



Title	Positioning Pedagogy - a matter of children's rights?
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Publication date	2016
Publication information	Devine, Dympna, and Deirdre McGillicuddy. "Positioning Pedagogy - a Matter of Children's Rights?" Taylor and Francis, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2016.1197111 .
Publisher	Taylor and Francis
Item record/more information	http://hdl.handle.net/10197/7913
Publisher's statement	This is an electronic version of an article published in Oxford Review of Education, 42(4): 424-443 (2016). Oxford Review of Education is available online at: www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03054985.2016.1197111 .
Publisher's version (DOI)	10.1080/03054985.2016.1197111 .

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Positioning pedagogy - a matter of children's rights?

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Published in Oxford Review of Education

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2016.1197111>

ABSTRACT

This paper foregrounds pedagogy in the realisation of children's rights to non-discrimination and serving their best interests, as articulated in the UNCRC. Drawing on a mixed methodological study of teachers in 12 schools it does so through exploring teacher pedagogies in terms of how they 'think', 'do' and 'talk' pedagogy, conceived as their pedagogic 'habitus'. Findings confirm contradictions between teachers' ideals and their practice that is significantly mediated by the socio-cultural context of their schools, gender and presence of migrant children. Especially striking is that neither social justice concerns nor children's rights explicitly emerge in their narratives, in turn influencing how they 'do' pedagogy with different groups of children. This contradiction is understood as a dialectical process of re/action influenced by structures, policies and the exercise of power in local contexts. The UNCRC provides a generative mechanism within which to hold government to account for the impact of policies, especially in challenging contexts. To be realised in practice, however, it also needs to be embedded in teacher habitus, shaping their dispositions toward children's rights to non-discrimination and serving their best interests in education.

Introduction

Education policy and practice has a profound impact on the power and positioning of children in the wider society. Global policymakers such as the OECD increasingly shape who and what matters in education and how children's learning, being and 'doing' is being directed in particular ways. Key questions are raised about who and what is valued - how children are valued, what is valued in children's learning and if children are differently valued in schools (Devine 2013a). Such questions are bound with the framing of children's identities, including citizenship (Devine 2002), how school practice shapes children's experience of whom they are, as well as what they will become. As Foucault (1979) reminds us however, change, and the power to drive it, does not operate in a linear fashion but is circular and often embraces contradictory tensions and trends. Co-incident for example with the neo-liberal thrust of education is the recognition globally of the need to value children (and childhood) in and of themselves, alongside the need to embrace a more holistic and rights centred approach to all aspects of children's lives. The UNCRC has been pivotal in this changing discourse, providing a template for working toward, albeit minimum standards, of rights for all children, including provisions directly related to education. Indeed Lundy (2012:396) asserts that the convention is the most widely endorsed human rights treaty globally and has the potential to be a significant driver of education policy change.

Devine (2013a, 2011) has argued elsewhere that the UNCRC provides a template not only for what is 'good' in childhood but also how to realize a 'good' childhood. It is embedded in values that, while hotly contested at the time of its drafting (Freeman 2000), recognize the centrality of education to both the construction and experience of

childhood(s). Two provisions are especially important with respect to education: Article 28 defines the right to education and Article 29 defines the purpose of education. This latter embraces holistic concepts that include recognition of culture, identity, and the development of the child's personality in a spirit of peace, tolerance and equality. Of equal importance are more general principles expressed in Articles 2, 3 and 12 that underpin all other articles. These relate to non-discrimination with respect to different groups of children, (birth, race, colour, sex, language, religion, politics, birth or other status) as well as the right for children to have a say in matters directly affecting them and the right to have decisions made in the best interest of the child. In this paper, the focus is placed on pedagogy through the lens of children's rights, specifically on children's rights to a holistic and non-discriminatory experience of education and one that serves their best interest. This can be articulated not only in terms of considering the quality *of* teaching and learning that children receive, but also in/equalities *in* learning that may be provided to different groups of children. The concept of rights is used not in terms of rights as private 'consumer' of education services within an increasingly marketised system (Devine et al 2012). It is about rights related to and in education, and by implication pedagogy, as both a public and positional good (Lingard and Mills 2007). It coincides with questions about socially just education (Francis and Mills 2012), foregrounding pedagogy in the realization of children's rights to non-discrimination and ultimately, the capacity to live a good life (Reay 2012), a life that is valued, respected and meaningful (Lynch et al 2009). Pedagogy and teacher 'effect', is not only then about the 'what' and 'how' of teaching and learning (the quantity and quality as it were). It is fundamentally relational, potentially involving in/equalities in the 'doing' of teaching and learning between different groups of children. It interconnects with identity formation and framing inclusive citizenship in a context of structurally embedded power relations that are inter-generational (between adults and children) as well as gendered, classed, raced and disabled (Devine 2003).

The focus on children's rights in education is not new. There is an increasing body of research that documents children's voice in relation to their education for example and the articulation of this voice as matter of their rights and well-being (Downes 2013, Osler 2010). Elwood and Lundy (2010) provide a detailed analysis of assessment policy and practices in light of children's rights standards, detailing the impact on the best interests of children, their rights to non-discrimination and their rights to participating in decisions relating to assessment practice. Children's experience of school has also been considered in terms of the exercise of power between adults and children, and of schooling as a disciplinary system, something that is 'done' to them rather than with them (Devine 2003). With respect to views on pedagogy, this latter research identified their concerns over the control that was exercised over their time and space in school. It also children's emphasis on good explanatory skills, being fair and patient and providing opportunities for fun and 'work' in 'good' teaching (Devine 2003: 87). In this paper these issues are explored from the perspectives of teachers, focusing on teacher pedagogies in the context of children's rights to non-discrimination (Article 28) and safeguarding their best interests (Article 2). The focus is upon teachers' own constructs and practices of pedagogy as a key element in the realization of children's rights more broadly in education, rather than on children's own views detailed elsewhere (Devine 2003).

