

**Pedagogy, empowerment and discipline: Comparative perspectives of novice teachers in England and Turkey reflecting on ‘the other’**

Hugh Busher<sup>1</sup>, Tony Lawson<sup>1</sup>, Chris Wilkins<sup>1</sup>, Ismail Acun<sup>2</sup>

*1: School of Education, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK*

*2: Uşak University, Turkey*

Hugh Busher, School of Education, University of Leicester, 21, University Road,  
Leicester, LE1 7RF, UK. [hugh.busher@le.ac.uk](mailto:hugh.busher@le.ac.uk)

## **Abstract**

This paper discusses the views of Turkish and British novice teachers on pedagogy and pedagogical relationships with school students when confronted with the pedagogical practices of the 'Other'. Experiences of those practices were gained by novice teachers during an exchange visit for British and Turkish university students in 2008-2009. Data was collected through questionnaires and focus group interviews. Findings suggest that Turkish and British novice teachers initially constructed the 'Other' as very different from themselves. The views of members of both groups were heavily influenced by the cultural contexts in which they trained and worked. British novice teachers tended to take as axiomatic constructivist approaches to pedagogy and the relevance to successful pedagogy of listening to students' voices. Turkish novice teachers questioned both, many seeing control and dissemination of knowledge as central to pedagogy and student teacher relationships.

**Keywords:** Teacher development; intercultural perspectives; policy contexts

## **Introduction**

This paper argues that when novice teachers critically reflect on the pedagogic practices of 'the other' in particular contexts, they also confront their own practices and values and their own experiences as students at school (Busher 2005), their cultural and social capital (Bourdieu 1986). It also argues that they are aware of and influenced by the public discourses around pedagogical practices and the cultural milieu they inhabit, their habitus (Bourdieu 1990).

The data for this paper arises from a postgraduate student exchange programme (jointly funded by the EU and the Turkish government) between Uşak University, Dokuz Eylül University, Middle East Technical University (all in Turkey) and the University of Leicester, England (UK). The programme was designed to promote civil society dialogue in the context of Turkey's candidature for accession to the EU through explorations of participants' understandings of citizenship, Citizenship Education and

attitudes towards students' voices in schools in England and Turkey. The term 'England' is deployed when referring to educational or political systems to acknowledge the diversity of Education systems in the UK. The term 'British' is used for the postgraduate students since they came from all parts of the UK.

Turkish and British student teachers' perspectives on Citizenship Education and on notions of citizenship in their own countries and Europe were collected during an exchange programme for university students in 2008-2009 using a questionnaire and focus group interviews. Before the exchange visits took place the questionnaire was answered by 581 Turkish undergraduate students and 85 British postgraduate students. Of the British students, 27 were training to be Primary School teachers and 58 were training to be Secondary School teachers. Given the small number of responses from British trainee Primary teachers, it was decided to amalgamate the findings from the two British groups. Quantitative data was analysed using simple descriptive statistics to interrogate the proportion of students from each country holding particular views, including none, for each question. During the exchange visits focus group interviews were carried out with 14 British and 14 Turkish postgraduate students. The interview schedule was drawn up partly to complement issues investigated through the questionnaire and partly from participants' responses to the questionnaire. The resultant qualitative data was analysed thematically. The data and methodology are reported in more detail elsewhere (Busher et al. 2009, Wilkins et al. 2010).

### **Educational policy contexts**

Education is both a site and a conduit for struggles (Foucault 1976) through which teachers and students can explore the tensions of being and becoming as they (re)construct their identities (Giddens 1991; Kearney 2003) in situational contexts. The pursuit and enactment of self-identity is central to the development of agency (Giddens 1991) through which people interact with others and with constructed social systems/structures (Giddens 1984). The student teachers in the exchange programme were near a critical point in this journey, moving from being unwaged trainees to income earning teachers. Their contexts were, then, particularly volatile at the micro level, but also at the macro level, because of globalisation, fears of world climate change, the near collapse of the world economic order that enshrines Western dominance and the emergence of additional layers of identity, such as the European Union.

Schools are sites in which national policies and local perspectives intersect as people struggle to construct implementable educational policies and practices (Grace 1995; Riley and Docking 2002) that reflect particular but contested values (Starratt 2007). The importance of schools and schooling in shaping social constructions, such as society's views on identity, pluralism and social cohesion, has been increasingly acknowledged by both national governments within Europe and by the EU. This awareness has been heightened by the observed decline in civic engagement and in participatory politics, especially by young people (Citizenship Foundation 1997), in the second half of the twentieth century.

These changes have taken place in the context of complex structural changes in the global economy, and the impact of globalization and regionalization at national and

European levels (Dale and Robertson 2009). Changing global political and economic conditions have had a major impact on developing a common EU outlook, as has EU expansion eastward since 1989 since the collapse of Communism. The last has brought in to EU membership states with different historical ‘social models’, and different economic conditions, democratic structures and traditions of civil society, from those of the founding states of Western Europe.

Despite the significant spending on European education projects around issues of citizenship, identity, social justice, democracy and human rights, a lack of coherence is particularly apparent in those aspects of education related to the promotion of ‘Europeanness’ and the European ‘social model’ as envisaged in the Maastricht Treaty. This seems to be because models of Citizenship Education tend to mirror the political traditions and cultures of nation states (Hahn 1999; Kerr 2005). In states where centre-left social democratic parties generally dominate (such as in the Nordic bloc), more participatory, process-led approaches to Citizenship Education prevail, whilst more didactic, content-led approaches pertain in states dominated by centre-right politics (Hahn 1999; Kerr 2005).

