

NEO-LIBERALISM AND EDUCATION:
ANALYSIS OF REPRESENTATION OF NEO-LIBERAL IDEOLOGY
IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM IN TURKEY

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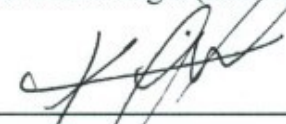
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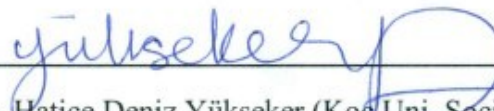
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ABSTRACT

This research investigates to what extent neo-liberal ideology is represented in the primary school social studies textbooks for the fourth and fifth grades published by the Ministry of Education in Turkey since 1980, and whether the content of the textbooks leads students to think within the framework of neo-liberalism. This study analyzes the textbooks published from 1980 to 2009. The focus of the study is on the 2004 Primary School Education Reform, which is the first structural amendment in primary school education since 1968. This study compares the 1968 and 2005 social studies curricula via temporal time difference analysis in terms of the structure and subjects they cover. Analyses of the textbooks are based on the comparison of the pre- and post-2005 textbooks in terms of representation of the neo-liberal discourse. In addition, this study utilizes information gathered from in-depth interviews conducted with the architects of the reform in order to explore the rationale behind the 2004 reform. Based on the findings of the temporal time difference analysis of the curricula and the quantitative and qualitative content analyses of the textbooks, this study concludes that representations of neo-liberal ideology in the social studies curriculum and textbooks have significantly increased with the implementation of the 2004 reform.

Keywords: neo-liberalism, educational reform, social studies, curriculum, textbooks, Turkey

ÖZET

Bu çalışma 1980'den bu yana Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından basılan ilköğretim sosyal bilgiler dördüncü ve beşinci sınıf ders kitaplarında neo-liberal ideolojiye ne kadar yer verildiğini ve bu ders kitaplarının içeriklerinin öğrencileri neo-liberalizm çerçevesi içinde düşünmeye yöndendirip yönlendirmediğini incelemektedir. Çalışma 1980-2009 tarihleri arasında yayımlanan ders kitaplarının analizini içermektedir. 1968'ten bugüne ilk yapısal değişiklik olan 2004 İlköğretim Eğitim Reformu çalışmanın merkezinde yer almaktadır. Bu çalışma 1968 ve 2005 müfredatlarının yapılarını ve içerdikleri konuları zaman farkı analizi methodu ile karşılaştırmaktadır. Ders kitaplarının analizi 2005 öncesi ve sonrası kitapların neo-liberal ideolojiyi yansıtma bağlamında karşılaştırmalı analizlerine dayanmaktadır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma 2004 reformunun gerekçesini araştırmak amacıyla reformun mimarlarıyla yapılan derinlemesine mülakatlardan elde edilen bilgilerden de yararlanmaktadır. Müfredatların zaman farkı analizi ve ders kitaplarının nicel ve nitel içerik analizlerinden bu çalışmanın elde ettiği sonuç, 2004 reformunun uygulanmasıyla birlikte sosyal bilgiler müfredatında ve ders kitaplarında neo-liberal ideolojinin yansımasının önemli ölçüde arttığıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: neo-liberalizm, eğitim reformu, sosyal bilgiler, müfredat, ders kitapları, Türkiye

DEDICATION

To My Father
Babam'a

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I dedicate this study to my father, Ekrem.

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INTRODUCTION

General Context of the Research

There is a worldwide tendency to change educational systems to make the content of the systems more compatible with the requirements of the market economy. Educational reforms have been implemented in several countries especially in the last few decades. Discourse of these reforms concentrates on the rhetoric of curriculum change and modernization (Bonal, 2003), and are based on a constructivist education model (Altnyelken, 2010a, 2010c). Many scholars argue that the curriculum, policy and content changes implemented in the neo-liberal era are designed to produce conformable, self-interested, and market-oriented human beings (Apple, 1999; Giroux, 2008; Hursh, 2000; Tabulawa, 2003). Criticizing this purpose, Giroux (2008: 146) states that knowledge should not solely be used for creating profits or future careers in the market; in fact it should be used for promoting human freedom and social justice.

Reflecting similar reform initiatives in many other countries, the Ministry of National Education of Turkey reorganized the curriculum for primary school education in 2004 through a reform known as the 2004 Primary School Education Reform. The new primary school curriculum was piloted in the 2004-2005 academic year in 120 primary schools in nine cities (MEB Eğitim Bülteni, 2005a: 47) and began to be implemented throughout the country in the 2005-2006 academic year (Çınar et. al., 2006: 51).

Before 2004, the curriculum for primary school had been last reorganized in 1968. That is to say, the same curriculum was in practice between 1968 and 2004. Therefore, the Ministry considers the 1968 curriculum as obsolete and inadequate to educate students according to the

competencies, skills and knowledge required in the contemporary world. It aims to respond to the demands that emerged in the globalized neo-liberal world. Moreover, the Ministry criticizes the 1968 curriculum for encouraging rote-learning, failing to give students a chance to practice in their daily lives what they learn in school, and failing to support life-long learning. Henceforth, the 2005 curriculum is centered on development of several competencies and skills and adopts the constructivist pedagogy. However, the critics of the reform argue that the aim of the reform was to make educational content compatible with the neo-liberal discourse (İnal, 2009). In this respect, the purpose was to educate students for the neo-liberal system.

The current study aims to explore the impact of neo-liberal ideology on the educational system in Turkey through the analysis of primary school social studies textbooks. It investigates to what extent neo-liberal ideology is represented in the fourth and fifth grade primary school social studies textbooks published by the Ministry of Education in Turkey since 1980, and examines whether the content of the textbooks has the potential to lead students to think within the framework of neo-liberalism. In addition, in order to have a broader understanding on what kind of changes the 2004 reform made in the social studies course, the temporal time difference analysis of the 1968 and 2004 curricula was conducted. In addition, this study analyzed the textbooks published from 1980 to 2009. The pre- and post-2005 textbooks are examined in terms of representation of neo-liberal discourse utilizing the quantitative and qualitative content analyzes. Moreover, this study also utilizes information gathered from the in-depth interviews conducted with the architects of the reform in order to explore the rationale behind the 2004 Reform.

In Turkish literature there are several studies analyzing textbooks from different aspects. One of the most recent studies, for instance, was conducted by the Turkish History Foundation (*Türk Tarih Vakfı*) which analyzed the representation of the human rights issue in textbooks. Despite the existence of many studies about different discourses in textbooks, there is not any research in the literature analyzing the relationship between neo-liberal ideology and education through the analysis of textbooks. In this respect, some current studies that analyze the relationship between neo-liberalism and education can be distinguished from the current study in the sense that, first, those studies do not analyze the relationship through textbooks and, second, they mainly focus on privatization of education. Furthermore, the studies conducted on the 2004 Primary School Education Reform are mainly centered on the question of evaluating the implementation of the 2004 reform in Turkey (Altınyelken, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c; Akpınar & Aydın, 2007; Aykaç & Başar, 2005). Unlike those studies, the purpose of this study is to explore whether students are exposed to neo-liberal ideology via the state education system.