The dialectic interplay of teacher habitus and pedagogic practising

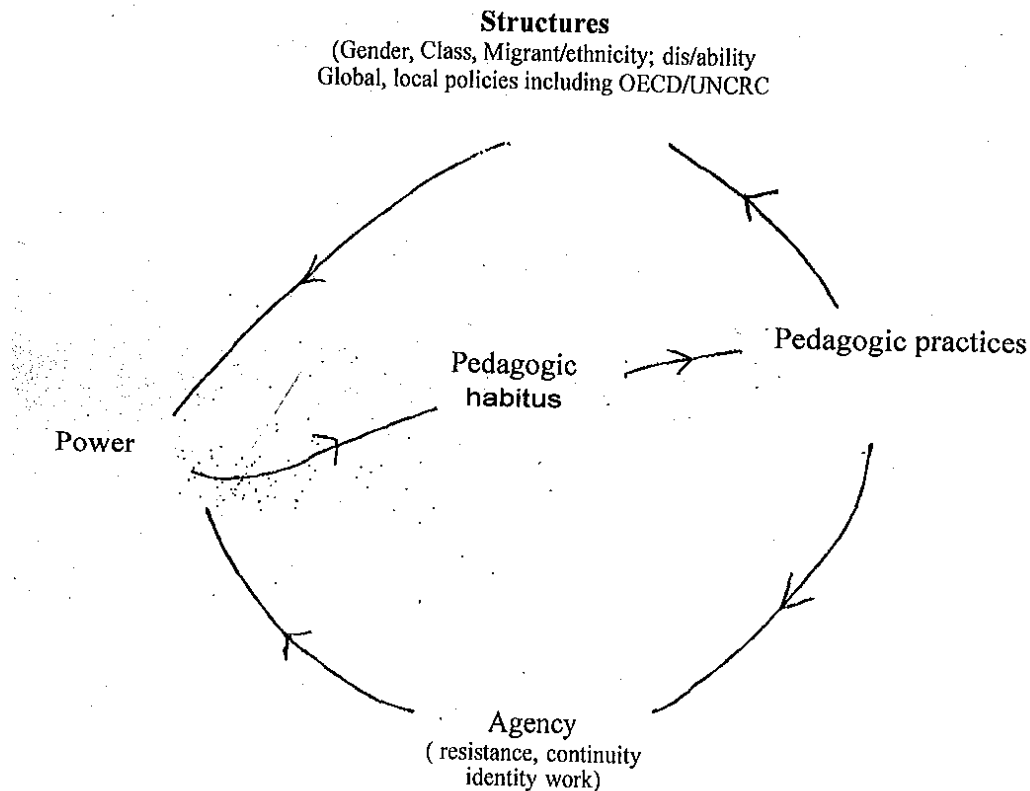
In considering teacher pedagogies, the paper draws especially on Bourdieu's (1990, 1998) concepts of habitus and field to consider the pedagogical *practising* of a sample of teachers in Ireland. The term practice is used here both with reference to Foucault's concept of subjectification and in the context of Bourdieu, the development of a pedagogical disposition or 'habitus' that is mediated not only by personal and prior experience but structural characteristics of the educational 'field' at local, national and global levels. Pedagogic practising is deeply interwoven with dynamics of capillary-like power embedded in 'thinking' 'doings' and 'beings' that have conscious and dysconscious elements. The analysis builds on previous theoretical work examining the role of leadership practising in newly multi-ethnic schools (Devine 2013b) but also on the analysis of the pedagogical/productive tensions in the experiences of migrant children in education (Devine 2013a). These tensions have been conceptualized as spheres or fields of re/action that position (migrant) children as being both 'valued', holistically as envisioned within the UNCRC, and as 'adding' value (in human capital terms) through their productivity and work in schools. It is these tensions around 'value' that frame dynamics of recognition and mis-recognition, discrimination and non-discrimination, in teacher interactions with them. In connecting pedagogy with production, the deep connection between pedagogy as a process of identity making and outcome framing (Bernstein 1996) is recognised, core to the subjectification noted by Foucault (1979) in disciplinary systems. It interconnects fundamentally with the formation of children's personal, social and learner identities, in so doing framing their rights and well-being. While the power to subjectify has always been prevalent through pedagogies, within neo-liberal contexts, the nature of pedagogy shifts and with it implications for how childhood(s) are being constructed and experienced¹. Productive and or pedagogic tensions arise between the valuing of children holistically and the more performative value added economically and socially, through, their productivity in schools. Resonating with Bourdieu's work, Bernstein speaks of the importance of making explicit 'the inner logic of pedagogic discourse and its practices' (Bernstein 1996: 18) in order to understand its significance for the regulation of identities and consciousness. In this paper the focus is upon the dispositions of teachers that are evident from their stated values, priorities, narratives, as well as 'doings' related to their pedagogy. This is their habitus, defined by Bourdieu (1990: 12-13) as

