Chapter 38
Educating 'Euro-citizens': A Study of a Vocational Uppers Secondary Programme in Health Care and Social Services in a Finnish (Sub)Urban Setting

Sirpa Lappalainen

38.1 Introduction

Nordic countries, such as Finland, have long been regarded as paradigmatic welfare states, where citizens receive support in order to secure their well-being as well as benefit from the common good (Bloch et al. 2003; Esping-Andersen 1996). However, the Nordic welfare state model has been eroded by the spread of neoliberalism, which emphasizes economic reasoning and market orientation (Gordon et al. 2003; Telhaug et al. 2006). This erosion of the welfare state has impacted on the idea of citizenship. In the Finnish context, turning points included an exceptionally deep economic depression at the beginning of the 1990s and membership of the European Union in 1995. The economic depression worked to legitimate changes in politics and policies – neo-liberal reasoning was added to the political agenda through a rhetoric of necessity in a difficult economic climate (Kantola 2002). The concept of the 'active citizenship' was mobilized (Harinen 2000). Individuals were required to take responsibility for their own success and also for the wellbeing of their inner circle. One of the paradoxes was that on one hand individuals were pushed to take risks; on the other failure was potentially more disastrous from individuals' point of view because the welfare state did not provide the same backup as previously.

The state was no longer understood as responsible for protecting individuals from the uncertainties of the market, but rather, for helping people to participate successfully in the market through education, flexible employment and tax incentives (Turner 2001 p. 194). This meant that although equity remained a goal, the focus was more on equal access than equal outcomes, and inclusion was more extensively based on individual positioning in the market and patterns of

S. Lappalainen (✉)
University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland
e-mail: sirpa.lappalainen@helsinki.fi

W.T. Pink, G.W. Noblit (eds.), *Second International Handbook of Urban Education*, Springer International Handbooks of Education,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-40317-5_38

consumption. Moreover, again partly due to its weak economy, Finland was exceptionally conformist to the Europeanisation of educational policy (Lundahl 2007; Ollikainen 2000), this shift in reasoning much in evidence in curriculum documents. This shift was exceptionally marked in curriculum documents of Vocational Education and Training (VET) (Lappalainen and Lahelma 2015). From the millennium onwards, vocational curriculum documentation has contained discourses referring to a new kind of ideal subjectivity; the internationally flexible, labour-market citizen, who on the one hand is capable and willing to cross national borders for employment and on the other, as a consumer and worker, also pays attention to national interests (Isopahkala-Bourét et al. 2014). However, for example, students participating in the research tended to be quite sceptical about their prospects in the transnational labour market, seeing their future mainly tied into the local context (Lappalainen 2014). The national curriculum can be understood as a programme, which the nation state, through political debate, has established to prepare young people for future citizenship (Erekson 2012; Gordon et al. 2000; Yates and Grumer 2011). At the same time, defining desirable features of citizens works as a tool for social selection and control (Hargreaves 1994). However, as Ball et al. (2012, p. 3) argue educational policy statements are not implemented but enacted; i.e. 'translated from text to action' in relation to a particular historical context. Thus, although, statements presented in curriculum oblige educators to adopt certain pedagogical practices, they can be put into effect in a revised form and thus be contested.

In this chapter, I explore how the ideal subjectivity of labour-market citizen introduced in curriculum is (re)formed in the everyday life of a vocational upper-secondary college of Health Care and Social Services (HS). I have chosen to focus on HS because it is a sector where changes to the welfare state have been most pronounced (e.g. Filander 2003). Moreover, educational and vocational guidance (EVG) as well as employment authorities tend to propose HS for particular groups of people. for example, girls (Kurki 2008) and women (e.g. Antikainen 2010; Chang 2014) with immigrant background are thus actively guided towards HS regardless of their previous educational history. Also for young people with low grades in school, HS is often seen as a 'realistic' educational track (e.g. Lappalainen et al. 2013). Previous analyses of curriculum documentation suggest that the ideal subjectivity, based with neo-liberal reasoning, is the labour market citizen: students are expected to internalise the ethos of entrepreneurship and lifelong learning, and become capable of change, for instance as already noted, in crossing national borders to follow the needs of the labour market (Isopahkala-Bourét et al. 2014; Lappalainen 2014). Although, this neo-liberal reasoning has begun to impact on the objectives of existing educational policy, analysis of pedagogical practices in the female-dominated upper-secondary college of HS complicates the picture by revealing how neo-liberal reasoning can be problematised and the social democratic basis of the programme actively and subtly maintained.

38.2 Theoretical Background

This chapter draws on two research projects,[1] which focused on an analysis of the construction of citizenship and difference in upper-secondary vocational education and training (VET), a field where young people are prepared for labour-market citizenship. The concept of citizenship is historically constructed, and thus the economic, political and social climate shapes the ways it is understood (Harinen 2000; Skeggs 2004). Following Ruth Lister (2003) and Nira Yuval-Davis (1997), citizenship here is regarded as multilayered and contextualized, drawing on meanings from lived experience and the social, historical and political context. Historically, as a means to train rational, disciplined and obedient workers, vocational education had a special relevance in Finnish nation building and citizenship (e.g. Kettunen 2010 p. 220). The concept of labour-market citizenship in the research projects refers to the transformation from representation of ideal citizenship in relation to the nation state, to relating instead to the transnational labour market, for example, involving multinational companies.