All in all, this study aims to contribute to the literature on several levels. Firstly, it will provide a comprehensive analysis exploring the affiliation between the neo-liberal discourse and the content of educational systems. Secondly, through conducting comparative analyses of the curricula and textbooks, it will examine the amendments made in the educational system by the Ministry of National Education since 1980. In this respect, it will show the extent to which neo-liberal ideology has supplanted earlier discourses over time. Thirdly, the analysis of the reform in Turkey as a case study makes it possible for the further research to compare this study's findings with other countries' reforms.

Statement of the Problem

Althusser (2006) states that, in capitalist societies, education functions as one of the primary ideological tools of the state. In line with the neo-liberalism's intent to instill a culture of individualistic, market-oriented behavior in people of all social classes (Soedeberg et. al., 2005: 12-13), the goal of education in the neo-liberal era has become promoting knowledge that contributes to economic productivity and producing students who are compliant and productive (Hursh, 2000). Hursh (2000) states that students are viewed as human capital which can work for the continuity of the neo-liberal market economy.

Neo-liberal policies have been implemented in Turkey since the 1980s, and several changes have been made in the contents of textbooks since then. However, with the major amendment, the 2004 Primary School Education Reform, analysis of the impact of neo-liberal ideology on education through textbooks is needed in order to examine whether education is being used by the state as a tool to reinforce neo-liberal ideology. This is important in the sense that it shows that even without privatizing the schools, amendments made in the curriculum and content of textbooks by the state promote neo-liberalism. In this respect, neo-liberal ideology does not solely aim to commodify the schools; it also aims to commodify students who will work within the neo-liberal market economy (Apple, 2004: 105). Another important point to emphasize is the level of education impacted by neo-liberal ideology. As noted, this study analyzes primary school level textbooks in order to assess whether students are educated in accordance with the neo-liberal ideology starting from primary school. This analysis is important to figure out whether students become familiar to the neo-liberal discourse even in the early stages of their education.

Purpose of the Research

This study has three major purposes. The first purpose is to find out why the Ministry of National Education initiated the 2004 Reform. In order to understand the rationale behind the reform, in-depth interviews were conducted with the architects of the reform.

The second purpose is to analyze the representation of neo-liberal ideology in the primary school social studies textbooks published by the Ministry of National Education from 1980 to 2009. This analysis will document the extent to which neo-liberal discourse has entered the textbooks. In order to conduct this analysis, both qualitative and quantitative content analyses were utilized.

The third purpose is to question the role of the state in the educational system. The literature discussing the impact of neo-liberalism on education focuses mainly on the privatization of education. Even though commodification and privatization in public services have been very popular especially since the 1980s, the role of states in the neo-liberal era is worthy of consideration. It is possible to argue that in the neo-liberal era, in addition to the privatization of education, reforms made in the content of the educational system by the state serves the market economy. In this sense, this study examines the role of the state in reinforcing neo-liberalism. The analysis of textbooks published by the state will be used to examine whether the state paves the way to represent of neo-liberal ideology in the education system through the amendments made in the content of education.

All in all, this research aims to contribute to the literature through the analysis of neo-liberal ideology's presentation in the social studies textbooks, which has not been analyzed so far.

Research Questions

Given the purposes stated above, the research questions are formulated into two general questions, all with their relevant sub-questions.

The first main research question is “What were the reasons to initiate an educational reform in the primary schools in 2004?” In order to have a comprehensive answer, following sub-questions are also answered in this study:

- What is the relationship between the neo-liberal ideology and education?
- What kinds of changes or developments have occurred in the education system of Turkey since its implementation of neo-liberalism, and why?
- Was there any impact of the business sector, such as TUSIAD, in the preparation of the 2004 Reform?
- Did the international financial organizations, such as the IMF and the World Bank, and the European Union play a role in the initiation of the 2004 Reform?

The second main research question is “To what extent is neo-liberal ideology represented in the fourth and fifth grade social studies textbooks published after the 2004 Reform?” The following sub-questions have guided this main question:

- How does the new social studies curriculum define the scope and purposes of the reorganized social studies course?
- What kinds of textbooks does the new curriculum require?
- What kind of contextual changes have been done in the textbooks?
- What neo-liberal concepts have been added and what has been displaced by neo-liberal themes?

- In terms of subjects and structure, how are the textbooks published before and after the reform differentiated?

Outline of the Study

The study consists of seven chapters. An overview of the chapters is presented in this part.

The current part, i.e. *Introduction*, introduces the context and aims of the study, the research problem and questions, and the general outline of the study.

Chapter I and *Chapter II* present the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study based on a literature review. *Chapter I* begins with discussions of neo-liberalism and its impact on the state. In this respect, the first section of the chapter discusses the role acted by the state for the continuity of neo-liberalism. The second section deals with the impacts of neo-liberalism on public services, such as education and health, and illustrates how public services are privatized and considered as commodities under neo-liberalism.

Chapter II broadens the impact of neo-liberal policies on public services through specifically focusing on educational systems in the neo-liberal era. The purpose of this chapter is to underline how neo-liberal policies transform the content of the educational system in accordance with the ideology. In this respect, a global tendency towards reorganization of education is presented and discussed in this chapter. By doing this, this chapter shows that educational reform is not specific to Turkey, but there are different reforms initiated in many other countries similar to the one implemented in Turkey.

Chapter III presents an educational system in Turkey in the neo-liberal era. In this respect, the chapter is specifically based on the educational transformation in Turkey. After providing

general information about the educational system practiced in the early periods of the Republic, the chapter focuses on the 2004 Primary School Education Reform. It presents the changes made by the reform. Then, it explores the reasons for the reform and the rationale behind the reform. The chapter ends with presenting the positive and negative reactions to the reform.

Chapter IV presents the research methodology and design. Explanations regarding the methods of inquiry of the study are provided in this chapter. The first section of the chapter displays the temporal time difference analysis of the 1968 and 2005 curricula. The second section explains the quantitative and qualitative content analyses conducted in this study and data collection procedure. The third section illustrates the procedure of the in-depth interviews regarding the selection process of respondents and analysis of the transcriptions.

Chapter V is devoted to the findings of the temporal time difference analysis, content analysis and in-depth interviews. The chapter opens by comparing of the 1968 and 2005 social studies curricula for the fourth and fifth grades. The second section of the chapter compares the pre- and post-2005 textbooks and provides the findings from the quantitative and qualitative content analyses and in this way examine to what extent the neo-liberal discourse is present in the textbooks. The quotations from the in-depth interview are also given throughout the chapter when it is necessary.

The last part, i.e. *Discussion and Conclusion*, presents an overview of the study. The first part provides the summary and evaluations based on the key findings of the research. The second section presents recommendations for further studies in light of the literature review conducted for this study and its findings.

CHAPTER I

NEO-LIBERALISM AND PUBLIC SERVICES

The literature discussing the impact of neo-liberalism on education focuses mainly on the privatization of education. Some scholars argue that states lost their importance in the neo-liberal era during privatization attempts in public services. However, this argument disregards the role of states in the reproduction process and hence neglects the important role acted by the state for the continuity of the system (Apple, 2006: 165). Therefore, the role the states adopted in the neo-liberal era is worthy of consideration. In this respect, the first section of the chapter discusses the role of states acted for the continuity of the market. The second section presents the impact of neo-liberalism on public services, specifically on education.