A system of acquired dispositions functioning on the practical level as categories of perception and assessment or as classificatory principles as well as being the organizing principles of action'

In the spirit of Reay (2004) *habitus* is being used as a conceptual tool rather than as an assertion of a collective habitus among teachers, although these may exist. Teachers' '*organizing principles for action*' are however played out across different fields – themselves characterized by trajectories of power and tensions between 'preservation and transformation' (Bourdieu 1998: 40). In this sense the habitus, like pedagogy itself, is fundamentally relational. At a macro level in the dialectic between structure and agency, at a micro level in the dynamics of mis/recognition in everyday life in schools as teachers are caught in a web of decisions (*le sens pratique*) of who to spend time with and how that time is to be spent engaging with groups of children who are differently classed, gendered, raced and abled. This dialectic is reflected in Figure 1 below with pedagogic habitus construed as a process both contributing to

and deriving from fields and/or spheres of re/action at the level of school, class, self and society.

Figure 1: The structuring of pedagogic practice



Structures are the rules and resources (Giddens 1984), signifiers and power relations/discourses that set the context for action in schools. These can be not only embedded relations and normative representations in society related to gender, class, ethnicity, and disability but also policies at national and international level (e.g. the UNCRC and the OECD) that shape practice on the ground. Agency reflects the reflective and agentic capacities of actors – in that teachers know what they do and why they do it. For Foucault (1979), it is practices that connote modes of regulation, ‘truths’ that govern and subjectify. This does not make beliefs or values irrelevant. Rather it heightens the need to focus on the very practices, the pedagogies, that are enacted in everyday life both consciously and dysconsciously that may have implications for realizing children’s rights in education. The primary focus in this paper is on their practising at the intersection of how they a) ‘think’ pedagogy, b) ‘do’ pedagogy and c) ‘talk’ pedagogy, recognizing that these three aspects are simultaneously inter-connected at the level of everyday interaction.

Outline of the study

In recent years, sensitivity to children's rights in Ireland has gained increasing traction, including the insertion of their rights into the constitution in 2012. However this latter is predominantly framed in terms of a protective discourse (from abuse) rather than the wider empowerment of children (Kilkelly 2008). The appointment of a full Ministerial portfolio to provide greater synergies across government policy in relation to children signals priorities in the area, within a wider well-being framework that began with the publication of the first National Children's Strategy in 2006, and has been subsequently developed and extended (DCYA 2014). More generally the society has undergone profound change, ranging from boom to bust (and boom again), yet remains positioned as a high skills economy. The education system has also undergone systemic change, including demographic change through increasing immigration, as well as the inclusion of disabled children into the mainstream system. Members of the teaching profession are overwhelmingly white, female, Catholic and middle class (Drudy et al 2005). Teachers enjoy high status, and relatively powerful union representation that has successfully resisted more overt elements of new managerial reform such as school league tables (Author et al 2012). Yet in spite of persistent curricular and gradual examination reform, Gleeson and O'Donnabhain (2009) assert that little has changed by way of teacher beliefs and values, most especially at secondary level where there is a prevalence of didactic and exam oriented approaches to teaching and learning (Smyth and Banks 2012). A strong 'moral' and 'vocational' element to primary teacher identities, while still prevalent, has lessened in recent years (Kitching 2009). International comparisons – through the TALIS report by the OECD (2009) noted a lower emphasis on collaboration on pedagogy, professional development, teaching for diversity and inclusion among second level teachers. However this study also noted higher levels of self-efficacy, and more positive valuations of student/teacher relationships and disciplinary climates than among secondary school teachers in other countries.

This paper draws on a mixed methodological study of teacher practices. Our concern was to document pedagogy in its widest sense, identifying the organizing principles for action (Bourdieu 1990) that underscore such pedagogy, including the inter-linkages between teachers' beliefs and their practices. A concurrent and sequential mixed methodological design was employed (Teddlie and Tashakori 2009) that included intensive work across 12 field sites and the use of workshops, questionnaires, classroom observation and semi structured interviews.

The study sample is drawn from six primary and six secondary schools, representing a diversity of school types in terms of gender (single sex and co-educational) and social class (DEIS, non-DEIS). Observations of teacher practice were conducted among 78 teachers drawing on an observation schedule (with 30 of these done jointly to test for inter-rater reliability), developed by Teddlie et al 2006 as part of a larger international study in to teacher practices. In addition, 73 teachers were interviewed, comprising 18 male and 55 female, 38 primary and 35 secondary school teachers. Ethical approval for the study was secured through the University ethics committee. The full breakdown of the sample is indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Outline of the Sample

School/Student Background			Teacher Background								
<i>School Name</i>	<i>Social Class</i>	<i>Gender Mix</i>	<i>Teachers Observed</i>			<i>Teachers Interviewed</i>			<i>Questionnaires</i>		
			Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Primary Schools											
Oakvale Primary	DEIS	Girls	8		8	8		8	4		4
Laurelwood Primary	Non-DEIS	Co-Ed	2	4	6	2	4	6	2	4	6
Hazelgrove Primary	DEIS	Co-Ed	4	2	6	6		6	5		5
Hollybrook Primary	DEIS	Boys	4	2	6	4	1	5	3	2	5
Beechview Primary	Non-DEIS	Girls	8		8	8		8	21		21
Ashmount Primary	Non-DEIS	Boys	1	2	3	3	2	5	5	3	8
Secondary Schools											
Primrose Dale Secondary	DEIS	Co-Ed	5	1	6	5	1	6			-
Bluebell Grove Secondary	DEIS	Boys	1	5	6	1	5	6	16	18	35
Daisydale Secondary	Non-DEIS Fee paying	Girls	8		8	8		8	4	3	14
Rosemount Secondary	Non-DEIS Fee paying	Boys	2	5	7	4	1	5	5	10	15
Oakvale Secondary	DEIS	Girls	7		7	5		5	5		5
Violet Hill Secondary	Non-DEIS Fee paying	Co-Ed.	1	6	7	1	4	5	4	3	8
Total			51	27	78	55	18	73	80	43	126ⁱⁱ