### *Educational reform in England, Turkey and Europe*

English education policy in the past decade (both generally and more specifically curriculum policy) can be seen as emblematic of ‘New Labourism’. For those close to ‘the project’, it marks ‘a third way’; neither left nor right, neither neo-liberal nor socialist (Giddens 2000). Others characterised it as simply an extension of the Thatcherite neo-liberal project of the 1980s overlaid with an unconvincing rhetoric

emphasising social democratic values of inclusion and equity (Ball 2001; Brehony 2005).

In relation to curriculum policy, the post-1997 period has seen shifts in emphasis; whilst the beginning of this period saw highly prescriptive interventions (the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, management and leadership training for head teachers, and the intensification of the inspection regime). For Ball, these represent a paradox in which reveals, beneath a rhetorical emphasis on learning, a technocratic view of education, a ‘black box, input-output’ approach which downplays the importance of understanding the processes of learning in favour of an outcome-driven, ‘over-determined’ performative model of schooling (Ball 2001, 51-52).

More recently, New Labour education policy has shifted (at least in its rhetoric) to a more flexible approach. Whilst the government continues its high volume output of initiatives, innovations and guidance for schools, the apparent emphasis is on ‘handing back autonomy’ to the profession, by allowing schools and teachers more flexibility in interpreting policies to suit the needs of their pupils. However, this ‘flexibility’ can also be seen as contradictory (and superficial). New initiatives can be promoted through a discourse of consent and collegiality, the performative culture of New Labour education governance ensures almost complete compliance (Ball 2003; Troman et al., 2007) Where a initiative is passed to a school, the language of consent must be seen through the lens of the highly performative model of high stakes inspection through self-evaluation, in which education professionals are drawn into a panoptic self-surveillance that normalises a ‘coercive compliance’ with the state agenda (Wilkins and Wood 2009).

The last decade has also seen significant educational reforms in Turkey, mirroring wider societal, political and economic changes. These reforms, such as the introduction of a new primary curriculum in 2004, have largely focused on moving from a ‘traditional behaviourist’ approach to curricula and pedagogy to a ‘constructivist’ one (Yanpar 2009), indicative of a deeper shift in notions of the purpose of education and the ‘place of the child’ in schooling.

As in England, the dominant rhetoric driving these changes has been one of increasing academic attainment (frequently drawing upon international standardized studies such as PISA and TIMSS (M.E.B. 2008; Olkun and Aydoğdu 2003). However, this similarity masks the distinctive social, cultural and political context to schooling in Turkey. As Bruner notes, “each generation gives new form to the aspirations that shape education in its time” (2002: 1); the aspirations of the founders of Turkish Republic reflect the challenges of transition from imperial power to nation state, and the desire to create a secular, ‘western nation’ out of a multi-national, predominantly Islamic ‘eastern’ society (Lewis 1991; Ortaylı 1985).

Characteristically for Turkey, this transition was managed by the governing elite in a ‘top-down’ manner (Timur 1985; Mardin 1991). This elite, mostly influenced by French Jacobin tradition, developed a centralised education system (along with other public and political spheres) explicitly designed to ‘create a nation’, thus emphasising a strictly prescribed curriculum in which pupils were to be schooled for the good of the nation rather than educated for personal empowerment (Behar 1996; Kaplan 1999). Although there was a deviation from this functionalist approach during 1960s (Turkmen

and Bonnstetter 2007), it was short-lived as a more authoritarian, centralised approach reasserted itself, particularly during periods of direct military interventions into the political sphere.

As then, educational changes taking place currently reflect wider political changes, with the ruling ‘moderate Islamic’ AK Party representing a challenge to the traditional elite and a shift in Turkish social and political stratification. Whilst much internal criticism of the governing AK Party argues that it marks a ‘backwards step’ away from ‘westernisation’ and ‘modernisation’, in respect of education policy, its period in office has been characterised by a generally ‘progressive’ policy direction. The 2004 primary curriculum has less emphasis on *creating* good citizens and more on *empowerment* by equipping pupils with skills of enquiry, critical thinking, evaluation, cooperation, reflection and presentation (M.E.B. 2004).

Whilst the very different socio-cultural and political contexts of England and Turkey are clearly reflected in the distinctive paths followed by each country’s education policy developments, it is also worth noting that they are both largely driven by the rhetoric of ‘modernisation’, with two parallel but distinct strands. One strand focuses on a ‘progressive modernisation’, employing themes such as ‘personalisation’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘social/emotional literacy’; the other is of a more ‘functional modernisation’, the focus on driving up attainment in order to compete in an increasingly dynamic globalised economy. These two strands of modernisation need to be viewed in a European dimension (specifically, a European Union one), since these can be seen as underpinning the political vision set out in Lisbon Treaty. In the context of this study, the differing positions of England and Turkey in respect of the EU is

significant; England as a longstanding member but with deep political divisions regarding its future relationship and Turkey as a candidate nation in which the supposedly ‘anti-western’ Islamic AK Party is, in government, the most actively pro-European, most pro-western governments in Turkey’s history. Many of the recent reforms in Turkish schooling have been explicitly driven by a desire to ‘democratise’ education in order to satisfy EU accession criteria, whilst in England, the relentless focus on increasing attainment consistently draws upon the Lisbon Treaty’s desire to ‘dominate through a knowledge-based economy’.

This highlights the contested discourse at the heart of EU education policy (Dale and Robertson 2009), as both member and candidate member states attempt to enact a twin-track policy addressing both the economic EU model of neo-liberal ‘economic dynamism’ (Lynch 2006) and the ‘European Social Model’ emphasising social welfare, human rights and democracy and community cohesion (Giddens 2007; Rasmussen et al. 2009). As EU membership changes, so does the social, cultural and political context, and so both national and supranational educational policy developments will continue to develop in an increasingly fluid, dynamic way (Novoa 2001; Lawn 2002). Whatever aspect of England and Turkey’s educational policy and practice is considered, therefore, it must also be considered from a European perspective as well as a comparative national one.

