the course of the discussion, it becomes apparent how often works of art and cultural assets and practices are viewed through the lens of a Eurocentrism and North America centrism (Keuchel 2015: 46). This critical examination of one's own receptive behaviour is transferred both to one's own work and to its relevance within institutional and structural contexts.

The artists shall hopefully become more aware of their own, varied cultural and artistic backgrounds and more conscious of their own artistic rules. This will create new stimuli and artistically and aesthetically may make diversity perceptible in their own work.

As part of the pioneer work of the further training within the scope of individual freedom, experimental techniques of intercultural and transcultural training are then in a further step to be transformed into aesthetic and artistic experiential processes. This begins by discussing different artistic forms of expression such as dance, visual art, acting, literature, etc. While intercultural training is usually limited to exercises on intercultural sensitivity, this pioneering work creates experiential spaces through artistic processes in which different contents is made tangible or artistic, and aesthetic creative processes are initiated via the medium of arts education. This could originate from approaches and exercises from highly divergent fields such as antibias training, transcultural theatre pedagogy and visual art or intercultural training, which are translated into a strength-oriented design process. Thanks to the freedom of experience and joint reflection, an awareness is created of artistic diversity and transcultural forms of expression, which also supports changes in artistic perspective and creative work (Fig. 2).

Levels	Topics Theory and practice
Personal level: Foundations and discourses on cultural diversity	Cultural concepts [discourse and concepts] Diversity [and categories of difference] Identity concepts, lifeworlds Construction and discrimination mechanisms Reflection on cultural educational work within the context of diversity in one's own behaviour, in addressing target groups and in addressing the arts, Exercises of inter/transcultural training
Educational level: Strategies for action	Subject-oriented education: Identity constructions and individual cultural imprints Practice-oriented strategies: didactic transfer, methods and examples
Artistic level: Aesthetic change in perspective and transformation	Addressing non-European and contemporary youth culture art forms and aesthetics Development of aesthetic and artistic diversity experiences: Transformation of techniques of inter-/transcultural training into aesthetic and artistic experiential processes of different art disciplines

Fig. 2 Topics of the further training concept "Diversity-conscious Arts Education". (Source: Keuchel and Öztürk 2014)

4 Testing Process: Adjustments and Realignment of the Further Training Concept

Within the scope of the project funding, three tests of the devised curriculum were intended for the development of the further training concept in order to be able to carry out necessary modifications in the process from the results of the accompanying evaluation.

The evaluation within the context of DiKuBi was carried out in both a process-related (formative) and a summarising (recapitalising) form. This made it possible

on the one hand to directly implement feedback on the results during the course weeks and tests and thus continuously develop the offer. The evaluation yielded specific findings after the individual course weeks on the framework conditions, satisfaction with lecturers, content-based and methodological approach, working and group atmosphere, scheduling and structuring of course contents and preparation and implementation of the practical projects. Some of these findings were already implemented in the next course week; some were only implemented in subsequent testing phases (cf. Öztürk et al. 2016).

The evaluation moreover provided systematic and empirically supported performance monitoring of the overall project. The evaluation design is based on Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's four-level model (2006), which is divided into the following levels:

- Reaction: Participant satisfaction
- Learning: Learning success, processing of the learning content
- Behaviour: Application of the acquired knowledge
- Results: Overall result, benefit for the organisation

The data collection was carried out in three phases: input/context, process and output/transfer. Different methods of data collection were employed such as online questionnaires, guideline-based interviews and project descriptions.

The learning success of the participants was demonstrated in the respective reports after a test, whereby the learning success is primarily focused on the personal and educational level in the sense of a change in perspective and attitude with regard to migration-related diversity. Empirically, it was difficult to record the scope and nature in which the individual's attitude had changed. By contrast, there was a clear, greater understanding of diversity-conscious arts education in terms of the characteristics of participant orientation, didactic expertise, change in perspective and self and external perception (cf. Öztürk et al. 2016: 4).

The overall assessment of the further training reflected a high general degree of satisfaction of the participants with the content, methods and framework conditions of the further training. The high degree of social relevance and the influence it exerted on their own work was confirmed by participants. Beyond this there were comments on expanding the methodological repertoire in all artistic disciplines and to create a collection of units, exercises and methods and structure them according to their content. Participants were also keen to have opportunities to continuously reflect on their own practice.

There were personnel changes during the process, which led to all three further training tests being conducted by different lecturers, particularly affecting the responsible lecturers who accompanied the entire further training. These changes very clearly showed that the design of the topics and the group support is very dependent on the personality, style and expertise of the responsible lecturers. Lecturers set special emphases through the selection and connection of methods and content. All three tests also used different guest lecturers, and they in turn set their own areas of focus. Ultimately, the composition of the participants in the further training also had an influence on the development of the content. For example, the

second further training group saw many participants from the field of visual arts taking part who, over the course of the programme, requested more intensive work in the field of visual arts. These wishes were met in the spirit of the workshop character, which led to very interesting and more in-depth discussions taking place. The further training group from the third test also differed from previous groups in accordance with the proposal due to its regional focus, in this case the Sauerland region. This also led to changes in content. Here, the networking between participants for the practical project and addressing structures and specific features within a rural context played a key role.

