Internal Entrepreneurship – a Trojan horse of the neoliberal governance of education? Finnish pre- and in-service teachers' implementation of and resistance towards entrepreneurship education.

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Abstract

This paper explores the effects of neoliberal education policies, by examining how the Finnish pre- and in-service teachers engage with the discourses of 'external' and 'internal entrepreneurship', create related inclusions and exclusions, and implement or challenge the aim of educating enterprising and entrepreneurial citizens. Whereas the promotion of 'external' entrepreneurship was seen to be in conflict with the values of basic education, and therefore substantially rejected as the aim of schooling, both the pre- and in-service teachers constructed the view that every pupil/student should be encouraged towards internal entrepreneurship, i.e. an enterprising mentality with attributes of self-responsibility, diligence and independence. Internal entrepreneurship, then, was considered as an universal and natural educational aim. We suggest that internal entrepreneurship as a manifestation of neoliberal subjectivity is difficult to subvert, because it fits well with the traditional aims of Finnish education.

Keywords: Neoliberal educational policy, Finnish entrepreneurship education, pre- and inservice teachers, gender

Introduction

Contemporary neoliberal education policies and their rhetoric of standards, efficiency, excellence and increasing choice have spread from the US to Europe, largely supplanting the traditional goals of equity, participation, and social welfare upheld by Nordic and other social democratic European states (Gordon, Lahelma and Beach, 2003; Antikainen, 2006). Neoliberalism has normative political ideology and a perspective towards human life that differs from that of the social democratic state (Telhaug, Mediås and Aasen, 2006). According to tenets of neoliberalism, people are not seen as social citizens but as clients, consumers and entrepreneurs of the self (Simons and Masschelein, 2006). Neoliberalism's influence on educational philosophy/thought can be seen in the business terminology and language of contemporary education policy and pedagogy, where schools are regarded as commodities and business rather than as sacrosanct academic institutions (Telhaug Mediås and Aasen, 2006), and where the discourses of enterprise schooling introduce training metaphors into schools that normalise the language and practices of vocationalism (Shacklock, Hattam and Smyth, 2000).

In Finland, the promotion of entrepreneurship education is the latest manifestation of the restructuring of education in line with the neoliberal spirit. Most European countries have a policy commitment towards promoting learning about entrepreneurship, but, as yet, it has not become a widespread subject in the European educational systems (European Commission, 2006). Finland, however, has turned out to be an early adopter and reformer, and entrepreneurship education is now taken into consideration throughout the school system, from primary schools through to universities. In 2004, the Finnish Ministry of Education (FME) started an action plan with the aim to promote, on the one hand, a general enterprising attitude and a new basic mentality for every citizen – 'an outlook of *internal entrepreneurship* combining flexibility, initiative, creativity and independent action with cooperation skills and strong motivation' (FME 2004, p. 15). On the other, the aim of the FME is to promote *external entrepreneurship*, i.e. to enhance the skills of the people who want to set up their own businesses.

In this article we approach entrepreneurship education from a neoliberal governance and feminist post-structuralist point of view (Foucault, 1991; Rose, 1992; Weedon, 1987; Davies et al., 2006)

and we explore the ways in which Finnish pre- and in-service teachers engage with the new aim of educating enterprising citizens, which the Nordic school system now faces. The teachers' power of naming is important because it both makes possible and constrains what the children, pupils or students can be, how they can understand themselves, how they can envisage their lives and how they can desire (Butler, 1997; O'Flynn and Petersen, 2007, pp. 459—460). Pre- and inservice teachers' engagement with entrepreneurship education is worth exploring because teachers – as a target population of educational governance – are frequently considered the critical centerpiece for the actualization of any sort of educational change (cf. e.g. Hubbard and Datnow, 2000). Therefore, the training of school teachers to accept the new educational ideology is also seen as especially important.

Despite recent success in PISA (OECD, 2010), the Finnish school system and the teachers as a professional group have frequently been criticized during the last decade. This criticism concerns, firstly, the poor school achievement of boys. Underlying this concern has been an assumption that all girls are successful and all boys are underachievers; that the girls' success is something problematic and the boys' lack of success is something heroic; and that the reason for the boys' lack of success is the teaching methods and the 'feminization of schools' (Lahelma, 2005). This 'feminization of schools' argument is in part based on the fact that 70 % of all Finnish school teachers are female, and that Finnish women have bypassed men in the numbers of academic degrees being awarded: in 2005 46 % of all women and 29 % of all men aged 25—34 had a degree in higher education (Statistics Finland, 2007).

Secondly, in line with the neoliberal spirit, Finnish education has been criticized for being too abstract, subject-bound and separate from 'real-life concerns' (e.g. Simola, 2005). The 'vocationalists', in particular, have argued that education should be made more relevant to the needs of the economy, in opposition to the traditional 'liberal-humanist' view that education should be seen as an end in itself or as a means to realising human potential for its own sake (Hickox, 1995). According to Filander (2006, p. 263), in Finland 'the work-based and practice-based concepts have achieved an almost sacred position as a vocabulary that no one can call into question. Concepts like education and training are part of school knowledge and theory that have been dismissed by tacit experience and knowledge in practice'.

Thirdly, in Finland comprehensive school teachers have been educated in universities since 1971. This has guaranteed their professional autonomy. Teachers are used to seeing themselves more as 'the candles of the nation' than customer service agents and they have not been very eager to adopt the new neoliberal educational ideology. Therefore, teachers are considered as a conservative group pedagogically and as obstacles to realizing the neoliberal educational target: hence, there is pressure to increase entrepreneurial education for teachers and student teachers (Seikkula-Leino, 2006). Seikkula-Leino et al., (2010, p. 124) argue that

Entrepreneurship education, in practice, is rather limited, since it is not a part of normal schoolwork [--] teachers seem to have some, but limited, knowledge about how to conduct entrepreneurship education in practice. [--] teachers' in-depth understanding of entrepreneurship education is insufficient.'

