

# Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Education



# Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Education

Edited by

Hasan Arslan, Georgeta Rață,  
Ercan Kocayörük and Mehmet Ali İçbay

**CAMBRIDGE  
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P U B L I S H I N G

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## FOREWORD

The book *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Education* is a collection of essays on educational issues written by educators and researchers from three continents—Africa, Asia, and Europe.

The first chapter, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, starts with a study on collaborative learning by Güven and Hecht-Valais. In their attempt to demonstrate how learner-centred teaching methods can be implemented in foreign or second language classrooms, the authors investigate the views of the teachers of EFL about collaborative learning, more specifically about the implementation of project-based learning as a pathway towards learner autonomy. The findings indicate that the topics in the classrooms need to be varied to complement diverse student learning styles and interests, thus offering students more choices. The study by Uslu, that uses the predictive research in the survey model, examines the relationship between educational research use levels and lifelong-learning competencies of elementary school teachers. Questioning 206 teachers from 19 elementary schools of Çanakkale, Turkey, the author shows that lifelong-learning competencies of teachers are high, indicating that the relationships of teachers' lifelong-learning competencies with their frequency of following educational research, performing educational research, following periodical publications and educational status are significant. In their study, Iyibil, Güç and Akpınar examine 24 pre-service teachers' answers in detail. They show that 24 pre-service teachers from the Faculty of Education in the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey generally use the strategies of linear solution, drawing, finding a pattern, intelligent guessing and testing, adopting a different point of view, considering extreme cases, organizing the data and accounting for all possibilities less, but never use the strategies of solving a simpler analogous problem and working backwards. Altıntaş and Özdemir investigate how 200 primary school teachers view gifted children in their classrooms. They ask two open-ended questions: "What are gifted children for you?" and "What are the characteristics of gifted children?" The findings suggest that gifted children are mostly perceived by their teachers as students who have high interest in the topics and who get easily bored during the lessons when the topics are below their level and when they are not allowed to use their potential. Tabancalı and Çakmak report a study on the teacher's job satisfaction. Employing

239 teachers working in 42 primary schools in Istanbul, Turkey, they use Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire to find out the teacher's job satisfaction levels. The analyses indicate that both male and female teachers' intrinsic satisfaction levels are high. However, female teachers' intrinsic satisfaction levels are statistically higher than male teachers' are. There is no significant difference in teachers' both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction levels according to age. Art, music and gym teachers' extrinsic satisfaction levels are higher than primary school teachers' extrinsic satisfaction levels. Examining the use of metaphors in class, Polat and Kazak demonstrate how high school students perceive their teachers. Two hundred and twenty 12<sup>th</sup> grade high school students produced positive personal images of their teachers: the Counsellor Teacher, the Educative Teacher, the Teacher as a Source of Knowledge, the Fellow Sufferer Teacher, the Caretaker Teacher, the Confident Teacher, the Helpful Teacher, the Leader Teacher, the Relaxing Teacher, and the Big-Hearted Teacher. In her study, Yumru reports her solution to the theory-practice problem of ELT students by reconstructing the first year Reading & Writing course in the Department of English Language Teaching at Cag University, Turkey. More specifically, she investigates whether the involvement in keeping portfolios has an effect on student teachers' understanding of the process approach to teaching writing prior to their pedagogical courses. The results indicate that students' active involvement in a process approach to teaching writing, together with the summative and formative functions of the portfolio assessment prior to pedagogical courses, helps them conceptualize the writing strategies to be taught to the students in their future practices. In their study, Jiménez-Garrido and Pérez-Navío explore the nature of the change that new teachers undergo when they switch from regular education to full immersion education. Monitoring 24 new teachers in a full immersion school in the USA, they suggest that districts and schools need to prepare educators before they start their teaching duties. For them, preparing teachers for immersion education does not mean limiting their performance in class but to give them a wide range of strategies and techniques to choose from. In his paper, Norley highlights the state of numeracy amongst the general British population; he outlines and advocates a methodology for rectifying some of the issues raised, describes the context in which it is used, briefly examines the role of technology in the learning of numeracy, draws conclusions and makes recommendations. In their study, Arslan, Ogan-Bekiroğlu and Suzuk examine the change in the pre-service physics teachers' science process skills in an inquiry-based laboratory environment. During a 12-week study, 25 pre-service teachers participated in inquiry-