In terms of the evaluation, the change of the primarily responsible lecturers on the one side posed a challenge, since the lecturers' personalities influenced the assessment. However, it was still possible to identify recurring content that was consistently positively highlighted despite the change in lecturers, content which could be seen as "right" and relevant for the further training. A further benefit of the personnel changes could be seen in the development of the module manual, which, thanks to the diversity and simultaneous examination, proved to be particularly detailed.

It became clear, both within the process itself and through the accompanying evaluation, that the participants required support for the development of a practical project. This led to a whole day being introduced already in the second test for project development and planning with support from a guest lecturer. Implementing the practical projects between the second and the third course phases still proved difficult in part, since there was often not enough time to acquire grant funding or to find cooperation partners or participants, for example. The originally intended approach for the projects to be carried out within the scope of their own work was difficult for many participants, as they rarely operate in fixed or regular group contexts. At the same time, the participants tended towards keeping the practical project and just extending the time between the course phases. The practical component demonstrated to many participants the challenges that can arise in the actual implementation and furthermore how important the collegial exchange amongst the group is.

5 Modules and Method Collection

Both the testing and the evaluation findings highlighted just how much the participants of the further training desire orientation in the complex issue of diversity-conscious arts education. During the design phase of the further training and in the implementation process, examining the issues and perspectives of arts education can take up in diversity discourse, and what makes diversity-conscious arts education special was a subject of repeated intense discussion in the team.

In light of this, a module manual was developed that structures the thematic blocks and brings them into a didactic and logical structure. One module was developed as a basic module that is intended to provide an adequate introduction to the topic of diversity. This basic module is about discussing terms and concepts of

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4
Raising awareness of diversity perspectives	Artistic forms of expression of difference	Artistic examination of diversity	Practical experience / practical project
M1.1 Terms, discourses and concepts	M2.1 Transculturality	M3.1 Visual art	M4.1 Designing diversity-conscious practical projects
M1.2 Categories of difference	M2.2 Empowerment through artistic means	M3.2 Performing Arts	M4.2 Diversity-conscious educational practice
M1.3 Changes in perspective	M2.3 Art outside the Western canon	M3.3 Dance/choreography	M4.3 Reflection
M1.4 Lifeworlds		M3.4 Language/literature	

Fig. 3 Overview on the structure of the module manual

arts education to establish a joint level of knowledge in the participant group. It includes addressing identity constructions and social categories of difference (cf. Huxel 2014). This also implies addressing structural discrimination, ascriptions and entry barriers as well as engaging different lifeworlds in the sense of changes in perspective (Fig. 3).

The second module references artistic forms of expression of difference (Keuchel 2015: 52). This includes discussing transculturality (Welsch 1992), empowerment approaches (cf. Herriger 2014) and youth culture and art forms outside the Western canon.

The third module takes a perspective from the viewpoint of the artistic disciplines. The key issue here is which creative spaces are opened up in the respective art that enable diversity experience and how this experience can be reflected and classified within the overall context.

The fourth module deals with the practical application of diversity-conscious arts education in heterogeneous groups. Here, a diversity-conscious, discrimination-sensitive and barrier-free project concept design is taken into focus. Topics such as language or manners of addressing participants, moderation methods, conflict management, group cultures of interaction and the role and attitude of the instructor are also discussed.

With respect to methodology, all contents are either learned by means of arts education, mainly stimulated through discussion of the sensory experience and one's own creative process or, like in module three and in part also in module two, focused on the artistic process with its quality as a space for reflection for inner attitudes.

The methods, exercises and units from the three tests of the further training were compiled with this underlying structure. They were tailored to enable lecturers or trainers to acquire and implement them. The preparation includes incorporating the assessment and self-reflection levels, as well as giving tips on finding links to other topics.

Since pioneer work has been performed with the DiKuBi further training and the Academy of Arts Education continues to view the field of “Diversity-conscious Arts Education” as a field of development, this collection has been designed as a dynamic element in the form of a “DiKuBi index” that should continue to grow, be continuously reworked and further developed. Perspectively, this should result in a pool of units for trainers and lecturers to use accordingly for their own points of entry.