I.1. State for the Market

Economic problems of the 1970s, such as increased accumulation of capital, unemployment, inflation and the fiscal crises, led states to question the existing economic system of the post-World War Two era (Harvey, 2005: 12). As a consequence, beginning in the US and Britain during the Reagan and Thatcher administrations, respectively, neo-liberalism has been a main ideology of different states since the late 1970s.

The neo-liberal state was formed as a critique of the welfare state. The Reagan and Thatcher administrations accused the state of being responsible for the economic problems faced in the 1970s, and supported a move toward a more laissez-faire capitalism. The state would guarantee the implementation of the system, but it would not be interventionist. Moreover, they argued that state decisions were not objective, rather they were politically biased in the sense that they depended upon the strength of the interests groups like unions (ibid.: 21).

Linked to the changes witnessed in the US and Britain, many countries, including Turkey, turned towards neo-liberalism in political and economic practices in the last three decades (ibid.: 2).

Due to the changes associated with the emergence of neo-liberalism, interest in the analysis of the state as a critical determinant of politics and economy has been condensed since the mid-1970s (Campbell & Pederson, 2001: 1). The discussions are centered on questions of “How does neo-liberalism affect the state?” and “Does it alter the functioning of the state?” Neo-liberalism as a political economic theory proposes a minimum role for the state. However, states still have a noteworthy role in relation to work, welfare, *education* and defense [emphasis added] (Olssen, 2004: 240). In addition, what theories assume does not always exactly fit with the practices. That is to say, even the US and Britain, for instance, do not cleave to the principles of neo-liberalism all of the time (Harvey, 2005: 71). What lies at the center of neo-liberalism is actually a restructuring of the relationship between the state and market, not the end or rolling back of the state (England & Ward, 2007: 25). States play an important role in both backing and promoting neo-liberal processes (Harvey, 2005: 159). In addition, states can be beneficial in the amelioration of problems that resulted from neo-liberalism (Klak, 1998: 18). In this sense, the neo-liberal state, on the one hand, is expected not to intervene in market and simply set the stage for market functions; on the other hand, it is expected to play a role in creating a good business climate and to be a competitive actor in global politics (Harvey, 2005: 79). Riain (2000: 187) maintains that the state, market and society are embedded in each other and constructed by their interactions with one another. Hence, studies about neo-liberalization require an integrative vision that reflects the relations among the state, market and society and their transformations within the process of neo-liberalization.

The philosophy of neo-liberalism is rooted in market rationality and in the active encouragement of laissez-faire economic systems worldwide (Mitchell, 2004: 389). Harvey (2005: 1) defines neo-liberalism as a theory of political economic practices that favors the liberation of individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. Neo-liberalism intends to instill a culture of individualistic, market-oriented behavior in people of all social classes (Soedeberg et. al., 2005: 12). To put it differently, for its continuity, neo-liberalism has to be internalized and be a way of life for people.

Victor (1986: 167) claims that neo-liberalism seeks to do two things primarily. On the one hand, neo-liberalism is concerned with the maintenance and strengthening of the entrepreneurial aspects of capitalism by emphasizing the importance of risk-taking and innovation. On the other hand, it underlines the significance of community because accomplishment of neo-liberalism cannot take place without thinking of the whole fabric of society (ibid.: 168). However, in the neo-liberal era, the stress is still on competition rather than cooperation (ibid.: 173) which leads both states and societies to be competitive (Ercan, 2006: 407). Related to the competitiveness, entrepreneurialism has gained more importance due to its assertion of growth; therefore the risk-taking entrepreneur is the hero of neo-liberalism (Victors: 1984, 168).

Öniş (2000: 1) calls the period after the 1980s as a neo-liberal globalization, which possesses tremendous potential for economic growth driven by technological progress. Opening up of markets and rapid expansion in trade and capital flows have become the main features of the period. He draws attention to the situation that the neo-liberal globalization process has deepened the inequality between and within countries. Therefore, in order not to be a loser in

this system, states have been forced to acquire the necessary skills and the capacity that helps them to adapt to the new environment. This adaptation process causes several changes in the functions of states. Privatization and capital account liberalization has made the traditionally performed functions of the states quite obsolete. However, this does not mean that the state is totally obsolete or does not have any functions in the neo-liberal globalization. In fact, states have begun to perform new functions in such key areas as building *human capital* and technological infrastructures, maintaining macroeconomic stability, creating competitive environment and regulating financial systems, which constitute the requirements of the new system [emphasis added] (ibid.: 3).

Instilling individualistic culture and market-oriented behavior in human beings and the building of human capital by the state are two crucial features of the neo-liberal era at the heart of this study. In addition to the privatization of public services, states seek to promote the neo-liberal system through building the human capital of workers in the market economy. This study underlines the continuing importance of states in the neo-liberal and global world.

I.2. Neo-liberalism in Public Services

In line with the spread of neo-liberal ideology, almost all spheres of life have undergone a change. That is to say, it has not been only the economic system that has been affected. Therefore, the changes witnessed in the neo-liberal era cannot be explained solely by referring to the narrow and ideology-based economic perspective (Ercan, 2006: 383). Service sectors, like education and health, have become regulated in accordance with the rules of the market. One of targets of the regulation policies that have been implemented by many different states since the late 1970s is the public sector. Education and health constitute the major sites that

have been amended by regulation policies (Aydođan, 2008: 167). This section of the chapter explores the impact of neo-liberalism on public services.

Hartley (2009) states that “economic globalization has limited the fiscal room for maneuver by nation-states, and spending on public services has come under pressure, especially in those nation-states which have subscribed to economic neo-liberalism, and wherein the public services have felt the hand of the market fall firmly on their shoulders” (p. 425).

The proponents of neo-liberalism in education highlight the importance of global competitiveness, the reduction of the cost of education, and the creation of individuals who are oriented to excel in global competition (Mitchell, 2003: 388). Neo-liberalization and globalization push states to enhance economic competitiveness and commodification in almost all spheres of life, hence emphasis of the educational policies is on entrepreneurialism and international testing (Bonal, 2003: 165).

Knowledge has become a good that can be exchanged since neo-liberalization policies in education were put on the agenda globally in the 1980s. Education has become increasingly important in the global marketplace because it is regarded as a form of capital (Harris, 2007: 118). Structural adjustment policies implemented under the supervision of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank facilitated the adaptation of education to the market. These international economic institutions considered education as a sphere in which the private sector could take place and gain profit. Therefore, the privatization attempts in education and public services in general, have increased since the 1980s (Scherrer, 2005: 493; Aydođan, 2008: 166, Ercan, 1999: 31). Privatization of public services helps the system to overcome its crises as well. In each economic crisis international financial organizations suggest that states open more of their service sectors to the market (Aydođan, 2008: 166).

Aydođan (2008: 171) underlines the importance of reforming education systems because they are a locomotive for other changes. That is to say, a change made in the education system will automatically affect the other spheres of public sector due to its wide sphere of influence (ibid.: 171).