### **Pedagogies of transmission, construction, and experience**

The traditionally conceived ‘transmission’ model of pedagogy has been characterised as suitable for a mode of capitalism that is simpler than current late capitalist societies

(Jameson 1991). The transmission model suggests that there are knowledgeable teachers, whose main function is to transfer that knowledge to receptive students. The knowledge transferred is that which is useful for the different roles that individuals will perform for the efficient working of capitalism. The state invests in subordinate 'subjects' in order to reproduce the material and social conditions of a hierarchically ordered society (Taylor and Robinson 2009). Friere (1972) argued that the social context of capitalism led to an ideological function for schooling, in which learners became the 'object' of pedagogy, to be reproduced as workers of varying kinds and oppressed by a limiting education. In contrast, Friere (ibid) proposed an alternative pedagogy that provide learners with the ability to question given understandings and the wherewithal for learners to act together to come to a new understanding of the social world and to act together to change it

Social constructivist notions of pedagogy emphasise the social nature of teaching and learning and promote a form of pedagogy in which the student is as active a participant as the teacher in the co-construction of knowledge. These notions draw upon the work of Vygotsky (1978). The function of pedagogy in this conceptualisation is to provide scaffolds to assist students to explore their next steps in forming their knowledge of an issue. Understanding is built up through a series of collaborative steps between teacher and taught.

Experiential pedagogies focus on the need for learners to experience things directly in the construction of knowledge (Kolb 1976). The emphasis is on the processes of learning rather than on the knowledge that is the outcome of activity. By engaging in the 'cycle of learning', especially the reflection on experience (Schön

1987) that is at its heart, learners are provided by their teachers and themselves with the opportunity to discover knowledge for themselves.

The Turkish students in the exchange programme had generally been inducted into the transmission model, although some recognised its limitations and the strengths of social constructivist approaches. The British students had largely been inducted into the constructivist model. Both, however, were concerned with the power that they had to help students to learn, although they expressed that concern somewhat differently. One group wanted to more effectively impose knowledge on students, while the other wanted to facilitate learning becoming more collaborative with the students.

### *Discourses of empowerment and discipline: Teachers*

The empowered teacher is one who would empower the learners themselves. Empowerment has therefore come to mean an implicit shifting of power from government to the teacher and from the teacher to the student with the potential to reduce the power differentials inherent in the transmission model of pedagogy (Deacon and Parker 1995).

Empowerment draws upon both the individualistic (Holt 1987) and critical (Ward and Mullender 1991) traditions of teacher and student autonomy. As such, it is part of an 'emancipatory' narrative focused on the transformative capacity of active ways of learning and teaching (Zyngier 2007). This approach is primarily concerned with the development of critical skills in the individual student and teacher, but in the context of recognising limiting structural forces such as an examination system. It is

therefore one where students and teachers become ‘conscious of their agency to think and act in the interests of their own liberation’ (Swartz 1996, 400).

However, ‘empowering’ practices that focus on individual agency such as the use of profiling in English schools can also be seen as central to the disciplinary regime of modern education (Hall and Millard 1994). The individual student or teacher is represented by their profile and, as they *become* their profile, in a Foucauldian sense profiling becomes a disciplinary procedure (Foucault 1977) through which individuals are constituted atomistically from society by their individuality and their difference from others. The individual becomes a ‘web of texts’ (Preston and Symes 1992, 199) that codifies and identifies the individual in terms of their differences to others.

However, the practices of empowerment may also involve real freedoms for teachers to engage in progressive pedagogies, once in their own classrooms. Dembélé and Schwille (2006) showed that accountability systems in educational reform can be used to support the empowerment of teachers and learners and not just to control them. Such systems can impose responsibilities on bureaucratic organizations to provide the means by which participants in education can self-direct their own development in ways that would benefit themselves.

### ***Discourses of empowerment and discipline: Students***

A key development in the promotion of a more optimistic view of empowerment has been the evolution of the student voice movement. Students’ voices are not always heard in accounts of empowering programmes, where the focus is often on teachers. To

counter this, the importance of ‘pupil voice’ or ‘student voice’ has become increasingly recognised in many education systems through such notions of personalizing learning and seeking out student/pupil opinions (Flutter and Rudduck 2004).

Liberatory and transformative approaches to education assume that dialogue between teachers and students are by their nature empowering (NCSL 2009; Fielding and McGregor 2005). Dialogue is perceived to lead to collaboration (Taylor and Robinson 2009) which may lead to changes in school practices. In this view, the practice of student voice may lead to shifts in the power relationships between adults and young people in schools (Cook-Sather 2006). A more nuanced approach is the four-fold typology of student voice work developed by Fielding (2001), ranging from the reactive ‘Students as Data Source’ to the pro-active ‘Students as researchers’. He argued that student voice work had the potential to transform ‘what it meant to be a student; what it means to be a teacher.’ (Fielding 2004, 296).

However, the concept of student voice is itself problematic. Student voices may only be articulated when teachers authorize them and in ways that curtail any critical dimension of prevailing conditions (Ruddock 2006). This has the effect of sustaining existing hierarchies. Sometimes student voice is assumed to be ‘monolingual’ (Robinson and Taylor 2007), denying the multi-faceted nature of student perspectives (Rubin and Silva 2003). In particular, students who speak in the language of the dominant discourses of a school, with ‘the voice of the subaltern’ (Spivak in Morton 2003), are more likely to be heard than those with dissonant voices or who use a different register from that of the dominant discourses (Barton and Tusting 2005). If responses to hitherto marginalised student voices are to be meaningful, listening by

teachers needs to be sustained and serious rather than an occasional indulgence (Bhavnani 1990).