In order to instil enterprising pupils with abilities to innovate, be flexible, to co-operate and to be competitive, there is a call for such teaching methods that stress problem-solving, vocational skills, cooperation, creativity and risk-taking (Kyrö and Carrier, 2005).

In the context described above, it is important to explore how the pre- and in-service teachers – as agents of educational change – *themselves* construct the desirable and undesirable aims and values of education and their work as teachers. Therefore, we investigate how the pre- and inservice teachers make sense of entrepreneurship education as an educational aim. Do they recognize and mobilize the discourses of internal and external entrepreneurship and, if they do, in what ways? Moreover, we examine what kinds of inclusions and/or exclusions in- and preservice teachers produce when they make sense of the aim to educate citizens to be enterprising.

Even so, we argue that political and educational governance is not totally deterministic. Instead, the political ideal of enterprising citizens might be placed under compliance, scrutiny and negotiation in schools, as well as in teacher training. Obviously, there is a discursive struggle within entrepreneurship education which stems from the juxtaposition of the economic and educational discourses (Anderson, Drakopolou Dodd and Jack, 2009; Leffler, 2009; Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010). Hence, our study also explores how the pre- and in-service teachers, as active agents, implement or challenge the discourses of internal and external

entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education as a manifestation of the neoliberal educational policy. We reflect upon our findings in relation to the effects of the neoliberal educational policy on the Nordic model of education and gender equality in education.

Theoretical background

The traditional focus of research on entrepreneurship education has been on business, and new venture management, in particular (Gibb, 2002). From the 'social constructionist' perspective (Gibb, 2002, p. 249), the traditional approach is limiting with its notion of a 'heroic entrepreneur' and with its association of entrepreneurship with high growth, technology-based businesses and market liberalization. Thus, there is a need to place entrepreneurship in a wider inter-disciplinary context built upon a more pluralistic and diffused view of society and the cultural nature of markets (Gibb 2002; Leffler, 2009). As Allan Gibb (2002, p. 251) argues, 'moving enterprise and entrepreneurship away from their equivalence with market liberalization allows the entrepreneurial concept to engage more effectively with wider issues of sustainable enterprise development within the context of cultures, social issues and environment'. For example, in their case study of the English inner city Academy¹, Woods and Woods (2009) have explored the meanings constructed around enterprise and the degree to which meanings ascribed to entrepreneurialism are fixed around business models, or take in or construct different or broader conceptions of entrepreneurial activity. Researchers conclude that while there are strong influences encouraging schools in Britain to define enterprise according to 'an individualistic, business-related model, the teachers of Academy are moving to embrace a wider conception that incorporates ethical concerns, social issues and the students participation' (see also Deuchar, 2004).

In this research we adopt a more critical stance towards entrepreneurship education by approaching it from the governance point of view (Foucault, 1991; Rose, 1992; Miller and Rose, 2008). Governmentality can be understood as a way of explaining the establishment and the exercise of political power in which the concept of government is broader than management by

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¹ The Academy is a secondary school of over 1,000 students. According to Woods and Woods (2009) the drive to create more enterprising schools is affecting all schools in England, but Academy intensities the focus on innovation and enterprise.

the state. Governance is a productive power that is embodied in the rules through which *individuality* is understood, acted on and differentiated in social practices (Popkewitz and Lindblad, 2004). We argue that entrepreneurship education reflects a neoliberal mentality of governance which aims at transforming the passive citizens of welfare societies into active *enterprising selves*² and operates in terms of an ethic of the self that stresses the maximization of the self-steering capacities of individuals as vital resources for achieving private profit, the nation's economic competitiveness and social progress (Rose, 1992).

The aim of the social constructionist research is to take entrepreneurship out of the locker room of economics and to forge more radical entrepreneurialism, in order to foster community empowerment, ethical sensitivities, and deeper personal development (see Wood and Woods, forthcoming). However, we suggest that a remodeling of the subjective experience of the self around an economized notion of enterprise may subtly alter and depoliticize conventional notions of individual autonomy. As McNay (2009, p. 62) notes, 'individual autonomy becomes not the opposite of, or limit to, neoliberal governance, rather it lies at the heart of its disciplinary control. This challenges conceptions of resistance, freedom and political opposition'. From the neoliberal governance point of view the organization of society around multiplicity of individual enterprises also depoliticizes social and political relations, by fragmenting collective values of care, duty and obligation, and by displacing them back to the managed autonomy of the individual (ibid., p. 65). Though it is important to recognize the value of countervailing discourses and ideas of entrepreneurship (Woods & Woods, forthcoming), it is also essential to explore these alternative tales of entrepreneurship as technologies of the self, through which the subjectivity and meanings of the 'social' are constituted (see Rose, 1999, pp. 135-136, 164-166).

Moreover, our aim is to provide post-structuralist feminist perspectives of entrepreneurship education and the formation of subjectivities under the aegis of the neoliberal governance of education. In policy documents (FME, 2004; European Commission, 2006), entrepreneurship is

² The term 'enterprising self' refers to the ethos shaped in various institutions, such as the school system, where an entrepreneur-like course of action and self-relationship is offered as a model for citizens (e.g. Rose, 1992; Komulainen, Korhonen and Räty, 2009). According to Bröckling (2005, p. 11), 'the enterprising self [as an educational program] does not designate any empirically identifiable entity at all, but rather marks a direction for the way in which individuals are to change and be changed'.

presented as a class and gender neutral, inclusive route to employment for every citizen and a correct mindset for everyone. The citizens are defined, above all, as 'individuals' and taken to be active subjects, not passive objects. Most of the previous research analyses entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education in gender and class neutral ways without considering questions of power and inequality (Komulainen, Korhonen & Räty, 2009). As a construction, however, the entrepreneur is far from a gender and class neutral one: entrepreneurship is historically based on bourgeois values and located in the symbolic universe of maleness, and hegemonic masculinity is also embodied in the figure of the entrepreneur. The ideal individual qualities of an entrepreneur – such as competitiveness, independence, the need for achievement, and willingness to take risks - have set a norm that has excluded feminine characteristics and justified middleclass and masculine values as bases for entrepreneurship (e.g. Mulholland, 1996; Ahl, 2002; Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio, 2004; Komulainen, 2006). Considering that the entrepreneur is a masculine construction and that entrepreneurship should, nonetheless, be offered to every citizen-to-be, it is important to study the formation of subjectivities and the construction of social differences through the processes of inclusion and exclusion in relation to the neoliberal governance of education and entrepreneurship education, in particular.