The General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) executed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) prompted the liberalization process of education in particular, and public services, in general, in the mid-1990s (Scherrer, 2005; Siqueira, 2005; Sayılan, 2006; Aydođan, 2008; Yıldız, 2008). The GATS creates a framework for the increasing liberalization in public services (Scherrer, 2005: 486) This amendment is necessary for the states to be competitive and receive a share from the international trade. The GATS allowed education to be considered as a tradable commodity and committed to the process of the commodification of education (Aydođan, 2008: 167). In line with the spread of neo-liberal ideology, GATS provided a political and legal framework for deregulation and privatization of education (Scherrer, 2005: 384). Turkey stands among the countries that signed the agreement. She became part of the agreement in 1995 and since then education has been privatized even more (Keskin, 2008: 12).

In addition to the impact of the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO, the European Union also assumes an active role in the commodification and privatization of education (Scherrer, 2005: 485). The EU promotes the new world trade regulation, i.e. liberalization of as many industrial and service sectors as possible (ibid.: 499). The EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy points out,

“if we want to improve our own access to foreign markets, then we can’t keep our protected sectors out of the sunlight. We have to be open to negotiating them all if we’re going to have the material for a big deal” (Speech at the

United States Council for International Business, New York, 8 June 2000, quoted in Scherrer, 2005: 500).

It is easy to see the motive behind the policies of the EU. Opening the services to the marketplace is welcomed as long as this action provides a material return. Turkey's European Union integration process has played a significant role in the liberalization of the educational system in Turkey. The Seventh Development Plan of Turkey (1996-2000), for instance, considers education as the most important sector of the program and states that the educational system has the responsibility of educating students in accordance with the competitive market economy (DPT, 1995: 27). In this respect, educating students to have a full set of skills that are necessary to be part of the market is considered necessary to increase the competitiveness of Turkish economy and facilitate the accession to the EU (Tuzcu, 2006: 35). In addition, in the 2004 Progress Report of Turkey, the EU underlines the unemployment problem in Turkey. The report states that this problem has resulted from insufficient amount of budget contribution to education and incompatibility between the demands of the labor market and the educational system. Thus, both public and private investments in education ought to be increased, and the education system ought to be made compatible with the market (ibid.: 35-39). In short, the changes made in education due to the integration process has reorganized the content of education in accordance with the economy (Sayılan, 2006: 48), and the adaptation of neo-liberal ideology has accelerated the commodification attempts in education system in Turkey (Ercan, 1999: 33).

To conclude, this chapter illustrated both the role of the state in the neo-liberal and global world, and the global impact of these changes on educational systems. Dale (2000) studied the role of the state in educational policy field in the global era. He argues,

[r]ecognizing the existence of globalization does not mean that the state has less presence or that its presence is less significant in the provision, funding or regulation of public services. The forms in which the state, the market, and the community combine in the provision, regulation and funding of education makes clear that globalization effect on educational policy is not simply transfer from the public to the private sector. The re-structuring of state intervention can take different forms depending upon a range of factors that, in many cases, remain nationally based. We cannot assume, therefore, either that globalization does not have effects on the state role and intervention strategies or a necessary convergence effect as a result of the globalization process (in Bonal, 2003: 160).

Therefore, even though several attempts by the neo-liberal governments have been attempted which tend to reduce the spending on education and support privatization of education the educational system is a sphere that has not been completely liberalized. Olssen and Peters (2005: 339) explain the importance of the state in the educational sphere referring to the transition from industrial economy to knowledge economy. They assert that,

[w]ith the massive sweep of neoliberal reforms restructuring and privatizing the state sector, national education systems remain overwhelmingly part of the public sector, both state-owned and state-controlled. The state provision of an increasingly ‘massified’ system of formal education is still the dominant form of the organization of knowledge. Paradoxically, at a point historically when the interventionist state has been rolled back and when world governments have successfully eased themselves out of the market, often substituting market mechanisms for the allocation of scarce public goods and services, governments find themselves as the major owners and controllers of the means of knowledge production in the new knowledge economy (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 339).

Over all, education is still one of the spheres in which states have a crucial impact, and neo-liberal states aim to rearrange the public education system in a way to make it suitable for the necessities of the market economy (Hursh, 2005). Even without privatizing the schools, through the amendments made in the education system, such as curriculum changes, states can serve the continuity of neo-liberalism. The next chapter provides a broader discussion on the relationship between neo-liberalism and education.

CHAPTER II

NEO-LIBERALISM IN THE EDUCATIONAL AGENDA

This chapter presents the impact of neo-liberalism on educational systems through focusing on the reform process initiated in the neo-liberal era. The purpose of the chapter is to illustrate the changing discourse on education. Neo-liberal ideology affects education both through favoring privatization attempts in education and through reforming educational content. This chapter investigates the discussions on the latter.

The first part of the chapter describes the role of education in promoting states' ideology. The second part presents the main features of the behaviorist education model and the constructivist educational model, the latter of which has been implemented in many countries in the last few decades. The third part is devoted to a more detailed analysis of the constructivist model, including the historical background of the model. The fourth part discusses what kind of features human beings are expected to acquire via education in the neo-liberal era. The last part gives examples from different countries' educational reform process initiated in the last three decades to show global impact of neo-liberal ideology in education.

II.1. Neo-liberal Ideology in the Educational Agenda

Reforms in education systems beginning with neo-liberalization have not only focused on the management and administrative systems, but also on the educational process itself (Karsten, 1999: 303). Therefore, it is not enough to analyze neo-liberalism in terms of success and failures as if it is solely a political program. Its critical exploration must address the “transformation of its discursive deployment, as a new understanding of human nature and social existence” (Read, 2009: 26). The major purpose of the neo-liberal reforms in general is to transform what counts as a good society and responsible citizens, and based on this, it aims to produce a good student in schools who will be compatible with the market through making a continual enterprise of themselves (Apple, 2001: 414).

Because there is a close relationship between political, ideological and economic powers of the state and education, exploring the content of educational reform itself is crucial. Referring to neo-liberalism as a new capitalism, Fairclough (2004) states that “the common idea of new capitalism as a ‘knowledge-driven’ socioeconomic order implies that it is also ‘discourse-driven’, suggesting that language may have a more significant role in contemporary socioeconomic changes than it has had in the past” (p. 104). He asserts that “discourse analysis has an important contribution to make a research on the transformation of capitalism” (ibid.: 104). Furthermore, focusing on the knowledge of policy as a practice makes it possible to consider a significant fact of modern life: Power is exercised less through brute force and more through the ways in which knowledge (the rules of reason) constructs the objects by which we organize and act on the issues, problems, and practices of daily life (Popkewitz, 2000: 18).