However, specific economic and regulatory conditions can make it difficult to promote a genuinely democratic dialogue in schools (Arnot and Reay 2007). State schools in England are forced to sustain asymmetrical power relationships within them by the constraints of the policy frameworks that surround and interact with them (Riley and Docking 2002). This is reinforced by the context of surveillance through inspection and national league tables of performance within which they operate. Schools seek to optimize their own performance within this disciplinary framework (Ball 2003; Troman et al. 2007), and the dominance of this performative discourse tends to reinforce the use of student voice to support the *status quo* and so neutralize any attempts at more radical empowerment activity.

Empowerment programmes do not necessarily allow students to voice the improvements in their lives that they want to see (Rudduck and Fielding 2006). Rather their voices are co-opted by managers, impelled by the performativity agenda, to assist drives to improve standards in schools. Student voice strategies on their own are not effective in reducing ethnic, class or gender inequalities that played out in the classroom and in wider society (Arnot, et al., 2003). Indeed the highly gendered, classed and racialised cultural frameworks within which schools operate (Reay, 2006), enhance these divisions. Many of the 'taken-for-granted' rules and processes of the classroom are 'invisible' to students (Arnot and Reay 2006).

Further, empowerment itself can act as a Foucauldian ‘dividing practice’ (McIntyre, Pedder and Ruddick 2005). It is much more likely that the ‘ideal student’, the obedient subaltern (Spivak in Morton 2003) with cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986) appropriate to existing social structures, will be consulted about their learning, rather than any others. The lack of space for the marginalised to challenge existing rules of pedagogy and classification highlights the potential ‘tragedy of democratically inspired pedagogies ... being [un]able to challenge classification structures’ (Arnot and Reay 2007, 323). There is much debate about the extent to which the formal arena of student consultation is dominated by the agenda of senior staff (Fielding 2008) which mediate school students’ views.

A crucial step in ‘liberating’ student voice from capture by dominant discourses is to recognize the legitimacy of difference (Taylor and Robinson 2009). Teachers and schools need to create space for challenges to the certainties of modernism (Derrida 1997) so that student voice can give expression to the many contending voices on what constitutes successful school process. Students are experienced participant observers of teachers, teaching and schools (Riley and Rustique-Forrester 2002). Many are able to articulate clearly what they consider to be effective and ineffective teaching and support for students, views that chime closely with the literature on effective teaching (Wragg et al. 2000; Cooper et al. 2000). So student voice can contribute to the effective management of schools to meet students’ educational needs, especially when schools work in economically and socially disadvantaged areas (Fielding 2004; Mujis et al. 2005).

This paper investigates some English and Turkish novice teachers' reflections on the impact of social and political contexts on the curricula and pedagogic frameworks in which they worked, on their and 'the Other's' approaches to pedagogy and to student--teacher relationships in different social and political contexts. In this case each group of students describes the other group and its system of education as 'the other'.

## **Findings**

Student teachers in this study recognised the impact of different cultural, institutional, and national curricula contexts on the choices teachers could make when developing their pedagogic practices. Understanding the contexts of the Other is, however, problematic, especially when that Other is remote.

### *Cultural differences*

In the questionnaire administered before the exchange visits, 38% of Turkish participants and 28% of British participants thought the others' country the one in Europe with which theirs had least in common. Although many British participants thought Turkey was a European country, supporting official Turkish government rhetoric, many Turkish participants thought Turkey to be partly Asian and partly European. Nearly 40% of Turkish participants perceived Britain to be an Atlantic country, leaning to the USA, although most British participants perceived it to be a European country. These views seemed to be echoed in the films that participants reported watching recently. Although 60% of British participants claimed mainly to

watch films made in the USA, 75% of Turkish participants claimed they watched Turkish made films. Only a fifth had watched USA made films. Other differences in perception concerned whether Britain was a Christian country (most Turkish participants' views) or secular (most British participants' views) and whether Turkey was Islamic (most British participants' views) or partially secular (most Turkish participants' views).

During the exchange visits other areas of difference emerged concerning ethnic and religious minorities in each country. British student teachers were perplexed that in Turkey, 'there are minorities such as Jews ... all the minorities are non-Muslims, the Jews, the Greeks [Orthodox]' but no ethnic minorities in public discourses.

Everything is Turkish and everything they are taught in schools is on a Turkish nation terms, the culture, the beliefs that are within the society, they will only learn about Islam as a religion

People in Turkey of different ethnic, rather than religious backgrounds had few rights.

I wasn't really quite clear what was going on, but just speaking in that lecture ... is like Kurds not having ... rights to be taught in their own language ... and that kind of thing (British student teachers).

Turkish participants' views of Kurds, as far as they were expressed, reflected the public rhetoric of monuments to national heroes who died fighting [Kurdish] insurgency. One British student teacher noted that, 'this diversity thing is missing [in Turkey], but they do acknowledge it, people come and go from Turkey and there are different cultures there'.

This sense of partially veiled discourses also affected discussions on gender and relationships between the sexes. Although in Turkey, formally, women were encouraged to take part in education and pursue careers, British participants thought

[Even] the women ... didn't really openly answer our questions regarding the gender situation in education or [Turkish]society. The attitude that Turkish people generally hold in society was definitely straight up like clearly mirrored in their education, like gender issues, they ignore sexual orientation and homophobia.