based activities for 2 hours per week. Two activities are given to the pre-service teachers: the first activity is about an inclined plane and the second is about free falling. Results show that inquiry-based activities improve pre-service teachers' science process skills. Özbey, Büyüktanir, Kesicioğlu and Türkoğlu explore how teacher candidates view cheating. They examine whether cheating differs according to gender, academic success, grade level, family attitude, family's education level and professions. In their study, Özcan and Altıntaş investigate how candidate teachers regard genetically modified products: 5854 year-candidate teachers in Biology, Science and Elementary Education from eleven different Turkish universities (the Marmara, the Aegean and the Black Sea) complete a survey consisting of 23 questions developed by the researchers. Results show that candidate teachers believe they have not been informed enough about GMOs. Investigating study skills of different achievement groups totalling 156 students, Amri shows that the use of study skills affects academic achievement: cognitive skills, such as self-testing strategies and the selection of main ideas, are positively related to academic success whereas affective skills, such as motivation and anxiety, hinder academic achievement. In their study, Memiş, Özel and Özcan critically investigate mathematics teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology in mathematics classes. Employing mathematics teachers working in Istanbul, Gaziantep, and Balıkesir, Turkey, they show that both female and male students have positive attitudes toward technology while there is a significant difference between high school and primary school mathematics teachers. In addition, mathematics teachers who work in private schools have a more positive attitude than mathematics teachers who work in public schools. Finally, by analyzing how note-taking is accomplished in a set of standardized clinical encounters, İçbay and Morrison seek to determine what medical students and residents do while watching clinical encounters in an experimental setting that contributes to the quality of their resulting clinical chart notes.

The second chapter is dedicated to the *psychosocial development of children in education*. Özbaş and Avcı investigate the relationship between the socio-economic status of the family and the benefits of education. The paper by Gümüş-Gers and Bütün-Ayhan presents the issue of adolescents' communication styles. Adolescents acquire many skills in school, and the school settings have an impact on their communication skills. The authors examine the effect of school type and gender on adolescents' communication skills. A qualitative study written by Şimşek and Katıtaş focuses on school-dropout: *Reasons for and Impacts of School Dropout: A Case Study in Sanliurfa, Turkey* presents the reasons of school dropout in

the rural area of Turkey with a case study in Sanliurfa. Another paper gives a valuable perspective on parental attitudes towards the child rights. Yurtsever-Kiliçgün and Oktay discuss this topic considering the child's age and gender. Gelişli, Kandir, Tezel-Şahin and Yazici's paper focuses on students' thoughts and opinions about violence. The study examines the views of primary school students about violence. The research is a descriptive study and the sample consisted of 87 students attending primary school in Yenimahalle, the city of Ankara, Turkey. The authors argue that students use violence as a way to solve problems. Three subsequent studies focus on the association between family type and children development. Ertürk and Şanlı consider the income level of the families in the Eskişehir province, Turkey. Güven and Açık attempt to explore the relationship between family and education and the effects it has on the children. A further study by Ogelman, Seçer, Önder and Mamiyev investigate the effect of divorced and un-divorced families on children. The research paper written by Bayhan examines the postmodern identity of college students. In addition, the paper argues that determining the problems of university students will provide a more analytical understanding of the "social segment" made up by both future managers and elites. Determining the issues through "explaining" and "understanding", and producing the solutions is the most important function of the scientific knowledge from a sociological point of view. Batur pays attention to the *Psychological Effects of Natural Disasters on Students and Emergency Response Plans*. The author states that natural events cannot be controlled, but their effects can be reduced by conscious city planning, by developing physical and environmental protection methods and through mass education. The study written by Dağlioğlu, Dağlı and Dalkiliç examines the relationship between the behaviours of preschoolers and their adaptation to school with regard to several variables. Bekir and Aydin clarify the perception of college students on their families. The authors claim that given that university students will be the intellectual and dynamic segment of the society in the future, their understanding of family is more important than ever. Didilicã underlines the very crucial issue of child's rights in early childhood. The paper provides further knowledge about the children's rights-based approach in the context of early childhood education and care (ECEC).