The remainder of the paper considers teacher practising in the study schools through the lens of children's rights to non-discrimination and safe-guarding their best interests. Specifically it explores not only how they teach (their observed practices) but also the narratives they draw on in explaining why they teach the way they do. Their habitus then is conceived as the outcome of both their values and principles (thinking pedagogy); their actions (doing pedagogy) and their narratives (talking pedagogy). These are conceived as situated dispositions that shape experiences of e/quality and discrimination/non-discrimination for diverse groups of children.

Thinking pedagogy - Teachers' principles for action

Workshops were held in each of the 12 study schools with whole school staffs in order to obtain a general sense of teachers' perspectives on what they considered to be 'good' teaching. Arising from these open-ended discussions 75 statements were generated to comprise a 'good' teacher questionnaire (Appendix 1). This drew substantively on the direct comments made during the open-ended workshopsⁱⁱⁱ. These items were clustered under five areas teachers identified as important to good teaching including: teaching style, personal traits, differentiation, professionalism and relationships with students. The questionnaires were distributed to teachers in the participating schools with 126 responding, detailed findings of which are reported elsewhere (Devine et al 2013). In this paper, these responses are conceived as indicators of the *principles for action* among our sample of teachers especially with respect to any underlying (and unprompted) sensitivity to issues of equality, inclusion, respect and recognition in how they thought about 'good' teaching.

Exploratory factor analysis^{iv} further clustered teacher responses into five areas. Reflected in Table 2 below, these included: passion for teaching and learning, a social and moral dimension to the role, being a reflective practitioner, effective planning and management of learning and love for children.

Table 2: Teacher principles for action - Exploratory Factor Analysis of the ‘What is a good teacher’ questionnaire with principal components analysis (PCA) extraction and Promax rotation^{vvi}

Factor	Variables	Factors				
		1	2	3	4	5
Passion for Teaching and Learning	Sees teaching as a worthwhile career	0.803				
	Is fair in treatment of students	0.755				
	Teaches students the value of learning	0.644				
Social and Moral Dimension	Encourages weak students to work	0.632				
	Leads by example		0.867			
	Is a good role model		0.801			
	Has qualities of integrity and fairness		0.745			
Reflective Practitioner	Has high moral values and tries to pass these onto students		0.604			
	Uses a variety of teaching strategies			0.879		
	Strives to improve their own teaching			0.793		
	Is willing to engage in professional development			0.714		
	Seeks advice from colleagues			0.686		
	Is self critical and evaluates own performance			0.649		
	Reflects on what has been taught			0.628		
	Is able to reflect on their own shortcomings			0.611		
	Takes risks and experiments in teaching (is innovative)			0.589		
	Effective Planning and Management of Learning	Covers the curriculum				0.875
Is a multi-tasker - able to think on their feet					0.692	
Gives tests regularly					0.653	
Regularly checks homework					0.650	
Can identify the quiet/shy student					0.564	
Is confident and takes on new challenges					0.477	
Love for children/young people		Loves and displays genuine warmth to children/young people				
	Incorporates ICT into teaching					0.738
	Tries to connect with students at their level					0.599
	Has a passion for working with children/young people					0.529

In Factor 1, passion for teaching and learning is equated with recognizing the value of education in and of itself and reaching out to ‘weaker’ students. These principles are further embedded in the social and moral dimension to the teachers’ role. Here integrity and fairness are identified in Factor 2, underpinned by a clear moral dimension to teachers’ work that suggests a civic (as well as perhaps religious/spiritual) dimension in their constructs of ‘good’ pedagogy. In Factor 3: ‘reflective practitioner’, an emphasis is placed on openness to reflection, new ideas and self criticism, while in Factor 4: ‘planning and management of learning’, recognition of the ‘shy/quiet’ child is stressed. This suggests a desire to ensure each child is ‘seen’, although, perhaps significantly, this concern is not named in terms of specific ‘groups’ or categories of children. Finally in Factor 5 connectedness with students is emphasized through ‘love’ and ‘warmth’ and ‘being at their level’, underpinned by a passion for working with them. In addition there were other items in the questionnaires that did not cluster within the factors but which are important in conveying the dispositions teachers valued in their relationships with children. These included valuing and respecting students’ opinions (48% strongly agreed with this, 48% agreed) and challenging students to ‘go beyond their comfort zones’; although this was not something teachers strongly agreed with (25% as opposed to 64% ‘agreeing’ it was important to ‘good’ teaching).