Althusser (2006) defines education as one of the most important ideological tools of state, a key function of which is to promote the internalization of state policies. In this respect, the

state is the most important actor that determines the education policies and education is not an impartial sphere (Gök, 1999: 3). That is to say, education is always political (Apple, 1999: 197, 2001: 410; Giroux, 2008: 126-127). However, Apple (2006: 165) notes that the idea that education as an ideological tool of state has become inured, thus we almost forget this fact. But, the recent literature illustrates that forgetting the role of state in the reproduction process means to neglect the important role acted by state for the continuity of the system. The educational system is determined in accordance with the interests of the political system, i.e. politicians have the power to prepare, execute and control the system (Gökçe, 2000: 25). The significance of the educational system for the continuity of the state ideology is due to the amount of time that students spend on education. Students are in schools for five days a week and eight hours a day, thus they are the compulsory listeners of the state's ideological discourse (Althusser, 2006: 76). In the neo-liberal era, states began to provide education addressing economic knowledge, skills and behaviors. There are two purposes in this process (Gökçe, 2000: 107-108). On the one hand, individuals responding to the demands of the economic system are created; on the other hand, consumption and production habits are internalized (ibid.: 107).

In order to understand the amendments made in the education system however, it is not sufficient to focus solely on the state's actions. As Apple (2001: 410) reminds us, there are multiple actors (international aid agencies, NGOs, corporations for example) in the social field of power that has an impact on the way education is going to be organized. It is the differential relation of power that moves education in particular directions in many countries (ibid.: 410). Similar to Apple, Giroux (2005; 2008) analyzes the relationship between education and neo-liberalism. Even though his main focus is on the importance of cultural politics, the general framework of his analysis and problematization of the relationship

between education and neo-liberalism is useful for this study. He criticizes neo-liberalism's purpose of producing competitive and self-interested individuals. He highlights the importance of corporate powers in the formation of education systems (Giroux, 2008: 146).

He writes,

Within neoliberalism's market-driven discourse, corporate power marks the space of a new kind of public pedagogy, one in which the production, dissemination, and circulation of ideas emerges from the educational force of the larger culture. Public pedagogy in this sense refers to a powerful ensemble of ideological and institutional forces whose aim is to produce *competitive, self-interested* individuals vying for their own material and ideological gain [emphasis added] (ibid.: 113).

Discourse on the official reforms in the educational system concentrates on the rhetoric of curriculum change and modernization (Bonal, 2003: 170). Policy, curriculum and educational research are the systems of knowledge for the social administration of teachers and students (Popkewitz, 2000: 18). There is a worldwide tendency to change educational models to make the content of the systems more compatible with the rules of the market. Many countries change their behaviorist education models to a constructivist model in order to cope with the emerging global trends (Altinyelken, 2010c; Tabulawa, 2003; Tekeli, 2003). The next part presents how the behaviorist and constructivist models consider education.

II.2. Constructivist vs. Behaviorist Education Models

The behaviorist education model is a teacher-centered model. There is a determined, i.e. inflexible, curriculum. In this sense, teachers do not have much chance to make changes in the curriculum. Moreover, the education process is based on a one-way transformation of knowledge, i.e. transformation from teachers to students. Therefore, this model envisages passive students and authoritative teachers. The behaviorist model emphasizes knowledge

itself. In this sense, it disregards different learning processes of students. In addition, the emphasis on knowledge directs students to rote-learning without questioning what they are learning (Altınyelken, 2010a, 2010b; Tekeli, 2003: 18-19).

Unlike the behaviorist model, the constructivist model is individual-centered and does not favor rote-learning. It highlights the importance of individual identity in education and puts the learners at the center of the teaching process (Carney, 2008: 40). Therefore, students have a more active role during the learning process. It has a different understanding of the teaching process; teachers encourage autonomous learning and a questioning spirit (ibid.: 42). Teachers and students construct knowledge through applying problem-solving methods to contexts that have no fixed solutions (Popkewitz, 2000: 20). In the constructivist education model, the teacher has an implicit control over students, students are expected to re-arrange and explore the learning context structured by the teacher. Thus, students have the chance to control how they select and structure knowledge which signals the democratic character of the model (Hartley, 2009: 427). Learning through play and active participation are important learning media of the model. Students “are thought to be naturally motivated, and could become the ‘agents of their own learning’” (Hasley & Sylva, 1987: 8 in Hartley, 2009: 427). The model encourages students to be active in all spheres of life (İnal, 2008; Tekeli, 2003: 18-19). As Carney (2008) asserts, within this model, policy-makers aim “to create teaching and learning conditions conducive to the nurturing of creative, flexible and cooperative citizens and workers” (p. 41). Even though the constructivist educational model gives more active role to students during the learning process, the content of education reorganized accordingly with the model restricts students within the framework of neo-liberalism. In this respect, the current study does not problematize the model, but the content of education formed with the constructivist educational model.

The focus of the constructivist model is on the student. Therefore, it is also called as child-centered or student-centered educational models. Even though the constructivist and student- or child-centered teaching models are not identical terms, they are interrelated (Windschitl, 2002: 165). They share much the same instructional philosophy and try to create and adapt curricula to meet the needs of learners, to manage more active classrooms and to deal with accountability issues regarding student's learning (ibid.: 134). This study considers a method of instruction that focuses on students, encourages them to participate in class activities via several exercises, and allows them to construct the knowledge that they gain at school in their daily lives is both student-centered and constructivist educational models.

II.3. The New Trend in Education: Student-centered Education Model

The student-centered educational model is not a newly developed model. Its origins are rooted in the works of Jean Piaget (1896-1980), Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) and John Dewey (1859-1952) (Altinyelken, 2010b: 2). However, despite its presence over many years, the student-centered model has gained worldwide dominance in education systems as a consequence of economic transformations witnessed in the last three decades (Tekeli, 2003: 18-19). This section of the chapter explores the spread of the student-centered model since the late 1970s and its affiliation with the requirements of the neo-liberal market economy.

In the 1970s, Western societies were faced with an educational crisis which provoked various reactions depending on the position and ideologies of different sectors of the economy and civil society. The educational system was considered as a reason for the low productivity of labor and the economic crisis. The system was insufficient to favor the accumulation process (Bonal, 2003: 162). Emergence of new economic, social and political conditions illustrated

the necessity of the existence of a new type of worker. The business community, for instance, redefined employees by stating that employees “can think creatively, adapt flexibility to new work demands, identify as well as solve problems, and create complex products in collaboration with others—all supposed benefits of constructivist learning environments” (Windschitl, 2002: 135). Moreover, consumerism became more important in the last decades. Government policies “must be anew, in a way that resonates with the contemporary culture of consumption” (Hartley, 2009: 425). In addition, notions of vision, passion, charisma, delight and mission have come to be used frequently (ibid.: 426).

Because they are at the center of the state’s institutions, schools have been reorganized to tackle with the crises and respond to the needs of new economic system (Apple, 2001: 409). In the neo-liberal era, the educational system focuses “on producing efficient workers who are able to adapt and develop new skills and work toward the goals of ownership” (Hursh, 2000). At this point, the content of the student-centered education model fits well with the demands of the economic system (Windschilt, 2002). This model was expected to break authoritarian practices in schools and consequently to produce individuals whose mind set would be compatible with political conditions deemed necessary for the penetration of the free-market economic system (Tabulawa, 2003: 18). In this respect, “educational systems, through creating appropriately skilled and entrepreneurial citizens and workers able to generate new and added economic values, will enable nations to be responsive to changing conditions within the international marketplace” (Robertson, 2000: 187 quoted in Hursh, 2005: 5).