Unsurprisingly, Turkish participants thought that in England, 'there are a wide range of cultures in every segment of society. In Turkey, on the other hand, you cannot easily see such diversity'. What struck some was, 'that students of the [inaudible] have different colour skin'. They thought the British, 'multi-cultural immigration policy [was] reflected in the educational policy as well. Of course that also reflects social life'. However, some were alarmed by this ethnic diversity and wondered why different minorities did not live in separate ghettos to minimise the likelihood of friction and confrontation between them and their different cultural practices.

### *Institutional differences*

British participants visited a Private Primary school of some 600 students near Usak in Turkey. They discovered that attendance at the private Primary school ' [cost] the equivalent of £3000 a year' and the school did, 'a lot of research into the family and their background' as well as students preferred learning styles before students were allowed to enter. They thought it unrepresentative of public schools in Turkey, because

[it has] only about 15 students in a class ... 60 children in a state school in a lesson. The school [had] a massive new sports hall and [its] own ballet studio

They compared this to what they were told about Turkish state Primary schools

in rural areas [in Turkey] it is a totally different ... they tend to use the blackboards a lot, d[o]n't have access to laptops or a projector in the classroom. [Teachers] just ... what they were told to deliver to the students rather than taking their own active approach

Turkish participants confirmed this when commenting on the schools they visited in England.

The classes I visited has some 14 ... and 25 maximum [students]. Anyway in our country, Turkey, you know, it could be up to 70, but of course this is not the case in private schools.

Turkish students visited a Sixth Form College of some 1000 students in Leicester, England. This College serves a multi-cultural community in the heart of this city. They noted the relatively few numbers of students in Secondary school classes and the extensive provision of computers to them. They noted that a lot of students in English schools seemed to spend break times studying, while students in Turkey used break times for socialising.

### ***British participants' reflections on pedagogy in a Turkish Primary school***

British participants' thought that the resources available and the relatively small class sizes would influence teachers' pedagogical choices. None the less, they considered

the modernity of the approaches ... are the sort of things that are still filtering into the English system at the moment... I was surprised at the ... highest standards.

British participants thought teachers' pedagogical approaches were affected by the school's ethos (culture) that was encapsulated in its motto: 'we teach the way our students want to learn'. None the less they noted teachers chose a range of pedagogical approaches. Some were

very formal and she picked people and they stood up to answer and then sat down. And they were all quiet

Other teachers collaborated more closely with students:

The science lesson we were in it was, 'do you want to learn by doing a role play? Do you want to learn by doing a competition, or question and answer?' So [students] are actually involved in a kind of dialogic fashion with the teaching styles

Some lessons were just disorderly:

Children were just shouting out, calling out. Teachers would have to raise their voice. There was no like ... no respect ... I know it's that in another part of the school as well

Those teachers who tried to implement the more collaborative approach seemed to be

mainly the newer teachers. ... The more established teachers are it seems, um, still following the same methodologies that they have been following for a while (British student teacher)

British participants thought the structures of the lessons were very similar to those in England:

They have a starter, a middle and what looked like a plenary ... [but] there are lots of different learning styles in Turkey. ... you've got different styles of teaching rather than there is an English style and a Turkish style. It's down to individuals.

School students were perceived as, 'very much into enjoying lessons and enthusiastic about them'. In part this was linked to various extra-curricular activities:

A festival every year for children or students. So every school in the whole country celebrates the fact of being a student (British student teacher)

### *Turkish participants' reflections on pedagogy in an English Sixth Form College*

Turkish participants perceived major difference between Turkish and English pedagogical approaches, but thought the smaller classes in English schools than in Turkish schools had an important impact on this. English teachers' pedagogical approaches were thought to be 'constructivist from top to bottom', which had a major impact on school students' participation in lessons:

What is important [In England] is whether students put forward and discuss their ideas... it does not matter whether those ideas are correct or incorrect ... in the Turkish educational system students generally tend to be shy and have some doubts about their opinions

Some Turkish participants applauded English school students being

given opportunities to get involved in activities where they can improve their creativity and critical thinking skills

In contrast they thought their schooling system could not deliver constructivist pedagogy, despite the Educational reforms introduced in 2004.

neither classroom infrastructure nor teachers are ready to put such an approach into practice.

In [Turkey], it is largely based on rote-learning ... Learning the dates of wars

Rote learning, they thought, 'impedes the learning process as it sounds boring to students'. They viewed the new constructivist approach to pedagogy as preferable to traditional Turkish approaches.

However, other Turkish participants questioned the efficacy of constructivist pedagogy in the light of their own experiences of schooling and traditional pedagogic practices. One noted

knowledge should be preserved as well ... [students] should not be doing only the things [they] are in favour of... This is missing here in the UK. OK, they are engaged in some activities through the internet but I found the knowledge given in class superficial and shallow compared to our country

Others noted that the importance of subject knowledge in Turkey was closely linked to public discourses about the importance of public examinations. '[students] need this knowledge ... when he starts doing his job... our system is still exam-oriented'.

### ***British participants' views of school student-teacher relationships***

British participants thought children in England had various rights which affected their relationships with teachers. 40% of them thought children had equal rights with each other, especially under ECM (Every Child Matters) legislation (DfES 2004). 27% thought children were entitled to safety at school and to free good quality education. Consequently 22% thought teaching was now more challenging because students knew their rights and might complain if teachers did not act in a manner that they believed to be proper. However 42% believed that teachers now had to develop mutually respectful and collaborative relationships with students to help them achieve their academic potential, and this made teaching more dynamic. None the less British participants took a very mechanistic view of student voice, 48% suggesting that school councils were the main vehicle for that or talking to teachers (14%) or through parents (8%).