Encouraging, extending, reflecting, risking, connecting, appear as key principles for action (Bourdieu 1990) among our teacher sample. These are important precursors for socially just and inclusive teaching (Francis and Mills 2012, Lingard 2007). Yet it is worthwhile also noting the absence of specific reference to rights and equality in the statements that ultimately framed the design and content of the questionnaire. This ‘absent presence’ of specific equality concerns (Apple 2006) suggests a liberal framing of equality among our sample of teachers, constructed in terms of ‘fairness’, opportunity and moral integrity. As teachers in the study schools ‘think’ pedagogy, it suggests that principles of children’s rights to non-discrimination and teaching in their best interests are implicit within their beliefs about ‘good’ teaching. Yet these are articulated in terms of concern for the individual dispositions of, for example, the ‘shy/quiet’ child, rather than in terms of structural in/equalities between children as members of minoritized groups in the wider society. A more collective/structural focus on children is articulated however in terms of fairness and warmth, with respect for children’s views (rather than a child’s views) more likely to be articulated by secondary school teachers, and values of care and warmth more likely to be expressed by primary school teachers.

There were other differences in emphases across teachers that signal the evolving ‘generative’ nature of their pedagogic habitus. Older teachers and those with longer teaching experience placed significantly greater emphasis on commitment and passion to the role as well as a more holistic valuing of education. In addition, female teachers demonstrated stronger commitment to the role, with higher ratings along each of the factor items. Social context of the school and its impact on the institutional habitus was also important in shaping teacher beliefs, with potential implications for teacher practising. In this respect, teachers in more middle class (Non-DEIS) schools were significantly more likely to make reference to reflective

practice in their constructs of ‘good’ teaching, including engagement with colleagues and the pursuit of additional professional development opportunities.

‘Doing’ pedagogy – the observation of teacher practices

Teacher practices were observed using a schedule developed by Teddlie et al (2006) along seven dimensions. These included assessment and evaluation; differentiation and inclusion; clarity of instruction; instructional skills; active learning and meta-cognitive skills; and classroom room management and climate. Table 3 provides an overview of the extent to which these behaviours were evident across each item.

Analyses across the 78 observed lessons revealed some differences on the basis of gender (teacher as well as student), social class, presence of migrant children, length of teaching experience and school level (primary or secondary). Multiple regression analyses identified some contradiction between this ‘doing’ and the principles they articulated in ‘thinking’ about pedagogy. These are especially important from the perspective of considering children’s rights to non-discrimination and an education that serves their best interest. They highlight how pedagogic practising is embedded in ‘logics’ (Bourdieu 1990) that permeate from macro to micro level processes in schools. These ‘logics’ were most evident with respect to divergences in practices across different groups of students based on their gender, social class and migrant background and in relation to the prevalence of active learning/development of meta cognitive skills; differentiation/inclusion; instructional styles and classroom climate.

The promotion of active learning and development of meta-cognitive skills

Here evidence was sought of empowering pedagogies that promote and extend critical thinking, deep and student centred learning (Alexander et al 2010; Munns 2007). These are central to realizing children’s rights to a holistic purposeful education that serves their best interests. Active learning and the development of higher order/meta cognitive skills was evident in the classes observed, although overall this was the measure in which teachers across the sample had the lowest observed practice. Nonetheless distinctions existed. Active learning was more evident in DEIS (working class) schools while higher order /meta-cognitive teaching was more evident in our non-DEIS (middle class) schools. Gender was also significant, to an even greater extent than social class (Appendix 2), with active learning and more challenging teaching least evident in boys’ only classes and most likely in co-educational classrooms. With respect to the presence of immigrant children, the higher the number of such children in the classroom, the least likely they were to be asked to give their personal opinions ($P < .01$) during the lesson.

Differentiation and Inclusion

Here the inclusive practice of teachers was explored, evident through peer learning, active engagement to the end of lessons and providing students with opportunities for additional practice. These practices were most evident in co-educational classes ($P < .05$) and those taught by more experienced teachers ($P < .05$) and less so in boys’ only classes (Appendix 3). Trends are also evident with respect to immigrant children, suggesting that the higher the proportion of migrant children present in the classroom, the less evidence there was of all students being actively engaged in their learning.

Instructional skills

This connects with being attentive to students engagement with their learning, an important element of both recognition and distribution (time) embedded in pedagogies. Again while a majority of lessons observed were rated relatively positively in terms of instructional skills, the number of lessons in which there was no evidence of group based work is of note (59%). Teacher practices in this respect were influenced by the type of students they were teaching, with group based differentiation more likely in classes in DEIS schools and where there was a considerably higher proportion of migrant children. What seems to be of issue here is the number of migrant children in the class. Where these are sizeable (greater than 30% of class), teachers altered their practice. Wait time for responses was also linked to class size – the larger the class, the less the wait time that was given, especially when there was a higher proportion of students with additional needs. This is an important element of the wider ‘field’ of educational policy and implementation, in terms of teacher pupil ratios, as well as levels of support to schools with respect to working with children with a range of additional needs. Gender was also found to be significant, with greater variety in instructional strategies evident in co-educational classes ($P < .01$). The age level of students was also important with more variety of instructional strategies in primary schools and less variation as one progressed into higher grade levels, especially into secondary schools ($P < .05$ and $P < .01$).

Classroom climate

In general teacher practices were highly interactive, showing evidence of creating positive and respectful classrooms for students, with purposeful and productive engagement. This latter was especially evident in co-educational classrooms and at primary level, but was significantly ($P < .05$) less likely where there were a larger number of migrant children (greater than 30%) in the classroom. Further, encouraging ‘invisible’ students (those reluctant to participate) was more evident at primary level and in non DEIS (middle class) schools.