Theoretically *feminist post-structuralism* frames the subject as constantly in a process of becoming; constructing itself by drawing on available discourses and cultural practices, while at the same time, forced into subjectivity by the same discourses and practices (Davies 2004; St. Pierre 2000). *Materialism* refers to understanding such subjectification in a social, economic and historical context (Jackson 2001 p. 284). This approach to understanding subject formation influences how class is conceptualized. Although the students' backgrounds can been described as working class or lower-middle class in terms of their parents' educational and professional backgrounds, class is not reduced merely to socio-economic status. Class is understood as a social position, which is changing and blurred in interaction with other categories, such as gender, age and ethnicity. Together these elements can be seen to strengthen social hierarchies, but they may also operate in contradictory ways (Anthias 2005 p. 36; Tolonen 2012 p. 127).

The above theoretical perspectives were intertwined with the adoption of a *contextualised ethnographic perspective*, meaning that fieldwork interpretations are understood against the background of current educational policy (Lahelma et al. 2014a). This theoretical framework acknowledges both the existence of educational structures and governing techniques of vocational practice and politics, and how people located in the educational field exhibit their agency (Adkins and Skeggs 2004). This is exemplified by analysis of subject formation in relation to 'Social, Business and Labour Market' and what it provides for (sub)urban youth subject, and also how it relates to the erosion of the Nordic welfare state.

[1] The research projects were funded by the Academy of Finland and were entitled: Citizenship, Agency and Difference in Upper Secondary Education – With Special Focus on Vocational Institutions (project number 1131548, led by Elina Lahelma) and Learning to become practical nurses: Ethnography on Vocational Education of Health care and Social services (project number 1133632, led by Sirpa Lappalainen).

38.3 'Urban' in the Finnish Context

It is important to keep in mind context when using the concept 'urban'. This is a study of vocational education in a Finnish suburban setting. Finland is a relatively sparsely populated Nordic country with few metropolitan areas. 'Urban' in the Finnish context is usually associated with former working-class areas, now populated by the so-called 'creative class'; that is, people working in the fields of art and design, information technology and academia – with music festivals, vintage shop, yoga studios, pop up cafes and so on. Like other Nordic countries, it is the suburban districts, which have the reputation as the main source of social problems, e.g. unemployment, poverty and substance abuse (Öhrn 2012). These are, however, areas where unemployment rates and proportion of population with an immigrant background are higher than average, and education and income levels are lower than average. The current tendency in Finland is to centralize public services such as health care, social services, education and culture into larger units, with, for example, small local libraries and health care centres under threat. Thus availability of local services varies, and at its minimum, comprises just a small shopping mall with grocery, hair saloon and pub or pizzeria.

The welfare state still has some influence despite the erosion of public services, and Finland is not the worst in terms of regional segregation. Due to economic development, welfare policy in the capital Helsinki, for example, regional socio-economic differences were decreasing until the 1990s (Vaattovaara et al. 2011). Moreover, unlike suburban districts, for example Rosengård in Sweden or Clichy-sois-Bois in France, Finnish suburban areas were not subjected to violent forms of collective resistance. However, trends in recent decades are worrying. Structural changes in economy and migration have reversed patterns of socio-economic difference between the areas (Kortteinen et al. 2006) and school achievement levels (Kuusela 2006, 2010) and thus Finland is now closer, socio-economically, to more segregated countries (Bernelius 2013). At the policy level, segregation in metropolitan areas is considered a social risk that needs to be avoided (e.g. Bernelius 2013). Still, this has not stopped governments from pursuing New Right policies, which deepen the gap between advantaged and less advantaged groups and strengthen obstacles preventing upward mobility. The revision of Basic Education Act 1998 (628/1998, 6§; 28§) was a turning point in terms of regional educational segregation of education. Before the revision of the act, schools had particular catchment areas, which in practice meant that pupils went to the local school. After 1998, schools still had to take pupils living in their catchment areas. However, pupils had right to apply to attend a school outside their neighbourhood. In fact, this increased level of choice favoured more privileged groups with greater economic, cultural and social resources (Kosunen 2014). A more recent example of New Right policy is a government's bill to restrict children's right to early childhood (pre-school) education. NGOs focusing on children's right and welbeing, as well as education trade unions and critical researchers came out against the reform, which is considered a serious reversal for educational equality.

38.4 Research Context

This chapter draws on 3 years of ethnographic fieldwork (Autumn 2007 to Spring 2010) in one vocational upper secondary college specializing in courses in Health Care and Social Services (HS). Upper-secondary vocational education comprises, in general, 3 years of study in a specific vocational sector. This gives, in principle, eligibility for entry into higher education, both polytechnics and universities. However, the most preferred institution is the more vocationally oriented polytechnic rather than university. After getting their school leaving certificate, students become qualified practical nurses.[2] They work at basic level within nursing, care, education and rehabilitation, in the health care and social services sector. The sector has problems in recruiting; therefore the knowledge and skills provided at upper-secondary college will enable young people to take up relatively stable forms of employment. However, the work at basic level within HS is poorly paid. It might guarantee reasonable living standards but does not allow for middle class forms of consumption.[3] Moreover, although VET, in recent years has actively been promoted by educational stakeholders, still the more academically oriented route of general upper secondary education has surprisingly well retained its symbolic value.

Student choice between different upper-secondary study pathways can be said to be classed, ethnicised and gendered. Young people from working-class and/or ethnic minority backgrounds more often end up on less culturally-valued vocational routes than white middle-class youth, who form the majority in more academic forms of study (Rinne 2012).[4] Gender segregation inside VET is also evident. According to recent figures (Official Statistics of Finland 2013), the field of HS is 85 % female, whereas for Technology and Transport, the percentage is 18.