In the private Turkish Primary school they visited, British participants were surprised by the student-teacher relationships they saw:

it was very child focused. [Teacher] obviously led the lesson but [students] came out, they drew on the board, they did the role play, they were asked ‘what have you done wrong?’? They weren’t just told how they’d done this wrong

In Citizenship lessons they thought this approach was

about the whole child and developing the child for the future ... coaching children to tolerate difference and not be prejudice in order to almost build a better society in the future

They thought the approach was based on expectations by teachers that students would act responsibly, whilst also acknowledging it included aspects of interpersonal behaviour that would not be acceptable in England,

[So] that if they ask to leave the room, you let them. You know they are going to come back, and you know they are not going to get up to all sorts ... a teacher almost ruffled a boy’s hair. But you’d think twice about doing that in England.

### ***Turkish participants’ views of school student-teacher relationships***

Only 37% of Turkish participants thought school children had any rights at all. Of these, 19% thought the rights were to health services and to education, while a further 12% thought that school children had human rights and rights to equality. 84% thought students’ rights had no impact on students’ relationships with their teachers, although a few thought it would increase the quality of education by moderating classroom climate. Most Turkish participants thought school students had no opportunity to express their views on how their schools were run, except perhaps through ‘wish and complaint’ boxes or through students complaining to their teachers.

Turkish participants detected a difference between student-teacher relationships in England and Turkey. 'It seemed as if students and teachers were friends'. This they attributed to 'the relationship between teachers and students [being] based on students' rights and demands'. These rights were those 'in theory and in practice [of] freedom of speech', which school students learnt through practice.

None of the teachers ... told pupils their rights and asked them to learn the law off by heart but they gave the understanding of it

They felt this indicated

... British teachers respect their students to a greater extent than Turkish teachers do. We as educationalists assume that we are the sole authority

and reflected more widely on perspectives on human rights and citizenship in society.

One example they offered of this was that when they

wanted to take photographs of the students and asked for permission from the teacher she asked the students if they want to and 2 students put up their hand and said 'please do not take our photograph'. The teacher suggested us not to take those two students' photograph and we respected their choice

Turkish participants thought human rights issues were very important

not only in schools but also in social life ... individual differences and the necessity to respect them ... this means that citizens are respected as individuals.

## **Conclusions**

Whilst there is an argument for promoting Europeanness in education, as a counter to xenophobia and overly nationalistic 'localism', identity can also be problematised where it is defined in an exclusive way, as being not 'the other' (Ross 2000). The Turkish and English participants in this study initially perceived themselves and their countries as very different in many ways. However, during the course of the exchange

they came to appreciate the cultural and educational contexts of the ‘other’ and the similarities that could emerge. The macro-cultures and policy discourses of the two countries affected the pedagogical approaches teachers could select, although participants on the exchange also noted that these choices were partly constructed by teachers on the bases of their prior experiences (Busher 2005). The identifiable differences between the two cultures that emerged during the exchange helped participants to recognise how pre-existing notions of what it meant to be a teacher were tied to a particular habitus (Bourdieu 1990). For example, in the two countries among teachers there were firmly held and different perspectives about the rights of ethnic minorities and (to a lesser, more invisible, extent) gender equality in the workplace that seemed to be sustained as much by cultural precepts as by policy discourses.

Insights into the pedagogy employed and relationships between teachers and students sanctioned in the Turkish and English schools exhibited similar revelatory episodes, but also revealed the complex interplay between officially sanctioned pedagogies and pedagogies-in-use in the classroom. Some Turkish participants were surprised at the collaborative relationships between teachers and students they observed in some lessons in England, while some British participants were surprised at the child-centred constructivism they saw in some of the classes in Turkey. On the other hand, participants from both countries observed what they had stereotypically expected in the other. Although this demonstrates the extent to which the practices of these schools support the thesis of Arnot and Reay (2007), it also shows the extent to which teachers are empowered to construct their own pedagogical approaches, even when prescribed curriculum and teaching methodology (in both countries) govern classroom practice. It

led some (British) participants to assert that there was not a Turkish or British way of teaching, but that individuals had some choices.

This breaking down of expectations about how the two educational systems delivered in the classroom was tempered by participants' recognition that the schools they visited respectively were not necessarily representative of the systems within which they were located. Particularly significant here were the differences noted between private and state education in Turkey and the multicultural composition of the Secondary school visited in England.

One key difference that emerged between Turkish and the British participants was over the issue of students' rights. While both groups contained those who thought that students did not have any rights, members of neither group seemed to hold an emancipatory perspective that would accord with the views of Fielding (2008) or Mujis et al. (2005). However, the British participants were more aware of legal frameworks, both international and national, that enshrined the rights of children to have a voice. In particular, the impact of legislation on conceptions of pupil voice was stronger amongst the British participants than the Turkish. The Turkish students were more interested in the social rights of their students (education and health) than in more abstract notions of the rights of the child *per se*. It is tempting to speculate that the difference in perspective here is due to the influence of European Union legislation, with its enshrining of human rights and that, if and when Turkey accedes to the EU, a similar embracing of children's rights in schools would develop. However, the interplay between the social and cultural contexts and the complexity of views revealed in this project suggests that any impact on classroom practice of supra-national policy

developments will be heavily mediated by national and local cultural precepts and policy frameworks.

## References

Arnot, Madeleine, Donald McIntyre, David Peddar, and Diane Reay. 2003.

*Consultation in the classroom: pupil perspectives on teaching and learning.*

Cambridge: Pearson.

Arnot, Madeleine, and Diane Reay. 2006. Power, pedagogic voices and pupil talk: the implications for pupil consultation as transformative practice. In *Knowledge, power and educational reform: applying the sociology of Basil Bernstein*, ed. R. Moore, M. Arnot, J. Beck and H. Daniels, 75-93. London: Routledge.