The data

So far, the neoliberal governance of education has mainly been observed in terms of educational policy and at the European and national level of educational politics (e.g. Fejes, 2008). However, several researchers have argued that a more nuanced and empirically based work that would explore the ways the enterprising self is understood, valued, interpreted and deployed within the institutions, such as in education, is needed (see Fenwick, 2008). The aim of our analysis is to provide empirical insights into neoliberal governance in the context of entrepreneurship education.

Our data was generated by two sub-groups of the research project ³. Firstly, Päivi Naskali has studied how teacher students perceive and comprehend the new educational goals expressed by the FME (2004) to promote 'enterprising characteristics' (for a more detailed analysis see

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³ The sub-researches are part of the larger research project 'Enterprising Self – Education, Subjectivity and the Processes of Inclusion and Exclusion in Late Modern Society funded by the Academy of Finland.

Naskali, 2010). Students from the University of Lapland, who attended an ordinary lecture in 2008, were asked to answer the following open questions in a questionnaire: first, how do you comprehend the enterprising features, defined by the FME that you should promote in education?; second, what are the educational values that entrepreneurship education highlights and brushes aside, in your opinion?; third, how do you think university education should take into account the educational purposes defined by society, including internal entrepreneurship?

Eighty two students answered the questionnaire and 78 % of them were women, comparable to the share of female students in the university's teacher training. 23 % of the students were specializing in teaching arts subjects in comprehensive schools. The students come from different parts of Finland and their social background corresponds to the situation in other provincial universities. In Finland, student teachers' socioeconomic background is more diverse than the social background of students in e.g. medicine, law and technology; the majority of student teachers' come from the countryside and from middle and working classes (Vanttaja, 2002). However, socioeconomic differences are balanced out to some extent by free tuition and student grants allocated by the state.

The second sub-study consists of 16 interviews with comprehensive school teachers. The sub-study set out to explore how the in-service teachers construct the meaning of entrepreneurship education and produce related characterizations of the abilities of the pupils, and whether the teachers' interpretations of abilities intertwine with the more 'traditional' and institutionalized discourses of 'a good student' (for a more detailed analysis see Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010).

In Finnish comprehensive school, entrepreneurship education is not a school subject of its own, although 'participatory citizenship and entrepreneurship' is a new module in the national core curriculum (The Finnish National Board of Education 2004, pp. 40—41). Instead, the concept of entrepreneurship is supposed to be addressed through all school practices as a cross-curricular theme. In comprehensive school, the aim of entrepreneurship education is that the learners become familiar with the world of work and entrepreneurship, that they gain basic knowledge of the operation and the respective functions of the school community, the public sector, businesses,

the industry and organisations and of entrepreneurship as a profession (FME, 2009).

The interviews were conducted in six different schools located in two medium-sized towns in Eastern Finland. The participating teachers work as subject teachers and teach pupils who are 13—16 years old and in their 7th – 9th year of the nine-year comprehensive schooling system. One of the schools has been very active with entrepreneurship education. In this particular school, entrepreneurship is strongly present as an all-inclusive ideology characterizing daily practices of teaching and learning. Moreover, one school has an extensive repertoire of entrepreneurial projects, visits, events and contests embedded in everyday school work. In two other schools, entrepreneurship education has been a topic of collective consideration and there are attempts to make it a notable part of these schools' practices. However, entrepreneurship is still mostly presented in pursuance of specific subjects or courses, not as a cross-curricular ideology. Three of the schools, however, do not have any specific practices of entrepreneurship education and collective discussion is also lacking.⁴

In the interviews, broad themes were discussed with each interviewee but not necessarily in the same order or to the same extent. These themes included spontaneous associations for the terms 'entrepreneur' and 'entrepreneurship education', the practices of entrepreneurship education in the interviewee's own school (such as the methods and activities), the abilities of the pupils, the values of schooling and the perceived changes in them, and the school's role in fostering young people's attitudes toward work and educating citizens-to-be for our future society (Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010). As presumed, the teachers constructed their views of entrepreneurship education by negotiating the multiple meanings and interpretations of it. Accordingly, the interviewees' positions – also within the same interview – substantially varied.

We have utilized feminist post-structuralist approaches to pre- and in-service teachers' interpretations. Post-structuralist theory provides a set of theoretical propositions that attempt to articulate the ongoing process of being subjected, and of subjectivity (Davies et al., 2006). A particular strength of the post-structuralist research paradigm is that it recognizes both the

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⁴ The notes about differences in schools' interpretations and practices of entrepreneurship education are based on the discussions with the teachers.

constitutive force of discourse, in particular of discursive practices, and at the same time recognizes that people are capable of exercising choice in relation to those practices (Davies and Harré, 2008).

In our present analysis, we compared the ways in which pre- and in-service teachers engaged with the discourses of the internal and external entrepreneurship when they made sense of the aim of educating enterprising citizens. We explored the arguments for and against the aim of educating enterprising citizens which were produced through these discourses. We looked at the kinds of attributes of the enterprising self and the patterns of classification of the child/pupil/student/teacher/human being the student teachers and in-service teachers produced within the discourses of internal and external entrepreneurship, and analysed whether these classifications were gendered. In addition, we analysed how the pre- and in-service teachers positioned themselves in relation to and through the discourses they complied or resisted ⁵ (cf. O'Flynn and Petersen, 2007).