The college where the research was carried out was one of the biggest in Finland with approximately 1900 students and 190 teaching staff. Most students interviewed in their first year at college lived in the suburbs, where incomes and employment levels are lower and proportion of migrants higher than average, as already noted. For female students living in the suburbs, this college seemed to the most obvious choice. The few 'high achievers' at the college were of much curiosity to the teachers, who wondered why they, given their wider choice of other more academic courses, had chosen the vocational route of HS.

In the first 2 years of fieldwork, I followed a group of 24 students (22 female and 2 male), who had started their studies in Autumn, 2007. Most students decided on vocational education as soon as they completed compulsory schooling. Most were

[2] Practical nurse is a protected occupational title licensed by the National Supervisory Authory of Welfare and Health.

[3] In 2014, the average wage in the public sector was 3094 euros (Official Statistics of Finland 2015), whereas according the Finnish Union of Practical Nurses, the average wage of a qualified practical nurse was 2076 euros (Super 2015).

[4] The Finnish upper- secondary education system is strictly divided into general (gymnasium) and vocational institutions. The former offers an academic, all-round programme of studies that prepares students for the matriculation examination.

born in 1990 or 1991, so that their childhood was spent during a marked economic downturn of the 1990s in Finland. Moreover, their first steps into the labour market were blighted by the continuing difficult economic climate.

The last year of fieldwork was spent following three groups of students at the end of their college studies. Student ages varied in the groups; the youngest students were just 18 years old, while the oldest were over 30. At the beginning of the academic year, group size varied between 18 and 24.[5] Two were single-sex female groups, whereas the third had slightly more females than males. All students interviewed had completed their compulsory schooling in Finland although three had come to Finland when very young and two had transnational family arrangements.

Here, the main focus is on the course 'Social, Business and Labour Market (Subjects)' (SBLS), one of nine core subjects.[6] The course was divided in two parts. The first part was taught in the second year of a basic studies programme and the second, took place in the students' final year. Course teachers were well qualified with university degrees in the social sciences. The objectives of the course were as follows, that the student: (1) contributes to the management of general affairs at college and in on-the-job training placements; (2) assesses his/her abilities as an active citizenship and consumer; (3) knows how to use social services provided; (4) draws up a personal financial plan; (5) assesses the significance of entrepreneurship to the Finnish national economy; and (6) is able to search for information on workplaces in the health care and social and health care sector as well as on the European Union and its citizens (Finnish National Board of Education 2010, 244). Here, SBLS is regarded as an arena where expectations regarding future labour-market citizenship are produced, reproduced and challenged.

38.5 Data and Methodology

The analysis presented in the chapter draws on field notes generated by the SBLS course (12 days) plus interviews with two teachers who taught the course, lasting each approximately 80 min. The ethnographic fieldwork (Heyl 2001; Lahelma 2002) shaped how interviews were conducted and what questions were asked. The teacher interviews started with a request for a description of their work history, with further questions relating to their job description (e.g. what kind of courses he/she is teaching, what he/she is emphasizing in teaching), student group, differences between students, and educational 'philosophy' as well as the content of the subject that they were teaching.

The process of analysis had three phases. The first phase was an overall reading of the materials generated by the whole research project, highlighting areas, where

[5] Due to suspensions and dropouts, the group's size tended to decrease during the year.

[6] The nine core subjects are Swedish, second national language, foreign language, mathematics, physics and chemistry, business and labour-market subjects, physical education, health education, arts and culture.

questions of citizenship were actualized. This research phase showed that SBLS was an educational space that was ambivalent towards the requirement for neo-liberal reasoning. For example, the curriculum and the content of the course are explicit in promoting a particular kind of subjectivity; of flexible and mobile workers with an internalised ethos of entrepreneurship. This however was challengeable during the lessons. While the content of the curriculum was acknowledged in teaching, the way issues were introduced seemed dissonant with the 'ethos' of the curriculum texts. The second analytic phase focused on field-notes of pedagogic encounters between teachers and students on SBLS course in more detail (see Youdell 2011 p. 85), especially how society was constructed in these encounters: i.e. what was said and what were the consequences. The third phase involved reading the field notes and teacher interviews side-by-side, to explore how teachers make sense about their own teaching. This analytic phase revealed how teachers struggled with and negotiated the content of curriculum.

38.6 Business and Labour Market Subjects: An Arena for Problematising Neo Liberal Reasoning?

38.6.1 The People's State?

The following snapshot comes from beginning of the first lesson of the SBLS course. The teacher describes the content of the course, and introduces concepts of family, community and society.

> Kimmo (a teacher, male) delivered the outline of the course saying that the course is one of the core subjects and it is common course for all vocational students […]. He said that we are not going to use any textbook, which means lot of notes. In the printed outline of the course, the core content was listed under the following topics: acting as a member of society and EU citizen; impact on households and companies of Finland's and the EU's economy; acting as a member of a work community; acting according to labour-market procedures. He mentioned the rules of working life, noting that 'quite a lot of you have experience on working life already'. He started to talk about the concept of society, illustrating his talk by drawing nested circles on the blackboard with the smallest representing individual, the next size up representing the family, and the next representing community and the largest, the EU. He explained that often the starting point is a family; 'individuals form a family. A family is a place for reproduction where our batteries are recharged so that we are able to act in society'. The concept of community was explained as follows. 'Community is often formed by individuals, who have a common goal more or less.' The football team was given as an example on a community. He continued by referring to the history of Finnish nation state, describing how artists and intellectuals built a joint mental image of Finland. 'We were injected with a common sense of belonging in between the huge Russia and Sweden. He then brought the EU into the discussion, and how we were incorporated into the big joint family of the EU. (Fieldnotes: SBLS, Autumn 2008.)