In the neo-liberal globalization era, many countries both from the west and the east implemented national educational reforms based on the student-centered model. Tabulawa (2003) analyzes the changes in educational systems, i.e. a shift towards the student-centered

model, from a macro perspective and explores the participation of international aid agencies in pedagogy. He states that those agencies' interests in pedagogy have become explicit since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Referring to the world system approach, he mainly argues,

[t]he interests of aid agencies in the pedagogy is part of a wider design on the part of aid institutions to facilitate the penetration of capitalist ideology in periphery states, this being done under the guise of democratization. The hidden agenda is to alter the '*modes of thought*' and practices of those in periphery states so that they look at reality in the same way(s) as those in core states. This process is being accelerated by the current wave of globalization, which is a carrier of *conservative neo-liberal ideology* [emphasis added] (Tabulawa, 2003: 10).

Although Tabulawa's analysis depicts a general picture, it may miss the nation-specific differences due to its more macro perspective. Carney (2008: 45) criticizes the rapprochement of the dependency and world system theories to education because of focusing heavily on the role of international financial institutions and neglecting domestic differences. Albeit he acknowledges the affiliation between the student-centered model and the demands of the market economy, he states that each state utilizes "the international language of progressive pedagogy in ways that fit their particular, localized, culturally-grounded circumstances" (ibid.: 41). Further, he claims that without disregarding the fact that the room for manoeuvre at the local level is not boundless, we still have to consider the features of amendments imposed at the local level (ibid.: 46). In other words, while analyzing the educational reforms, global and nation-specific features have to be considered together. However, although it is very crucial to explore both nation-specific changes and global trends together, it is first necessary to understand the latter in order to analyze the former. As Crossley states, "it is now increasingly difficult to understand education in any contexts without reference to the global forces that influence policy and practice" (as cited in Apple, 2001: 409).

The impact of international financial institutions, especially the impact of the World Bank on education has significantly increased since the 1980s, which has coincided with the application of structural adjustment policies (Bonal, 2004: 650). Since then, the Bank has become the most important single source of multilateral technical co-operation and the leading agency in setting the education and development agenda (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002: 438). The power of the World Bank in education is not solely because of its capacity to mobilize funds. It also represents itself as “an agency of technical advice, commanding impressive expertise, analytical skills and experience of its professional staff, thus with the possibility of influencing all sorts of initiatives in policy formulation” (ibid.: 438). To illustrate the impact of the Bank, while it supported 272 studies on education between 1972 and 1982, this number increased to 436 between 1982 and 1989. The expenditure of the Bank on education in the latter period was \$ 98.5 million (ibid.: 438). Moreover, Bonal (2004: 649) notes that the World Bank has noticeably intensified its activities on education through raising its loan commitments for education from 4% of the Bank’s budget in 1980 to more than 9% in 1999. He argues that the increase in the financial allocation is a key point in understanding the World Bank’s capacity to influence the direction of education policy in developing countries. Although in quantitative terms, he emphasizes, that educational financing channeled through the Bank may represent a relatively small percentage of country’s domestic educational budget, the conditional nature of these credits increases their influence on the administration and management of educational systems (ibid.: 650).

Investment in education is prioritized by the Bank as a way to overcome poverty in developing countries. In this respect, education is an important tool for the training of human capital (ibid.: 650-651). The influence of international capital over national states is not only about economic improvements or capital mobility. International agencies also transport new

sets of values that demand individual self-interest rather than collective rights through their support in research, investment and aid (ibid.: 654). The influence of these agencies produces a kind of framework that restricts the alternative options available to policy-makers in developing countries (Bonai, 2004: 655; Torres & Schugurensky, 2002: 439).

The Bank's approach towards the educational sphere changed especially in the second half of the 1990s. Since then, the global priorities established by the World Bank in the educational sphere have consisted of four areas: Basic education for the poorest and for girls, intervention programs for early child development and health in education, the use of innovative methods in education such as use of technologies and the systemic reform in curricula and assessment, management and the financing of education (Bonai, 2004: 655). These strategies are applied selectively in different countries, particularly in Africa (ibid.: 655). Tabulawa (2003) notes that governments in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa initiated curricular reforms based on the student-centered pedagogy which "come as a prescription from aid agencies through educational projects and consultancies funded by the aid agencies" (p. 9). To give a specific example, the student-centered pedagogy was heavily emphasized in two educational projects financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), namely the Primary Education Improvement Project and the Junior Secondary Education Improvement Project (ibid.: 9).

In the twenty-first century, neo-liberalism is underpinned by the rise in importance of knowledge as capital (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 330). For the analysts of the world policy agencies, such as the World Bank and OECD, amendments made in the educational sphere is driven by the shift from industrial economy to knowledge economy (ibid.: 330). Olssen and Peters (2005) points out that,

[t]he shift to knowledge economy involves a fundamental rethinking of the traditional relationships between education, learning and work, focusing on the need for a new coalition between education and industry. ‘Knowledge capitalism’ and ‘knowledge economy’ are twin terms that can be traced at the level of public policy to a series of reports that emerged in the late 1990s by the OECD (1996a) and the World Bank (1998), before they were taken up as a policy template by world governments in the late 1990s. In terms of these reports, education is reconfigured as a form of knowledge capital that will determine the future of work, the organization of knowledge institutions and the shape of society in the years to come (p. 331).

An OECD report *The Knowledge-based economy* (1996a: 14) indicates that “education will be the centre of the knowledge-based economy, and learning the tool of individual and organizational advancement”, where learning-by-doing is vital (as cited in *ibid.*: 334). The role of education in the creation of human capital and in the production of new knowledge becomes more prominent with the knowledge economy (*ibid.*: 332).

In the neo-liberal era, commodification is not seen merely in educational system; instead students have become to be regarded as marketable commodities (Apple, 2001: 416), which corresponds with the human capital theory. Woodhall (1985) defines human capital as the investment that human beings make in themselves “by means of education, training, or other activities, which raises their future income by raising their lifetime earnings” (as cited in Tabulawa, 2003: 14). Therefore, individuals increase their market value through education. The human capital theory is supported by the international aid agencies and institutions. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)’s document, for instance, states the development of contemporary economies depends crucially on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of their workers—in short on human capital. In many respects, human capital has become even more important in recent years (*ibid.*: 14). States that support the

integration of the educational system with the human capital theory believes that the correspondence between education, productivity and private earnings, and social benefits will be managed as a consequence of this integration (Bonal, 2003: 162).

All in all, the student-centered educational model is perceived by reform-makers as the antidote to several shortcomings of the previous system, such as a high reliance on memorization, low educational outcomes, alarmingly low student motivation and disengagement from schooling. High hopes were raised for the potential of the model to improve education quality and to promote intrinsic learning among students (Altinyelken, 2010c: 31-32). In this respect, compared to the behaviorist model, it seems that this model has the potential to provide better education. However, despite this potential, resemblances between demands of the market and content of the student-centered model need further exploration. In other words, even though from a pedagogical perspective this model seems fruitful because it breaks the classical educational model and makes students more active during the learning process, how discourse in curriculum and other school materials, such as textbooks, is constructed by educational reforms based on the student-centered model have to be analyzed to assess whether it possesses a market-oriented language. This is the aim of Chapter V.