Student teachers resisting and repeating the ideal of the enterprising self

The students mentioned many traits and patterns of behaviour that they thought could describe the enterprising features of an individual (Naskali, 2010). The most common terms mentioned were independence (30), a sense of direction (29), self-esteem (25), creativity (23), social talents (20) and courage (22). Courage was connected to risk-taking and coping with stress. For example, one male student described the features as following: 'The ability to take risks, being critical, the ability to cope with stress, perseverance, sociability, ability to solve problems, orientation towards the future, understanding business, the values of sustainability and inventiveness.'

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⁵ In poststructuralist feminism, the participants of the study are understood as individuals who emerge through the process of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product but as ones who are constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate (see Davies and Harré, 2008). The counting or measuring of discourses employed by the participants and/or making the typologies of the participants is not usually involved in the analysis. However, in order to strengthen the claims made in this article we also offer some quantitative data.

We can see that most of the features connected to enterprising individuals are all 'strong' features with a masculine connotation⁶ (see Mulholland, 1996; Ahl, 2002; Bruni, Gherardi & Poggio, 2004). They represent cultural model stories that are constructed according to a cultural manuscript. According to the cultural story and reflecting the viewpoint of differential psychology, the abilities are seen as personal talents (see Räty and Snellman, 1998). Actually, the idea of the entrepreneur, as such, was described as a personal attribute, not as a profession or career: 'Entrepreneurship is a characteristic, not a profession or a career' (female student teacher). However, the phenomenon seemed to be quite confusing in the students' minds: almost any personal characteristic was understood to be representative of the enterprising mentality.

Confusion is a part of the discursive change. The old terms – such as independence and freedom – are adopted into the new language because teachers have become used to them and they have 'good' connotations: who would not want to raise a child to become independent and free? At the same time, the meanings of independence and freedom have changed: they are linked to a personal responsibility for success or failure. Michael Peters (2005, p. 129) writes about 'responsibilization' as a central factor in the process where neoliberal power is exercised.

Most of the students just repeated the adjectives and traits without criticism (Naskali, 2010). It was argued that school has to coach pupils for future society by already toughening the children up at school and by constructing schoolwork in an enterprising manner. This would help the children's survival in a world that 'stresses greed and corruption' and where 'profit making and productivity are the central values'.

This interpretation can be understood on the basis of the new university politics, in which the subjectivities of both the teachers and students have changed within the new 'management'

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⁶ For example, Helene Ahl (2002) has analyzed the discursive construction of the female entrepreneur and entrepreneurship in research texts from the perspective of feminist theory. She has deconstructed both entrepreneurship and Bem's femininity/masculinity scale to show how the positive words associated with womanhood like *affectionate* and *sympathetic* are not present in the discussion about entrepreneurship. However, the words to describe masculinity like *self-reliant, assertive* and *willing to take risks* do fit with descriptions of entrepreneurs. Ahl concludes that that entrepreneur is male as norm and female entrepreneurship is marked as special. Women are positioned as 'something else', something to be explained and compared to entrepreneurial men, to the norm.

panopticism' and the new forms of entrepreneurial control (Ball, 2001). In Finnish university politics, the emphasis is on the fast 'flow-through of material': the students should complete their studies as quickly as possible. They are seen as customers and the teachers, then, should take the position of 'customer service agents' or coaches for standardised academic scores. Moreover, because of the deconstruction of the traditional Nordic welfare society, the university has been called on to educate students for the private sector and to become entrepreneurs. Courses on entrepreneurship should be included in the curriculum but, above all, the students should adopt entrepreneurial attitudes, such as innovativeness and competitiveness.

Student teachers saw the mentality of entrepreneurship as a universal target of education for all with no reference to gender, ethnic or racial related differences (Naskali, 2010). Finnish students are not trained to recognize masculine and Western values included in the ideal of the 'universal man' or to reflect on how this normalcy excludes the feminine other as passivity, modesty, dependency and impulsivity. However, some students recognised the *social* differences between people. They noticed that the new educational ideal of the enterprising individual excludes the fact that 'all people are not of the enterprising type' and that the value of 'normal labour' will decrease in the new hierarchy.

It is interesting from the gender perspective that becoming an entrepreneur or behaving in an enterprising way was not seen to presuppose high education: none of the mainly female students defined good school grades as a condition for becoming an entrepreneur. Still, girls are good students and, as mentioned above, young women are nowadays better educated than young men in Finland. However, it is argued (see Sivers, 2008) that the knowledge economy and the entrepreneurial ideal do not appreciate thinking and understanding but rather knowledge or information that can be obtained outside schooling, e.g. from the Internet.

The students also expressed critical reflection and resistance to the neoliberal educational purposes (Naskali, 2010). Approximately 30 % of the answers had a critical tone. Those students of art subjects especially defended the social and humanist values of education in the comprehensive school and criticised the new educational values.

Schooling has always represented different values that have been fed to pupils and these values have reflected the values of society. Sometimes they are good, sometimes not so good and valuable. Who defines who has the power to define what is the most important? The purpose of the comprehensive school is to civilise and raise the children into social life and to give them possibilities to discover what their own objects of interest are. (Female student teacher of art subjects.)

This answer shows that some students were aware of the hidden curricula and understood that the knowledge produced by education is always a political issue. Teaching is seen as a continuous fight between different values and ideologies. The students' criticism focused on individualism, competitiveness, consumerism, and getting the children to accept the uncertainty of their futures. Some students wanted the children to lose these purposes and stressed equality, caring, the common good, and justness and fairness – the soft values of humanism: 'Introducing enterprising values to all levels of education is not acceptable because they do not emphasize equality, caring, the common good and fairness' (Female student teacher).