In analyzing this example, questions arose about the ways society is described and made sense of (Davies 2004). The above 'synopsis' of the lecture shows society

as starting from the individual through to the family, community (e.g. football team) and nation state, ending up with the EU. Individual and family are described in abstract gender-neutral ways; categories of male and female are not reproduced. Moreover, the family could be any kind of family; hetero-sexual nuclear family, 'rainbow' multiethnic family or extended family. Community is illustrated by the football team which is curious in such a female-dominated context. Football has not the same relevance in Finland as, for example, UK or Germany, where the local football team is both a binding and potentially dividing force related to social class and regional as well as gender identity formation (Dunning 2000; Gibbons 2014; Harris 2001). Traditionally Finnish 'teacher-hood' or professional self-concept is characterized by conformism towards governmental ideology and adoption of a neutral, non-political stance (Räisänen 2011, 442). Although religious community, political party or fan club might have been better illustrations of community, football, from the (male) teacher's point of view, was a neutral way to exemplify the idea of community.

As the lecture continues, the teacher makes visible how the Finnish nation state can be seen as a formation of elites, where the common sense of belonging is based on the geo-political location between two more powerful countries. Benedict Anderson (1983/2006), in his analysis of the spread of nationalism, provides the concept of 'imagined community', as not something concrete but rather, an image of affinity that members hold in their minds (Anderson 1983/2006). In his lecture, the teacher reveals the process of imagining the Finnish nation state. When introducing the EU, he has no similar story. However, when talking about EU he used the metaphor of family to communicate collective aims, at the same time as still keeping an analytical distance in describing how national and transnational collectives are created through political action.

In the interviews, I asked teachers to reflect on what were the most important course themes or issues. Kimmo said that one of his aims is to cover themes in the curriculum. However, his main concern is to transmit an understanding of how society works and awaken student interest in social issues. He expressed a commitment to the view that this should be carried out in a neutral manner. 'At least I tried to avoid expressing my own values, though still for sure they (values) sometimes pop up'.

Kimmo's view of the social/civil awareness of his students was relatively pessimistic. He argued that many of them have no idea of basic concepts such as state or municipality. He especially mentioned the EU as a challenging theme to which he generally gives less attention. It has been argued that European education policy has not managed to dissociate citizenship from the nation state, so that people's sense of belonging is still based on the idea of national community (Philippou et al. 2009). Teaching on SBLS was generally based on existing 'stories' about the nation while it was more difficult to create collective narratives for 'euro citizenship' even though it is a formal aim of the course.

The lecture described above continued with the next part focusing on society:

> Kimmo introduced a picture of three intertwined wheels, which illustrated the social, political and economic systems. It was explained that society is made up of three systems: social, voluntary coalitions of people, such as hobby clubs, residents' associations, sport clubs;

political, how social life is organized by means of administration and legislation (State and municipalities). […]; and economic, the pursuit of profit, companies.

Kimmo: The political system tries to constrain the economic system so that people are not exploited.
Kimmo asks whether any one system dominates the others
Helmi (female student): Money dominates too much.
Pilvi (female student): Agree, money dominates far too much, nothing can't be done without money.
Kimmo: How might it be possible to reduce that domination? I do indeed agree with you.
Laura: I think it's entangled with social; there are people who can't afford the [medical] treatment that they need.
Kimmo turned the discussion to children's leisure activities and how parents are required to give money for activities.
Kimmo: You mean that the political system isn't working properly? The allocation of resources is politics. (Field-notes: SBLS, Autumn 2008.)

It has been argued that neo-liberal reasoning indicates a move away from a rights-based model of citizenship to citizenship based on consumer-orientation, entrepreneurism and the economy; with the state entrusted through education to produce particular forms of subjectivity appropriate for the presumed needs of the economy (Peters 2011 p. 174; Komulainen 2006 p. 215). Our previous analyses (Isopahkala-Bouret et al. 2014; Lappalainen et al. 2010) indicated how neo-liberal rationality and emphasis of market forces, is expressed in vocational curriculum documents. However, Kimmo's teaching as above indicates that neo-liberal reasoning can be problematized by both teachers and students. The teacher (Kimmo) argues that 'the political system tries to constrain the economic system so that people are not exploited'; hence the relationship between political and economic is seen by him as contentious; and the present economic system is potentially exploitative and needs to be regulated by the political system. Kimmo makes the point that the political system should not be for economy but for the people. Students point out that material resources set limits for individual agency. Kimmo supports this interpretation by citing an example of how the need to make money affects the leisure time of families and also by asking what could be done to reduce the domination of economics. This view of the relationship between economy and politics, co-constructed by teacher and students, offers a challenge to the demand for neo-liberal rationality and echoes the tradition of the social democratic welfare era when the role of the state was seen as to protect people from the uncertainties of capitalism.