Classroom management

This was the component in which teachers had the highest mean score, confirming the OECD (2009) report of higher than average levels of effective classroom management among teachers in secondary schools in Ireland than across OECD norms. A tighter disciplinary frame was more evident especially in middle class schools ($P < .05$) and among more experienced teachers. The presence of children of immigrant background was also significant in that the greater the number of such children the less positive evidence of classroom management ($p < .05$), most especially with respect to involvement in all activities until the end of the lesson. More structured and consistent approaches to classroom management were also evident in secondary schools (Appendix 5) and co-educational classrooms ($p < .05$).

Overall, the findings indicate that ‘doing’ pedagogy occurs in fields of interaction that are embedded in dynamics of class, gender and ethnic/migrant status. There was evidence of deeper, more challenging and inclusive practices in co-educational classes, and in schools attended by middle class children. This suggests that pedagogies of indifference (Lingard 2007) are more evident in classrooms serving more marginalized students, including immigrant/minority ethnic students, as well as

in boys' only classrooms, dovetailing with patterns identified elsewhere (Gillborn 2008; Ingram 2009). While more experienced teachers showed greater evidence of inclusive teaching and more effective classroom management, they were also less likely to engage in active learning and use a variety of teaching methods.

These patterns raise key concerns around the realization of children's rights - both in terms of education experiences that uphold their rights to non-discrimination and in relation to serving their best interests. Across the study sample, this includes particularly children in DEIS/working class schools, especially boys in boys' only schools, and children of immigrant background who, from our observational data, are not experiencing equal opportunity to engage in deep learning that may be more appropriate to their needs. Pedagogic practising was overlain with aspects of teacher habitus related to length of their teaching experience as well as to some extent teacher gender, although this was more influenced by the gender profile of the school^{vii}.

How teachers in our sample 'do' pedagogy runs contrary, in some important respects, to how they 'think' pedagogy. This was especially with respect to recognition and inclusion of children who may be typified as for example 'weak' and or 'quiet/shy' - potential signifiers for those positioned as 'other' in the everyday life of classrooms. This is the embeddedness of capillary power, emanating through re/actions that undercut wider principles to 'good', 'fair' and socially just pedagogies. Given the disjunction between teacher 'discourse' and the observations of their practice, a more nuanced analysis of their practising (conceptualized as the intersection between structural and agentic influences) is warranted through exploring their perspectives about why they teach the way they do.

Talking pedagogy – the dialectical interplay in positioning pedagogy

Teacher narratives in the in-depth interviews following each lesson observation, re-affirmed the warm and respectful relationship they sought with their students. This intertwined with the passion for the role that emerged as the most significant factor in the 'good' teacher questionnaire outlined earlier. It confirms that the affective dimension to teaching and learning is central to teacher habitus, reflected in the comments of Una and Joan below:

I try to create an environment where they are happy and relaxed...if students don't trust you they won't work for you (Una, Violet hill secondary)

There are kids who would never miss a day and when the time comes to go home they don't want to go... it is a safe place where they will be heard (Joan Hazelbrook primary).

Yet the emphasis on care and nurturing and what this implied for the 'doing' of pedagogy was mediated, as we saw in their practice, by the socio-cultural background of students they were teaching. In this respect teaching as 'social work' or 'therapy' (Lingard 2007) in our working class/DEIS schools cut across the time and energy teachers had for more sustained, 'on task' pedagogies. This is encapsulated in the comments of Jenny and Gemma:

I knew classroom management would be tough but I didn't think it would be like it to the extent it was...I found it exhausting (Jenny Hollybrook primary)

I came in today to a room of 5th year students...one of the students started roaring when I asked her to move places... that took ten minutes of my class before I could even think of mentioning maths to them (Gemma Oakvale Secondary)

The attendant emphasis on nurture and care in these teachers' narratives also extended into a lowering of expectations of these children's capabilities that dovetailed with our observational data, especially with respect to higher order and meta cognitive skills and differentiated practice:

I am balancing off academic achievement with a bit of fun, especially for the weaker classes... when we do something I would entertain them for part of the class in some way or other (Veronica Oakvale secondary).

This whole active learning thing is great but here in a DEIS school you'd never get them focused after (Joan Hazelbrook primary)

In terms of the realization of children's rights, there is then a perceived tension between a more 'protective' discourse and 'provision discourse' in the 'doing' of pedagogies in DEIS/working class schools especially. Here, teachers were concerned about children's personal well-being and altered their pedagogies, including being more flexible and adaptable, in order to keep the children 'on-task'. That it was teachers in these schools who were least likely to emphasize the need for professional development and/or reflective engagement in practice (see Table 2) suggests a pedagogic 'drift' (Lupston and Hempstel Jorgensten 2012) that ultimately undermines the best interests of these children.