According to the answers, most of the students could name the 'right' features of the 'internal entrepreneur' that were based on such binary oppositions as weak—strong; lazy—diligent; dependent—independent; shy—bold; female—male. These dichotomies constituted chains of meanings, or as Deborah Britzman (1998, p. 88) says, an 'economy of stereotypes' that makes some characteristics seem 'natural'.

On the other hand, students still have their agency. It could be suggested that the students realize that the 'the ghost of the risk economy implicitly questions the current economic course of the knowledge economy discourse [--] it reveals some of its contradictions, exclusions, and instabilities' (Bullen, Fahey and Kenway, 2006, p. 54). Critical pedagogical practices also open up a space for critical thinking in the neoliberal university and enable resistance, as well as the education of 'transformative intellectuals'.

Inclusive and exclusive characterizations of pupils as internal and external entrepreneurs by in-service teachers

When the in-service teachers made sense of the aims and meaning of entrepreneurship education and considered their pupils as (potential) internal and external entrepreneurs, their constructions

were intertwined with the *notion of the good student* (Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010). Historically, the school has articulated its conceptions of the self through the discursive frame of the 'good student'. However, the notion of the good student is likely to vary within and across contexts (Youdell, 2006). Firstly, the good student is constructed in a context where the notions of achievement and individual abilities and intelligence are emphasized and a construction of the talented individual is produced. Good students, as talented individuals, are ranked according to their educational potential (the selective and restrictive sphere of education). This notion of the good student derives from the school's institutional concept of ability, which is a strong differential one. In this context, 'ability' is taken to be a generalized, measurable and fixed characteristic of the individual student (Rosenholtz and Simpson, 1984; Räty and Snellman, 1998). The conceptions of abilities are, for the most part, gendered, and they are also classed: the abilities form a hierarchy with a clear distinction between the theoretical and cognitive abilities that manifest 'real' ability and the practical and social skills (Peachter and Head 1996; Räty and Snellman, 1998).

The second context in which the good student is constructed is the discourse of conduct. In this discourse, pupils who are good students are likely to be marked by such characteristics as politeness, obedience, eagerness to learn and do 'the very best', inquisitiveness, acquiescence to adult authority, restraint, good and common sense, and maturity (Youdell, 2006). However, both of these discourses of the good student rely on the ideology of individualism and the uniqueness of each pupil with the notion of natural giftedness (Räty and Snellman, 1998).

Internal entrepreneurship for everyone

Like the student teachers, the in-service teachers recognized and reproduced the political discourse of internal entrepreneurship. However, it was 'translated' into the school's hegemonic discourse of the good student. According to the interviewees, the concept of internal entrepreneurship fits well with the old idea that the teachers in schools should inspire each pupil to do the very best she or he can⁷, and in this way encourage the pupils' maximal innate ability

⁷ In the English language 'entrepreneur' refers to growth-oriented entrepreneurship and the term small business owner means to have a small business. In the Finnish language the term 'entrepreneur' is used for both. 'Yrittäjä' is

and responsible attitude to (school)work. As was the case with some of the critical student teachers, the vast majority of in-service teachers claimed that comprehensive schools should primarily concentrate on providing basic skills for everyone, whereas the teaching of business skills, i.e. the promotion of external entrepreneurship, should be included in the aims of postcompulsory education, such as vocational schools⁸. Thus, the teachers also stood up for their own basic work.

MK9: How would you yourself begin now if you had to define what entrepreneurship education is here in comprehensive school?

Interviewee 11 (a male teacher): In my opinion it has to be that, although it is of course such a terrible cliché, but internal entrepreneurship, that in some way I manage to get irritated if the pupils are pushed real entrepreneurship [--] in my opinion it would be more important to teach them not to give up [--] That in basic school it has to be to a large extent this internal entrepreneurship ... and that you do not give up easily and then real entrepreneurship, which as such is quite necessary, I'm not saying that, but maybe that should stay in the secondary school [--] maybe doing business should come later [--] First of all we have quite limited, we have a lot to do to give the basic education here [--] and, of course, not everyone is cut out to be an entrepreneur so someone has to do something else too.

MK: What do you think of the claim that the school should educate all students into entrepreneurship?

Interviewee 9 (a female teacher): It is a question of definition of what entrepreneurship is, that if you define enterprising in a way that people are enterprising, that they thrive to do their best in their own, in their own field, in our case in school and they want to have good results, so I think yes, that is what we do, all the time.

The notion of the good student was deployed differently depending on whether the pupils were evaluated as internal or external entrepreneurs. The characterizations of pupils as internal

a derivative of the verb 'yrittää' which means the same as to struggle and to tenaciously attempt to reach one's goals. So, in the Finnish language the term 'yrittää' has close connotations to the notion of 'doing one's best'.

 $^{^{8}}$ Our findings are in line with the results of previous studies, insofar that the teachers emphasized the idea of internal entrepreneurship and challenged the aim of promoting business knowledge in school (see e.g. Seikkula-Leino et al., 2010; Backström-Widjeskog, 2010). Based on our findings, the teachers whose school is collectively more active with the concept of entrepreneurship were likely to accept and appreciate different forms of entrepreneurship education; they were not so critical towards the idea of promoting external entrepreneurship in schools (Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010).

⁹ MK refers to Maija Korhonen as an interviewer.

entrepreneurs were made within the discursive frame of the *diligent student* (Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010). In the teachers' talk, an internal entrepreneur was a hard-working, responsible pupil – either a high-performing pupil or a pupil who, although not possession of much innate ability like the ideal good student is, could compensate for this by effort and diligence. Thus, the concept of the internal entrepreneurship represented an ideal category which was potentially inclusive also for pupils with less innate abilities. However, internal entrepreneurship was not completely beyond the selective sphere of education: (dysfunctional) families and homes, as well as developmental psychological 'facts', were seen to condition the development of an enterprising attitude.