The third chapter is dedicated to *educational policy*. Yildirim focuses on the teaching of democracy and citizenship. The author underlines the issue of the learning process in the teaching of the rights of children from survival and protection to development and participation. Tutkun and Salih-Genç focus on the importance of social, economic and cultural

changes in teacher's activities and roles. Their paper aims at stressing the need for teacher autonomy in terms of increasing the teacher's role in education. Another interesting paper belonging to Eroğlu, Oğuz and Babahan wonders if the Gypsies are without education or education is without the Gypsies. This study is based on the findings of a group of researchers that aim to make the women in the Roma communities visible. Kayman and Uysal examine the university as a Taylorist institution and the reception of the motto in the case of the Gazi University, Turkey. The data obtained in the study are useful to corporate identity planners and give hints to institutions on the evaluation of the mottos that showcase corporate identity. The paper *Transformational Leadership in Higher Education* written by Beytekin contains an exploration of the nature of transformational behaviours of faculty deans so that a clearer understanding of what it means can cause effective management in higher education. Üçer and Gönel focus on the issue of higher education of economics in Turkey. The authors complain about economics in higher education and are concerned about the transformation of the student profile. The paper by Pişkin, Ersoy-Kart, Savcı and Güldü argue that behaviours are influenced by individuals' personality traits because individuals make conscious choices when adopting certain behaviours. Tukhashvili's study points to the importance of the potential emigration of Georgian students for study purposes. The author argues that many graduates continue to stay in foreign countries for work, and that educational migration turns into permanent migration, causing the country to lose intellectual potential. Another research paper was written by Sunata on the impacts of the Turkish education system on migration. This paper analyses the impact of the education system on migration. Kocabatmaz underlines the importance of supervising teachers' competences and shows how to develop their professional competence during the period of teaching practice. The paper written by Şahin and Arcagök presents the issue of service learning. They approach the issue from four perspectives: the basics of service learning, the foundations of service learning in higher education, the foundations of service learning in Turkey, and the benefits of service learning. Çavuşoğlu and Keskin examine the *Logistics Vocational Education in Germany and Turkey*. The main objective of their study is to present the contribution of education to the success of the logistics sector in Germany, the world's logistics leader, and to compare the current situation of logistics vocational education in Germany and Turkey. Kaya and Göçen focus on the importance of the constructivist program leadership and guidance levels of school principals. The authors argue that these programs have changed not only the roles of teachers and students, but also those of the principals.

Çalikoğlu and Işık's paper shows how to increase safety of high schools based on the opinions of high school students related to the safety of the schools.

The fourth chapter contains papers on *language in teaching*. The paper by Bayezit and Çubukçu compares Turkish and English language course books in terms of learning strategies based on the classification of O'Malley and Chamot (1990). Saraç and Sert debate the issue of *Convergence and Divergence in Online English Language Teaching Materials*. The authors tackle self-regulated learning via the integration of computer-based and e-learning materials to the curricular activities. Another paper written by Almacioğlu on Turkish BA, MA and PhD ELT students' attitudes towards the teaching profession argues that the role of attitudes is crucial because there is a strong relationship among teacher attitudes, society and school. A further study of Doğan examines the *Role of Mentoring in ELT Teacher Candidates' Professional Development* because English is the leading foreign language due to its prestigious position in the world, which has led to the rising of importance of learning and teaching English. The author argues that the possession of good pronunciation and intonation are two crucial professional prerequisites for non-native English language teachers. The paper on *Learning Success through Composition of Didactics and Technology* by Elkina reports on the monitoring of the teaching course "Programming" offered to the students of the specialization "Informatics in Public Administration". AlGhafri's study focuses on *Writing vs. the Red Pen: Omani College Students' Perspectives on Teacher-Student Writing Conferences*. The author claims that writing conferences between the teacher and the students is one of the most popular techniques that will never grow old over time. The paper *Views on the Use of Connectives in Students' Written Discourse* written by Çetinkaya, Ülper and HAMzadayi argues that connectives have a significant role in the linkage of propositions in the text and the organization of information flow. Inaccurate use of connective elements may lead to disconnections between the message that the writer wants to convey and the message formed in the text. The paper *English for Specific Purposes in Turkish Higher Education* written by Sert and Saraç underlines that the origins of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) date back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the publication of the first phrase book for foreign tourists. Ejupi's paper *Teaching Idioms in English as a Foreign Language* reflects the complexity of language comprehension for those who lack a native speaking environment. Finally, in his article *Quality of English Language Teaching in Turkish Secondary Education*, Uygun broadens his research on the improvement and maintenance of the