Yet in most interviews, teachers' views were decontextualized from structural inequalities, reiterating the explicit absence of naming inequalities and 'rights' in their constructs of a 'good' teacher. Perhaps of most concern, is that teachers in our working class schools did not query their pedagogy nor express any indication of social justice concerns. The lack of critical or deep appreciation about structures of inequality on their practice appeared fully ingrained into their habitus, evident in a level of confidence – *le sens pratique* (Bourdieu 1990) that governed their responses in explaining why they taught the way they did:

In a disadvantaged area you have to accept the fact that not every child is going to reach what your standards may be (Karen, Oakvale Secondary)

The disconnect between ideals of 'fairness' identified in 'thinking' pedagogy, and their practice, was further reinforced through an experience of relative isolation by these teachers in coping with challenges. This in turn reinforced deficit constructions especially in working class communities:

I know that I am on my own with these children apart from the support I get from the school...the parents are not helping me in any way (Karen, Oakvale primary)

Class inequalities in pedagogic practising are further reinforced through the prevalence of more performative driven approaches in the middle class, non-DEIS schools. The wider 'field' of the education market (Devine et al 2012; Ball 2009) structured teacher narratives here in terms of what they perceived as the 'driven' nature of middle class student's orientation to schooling. This had a corresponding impact on their pedagogy, which many resented in terms of 'governing' how they taught. Secondary school teachers especially spoke of the 'driven' nature of the high stake examination system and the pressure from middle class parents to ensure their children were succeeding:

Definitely parents pushing pushing pushing and I think it is them (parents) that are the main pressures (Aine, Daisydale Secondary)

There were challenges for teachers in middle class schools. Yet the care and nurture required was not in conflict with the provision of opportunities for extended learning. Teachers spoke of the seamlessness in aspiration and expectation (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127), aptly reflected in Ms Relis' comment that it is *'like teaching fish to swim'* in Daisydale secondary – a girls' only private/fee paying school. Gender intersected with social class, confirming essentialised views of femininities and masculinities that have been identified in other literature (Mills and Keddie 2007; Hodgetts 2010). These constructs had a definitive impact on pedagogies in that gender of students (single sex boys, girls and co-educational) was the most frequent and significant determinant of differences in the observation of teacher practices, with the most negative impact identified in working class boys' schools.

It was however in their discussions about working with migrant children and children with additional needs that a more visible self-questioning of pedagogy across the study sample emerged. As an exemplar and due to space limitation, the focus here will be upon migrant children. It was these children, positioned as being normatively 'different' that challenged teachers to step out of their comfort zones (Devine 2013a) and question their levels of efficacy and capacity to work with this 'difference':

You are constantly trying to make sure you are including everyone and keeping everyone happy and trying to get that balance, *when you are brought up in a certain culture yourself and you are stepping out of that yourself [emphasis added]*. (Patricia, Hollybrook primary)

A considerable difficulty for teachers in their work with migrant children was the often ad hoc nature of language support provision (Devine 2011) and a lack of co-ordination and development of sustained systems and practice. This ensured that they drew upon their practical knowledge and understanding, rather than an informed perspective of what is best practice in the field.

It kind of makes me feel quite helpless because he [migrant child] is not getting any work done; I kind of feel that I am failing him and the system

is failing him. (Gina, Hollybrook primary)

We had no TEFL department and one of the teachers kind of set up, really off her own back ...it wasn't always taken as seriously as it should have been (Marian, Primrose Dale Secondary)

Classroom observations confirmed that it was children of immigrant background who were significantly less engaged to the end of lessons, and less likely to be actively participating in lessons observed. As an example of positioning pedagogies – Marian's comment highlights how the lacunae in policy at school level (mirrored by a retractive policy at state level, especially with the onset of the economic crisis) positioned these students as not 'always taken seriously', especially in a context of intensifying demands. The clustering of these students in DEIS schools gives an additional cause for concern, given the noted tendency for teachers in such schools to have lower expectations for learning. These patterns were influenced by the number of migrant children present as well as by class size, contextual factors related to the wider field of educational policy as well as housing and urban planning. Where migrant children were in a relative minority numerically, their 'invisibility' pedagogically was more pronounced, compounded by the noted tendency, as newly arrived immigrants, to be acquiescent and quiet in the class (Devine 2011).

From a rights based perspective, the issue of language competence (in English as well as mother tongue) intersects with practices of recognition in relation to these children's learning. It dovetails also with investment of time as a significant aspect of pedagogy, that is itself embedded in the habitus and what is 'endowed with a sense of value in which it is worth investing one's energy' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1989: 44). As we see with Christine below, in an already strained context, she queries the value of whom she is to spend time with, legitimated in the context of deficit constructs of this particular child of immigrant background:

There is one student whose English is atrocious and my main problem is dealing with her as she doesn't communicate...then her attendance is atrocious. It wasn't worth the investment of my time when the others needed as much help as I could give them (Christine, Oakvale Secondary)

Yet there is a dialectic at work here that is not reducible to finite patterns. The challenge of 'stepping out' of oneself pedagogically mirrored the emotional investment of self that was also evident in teachers' engagement with migrant children at an inter-personal level. Words like 'worrying about', 'reaching out', 'joy', 'soft spot' also permeated teacher narratives, alongside concerns over the practical challenges of catering for the needs of all children in the classroom:

I would have a particular soft spot for these children. I was one of these in school myself, extremely quiet and diligent and never put the hand up (Marie, Hazelgrove primary)

I had a student who came into this country with no English and he asked me "can I please come to your higher level class even though my English isn't great...He ended up getting a C 1 in higher level English ... I get

such joy from that. (Jack, Blue bell grove secondary)

Concluding discussion

This paper has considered pedagogy as a process of positioning, both of teachers and of the students they teach. Drawing on the UNCRC, this positioning has been considered through the lens of children's rights to a purposeful, holistic and non-discriminatory experience of education that serves their best interests. Pedagogy is central to the translation of wider values and principles in practice, framing children's identities and how 'childhood' is constructed and experienced. The focus is not on the technical know how of lesson delivery. It is about contributing to a language for talking about pedagogy (Lingard et al 2006) and wider policy development, that incorporates children's rights as core to how pedagogy is understood, defined and practiced. In this respect the UNCRC provides a frame within which to embed socially just pedagogies and 'good' teaching into the realization of 'good' childhood(s). To be successful however, it must be embedded in teachers' habitus – *'le sens pratique'* and an understanding of the dynamics and processes that shape this. In other words pedagogy also positions teachers, both in terms of the values they espouse, as well as the practices they engage in.