38.6.2 Uncomfortable Entrepreneurship

As already noted, Finland has been pro-active in developing education for entrepreneurship. Vocational education has a place in the education system from primary school to higher education (Komulainen et al. 2009 p. 631). The title of the course, 'Business and Labour Market Subjects', reflects the inclusion of industry and commerce in school and university curricula (Ahonen 2003). One objective of SBLS is

therefore to understand the 'significance of entrepreneurship to the national Finnish economy' (Finnish National Board of Education 2010 p. 244). Katri Komulainen et al. (2009, p. 632) have introduced the concept of 'the enterprising self' referring to the moral regulation inherent in neoliberalism. It operates through various institutions, promoting an entrepreneur-like subjectivity, including ability and willingness to take risks, independence, and self-reliance as a desirable form of the selfhood (ibid). Curriculum texts are seen here as cultural practices, where the ideal subjectivity of the 'enterprising self' is defined (see Isopahkala-Bourét et al. 2014; Koski 2009). However, the following example shows ambivalence in how entrepreneurship is handled. This is taken from a lesson which took place in the students' final year at the college:

> We moved on to the next theme, which was entrepreneurship. The way the theme was introduced made me feel that the teacher's view might be quite ambivalent. […] Asko (male teacher): We have this weird theme; entrepreneurship. It's a big issue – we have an entrepreneurship boom here. […] Is it possible to become an entrepreneur straight out of school?
>
> Laura (the student): Why not?
> Asko: Would you?
> Laura: Well, no…
> Asko: If we talk about 'care entrepreneurship', if you are not interested at all, that's fine, you can keep your own distance.
> Asko stated that it is good to be critical. One student commented on entrepreneurship as too complicated. Asko wrote on the blackboard "Finnish attitudes" and explained. Previously there was a time when entrepreneurs were hated as capitalist predators; nowadays it's the other way around.[7] […].
> Asko: How much do entrepreneurs work?
> Ninni (student female): 24/7.
> Asko: A bit overkill […] He continued to explain that Finnish thinking is wary of the huge risks of entrepreneurship, 'a myth of bankruptcy and then comes divorce, alcohol and drugs – truth or legend?
> Minja (student female): Overkill.
> […]
> Asko: It is thought that as wage earners we stay safe but it doesn't work out like that, the wage earner is not safe in this country either. (Fieldnotes: Business and Labour Market Subjects, Spring 2010.)

Most interesting about the example given above is how, when introducing entrepreneurship as 'weird', Asko does not assume that it is a legitimate topic for the course but rather, something, which is difficult to incorporate. The theme of entrepreneurship is addressed by drawing on the conventional cultural narrative of risk and failure. Exposed to colourful expressions like 'capitalist predators' and descriptions of personal catastrophe such as bankruptcy, divorce and drug-taking, students are facilitated in understanding the change in political climate – where entrepreneurship changes from something that is socially suspect to something highly desirable. It is hard to see in Asko's story about social change, an advocacy of entrepreneurship; rather he puts an analytical distance between himself and officially promoted views on entrepreneurship, making visible the political nature

[7] This particular teacher tended to use colourful expressions and juxtapositions.

of the phenomenon. Asko thus promotes critical thinking among his students rather than proactive commitment to entrepreneurship.

Of further note is that while the teacher makes it clear that entrepreneurship is supposed to be discussed in the course, sceptical views are openly encouraged (see Koski 2009). At the end of the lesson described above students were given an assignment, of which the last of three options was on entrepreneurship – students were asked to develop a business plan. When handing out the assignment the teacher commented, 'This third one is for those with an entrepreneurial mindset – you have to think about yourselves as entrepreneurs; if you hate it, this is not your choice'. I interviewed the teacher after the course was over. He had taught social sciences and business since the 1980s in polytechnics and in vocational education, having previously worked in public administration and welfare of drug-users. I raised the manner in which entrepreneurship was introduced in the course discussion:

> SL: When I followed your lessons I started to wonder, you said something like 'you can keep your opinion', I mean I started to wonder whether entrepreneurship education has met opposition, or whether you meant to communicate a critical stance, I mean, it just made me curious.
>
> Asko: Well yes, (small laugh), I have taught so much, it might have come up somehow automatically, well definitely, I am a bit critical, I mean we have lot of kind of like fanaticism and kind of like flimflam in terms of entrepreneurship in our society. These entrepreneurship educators, they think too enthusiastically that it is a solution to everything and it should be implemented in early childhood education, even for toddlers. I find it a stupid and childish idea, especially in the care sector. Nurses have to become skilled professionals, in the first place. After that, it makes sense that some of them might end up as entrepreneurs. And I think also that it might be liberating, I mean I know that quite a lot of nurses are critical as well, and students also. It might be liberating to know that you can think what you like, that you are allowed to listen and discuss and form your own opinion and you are not supposed to be extremely positive. I have gained the impression of the implementation of the idea of positive thinking in entrepreneurship education. I don't think in that way, it is OK to be critical or have a negative view. But, well I haven't thought about that before (Teacher interview).

Both Kimmo and Asko took a somewhat critical stance towards entrepreneurship education. However in the extract above, Asko used epithets of 'fanaticism' and 'flimflam' in his criticism of entrepreneurship education, words conventionally used to articulate a disapproving stance toward religious worldviews. He also actively distanced himself from entrepreneurship educators, whose confidence in the potential value of entrepreneurship education, he ridiculed. The concept of the 'enterprising self' contains the interweaving of various moral attributes defining the good life (Rose 1992). Initiative, independence, assertiveness, risk-taking, self-responsibility are all regarded as characteristics crucial in entrepreneurship (Keskitalo et al. 2010 p. 15). According to Koski (2009) the advent of the idea of the 'enterprising self' in educational policymaking throughout the European Union symbolises the presence of new technologies of moral regulation. Drawing on Deleuze-Quattarian theorization Deborah Youdell (2011, p. 14) suggests that education should be understood as a complex assemblage of various heterogeneous objects, which create unity through the way they work together. Youdell (2011, p. 15) argues that politics is manifested

and pursued at all levels of education from political election manifesto pledges to everyday life inside educational institutions. In the pedagogical encounter described above, the teacher negotiates with the curriculum, seeking ways to fulfill the expectations of him as stated in curriculum, without surrendering his intellectual integrity.