Arnot, Madeleine, and Diane Reay. 2007. A sociology of pedagogic voice: Power, inequality and pupil consultation. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 28, no. 3: 311-25.

Ball, Stephen. 2001. Labour, learning and the economy: a 'policy sociology' perspective. In *Taking education seriously: Four years Hard Labour*, ed. Fielding, Michael, 45-58. London: Routledge Falmer.

Ball, Stephen. 2003. The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy* 18, no. 2: 215-28

Barton, D., and Karen Tustig. 2005. Introduction to *Beyond communities of practice: Language, power and social context*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Behar, B.E. 1996. *İktidar ve Tarih*. İstanbul: AFA.

Bhavnani, K-K. 1990. What's power got to do with it? Empowerment and social research. In *Deconstructing social psychology*, ed. I. Parker, and J. Shotter, 141-52. London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. 1990. *The logic of practice*. Trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1986. Forms of Capital. In *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*, ed. J.G. Richardson, 241-58. Westport, CON: Greenwood Press.

Brehony, K.J. 2005. Primary schooling under New Labour: The irresolvable contradiction of excellence and enjoyment. *Oxford Review of Education* 31, no.1: 29-46.

Bruner, J. 2002. *The process of education*. London: Harvard University Press.

Busher, H. 2005. The Project of the other: Developing inclusive learning communities in schools. *Oxford Review of Education* 31, no.3: 459-77.

Busher, H. C. Wilkins, T. Lawson, I. Acun, and N.L. Göz. 2009. Some British and Turkish university students' perspectives of the teaching of Citizenship in European

contexts. Paper presented at European Conference on Educational Research, Network 7 (Social Justice), September 28-30, in Vienna, Austria.

Citizenship Foundation. 1997. *Citizenship and civic education*. London: Citizenship Foundation.

Cook-Sather, A. 2006. Sound, presence, and power: “student voice” in educational research and reform. *Curriculum Inquiry* 36, no.4: 359-90.

Cooper, P., M. Drummond, S. Hart, J. Lovey, and C. McLaughlin. 2000. *Positive alternatives to exclusion*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Dale, R. 2009. Introduction. In *Globalisation and Europeanisation in education*, ed. R. Dale, and S. Robertson, 1-22. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Deacon, R., and B. Parker. 1995. Education as Subjection and Refusal: an elaboration on Foucault. *Curriculum Studies* 3, no. 2: 109-122.

Dembélé, M., and J. Schwille. 2006. Can the global trend towards accountability be reconciled with the ideals of teacher empowerment? *International Journal of Educational Research* 45, nos.4-5: 302-14.

Department for Education and Science (DfES). 2004. *Every Child Matters: Change for children*. London: DfES.

Derrida, J. (1997). *Positions*. London, The Athlone Press.

Fielding, M. 2001. Students as agents of radical change. *Journal of Educational Change* 2, no.3: 123-41.

Fielding, M. 2004. Transformative approaches to student voice: Theoretical underpinnings, recalcitrant realities. *British Educational Research Journal* 30, no. 2: 295-310.

Fielding, M. 2008. Beyond student voice to Democratic community. Paper presented at Conference on New Developments in Student Voice: Shaping schools for the future, June 20, in Birkbeck College, University of London.

Fielding, M., and J. McGregor. 2005. Deconstructing student voice: new spaces for dialogue or new opportunities for surveillance. Paper presented at The Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 11-15, in Montreal, Canada.

Flutter, J., and J. Rudduck. 2004. *How to improve your school: Giving pupils a voice*. London: Continuum Books.

Foucault, M. 1977. *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Trans. A. Sheridan. London: Allen Lane.

Foucault, M. 1976. Truth and Power. In *Power / Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings by Michel Foucault, 1972-1977*, ed. C. Gordon. 1980. 109-133. New York: Pantheon Books.

Friere, P. 1972. *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Giddens, A. 1984. *The constitution of society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. 1991. *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. 2000. *The Third Way: The renewal of social democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. 2007. *Europe in the global age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Grace, G. 1995. *School leadership: Beyond educational management: An essay in policy scholarship*. London: Falmer Press.

Hahn, C. 1999. Citizenship Education: an empirical study of policy, practices and outcomes. *Oxford Review of Education* 25, nos.1-2: 231 – 51.

Hall, C., and E. Millard. 1994. The means of correct training? Teachers, Foucault and disciplining. *Journal of Education for Teaching* 20, no. 2: 153-60.

Holt, M. 1987. *Skills and vocationalism: the easy answer*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Jameson, F. 1991. *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. London: Verso.

Kaplan, I. 1999. *Türkiye 'de Milli Eğitim İdeolojisi*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Kearney, C. 2003. *The Monkey's mask: Identity, memory, narrative and voice*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Kerr, D. 2005. Citizenship Education: An international comparison. In *Education for Citizenship*, ed. D. Lawton, J. Cairns, and R. Gardner, 200-27. London: Continuum.

Kolb, D. A. 1976. *The Learning Style Inventory: Technical manual*. Boston, MA: McBer.

Lawn, M. 2002. Borderless education: Imagining a European education space in a time of brands and networks. In *Fabricating Europe: The formation of an education space*, ed. A. Novoa, and M. Lawn 19-34. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Lewis, B. 1991. *Modern Türkiye 'nin Doğuşu*, 4.baskı, Ankara: TTK.

Lynch, K. 2006. Neo-liberalism and marketisation: the implications for higher education. *European Educational Research Journal* 5, no.1: 1-17.

McIntyre, D., D. Pedder, and J. Ruddock. 2005. Pupil voice: comfortable and uncomfortable learning for teachers. *Research Papers in Education* 20, no.2: 149-68.