Teacher practices, both observed and narrated in the study, were significantly influenced by the contexts within which they worked. While for the purposes of analysis, 'thinking', 'doing' and 'talking' pedagogy was separated, in reality they are closely inter-twined in the dialectical interplay between structure/discourse and action. Their habitus is an amalgam of structural dynamics in the wider field, as well as personal biographies and reflective action, including as highlighted in this study, length of experience teaching and to some extent their gender. What is striking is that neither social justice and equality concerns nor children's rights explicitly emerged in teacher narratives, either in their beliefs or rationales for what 'good' teaching should embody. There was reference to including the voices of children and being respectful of them, but this was at the level of recognition of individual children (drawing out the quiet/shy child) rather than an embodied sense of potential injustice against groups of children in their experiences of teaching and learning in school. Yet pedagogic practising is deeply embedded in social justice, whether this is explicitly stated or implicitly enacted. These findings reaffirmed others that have identified a lowering of expectations for children in working class schools, especially boys, but also for children of immigrant background. These children's opportunities for deep learning is not only mediated by the challenge over resources, class size and the wider intensification of teaching. It is also influenced by a lack of conscious awareness by teachers related to the structural dimensions of their practice that influenced how they positioned students in their teaching and learning. The research with secondary school teachers especially was the first opportunity they had of speaking with someone about their pedagogy. Of additional concern is not the struggles teachers endured, but the absence of awareness of struggle. This was especially reflected in the narratives of teachers working in DEIS schools. Yet it was these teachers, in both primary and secondary schools, who were least likely to emphasize professional development and or reflective practice as being central to 'good' teaching.

As Lingard et al 2006 argue the deep learning of students needs to be matched with the deep learning of teachers. The habitus is generative and has the potential for

change as well as for the reproduction of existing patterns through indifference and ‘not being taken seriously’. Children’s rights to an education that serves their best interests and overcomes discrimination, is not a matter of charity, care and therapy by teachers working in challenging environments. As Matuas and Zembylas (2014) note compassion and pity can be covert signifiers for projected disgust or antipathy for the other. Lynch et al (2009) speak of the importance of a careful education that dovetails well with the holistic nurturing envisioned in the UNCRC. Yet in the context of positioning pedagogies, careful must include not only warmth and connectedness but challenging and extending; all the more so in the messiness and turbulence in working with children at the margins. Framing these dynamics in the context of children’s rights in the UNCRC provides a generative mechanism within which to hold government to account for the impact of investment of resources and support for and of teachers; especially in challenging contexts. It also challenges teachers to reflect on their own positioning with respect to children’s rights both inter-generationally in terms of voice and participation, but also pedagogically in terms of serving the best interests of children through equal opportunities to learn. This study suggests concerns in this respect for migrant children, and boys in working class schools.

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ⁱ Similarly with respect to assessment. See for example Elwood and Lundy (2010) for an analysis of intensifying assessment within a children's rights frame.

ⁱⁱⁱ It is important to note that as researchers we were totally exploratory in the issues that emerged and therefore did not insert any direct questions in relation to either children's rights or issues of equality and non-discrimination.

^{iv} A review of the correlation matrix tested for multicollinearity and singularity, with the majority of values ranging between .3 and .8, and identified as statistically significant, thus ensuring that EFA could be undertaken with the data, in spite of the small overall small sample. Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant (chi-square 1643.55, df_351, pB.001) also indicating that EFA was appropriate for this set of variables. The KMO measure of sampling accuracy was .851, indicating that the sample size was appropriate for EFA.

^v Not all of the items listed in the questionnaire are 'covered' in the clusters, as they did not reach the appropriate loading for inclusion. Nonetheless the clusters as presented represent the best overall 'fit' of the data in order for meaningful statistical analysis to take place.

^{vi} Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the 5 factors. The results indicated that the scales were internally consistent and all results were above the recommended value of 0.70 for reliability demonstrating the factors which emerged during the EFA can be considered as reliable indicators to measure teachers' perceptions around the important characteristics of a good teacher. Cronbach's Alpha values were Passion for Teaching and Learning 0.775, Social and Moral Dimension 0.836, Reflective Practitioner 0.891, Effective Planning and Management of Learning 0.822, Love for children/young people 0.783

^{vii} It was undoubtedly also influenced by the institutional habitus of each school and the impact of student characteristics, as well as leadership practices in shaping this habitus at school as well as at class level but is beyond the focus of this paper (Devine 2013).

Figure 2 Sample from The ‘Good’ Teacher Questionnaire (Devine et al 2013)

A ‘good’ teacher.....	Less Important						Highly Important
Gives clear instructions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Is flexible and adapts to change in society	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Is inspiring to students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Forgives themselves and others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Adapts teaching to suit students abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Is well prepared and plans ahead	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Is a good team player on the staff	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strives to improve their own teaching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Values and respects students’ opinions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Encourages students to reach their individual potential	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Follows a routine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Is energetic and enthusiastic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7