Despite the fact that the promotion of external entrepreneurship was not regarded by the teachers as the primary task of the school's entrepreneurship education, it was not totally excluded from school. According to the teachers, pupils should get to know the 'general principles of economic life', e.g. learn to take care of their finances. However, like some of the student teachers, the inservice teachers were concerned about the negative outcomes which could occur if 'hard business values' were brought into school. A majority of the teachers constructed the view that 'harsh competition', 'making money', 'utilitarian viewpoint', or 'using elbow tactics' potentially jeopardize the ideals of 'humanity', 'cooperation', 'altruism', 'security', 'mutual respect', 'solidarity', and 'social justice'. Eight of the teachers were especially critical. They stated that too strong an emphasis on the ideas of efficiency, profitability and success along with the culture of competition within schools might put the children's natural innocence and/or mental health at risk, discourage pupils who already lack self-confidence, or increase egoistic behavior among pupils. Dealing with money and competition within the school was also seen as problematic from the point of view of educational equality.

Interviewee 4 (a female teacher): If it [entrepreneurship] is, as such, an attitude thing so that is quite okay [--]. Then if entrepreneurship is brought in as a competition and making money thing, so, that does not necessarily fit into school as it is today or then we should change the whole system, that we now have the idea that this is all for free and all that, which is very good. If the result is that schools are no longer equal through the fact that enterprises sponsor them, so I think this is perhaps what should not be brought into school.

Interviewee 12 (a male teacher): [--] these pupils here in comprehensive school they are still so young... children almost, [--] that for them the business world is quite a remote thing still, so I don't see in that sense that you should bring such, that enterprises would knowingly approach us and in some way start to galvanize the pupils here or, or in some other way would spread their tentacles here in the school world. I don't think that would be too reasonable... [--] to me school is for the pupils and the pupils should be guaranteed a safe and a good environment to go there... [--] I mean that if they are started to be given right from the kindergarten [--] this kind of big pictures that what you will be needing in the future and as an adult and, and that is the way you become useful to the society so, [--] it sort of eats up the children's innocence in a way ... that such result orientation or profitability, so must that become visible at such a young age, it sounds in that sense quite, quite crazy.

Accordingly, the teachers challenged the idea of external entrepreneurship by turning to the values of schooling. As mentioned above, the goals of the Nordic model of education have traditionally been equity, participation and welfare (Antikainen, 2006). Moreover, educational reforms in Finland have historically been structured within the discourse of equality which includes the notion that competition can lead to educational inequality (Räty, et al., 1995).

External entrepreneurship as a special talent

The characterizations of pupils as potential *external* entrepreneurs were construed within the discourse of a talented student and within the selective frame (Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010). Within this frame, the pupils were not assessed on the grounds of diligence or good learning, but in the light of individual talents and the notion of fixed abilities. The characterizations of the entrepreneur type of pupil had one particular thing in common: they challenged school's traditional notions of a good and capable student. The value of academic achievement and theoretical abilities came under question, whereas the importance of social talents and practical skills was highlighted.

However, within the teachers' notion that social and practical skills count as abilities in entrepreneurship, there were two different perspectives on the construction of the entrepreneur type of pupil. These two perspectives might occur also within the same interview. On the one hand, all of the teachers quite easily produced a more or less comprehensive *list of abilities* – such as social talents, activity, extroversion, creativity, boldness, diligence, self-confidence, independence, risk-taking ability, and the ability to cope with (economic) uncertainty – which

were considered representative of entrepreneurial potential on a general level: yet, the detailed characterizations of pupils were not explicated. This general level of construction of the entrepreneur type of pupil strongly reflects the cultural and political discourse and ideals of entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, seven of the teachers associated the entrepreneurial skills they gave with individual pupil or pupils, thereby structuring personalized and more detailed characterizations of the entrepreneur type of pupil¹⁰. Within these characterizations we, firstly, identified the type of *'the smart guy'*. The teachers construed this type by producing an image of the socially talented, extrovert, creative, and risk-taking pupils possessing the qualities of independence, self-confidence, activity and boldness. Moreover, specific personal and behavioral attributes such as openness, unconventionality, liveliness, sense of humor and vivaciousness were highlighted. Thus, in the teachers' talk 'a smart guy' was an easy-going pupil who is both capable and keen to take on social relationships in a spontaneous, self-confident and relaxed way. In the following, the teacher explicitly formulates the school's notion of ideal abilities and then discusses a pupil who does not quite fit the picture.

Interviewee 15 (a female teacher): The pupils with whom we have here maybe more challenge so, they do really well in working life, in other words, they have the eye and activity, liveliness that is perhaps needed and, maybe in the entrepreneur thing so, in many cases we say when we have some mischievous guy that he will become a good entrepreneur that they are so inventive and, such, independent doing that, and it often happens too.

In addition to 'the smart guy', we were able to identify yet another personalized characterization of the entrepreneur type of pupil which we call 'the good craftsman'. However, as the construction 'the good craftsman' was more incoherent and infrequent compared to the construction of 'the smart guy'. These kinds of pupils were not described as having 'soft skills' such as social skills, creativity or extroversion but rather as being practical, having hands-on skills instead. Vocational education and working-class occupations were considered as possible employment routes for them.

¹⁰ Eleven of the teachers, then, did not produce any personalized characterizations of the entrepreneur type of pupil. Presumably, it was difficult for the teachers to imagine their pupils as 'real' entrepreneurs, partly because they aimed to challenge the whole idea of promoting external entrepreneurship in schools.

Generally, while talking about the pupils' potential for external entrepreneurship, the teachers pointed out that the school system fails to acknowledge other talents than those related to academic achievement. The school's everyday practices, which are based on formality and prefer proper conduct, do not sufficiently enable the entrepreneurial pupils – neither the 'smart guys' nor the 'good craftsmen' – to demonstrate their real potential and capacity.

