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Bildung in trans- nationalen Räumen

Education in transnational spaces



Springer VS

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Almut Küppers • Barbara Pusch
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(Hrsg.)

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*For our five kids
and all the other children of our
transnationalizing world*

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Istanbul, April 2015

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Mapping Out the Transnational Educational Space Between Germany and Turkey

Almut Küppers, Barbara Pusch and Pınar Uyan-Semerçi

*To think of history as possibility is to recognize education as possibility. It is to recognize that if education cannot do everything it can achieve some things.... One of our challenges as educators is to discover what historically possible in the sense of contributing toward the transformation of the world, giving rise to a world that is rounder, less angular, more humane.
(Freire and Macedo 1996, p. 222)*

Paolo Freire, with his pedagogy of the oppressed, is a legend in the field of education and beyond. The renowned Brazil reformer favored education as a social practice of freedom and as a means of enabling younger generations to critically and creatively deal with reality in order to take an active part in the transformation of the world. Agency has remained, and needs to be cherished, as an important educational objective—especially in times of deep social divisions and growing tensions—a tendency clearly perceptible even in societies which consider themselves to be democratic and pluralistic. This volume deals with the potentials and

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challenges of educational institutions in a rapidly transforming world—not only international—but increasingly in densely interwoven webs of transnational relations. In the following essays, we will be exploring in depth the German-Turkish transnational space, which has expanded remarkably in the past couple of decades.

Around the world, the nation-state's control on education and socialization has been challenged by various types of regionalization and globalization, with complex forms of social, economic and digital integration. Nationalism and national citizenship no longer provide satisfactory responses to global realities, so it seems. Ever more complex interactions and changing social and economic practices have been challenging the existing paradigm of citizenship, which has traditionally been defined as belonging to a single country. The increasingly diverse and multi-directional mobility of people creates different allegiances with countries of origin, countries of residence, and countries of destination. Migration can therefore no longer be understood as the singular movement of person A leaving country X to go and live in country Y. Rather, continuous movement between countries X and Y, and sometimes a new route to country Z, has become *one* of many possible patterns of mobility. Hence, various transnational communities are developing simultaneously and are increasing in number as mobility between countries of origin and countries of residence and destination is increasing. Consequently, nation-state borders are bypassed not only by individuals, but also by transnational organizations, international institutions and in general by technology-fuelled communication. Thus, in the heavy weather of global and technological change, the old nineteenth and twentieth century type nation-state has become rusty and many of its policies and regulations seem to be questionable or even outdated.

In this book we will focus on educational practices and educational institutions. It seems like a commonplace to state that educational practices do not emerge in vacuum. Historical, political, social and economic conditions, in conjunction with media and technology, all shape the context within which preschools, schools and institutions of higher education operate and create learning environments for the next generations. According to Jeremy Waldron, “individuals can no longer be regarded in the modern world (if indeed they ever could be) as mere artifacts of the culture of the one community to which we think they ought to belong” (Waldron 1996, p. 15). However, many state school systems around the world are deeply rooted in the ‘nation-state paradigm’ where schools have traditionally been a place of cultural homogenization and contributed to the construction of ‘national identities’ as an imagined norm. The German–Turkish experience with different cases of educational institutions and programs, raises important questions. Challenging the existing paradigms, the German-Turkish case led to the creation and recreation of new words and concepts, as the old ones do not capture the new reality. According to Macedo, educational institutions “in a form of moral, social, political,

and economic reproduction [are] designed to shape students in the image of the dominant society” and “socialize [them] in ways that support the existing power structure” (Macedo 2000, p. 3). Due to their different ideological loads for creating ‘ideal citizens’ and the volume of migration between them, Turkey and Germany are interesting case studies for discussing educational institutions’ twin roles of reproduction and socialization.