6 Outlook: On the Stabilisation of the DiKuBi Further Training Concept

Within the scope of developing and evaluating the further training concept, it became clear that there was a clear lack of methods, didactic foundations and lecturers and trainers that operate at the intersection between arts education and diversity. This meant that extensive pioneer work had to be carried out content-wise over the course of the further training testing. This ultimately meant that not only were existing foundations and methods of cultural educational practice integrated into the DiKuBi further training concept design into a didactic concept, but for the first time, skills and methods were also generated together with participants within the further training concept design. It became clear here that there is a great need to further expand on these skills and methods. This was reflected both by the participants of all three further training tests and by the accompanying expert groups and discussions with municipalities that were held parallel to the development of DiKuBi. This is why, in addition to incorporating the DiKuBi further training concept into the existing academy programme, a further implementation of the DiKuBi approach in the form of new formats is simultaneously being tested.

6.1 Network and Trainer Education

As previously discussed, the tests very clearly demonstrated the need as voiced by participants for continuous, ongoing reflection of their own attitude as well as for collegial consultation on experiences from practice. At the same time, there was the desire to systematically continue to develop the specific cultural educational perspective on diversity within the context of further training modules.

This is why the Academy of Arts Education, supported by funding from the state of NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia), founded the network “Diversity-conscious Arts

Education” to continue and to underpin the research results. The objective of the network is to create a point of contact for graduates of the further training to continue work on the issue via an annual network meeting at the Academy of Arts Education.

Graduates can also apply for the further training programme and take part in a 5-day training course for teachers for diversity-conscious arts education, which will empower them to conduct stand-alone further training programmes specifically at the intersection between arts education and diversity.

6.2 Developing New Further Training Formats

Not least due to the current refugee situation since 2015, different institutional representatives and municipalities signalled interest during the testing of the DiKuBi further training concept in using it for their staff resources. The academy is accordingly currently working together with the city of Mülheim an der Ruhr on developing an adaptation of the DiKuBi further training concept for cultural institutions and various occupational groups in arts education in the form of a pilot scheme.

During development of this pilot scheme, the 3-week course programme was adapted both to the framework conditions of the municipalities and to the needs of the participants. The result was a further training format that offers three 2-day course dates with a joint practical project to be conducted by the participants in a municipal institution between the second and third course weeks.

The content of the further training is oriented towards the basic module; however, it was adapted to situations from the everyday working practices of the participants and their respective experiences in the field of arts education and their reflection on their experience. Exercises and work aids, too, were coordinated accordingly to the individual work context to ensure that participants were provided with specific tools. The combination of the work on their own attitude and concrete assistance during the pilot tests was viewed very positively by participants.

7 Conclusion: On the Opportunities of a Diversity-Conscious Practice of Arts Education

When testing the further training concept, the potential that lies specifically at the intersection between diversity and arts education became very clear within the framework of the discourse. This can have a positive impact specifically for practicing arts education and for social cohesion in general.

In terms of the cultural educational practice, it became clear in discussions with the participants and within the accompanying academic discourse that, in the face of the degree of complexity of the social challenges and the demands that heterogeneous groups are placing upon professional staff, expert knowledge in arts education alone is no longer sufficient. In view of the plurality of lifeworlds that are coming together in educational contexts and in terms of the development of lifeworld-oriented approaches to teaching, professional staff members are overwhelmed with the diverse cultural backgrounds and lifeworlds of young people. It demands an attitude of being able to endure irritation, reflect upon first impressions and hasty judgements and explore conflict situations without undertaking “pre-mature culturalisations”.

This particularly applies to the increasing heterogeneity of values in our society. Not least working together with people who have fled from countries with different political and in some cases religious attitudes or working with right-wing populist youths increasingly requires arts education to address values. In the sense of the humanistic educational ideal intimately associated with “ideas central to humanism such as human dignity, freedom and perfectibility” (Assis and Chen 2015: 118) lies a consensus on values aligned to those of the human rights convention. Here it is important to strengthen educational actors when dealing with heterogeneous target groups with different values and to develop respective orientation guidelines for practice.

A significant advantage of diversity-conscious arts education over other further training concepts from the areas of business or international development, for example, is that new resource-oriented and strength-oriented perspectives are created on what is sometimes considered a “difficult” – since highly complex and challenging – issue of diversity. Existing intercultural training concepts, antibias and anti-discrimination methods make more deficit-oriented, existing prejudices of participants visible. Existing further training concepts from other fields of activity are also often dedicated to a single theoretical approach such as that of interculturality or transculturality. The multi-perspectivity of the arts, which does not differentiate between “right” and “wrong” and instead opens up different perspectives on phenomena, not only creates freedom for individuals to create their position with regard to different theoretical concepts but also offers interesting alternative approaches to make diversity perceptible as a positive and not a negative resource. Additionally, arts education makes it possible to not only do this on a cognitive level but also to make it aesthetically perceptible. In the sense of personality development, individual attitudes are immediately engaged, and freedom is given to playfully develop one’s own position. This creates opportunities to deal with diversity in a playfully creative manner and at one’s own responsibility and thus to experience it as a positive, personal and, in the best case, social enrichment. Social cohesion could thus be strengthened.

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