Entrepreneurship education, class and gender

We suggest that the construction of the practically competent entrepreneur type of a pupil, 'the good craftsman', reflects meanings which are culturally associated with the working-class. 'The smart guy', instead, is a middle-class version of an entrepreneur: it represents the ideal of the risk-taking, creative and competitive enterprising self manifested in current educational policy.

The teachers' characterizations of the entrepreneur type of pupils were also gendered (Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010). Firstly, the point was that in entrepreneurship it is better to be an interesting, original and funny person than 'a good student'. In the following, the teacher sees the potential for entrepreneurship in quick-witted, socially capable pupils whose attitude to school work is careless and whose behavior in school is somewhat disobedient.

Interviewee 8 (a female teacher): I know of even such cases, pupils from our school, that their motivation for school work, they won't necessarily, that they will go to vocational school and become so and so, they are not interested in certain subjects because they won't need them and then you hear how they have succeeded in entrepreneurship or their own business regardless. And we have often laughed that the most rude and verbal ones, you could even say that, they become top managers or something. In my opinion we have good examples of that, it's not that you have done great in school that you would necessarily succeed out there in the business world. But then someone happy-go-lucky pupil who goes to school casually and then out there in the world they succeed really well, when they have found what they're interested in and what their thing is, so they become successful.

Secondly, it was implied that boys are more likely than girls to be entrepreneur types with the personal characteristics described above, whereas girls as 'good students' generally behave nicely and with restraint, follow the rules of authority figures and/or lack boldness. As one of the teachers explicitly put it:

Interviewee 2 (a female teacher): Boys are probably bolder, a little bit like girls are a bit good and believe in authority, but not all, that there too you have the brave and reckless ones [--] But, of the boys, I think that they have more such courage and bravery which may seem to be a sort of creativity and the girls are probably as creative but they don't show it... all and not in such a brave manner.

There was an obvious lack of implicit or explicit personalized characterizations of an entrepreneur type of girl in the teachers' talk. None of our interviewees produced a detailed description of a girl whom they could see as an entrepreneur. One of the teachers mentioned that she could picture one of her female students being 'a great doctor'. Another said that 'active and diligent girls' might become proper entrepreneurs. A male teacher saw that a girl who is 'dutiful', 'reliable', 'observant', and capable of 'taking responsibility' and 'organizing things' could succeed as an entrepreneur. Thus, when a girl was mentioned, feminine qualities such as responsibility, diligence, trustworthiness and care were construed and highlighted.

The qualities which were used to characterize pupils as potential external entrepreneurs in the teachers' interviews are relatively masculine (see Mulholland, 1996; Ahl, 2002; Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio, 2004; Komulainen, Korhonen and Räty, 2009). The cultural discourse of an entrepreneur – which excludes the discourses of femininity through the idealization of such abilities as risk-taking, competitiveness, creativity, activity and independence (Ahl, 2002) – therefore acted as one resource for meaning making in the teachers' interviews.

Conclusion

We suggest that, whereas the Nordic comprehensive school could be seen as a democratic society in miniature (cf. Telhaug, Mediås and Aasen, 2006), entrepreneurship education is a microcosm of the present neoliberal governance of Finnish education. We have taken the 'bottom-up' point-of-view to consider the effects of the neoliberal governance on Finnish education and explored how the pre- and in-service teachers engage with the discourses of internal and external entrepreneurship, what kind of inclusions and exclusions they produce, and how they implement or challenge the aim of educating enterprising and entrepreneurial citizens.

Our results show that the student teachers and in-service teachers recognized the aim of educating enterprising citizens as an important and novel purpose for education and pedagogy. However, they made a distinction between internal entrepreneurship as a 'soft' educational aim and external entrepreneurship as a 'hard' one: the latter was clearly rejected as a pedagogical aim of schooling. They criticized the competitive, individualistic and commercial dimensions of capitalism: competition was presented as a source of inequalities among pupils and as a source of egoism which, by exclusively encouraging private and individual interests, proves destructive to the collective aims of pedagogy and education – equity, participation and welfare.

Moreover, many of the student teachers and teachers hold a romantic view of childhood within which children are constructed as being pure, and innocent, and their childhood should be protected and kept carefree. Accordingly, commercialism was constructed as a threat to the child's innocence. In contrast to the critique presented about Finnish teachers being a pedagogically conservative group, we suggest that they are actually radical under the aegis of the neoliberal governance of education: relatively many of the student teachers and the vast majority of the teachers argued for the universal values of equality and democracy and simultaneously emphasized the ideals of altruism, cooperation, humanity, and solidarity, thereby challenging the economic values of education.

However, both the pre- and in-service teachers constructed the view that every pupil/student should be encouraged towards internal entrepreneurship, i.e. the enterprising mentality with attributes of self-responsibility, diligence and independence. Internal entrepreneurship, then, was considered as a universal and natural educational aim. We suggest that the internal entrepreneurship as a concept and an idea remained uncontested because it fits in well with the traditional values of education and the idea of educating students to be hard-working, responsible citizens (Koski, 2001). Despite the fact that the pre- and in-service teachers resist the hard values of capitalism, internal entrepreneurship seems to be the Trojan horse through which the neoliberal educational policy infiltrates the schools – it is a technology of government through which connections are made between the aspirations of the governing authorities and people's self-formative capacities (Miller and Rose, 2008). The discourse of internal entrepreneurship produces subject positions and embodied forms of subjectivity through which the behaviour of

individuals – the pupils, students and teachers – is governed in the interests of the broader strategies of power (cf. Weedon, 1987).