Due to the resemblance between requirements of the neo-liberal market economy and the goals of the student-centered model, this study asserts that this model can facilitate the production of individuals who will be compatible with the market. Neo-liberalism redefines individuals as competitive, instrumentally rational beings that can compete in the market place (Peters, 1994). Moreover, Apple (2006: 199) claims that individuals in the neo-liberal era are very much career oriented. The model neo-liberal individual is one who strategizes for

her/himself among various social, political, and economic options (Read, 2009: 35). The following section offers a detailed discussion on distinguishing features of the neo-liberal individual.

II.4. A New Type of Human Being: The Neo-liberal Individual

In order to clarify the reason to label the people in the neo-liberal era as neo-liberalized, rather than liberalized, it is necessary first of all to outline how classical liberalism and neo-liberalism consider individuals. Clarification of these differences is important in order to understand the current educational changes and reforms (Apple, 2001: 414).

Foucault (1982) highlights the nexus between the production of a particular conception of human nature and a particular political ideology (in Read, 2009: 26). To recall Adam Smith, the main focus of classical liberalism was an exchange which was considered as a matrix of society. This is because human beings have a tendency to barter, truck and exchange. However, in neo-liberalism, the main focus shifts from exchange to competition (ibid.: 27). Even though the idea of homo economicus is common in the two forms of liberalism, the difference lies at their emphasis on exchange and competition, respectively (ibid.: 27-28). The most significant impact of this shift is witnessed in the way in which human beings make themselves and are made into subjects. With neo-liberalism, workers have become human capital who have to invest in his/her skills or abilities. Therefore, homo economicus represents an entrepreneur of him/herself (ibid.: 28).

To illustrate the difference between earlier liberal perspectives and neo-liberalism, Harris (2007: 18) states that while states have less importance and the individual is seen as autonomous in the former, states are considered as the creator of the appropriate market conditions, thus have more positive presence in the latter. Creation of these conditions

includes the production of entrepreneurial individuals who are enterprising and competitive (ibid.: 18, 134). Parallel to these, Olssen (1996: 340) explains these differences,

[I]n neo-liberalism the state seeks to create an individual who is an *enterprising* and *competitive entrepreneur*. In the classical model the theoretical aim of the state was to limit and minimize its role based on postulates which included universal egoism (the self-interested individual); invisible hand theory which dictated that the interests of the individual were also the interests of the society as a whole; and the political maxim of laissez-faire. In the shift from classical liberalism to neo-liberalism, then, there is a further element added, for such a shift involves a change in subject position from ‘homo economicus’, who naturally behaves out of self-interest and is relatively detached from the state, to ‘manipulatable man’, who is created by the state and who is continually encouraged to be ‘perpetually responsive’. It is not that the conception of the self-interested subject is replaced or done away with by the new ideals of ‘neo-liberalism’, but that in an age of universal welfare, the perceived possibilities of slothful indolence create necessities for new forms of vigilance, surveillance, ‘performance appraisal’ and of forms of control generally. In this model the state has taken it upon itself to keep us all up to the mark. The state will see it that each one makes a ‘continual enterprise of ourselves’ ... in what seems to be a process of ‘governing without governing’ [emphasis added].

Read (2009)’s study also addresses the relationship between neo-liberalism and subjectivity. He asserts that neo-liberalism can be considered as a production of subjectivity in which individuals are constituted as subjects of human capital (Read, 2009: 25). In her analysis of the neo-liberal society, Harris (2007: 135) states that performativity is the main reference point of thinking. The purposes of education, therefore, do not pay attention to intellectual and moral questions, but to be effective and efficient. “What works” has become the main question to be answered and knowledge is regarded as a commodity (ibid.: 135). Similarly,

Olssen and Peters (2005) note that “a further consequence of marketization of education has been the increased emphasis on performance and accountability assessment, with the accompanying use of performance indicators and personal appraisal systems” (p. 327).

In the neo-liberal society, individuals are encouraged to see themselves as lifelong learners, as entrepreneurial individuals, and as active citizens and consumers (Harris: 2007: 136). A citizen is not considered as social being, but as an individual who has freedom and autonomy in the sense that he/she has the right to choose the kind of life that he/she wants to live (ibid.: 135-136). A citizen is to be a consumer first and foremost (ibid.: 42). In addition, Robertson and Dale (2002) question how states use neo-liberal political rationality as a doctrine to manage social conflict because “it can be mobilized to alleviate the problem of precariousness through privileging *the self, as entrepreneur*, as responsible for both creating and participating in productive activity and that this activity is the basis for distribution” [emphasis added] (p. 467). In a similar vein, Popkewitz asserts (2000: 19) that both states and schools are concerned with the production of the citizen, who can act as a self-regulated and self-disciplined person.

Neo-liberalism points at an emergence of a new mode of governmentality whose operative terms are not rights and laws, but interest, investment and competition. Read (2009) maintains that “neoliberalism is not simply an ideology in the pejorative sense of the term, or a belief that one could elect to have or not have, but is itself produced by strategies, tactics, and policies that create subjects of interest, locked in competition” (p. 30). The discourse of the economy becomes an entire way of life. That is to say, each action is taken accordingly with a calculus of maximum output for minimum expenditure as if it is an investment (ibid.: 31). States, corporations, individuals are all governed by the same logic, that of interest and

competition (ibid.: 35). As a consequence, instead of the economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system (Polanyi, 1957: 57). As discussed previously, educational reforms based on the constructivist and student-centered educational model are initiated in different countries. The next section presents examples from the other countries' reform experiences.

II.5. Neo-liberalism in the Educational Agenda: Different Countries' Experiences

The argument of this study, i.e. the increase in the impact of neo-liberal ideology in education systems, is witnessed in many countries. In the last decades, many countries reorganized their educational programs and curricula and the constructivist model was at the center of these reorganizations (Yaşar, 2005: 330). This section is devoted to the educational reform processes of several countries experienced in the last decades.

Aasen (2003) analyzes the restructuring process of education in Sweden and Norway in the 1990s. He states that enormous investments in education for everybody did not yield the expected economic results in the Western world and the economic crises of 1970s signaled a necessity to make changes in education (ibid.: 118). Like in many other countries, the ideological climate began to change in Scandinavia during the 1980s and a belief in the power of the market increased. The neo-liberal era paved the way to an increase in international competition based on the production of knowledge. Therefore, the content of the educational system, i.e. what should be taught at schools, necessitated a change. Consequently, in the late 1980s, changes in the economy and ideology were reflected on the educational policies (ibid.: 126-127). To clarify the changes, Aasen writes (2003),

As an integral part of the shift in political climate, a discourse on educational policy arose in Scandinavia that was no longer based on preparations for

participatory democracy, appraisal of social and cultural differences, or the demand for social justice and equality, but on the health of the national economy... The school was primarily regarded as an instrument to strengthen technical-cognitive know-how and to increase national efficiency (p. 127).