It has been noted that SBLS is a space in which there is an expectation to cultivate the entrepreneurial mindset of students. However, the teachers interviewed do not consider entrepreneurship as a concept describing selfhood but rather as a relation between individual and labour market. Their vision of the future of their students is as wage earners not entrepreneurs. Moreover, as our earlier analysis shows (Lahelma et al. 2014b) HS teachers prefer to see themselves as professionals, providing the qualifications needed in the workplace. This might explain their ambivalence in terms of entrepreneurship education. In the context of HS vocational studies, this ambivalence creates a space where educational aims which draw on neo-liberal governance can be criticised (see e.g. Besley and Peters 2007).

38.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have focused on pedagogic encounters between teachers and students in the context of SBLS, a subject in the upper-secondary vocational field of Health Care and Social Services, which, in the Finnish urban context, is a popular option for young women from working-class and ethnic-minority backgrounds. Traditionally Finnish teachers do not problematize governmental educational ideology (e.g. Räisänen 2011); that is considered to be the task of sociologists. Therefore, the way that SBLS was taught was surprising. Although teachers were careful to cover all aspects of the curriculum, their teaching certainly did not conform to the existing political climate which emphasises neo-liberal reasoning and the labour market. Social democratic welfare values were acknowledged in the criticism of the idea of the enterprising self.

Although the national curriculum is intended to govern education, still as Deborah Youdell (2011, p. 85) argues, the ways educators think about and engage with educational systems, structures and processes influence in pedagogy – even though, as Kimmo stated in the interview – they actively try to avoid conveying their personal views. SBLS was mainly taught by the teachers with a background in the social or political sciences. I want to suggest that it was this academic background that enabled them to distance themselves from government ideology and made it hard for them to 'buy into' the rationale, in which people's successes as well as failures are individualized and where the main aim is to produce obedient citizens with enterprising mindsets (see Koski 2009).

Due to the Europeanisation of Finnish VET, neo-liberal reasoning frames the curriculum and more explicitly, the objectives of SBLS. However, teachers and students displayed the power, at least to some extent, to disrupt the discourse of neo-liberalism. SBLS lessons constituted an arena where disruption was possible,

and where there was a space for critical thinking. Historical tendencies were used critically to scrutinise marketization as well as entrepreneurship. What might this mean for young people growing up in suburban settings, who intend to work in the care sector which provides relative security of employment, although poorly paid? In fact it cuts both ways. On the one hand, the critique of neoliberal policies can be understood as a counter politics (Youdell 2011 p. 15–16), which takes the form of everyday struggle or resistance, provokes awareness of forms of governance, and, at best, awakens a sense of political agency among young people. On the other hand, when preparing students simply as wage earners, the risk is that their future vision is simply to become skillful and caring workers at the lowest levels of the public sector. Their vocational education and training thus becomes merely the reproduction of a discourse of 'lack of alternative', which according Skeggs (1997, p. 161) is a central feature of being working class. Fulfilling individual aspirations is a luxury primarily available to white, middle class high achieving youth. Moreover, the female-dominated field of HS is poorly paid compared with other male-dominated vocational sectors. There is an equity problem where belonging is based on individuals' market and consumption positioning. Thus the challenge in educating these young people from the city and the suburbs in particular is how to problematize and disrupt prevailing discourses of neoliberalism without destroying their hopes and ambitions for the future.

References

Adkins, L., & Skeggs, B. (Eds.). (2004). *Feminism after Bourdieu*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ahonen, S. (2003). *Yhteinen koulu – tasa-arvoa vai tasapäisyyttä?: koulutuksellinen tasa-arvo Suomessa Snellmannista tähän päivään* [Educational equality in Finland from Snellman until today]. Tampere: Vastapaino.

Anderson, B. (1983/2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* London: Verso.

Anthias, F. (2005). Social stratification and social inequality: Models of intersectionality and identity. In F. Devine, M. Savage, J. Scott, & R. Crompton (Eds.), *Rethinking class: Culture, identities & lifestyle* (pp. 24–45). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Antikainen, M. (2010). *Matkalla suomalaiseksi ja hoivala-alan ammattilaiseksi: venäläis- ja virolaistaustaisten naisten ja suomalaisuuden kohtaamiset kuulumista rakentamassa* [On a journey to Finnishenes and care sector professionals?]. Research Reports 317. Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, Department of Teacher Education, University of Helsinki.

Ball, J. S., Mcguire, M., & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy. Policy enactments in secondary schools*. Oxon: Routledge.

Bernelius, V. (2013). *Eriytyvät kaupunkikoulut* [Differentiating urban schools] (Research Series, Vol. 1, p. 13). Helsinki: Helsinki City of Urban Facts.

Besley, T. A. C., & Peters, M. A. (2007). *Subjectivity and truth: Foucault, education and the culture of self*. New York: Peter Lang.

Bloch, M., Holmlund, K., Moqvist, I., & Popkewitz, T. (2003). Global and local patterns of governing the child, family, care, and education. In M. Bloch, K. Holmlund, I. Moqvist, & T. Popkewitz (Eds.), *Governing children, families and education. Restructuring the welfare53state* (pp. 3–31). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chang, C.C. (2014). *Highly educated Taiwanese women seeking self-acceptable position in Finland.* University of Helsinki, Institute of Behavioural Sciences, Studies in Educational Sciences, 253.