Mardin, Ş. 1991. *Türk Modernleşmesi*. İstanbul: İletişim.

M.E.B. 2004. *İlköğretim Öğretim Programları*.

[http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/ogretmen/modules.php?name=Downloads&d\\_op=viewdownload&cid=18](http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/ogretmen/modules.php?name=Downloads&d_op=viewdownload&cid=18)

M.E.B. 2008. 'PISA 2009'. <http://earged.meb.gov.tr/pisa/dil/tr/sunum.html>

Morton, S. 2003. *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*. London: Routledge.

Mujis, D., A. Harris, C. Chapman, L. Stoll, and J. Russ. 2005. Improving schools in socio-economically disadvantaged areas: a review of research evidence. In *Improving schools in difficulty*, ed. P. Clarke, 94 – 113. London: Continuum.

NCSL (National College of School Leadership). 2009. Student Voice and Choice

Nottingham

[www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/leadershiplibrary/leadingschools/improving-outcomes-for-schools/personalisedlearning/management-personalised-learning/student-voice-and-choice](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/leadershiplibrary/leadingschools/improving-outcomes-for-schools/personalisedlearning/management-personalised-learning/student-voice-and-choice).

Novoa, A. (2001). The restructuring of the European educational space: Changing relationships among states, citizens and educational communities. In *Rethinking European welfare: transformations of Europe and social policy*, ed. J. Fink, G. Lewis, and J. Clarke, 249-276. Buckingham: Open University.

Olkun, S., and T. Aydođdu. (2003). Üçüncü Uluslararası Matematik ve Fen Arařtırması (TIMSS) \*Nedir? Neyi Sorgular? Örnek Geometri Soruları ve Etkinlikleri. *İlköğretim 2*, no. 1, 28-35. <http://ilkogretim-online.org.tr/vol2say1/index.htm>

Ortaylı, İ. 1985. Batılılaşma Sorunu, In *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* 1, ed. H. Berktay, 134-138. İstanbul: İletişim.

Preston, N., and C. Symes. 1992. *Schools and classrooms: a cultural studies analysis of education*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Rasmussen, P., K. Lynch, J. Brine, P. Boyadjieva, M. Peters, and H. Sunker. 2009. Education, equality and the European Social Model. In *Globalisation and Europeanisation in education*, ed. R. Dale, and S. Robertson, 159-177. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Reay, D. 2006. 'I'm not seen as one of the clever children': consulting primary pupils about the social conditions of learning. *Educational Review* 58, no.2: 131-43.

Riley, K., and J. Docking. 2002. Perceptions of schooling among disadvantaged pupils. Paper presented at the *BERA Annual Conference*. September 2002, in Exeter, UK.

Riley, K., and E. Rustique-Forrester. 2002. *Working with disaffected students*. London: Paul Chapman.

Robinson, C., and C. Taylor. 2007. Theorizing student voice: values and perspectives *Improving Schools* 10, no. 5: 5-17.

Ross, A. 2000. Education for citizenship and identity within the context of Europe. In *Education for citizenship*, ed. D. Lawson, J. Cairns, and R. Gardner, 183-199. London: Continuum.

Rubin, B.C., and E.M. Silva. 2003. *Critical voices in school reform: students living through change*. London, Routledge Falmer.

Ruddock, J. 2006. The past, the papers and the project. *Educational Review* 58, no. 2: 131-43.

Rudduck, J., and M. Fielding. 2006. Student voice and the perils of popularity. *Educational Review* 58, no. 2: 219-31.

Schon, D. 1987. *Educating the reflective practitioner: Towards a new design for teaching and learning in the professions*. San Francisco CA: Jossey Bass.

Starratt, R. 2007. Leading a community of learners. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership* 35, no.2: 165-83.

Swartz, E. 1996. Emancipatory pedagogy: a postcritical response to 'standard' school knowledge. *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 28, no. 4: 397-418.

Taylor, C., and C. Robinson. 2009. Student voice: theorising power and participation. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 17, no.2: 161-75.

Timur, T. 1985. Osmanlı ve Batılılaşma. In *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* 1, ed. H. Berktaş, 139-146, İstanbul: İletişim.

Troman, G., B. Jeffrey, and A. Raggl. 2007. Creativity and performativity policies in primary school cultures. *Journal of Education Policy* 22, no.5: 549-72.

Turkmen, L., and Bonnstetter, R. 2007. Influences of some philosophical approaches in the historical development of Turkish science education. *Science Education International* 18, no. 1: 139-51.

Vygotsky, L.S. 1978. *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ward, D., and Mullender, A. 1991. Empowerment and Oppression: an indissoluble pairing for contemporary social work. *Critical Social Policy* 11, no. 32: 21-30.

Wilkins, C., and P. Wood, 2009. Initial Teacher Education in the panopticon. *Journal of Education for Teaching: International research and pedagogy* 35, no. 3: 283-97.

Wilkins, C., H. Busher, T. Lawson, I. Acun, and N.L. Göz. 2010 European citizenship and EU expansion: Perspectives on Europeanness and Citizenship Education from Britain and Turkey. *European Educational Research Journal* (in press)

Wragg, E.C., G.S. Haynes, C.M. Wragg, and R.P. Chamberlin. 2000. *Failing teachers?* London: Routledge.

Yanpar, T. 2009. Etkili ve Anlamı Öğrenme İçin Kuramsal Yaklaşımlar ve Yapılandırmacılık. In *Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretimi*, ed. C. Öztürk, 52-74. Ankara: PegemA.

Zyngier, D. 2007. Listening to teachers – listening to students: substantive conversations about resistance, empowerment and engagement. *Teachers and Teaching* 13, no.4: 327-47.