The pre- and in-service teachers' constructions of internal entrepreneurship reveal the ideal of the neoliberal subject who is encouraged to constantly improve oneself – to do the very best she or he can and to maximize her or his innate ability (cf. Walkerdine, 2003). The language of internal entrepreneurship focuses on the pupils as young people and children and creates the governable space of the democratic society through greater participation, self-reliance and self-responsibility. However, this language creates a 'new' distinction between those who *can and do* ensure their own well-being and security through their own active self-promotion and responsibility for themselves, and those who are *outside* this nexus of activity (cf. Rose, 1999). Thus, individual autonomy is not an obstacle or limit to social control but one of its central technologies (McNay, 2009).

In the new educational ideology, social equality is predominantly viewed as an obstacle when striving for excellence and risk is increasingly seen to be realised as an individual concern and an effect of personal inadequacies. Through celebrating enterprising and entrepreneurial citizens, neoliberalism positively embraces uncertainty, recognizing it as an important stimulus to economic growth. Uncertainty is a distinctive way of governing through the future and its place is vital in the formation of the rationalities of neoliberalism and enterprising subjects (Hay and Kapitzke, 2009). Moreover, it acts as an argument for why certain measures should be taken (Fejes, 2008). Both the pre- and in-service teachers implicitly accepted that uncertainty will be normal in future life and society, and constituted themselves as teachers within the discursive framework of risk – the teachers' role is to coach each pupil for future society by already toughening them up at school.

The neoliberal educational policy – with its emphasis on choice, the neutral market and individuality – actually discursively neutralizes capitalism by de-emphasizing social differences and by espousing individuality; people are responsible for their own advancement. The gender neutral language of the economy presupposes that all people have the same preconditions. Similar results are demanded of everyone, in spite of gender related and other differences

(Walkerdine, 2003). For example, if women with care responsibilities do not advance in their careers as expected it is interpreted as a consequence of their individual failure, not as a problem of the organisation. Making visible the gender differences constructed in education is especially important when the effects of neoliberal educational policies on equality and social justice are analyzed.

Despite the fact that the pre- and in-service teachers challenged the idea of promoting external entrepreneurship in schools, and criticized the 'hard' values of capitalism by turning to the school's traditional values of equality and participation, the external entrepreneurship was a discourse through which the hierarchical difference between 'entrepreneur type of boys' and 'high-achieving but passive and rule following girls' was constructed. Particularly, the in-service teachers constructed the entrepreneurial potential of their pupils with logic that conforms to the school's institutionalized discourse of the good student and the ideology of individualism and natural giftedness embedded in it (cf. Youdell, 2006). The teachers deployed the discourse of a talented student and the notion of fixed ability to evaluate the pupils as external entrepreneurs: risk-taking boys with 'soft skills' such as social skills, creativity and extroversion as well as boys with practical, 'hands-on' skills were regarded as the most entrepreneurial (Korhonen, Komulainen and Räty, 2010). It was implied that boys are more likely than girls to be entrepreneur types, whereas girls generally behave anti-entrepreneurially (Ibid.). As well as in society, in school, too, the discourses of femininity exclude entrepreneurship and men are culturally perceived to be more entrepreneurial than women (cf. Ahl, 2002).

Traditionally, the theoretical abilities manifest 'real' ability and the most valuable form of intelligence in school (Mugny and Carugati, 1989). However, the pre- and in-service teachers questioned the value of academic achievement and theoretical abilities as a condition for becoming an entrepreneur and practical and social skills gained a new kind of status. The abilities of the entrepreneurial pupils were located outside school, in the context of working life, which reflects the way of the neoliberal educational policy to speculate the future and criticize the school system for its inflexible practices (Olssen, Codd and O'Neill, 2004).

Moreover, challenging the value of academic talents reflects a new way of constituting the individuals' abilities from the viewpoint of *employability* (Brown, Hesketh and Williams, 2003). In the neoliberal era, employability is not only constituted as academic credentials; instead, it includes having extracurricular talents, 'a personality package' and a set of 'soft skills', such as creativity and co-operation, which are presumed to appeal to a heterogeneous group of employers (ibid.). Not only by representing boys as being more entrepreneur-like than girls but also by the exclusion of the academic achievements, entrepreneurship education justifies the masculine norm of subjectivity, because it is especially girls who are defined as good students. It is generally common in schools to consider boys as possessing more genuine talent, which devalues girls' high achievement and presents them as passive and rule-following (Lahelma & Öhrn, 2003; Lahelma, 2005; Walkerdine, Lucey and Melody, 2001).

We suggest that the neoliberal governance will have an effect on gender and social equality in education and society. The assumption of sameness denies the fact that people come to the competition-based society from different social and cultural backgrounds and gendered histories. Instead of discursively neutralizing capitalism, we argue that the market is not a neutral playing field but an already divided historical entity, premised upon classification with historically generated value, into which people enter with differential access to different types of resources (cf. Skeggs, 2004). The identities constituted and provided by the ethos of the enterprising self have antagonistic and potentially destructive effects on those identities traditionally located and performed outside the hegemonic masculinity and the private sector of society, and beyond the markets.

Feminist post-structuralism and discourse analysis does not presume that participants' accounts reflect underlying attitudes or dispositions; therefore, we do not expect that an individual's discourse will be consistent and coherent. Rather, the focus is on the discourse itself: how it is organized and what it is doing (Potter and Wetherell 1987, p. 49). In this article, we have focused on the similarities in the ways the pre- and in-service teachers deploy the discourses of internal and external entrepreneurship. Moreover, we have reflected upon the consequences of these discourses for gender equity in education. However, further research is needed to explore the variation of the meaning making of entrepreneurship education within different educational

contexts and by different actors of the school. Obviously, entrepreneurship education as a contemporary political and educational discourse reflects dilemmas and contradictions between economy and welfare, public and private, community and individual, academic and practical, mental and manual, and masculine and feminine (see Arnesen and Lundahl, 2006). Instead of merely identifying the discourses deployed in entrepreneurship education, it would be important to examine the ways in which the actors of the school – in real life situations – negotiate with the contradictions of entrepreneurship education and try to solve the dilemmas embedded within.

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