Davies, B. (2004). Introduction: Poststructuralist lines of flight in Australia. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 17*(1), 3–9.

Dunning, E. (2000). Towards a sociological understanding of football hooliganism as a world phenomenon. *European Journal of Criminal Policy and Research, 8*(2), 141–162.

Erekson, K. (Ed.). (2012). *Politics and the history curriculum: The struggle over standards in Texas and the Nation*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Esping-Andersen, G. (1996). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Filander, K. (2003). *Vocabularies of change – Analysing talk on change and agency in developmental work*. Roskilde: Roskilde University Press.

Finnnish National Board of Education (2010). *Sosiaali- ja terveysalan perustutkinto, lähihoitaja* [National core curriculum, health care and social services]. Retrieved from http://www.oph.fi/download/169114_124811_SoTe.pdf. Accessed 1 Mar 2013.

Gibbons, T. (2014). *English national identity and football fan culture: Who are ya?* Surry: Ashgate.

Gordon, T., Holland, J., & Lahelma, E. (2000). *Making spaces: Citizenship and difference in schools*. London: Macmillan.

Gordon, T., Lahelma, E., & Beach, D. (2003). Marketising democratic education. Ethnographic insights. In D. Beach, T. Gordon, & E. Lahelma (Eds.), *Democratic education* (pp. 1–9). London: Tufnell Press.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). Critical introduction. In I. Goodson (Ed.), *Studying curriculum* (pp. 1–11). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Harinen, P. (2000). *Valmiiseen tulleet – tutkimus nuoruudesta, kansallisuudesta ja kansalaisuudesta* [Young citizens – Arrivals at the given: A study of youth, nationality and citizenship]. Helsinki: Nuorisotutkimusseura [Finnish Youth Research Society].

Harris, J. (2001). Playing the man's game: Sites of resistance and incorporation in women's football. *World Leisure Journal, 43*(4), 22–29.

Heyl, B. S. (2001). Ethnographic interviewing. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, L. Lofland, & J. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 369–383). London: Sage.

Isopahkala-Bouret, U., Lappalainen, S., & Lahelma, E. (2014). Educating model 'worker citizens': Visions and divisions in curriculum texts. *Journal of Education and Work, 27*(1), 92–109.

Jackson, S. (2001). Why a materialist feminism is (still) possible – And necessary. *Women's Studies International Forum, 24*(3–4), 283–293.

Kantola, A. (2002). *Markkinakuri ja managerivalta* [Market discipline and the managerial power]. Helsinki: Loki-Kirjat.

Keskitalo-Foley, S., Komulainen, K., & Naskali, P. (2010). Risto Reipas riskinottaja Koulutuspolitiikan tavoittelema ihannekansalainen [Ideal citizen of educational policy]. In K. Komulainen, M. Korhonen, S. Keskitalo-Foley, & S. Lappalainen (Eds.), *Yrittäjyyskasvatus hallintana [Entrepreneurship education as a governance]* (pp. 15–36). Tampere: Vastapaino.

Kettunen, P. (2010). Vocational education as an answer – To what questions? In J. Kauko, R. Rinne, & H. Kynkäänniemi (Eds.), *Restructuring the truths of schooling – Essays on discursive practices in the sociology and politics of education* (pp. 199–225). Jyväskylä: Finnish Educational Research Association.

Komulainen, K. (2006). Neoliberal educational policy: A case study of Finnish textbooks of entrepreneurial education. *Nordisk Pedagogik, 26*(3), 212–228.

Komulainen, K., Korhonen, M., & Räty, H. (2009). Risk-taking abilities for everyone? Finnish entrepreneurship education and the enterprising selves imagined by pupils. *Gender and Education, 21*(6), 631–649.

Kortteinen, M., Elovainio, M., & Vaattovaara, M. (2006). Asuinolot ja niiden kehitys Helsingin kunnallisissa vuokrataloissa [Housing conditions and their development in rented council houses in Helsinki. *Yhteiskuntapolitiikka [Social Policy], 71*(1), 3–13.

Koski, L. (2009). Vocational curriculum – Morality for the working class? In M. Weil, L. Koski, & L. Mjelde (Eds.), *Knowing work: The social relations of working and knowing* (pp. 27–49). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Kosunen, S. (2014). Reputation and parental logics of action in local school choice space in Finland. *Journal of Education Policy, 29*(4), 443–466.

Kurki, T. (2008). Sukupuolitettuja ja rodullistettuja koulutusreittejä: Maahanmuuttajataustaiset tytöt siirtymässä toisen asteen koulutuksiin [Gendered and ethnised educational routes of girls with immigrant background in Finland. *Nuorisotutkimus, [Finnish Journal of Youth Research], 26*(3), 26–51.

Kuusela, J. (2006). *Temaattisia näkökulmia perusopetuksen tasa-arvoon* [Perspectives on equality in basic education]. Helsinki: Opetushallitus [National Board of Education].

Kuusela, J. (2010). Oppilaiden sosioekonomisen taustan yhteys koulumenestykseen koulutasolla [Pupils' socio-economic background and school achievement]. In M. Rimpelä & V. Bernelius (Eds.), *Peruskoulujen oppimistulokset ja oppilaiden hyvinvointi eriytyvällä Helsingin seudulla* [Educational outcomes and health of children – Does increased segregation in the schools and neighbourhoods in the Helsinki Metropolitan area procuce poorer health and learning among children] (pp. 44–48). Helsinki: Department of Geosciences and Geography, University of Helsinki.