The education system in Turkey is highly centralized and is under the supervision and control of the Ministry of National Education and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK). Except in specially licensed and foreign institutions, Turkish must be taught as the mother tongue, which has been an important and hotly debated issue particularly for Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin.¹ As opposed to the centralized Turkish system, education in Germany is under the control of sixteen federal state governments. Naturally, there is a great deal of variation within a school system shaped by a federal approach to education. Coordination on a national level consists of a national conference of the ministries of education and culture (Kultusministerkonferenz, KMK), which issues policy recommendations. Only recently has a paradigm shift been executed on the level of education policy: In the revised recommendations for Intercultural Education, the KMK states that multilingualism and diversity should be regarded as a resource and developed in learners and no longer be regarded as a deficit (KMK 2013).² Despite the structural

¹ For the details of the education system in Turkey, please see <http://www.meb.gov.tr/english/indexeng.htm>; <http://www.yok.gov.tr/en> as well as http://oecd.org/edu/EDUCATION%20POLICY%20OUTLOOK%20TURKEY_EN.pdf.[http://](http://www.yok.gov.tr/en) Besides normal high schools (*lise*) that provide four years of secondary education after eight years of primary and middle school education, there are some public and private high schools with a special language profile. These high schools provide one year of intense foreign language study followed by three or four years of regular high school education with additional hours for foreign language instruction. The medium of instruction at these schools is mostly English but may also be French or German (see Ressmeyer as well as Tapan and Hatipoğlu in this volume). The language of instruction at state universities is mostly Turkish; however, some state universities are English-, German-, or French-medium. Most foundation universities are English-medium.

² The German school system is traditionally a selective system of three tiers after four years (in some federal states six) of primary education. Secondary schools are called *Hauptschule* (vocational school), *Realschule* (middle school) or *Gymnasium* (grammar school) complemented by *Gesamtschulen* (comprehensive schools). Higher education starts after 12 or 13 key stages. A basic outline of the German education system can be found at http://www.eduserver.de/zeigen_e.html?seite=4112; a more detailed account is provided by the KMK at <http://www.kmk.org/information-in-english/the-education-system-in-the-federal-republic-of-germany.html>. German is generally used as the language of instruction in all state schools, although foreign languages hold a high status within the curriculum. The portfolio of foreign languages taught traditionally comprises of English and the large national European lan-

differences in Germany's and Turkey's educational systems, to question educational practices which are still heavily influenced by the monolingual ideology of the nation-state remains a necessity in both countries.

It took a long time before Western European nation-states arrived at the realization that after WWII they had transformed into immigrant societies. Adjusting their educational institutions to the demands of increasing diversity and diversification in times of accelerating mobility, constant migration flows and high-speed communication has only slowly begun to set in. In countries like Germany, a third of all children who enter school speak a family language other than German at home, and in the super-diverse urban centers, between 50 and 70% of all first graders are bilingual or multilingual.³ Children nowadays grow up experiencing linguistic diversity and many of them experience multilingualism and heterogeneity as a commonality. In contrast to this reality, many state school systems hold dear the assumption that the ideal student is monolingual. Even in the present day, the "monolingual habitus of the multilingual school" (Gogolin 1994) reaches far into the classrooms, with subtle but extensive consequences for identity development, hampering academic achievement and school success especially amongst immigrant children. With regard to educational and social justice, it seems necessary to raise awareness of the impact of the powerful nation-state paradigm on education and to question traditional practices in order to revise not only curricula but also teaching approaches and teacher trainings. On a more positive note, many countries are in the process of reconstructing their state school systems, implementing intercultural competences as a teaching objective across the curricula and starting to integrate new concepts like "inclusion" and "multilingualism". It remains to be seen if a more cosmopolitan view based on the idea of world citizenship will have an impact on the construction sites in the field of education. Against the backdrop of the current events in France (Charlie Hebdo) and Germany (Pegida) while writing this it seems surely necessary to reconsider ethical perspectives and notions of moral value, human dignity, and shared universal rights in order to remember that,

guages. Bilingual approaches to teaching content subjects, also known as Content and Language integrated Learning (CLIL), have been employed since the 1960s mostly at grammar schools but have become very popular in the past two decades also in other school forms. French had initially been the language of instruction in CLIL schools, but nowadays English is far more common as a CLIL language, with very occasional regional variations along the borders, where languages like Danish or Polish can be found in schools. The medium of instruction in German universities is mostly German. However, degree courses in English have become increasingly popular since the Bologna process was approved in the 1990s. For more information, see <http://www.hrk.de/activities/bologna-process/>.

³ Cf. the numbers provided by the Goethe-Institute: <http://www.goethe.de/ges/spa/prj/sog/mud/de4289336.htm>.