quality of foreign language learning and teaching in Turkish secondary education institutions.

*Hasan Arslan*



**CHAPTER ONE**

**TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION**



# EMPOWERING LEARNER AUTONOMY: A CASE FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Z. ZUHAL GÜVEN  
AND TERESA HECHT-VALAIS

## **Introduction**

Rapid social, economic, cultural and technological changes in the last century have brought about new insights for education. Those wishing to be competitive in business or academia must ensure they are up-to-date with twenty-first century skills and knowledge. In our global marketplace, lifelong learning is a reality, and the need to develop learner autonomy is an undeniable necessity. Another prerequisite for success in today's world is communicative competence: the ability to use language appropriately in real contexts. In the past several decades, educational specialists have been conducting various studies on how to foster learner autonomy in the foreign or second language classroom as English has taken prominence as an international language. However, teachers' perspectives toward implementing learner-centred teaching methods have not been studied comprehensively. This paper aims to contribute to closing this gap by investigating the views of the teachers who teach English as a foreign language, exploring collaborative learning as a whole, and describing specifically the implementation of project-based learning as a pathway towards learner autonomy.

## **Literature Review and Background of the Study**

### **Learner Autonomy**

Learner autonomy has been discussed with a great deal of interest in the last thirty years and much has been written about the definition, implementation and implications of autonomous learning (Holec, 1981; Little, 1991; Dickinson, 1995; Nunan, 1997; Oxford, 2003; Holec, 2008). According to Holec (1981), who first coined the term "learner autonomy",

autonomous learners are those who take the responsibility for the totality of their learning situation by determining their own objectives, defining the contents and the progression of their course; selecting the methods and techniques; monitoring this procedure, and evaluating what they have learned.

As for the instructional applications of learner autonomy, educationalists have proposed several models, some of which are based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky (1978: 68) emphasized "the distance between the actual level, as determined by independent problem-solving, and the level of potential development, as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." In the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Pearson and Gallagher (1983), which has inspired researchers to conceptualize the notion in various diagrams (Spires and Stone, 1989; Fisher and Freys, 2008; Murphy, 2009), the teacher and learner work together through a carefully guided process where the responsibility for learning is transferred from teacher to learner. This model combines Piaget's work on cognitive structures and schema, Vygotsky's work on proximal zone of development, Bandura's work on attention, retention, reproduction and motivation, and Word, Bruner and Ross's work on scaffolded instruction.

Learner autonomy has taken a significant role in the field of foreign language teaching; however it is said that teachers' roles have not been studied as extensively as the other aspects of learner autonomy (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012). The limited number of studies into teachers' views on learner autonomy reveal that teachers display positive attitudes towards learner autonomy, though some have unanswered questions on the subject (Camilleri, 1997; Ustunluoglu, 2009; Balcıkanlı, 2010; Kılınc, 2010; Bullock, 2011; Reinders and Lazaro, 2011; Yoshiyuku, 2011).

### **Collaborative Learning**

Literature on learner autonomy often suggests that the development of learner autonomy in the English language classroom should aim for competency in the following three areas: communicative competence, learning competence, and strategic competence. Project work encompasses these three learning goals as learners engage in a guided, expanded process of inquiry through which they investigate a complex question, problem or challenge, as an extension of what has already been learned in class. Project Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional approach that can be utilized to direct English language learners towards independence through well planned stages of learning which emphasize peer interaction, critical