Lahelma, E. (2002). School is for meeting friends: Secondary school as lived and remembered. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 3*(3), 367–381.

Lahelma, E., Lappalainen, S., Mietola, R., & Palmu, T. (2014a). Discussions that 'tickle our brains': Constructing interpretations through multiple ethnographic data sets. *Ethnography & Education, 9*(1), 51–65.

Lahelma, E., Lappalainen, S., Palmu, T., & Pehkonen, L. (2014b). Vocational teachers' gendered reflections on education, teaching and care. *Gender and Education, 26*(3), 293–305.

Lappalainen, S. (2014). Locality, mobility and labour market citizenship: Reflections of Finnish vocational students in social services and health care. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society, 22*(3), 425–445.

Lappalainen, S., & Lahelma, E. (2015). Subtle discourses on equality in the Finnish curricula of upper secondary education: Reflections of the imagines society. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. doi:10.1080/00220272.2015.1069399. [epub ahead of print].

Lappalainen, S., Isopahkala-Bouret, U., & Lahelma, E. (2010). Kohti työmarkkinakansalaisuutta hoiva-alan ammatillisessa koulutuksessa [Towards labourmarket citizenship in vocational education of Health Care and Social Services]. In K. Komulainen, M. Korhonen, S. Keskitalo-Foley, & S. Lappalainen (Eds.), *Yrittäjyyskasvatus hallintana* [Entrepreneurship education as a governance] (pp. 187–206). Tampere: Vastapaino

Lappalainen, S., Mietola, R., & Lahelma, E. (2013). Gendered divisions on classed routes to vocational education. *Gender and Education, 25*(2), 189–205.

Lister, R. (2003). *Citizenship: Feminist perspectives*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Lundahl, L. (2007). Swedish, European, global. The transformation of the welfare state. In B. Lingard & J. Ozga (Eds.), *Reader in education policy and politics* (pp. 117–130). London: Routledge.

Official Statistics of Finland (OSF). (2013). *Vocational education [epublication]*. Helsinki: Statistics Finland. http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/aop/2013/aop_2013_2014-09-23_tie_001_en.html. Accessed 16 Feb 2015.

Official Statistics of Finland (OSF) (2015). *Wages in public sector 2014* [epublication]. http://www.stat.fi/til/ksp/2014/ksp_2014_2015-05-07_tie_001_fi.html. Accessed 16 Nov 2015.

Öhrn, E. (2012). Urban education and segregation. *European Educational Research Journal, 11*(1), 45–47.

Ollikainen, A. (2000). Into the single market for education: Europeanisation of Finnish education policy discourses. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 4*(2), 33–53.

Peters, M. (2011). *Neoliberalism and after? Education, social policy, and the crisis of western capitalism*. New York: Peter Lang.
Philippou, S., Keating, A., & Hinderliter Ortlof, D. (2009). Conclusion: Citizenship education curricula: Comparing the multiple meanings of supra-national citizenship in Europe and beyond. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 41*(2), 291–299.
Räisänen, M. (2011). Koulutuspolitiikan punahilkka. Demko ry opettajan mallitarinan haastajana 1973–1989 [DEMKO – Little red riding hood of Finnish education politics image]. *Kasvatus [The Finnish Journal of Education], 42*(5), 441.
Rinne, R. (2012). Koulutetun eliitin erottautuminen [The distinction of the educated elite]. In P. Kettunen & H. Simola (Eds.), *Tiedon ja osaamisen Suomi* [Finland a country of knowledge] (pp. 367–407). Helsinki: Finnish Historical Association.
Rose, N. (1992). Governing enterprising self. In P. Heelas & P. Morris (Eds.), *The values of enterprise culture. The moral debate* (pp. 141–164). London: Routledge.
Skeggs, B. (1997). *Formations of class and gender*. London: Sage.
Skeggs, B. (2004). *Class, self, culture*. London: Routledge.
St. Pierre, A. E. (2000). Poststructural feminism in education. An overview. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 13*(5), 477–515.
Super. (2015). [The Finnish union of practical nurses]*: Palkkatietoja ja yleisimmät nimikkeet kuntasektorilla lokakuussa 2014* [Wages in municipal sector in October 2014] [epublication]. Helsinki: Super. Accessed 16 Nov 2015.
Telhaug, A. O., Mediås, A. O., & Aasen, P. (2006). The Nordic model in education: Education as part of the political system in the last 50 years. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 50*(3), 245–283.
Tolonen, T. (2012). Classed and gendered meanings of marginalisation in young people's transitions. In T. Tolonen, T. Palmu, S. Lappalainen, & T. Kurki (Eds.), *Cultural practices and transitions in education* (pp. 126–137). London: Tufnell Press.
Turner, B. S. (2001). The erosion of citizenship. *British Journal of Sociology, 52*(2), 189–209.
Vaattovaara, M., Schulman, H., & Kortteinen, M. (2011). A Nordic welfare model at a turning point? Social housing and segregation in Finland. In J.-C. Driant & N. Houard (Eds.), *Social housing across Europe* (pp. 49–70). Paris: La documentation Francaise.
Yates, L., & Grumet, M. (Eds.). (2011). *Curriculum in today's world: Configuring knowledge, identities, work and politics. World Yearbook of Education 2011*. Oxon: Routledge.
Youdell, D. (2011). *School trouble. Identity, power and politics of education*. London: Routledge.
Yuval-Davis, N. (1997). *Gender and nation*. London: Sage.