Education began to be considered in Norway and Sweden as a factor in economic growth and for national economic competitiveness. Rapid change in demand for competence, which has been witnessed especially since the 1990s, led schools in Scandinavia to define and convey real knowledge, i.e. knowledge required by the economic system (ibid.: 131). The aim of the reforms made in those countries was to reorganize curricula in the way that would serve to educate more competent students (ibid.: 128). Educational reforms in Norway and Sweden formed an instrumentalist perspective of education, which view students as human capital and education in the light of an economic rationality (ibid.: 134). Aasen (2003) describes the curriculum change in Norway:

Norway made play, defined as a voluntary activity, a compulsory teaching method for students aged six to ten. In all Scandinavian countries, “responsibility for ones own learning” became a key term in the educational rhetoric. The curriculum directives not only recommended cross-subject teaching and project-work, but also made problem- and project-based teaching mandatory... In Norway cross-subject teaching and use of the project method secured a prominent place in the compulsory school. The guidelines stated that 60 percent of teaching time in lower primary school had to be used for such activities, 30 percent in grades five to seven, and 20 percent in secondary education (p. 133).

There are similarities between reforms made in Scandinavian countries and the 2004 Primary School Education Reform of Turkey in terms of focusing on economic requirements, cross-subject-teaching and project-based teaching, which will be discussed in Chapter V.

All in all, Aasen (2003: 146) asserts that there is an orientation in Swedish education toward competition, consumer perspectives and the market itself. Likewise, the educational policy in Norway has been characterized by performance indicators, quality assessment, competition, and consumerism. All of these, he says, “identify enough evidence to claim that international movement of neo-liberalism influences the measures that are now being implemented more and more” (Aasen, 2003: 146).

In his analysis of educational reform attempts in the People’s Republic of China, Carney (2008: 39) states that reforms are in accordance with the demands of the market economy which seeks to prepare China for the global knowledge economy. International policy organizations, like the OECD, and multilateral development agencies, like the World Bank, have an impact on the educational reform process of China (ibid.: 40). The western educational models are considered as the best practice and constitute the common trait of the educational reforms implemented in recent years (ibid.: 39).

The curriculum reform of basic education whose purpose was to achieve a shift from a predominantly teacher-centered model to the student-centered model of learning was piloted in 2001 in China. The structure of the curriculum was also changed from one defined by subject studies to one that integrates connections between different types of knowledge (ibid.: 39-40). The main purpose is to equip students with the skills of innovation, creativity and cooperation, and also maintain the concern for students’ moral development (ibid.: 40). Carney (2008: 40) asserts that new reforms may lead to a new contract between the state and citizen and to the continuation of economic and industrial transformation if they are implemented successfully.

One of the conferences conducted by the State Council reflects the official position of the Chinese government on education. An editorial comment in this conference states,

With the new century, China's socialist modernization drive has entered a new stage of development, the rapid economic globalization, the acceleration of the pace of readjusting the industrial structure and the ever-fiercer international competition all have posed new challenges to us (Editorial, People's Daily Online, 2001 in *ibid.*: 41).

Carney (2008: 41) argues that according to policy-makers, because of entering a new era there was necessity in China to make an urgent change in order to continue its modernization drive and establish an appropriate position in the newly emerging global economic order and all these created the need for a specific and detailed vision of the Chinese classroom of the future.

For Carney (2008: 42-43), the educational reform attempt in China is important on a number of levels. Firstly, it indicates incapability of previous approaches to schools in terms of supporting the type of society envisaged in China in the future. Secondly, the reform in education will make it possible to tighten the relations between schooling and the world of work. In this respect, the reform attempt considers teachers as crucial agents for social and economic change (Carney, 2008: 42-43).

Altinyelken (2010a, 2010b) explores implementation process of Uganda's curriculum reforms. The new curriculum for primary schools, called the thematic curriculum, has been developed and implemented in Uganda since February 2007. The purpose of the new curriculum was to reorganize education as responsive to sustainable development and economic growth (Altinyelken, 2010a, 151). Education has been identified as a key component of human capital quality and a key ingredient for poverty reduction (Altinyelken,

2010b: 6). Moreover, the Ugandan government considered the new curriculum as a way to improve the quality of education by increasing the achievement levels of students in literacy, numeracy and skills (Altinyelken, 2010a, 2010b).

The new curriculum of Uganda adopted the child-centered approach through putting the child's interests, experience and needs at the center of the curriculum. The focus of the teaching methodology is on the child's activities. It encourages the participation and performance of students. Rather than being passive receivers and doing only what they are told, children are expected to be active participants in their learning by way of exploring, observing, experimenting and practicing (Altinyelken, 2010a: 152). Altinyelken (2010b) states that,

CCP [child-centered pedagogy] became popular since it was viewed as being more progressive, effective in improving learning achievements, and valuable for preparing children and youth for the world of work. It was widely recognized that when it comes to effective functioning in the work environment, general competencies (such as imagination, creativity, adaptability, problem solving and innovation), attitudes (such as self-discipline, tolerance and teamwork) and interpersonal skills (such as assertiveness and conflict resolution) are critical (Hoppers, 1996). In this context, CCP was perceived as far more superior in stimulating and reinforcing such desirable general competencies, attitudes and skills, and educating the youth for the increasingly competitive global 'knowledge economy' (p. 3).

During the transition attempts from the teacher-centered to the child-centered pedagogy, a number of international development organizations have been influential in Uganda, such as Aga Khan Foundation¹ and the USAID (United States Agency for International Development) (ibid.: 7). These organizations have been influential in terms of introducing the child-centered

¹ Aga Khan Foundation Canada is a non-profit international agency that supports social development programs in Asia and Africa (visit: <http://www.akfc.ca/>).

pedagogy in Uganda through different projects. For instance, Aga Khan Foundation has initiated three projects since the 1990s: The Kampala School Improvement Project, the Enhancement of Universal Primary Education in Kampala and the Enhancement of Universal Primary Education and Community in Kampala. The purpose of these projects has been to promote and institutionalize the adoption of the child-centered teaching methods and resources. Similarly, the USIAD initiated a six-year program in October 2002, which introduced a teaching and learning methodology that aimed to increase interaction within classrooms. The program has been influential in policy making circles and has influenced the pedagogical approach in the last curriculum review process which began to in 2007 (ibid.: 7).

To conclude, the countries' switch to neo-liberalism resulted in structural changes both in the management and implementation of education systems. On the one hand, through privatization policies education was liberalized. On the other hand, states are still in the preparation process of educational reforms and curriculum. In this preparation process, they illustrate the tendency towards the market-friendly student-centered, constructivist education model, which consequently has become globally widespread. The following chapter explores how the education system in Turkey has been affected by neo-liberal policies.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN TURKEY'S AGENDA

Chapter III presents an analysis of the educational system in Turkey. Previous chapters have discussed amendments made in education in the last three decades. They underlined the impact of neo-liberal ideology on education and gave examples of reform attempts in education in other countries. The focus in this chapter is on educational reform processes in the Turkish educational system. The main emphasis is on the 2004 Primary School Education Reform, which has been the only major amendment made in primary school education since 1968. It rearranged primary school education in accordance with the constructivist model. Before analyzing the reform process, the first section of the chapter provides brief historical information about the Turkish education system. The second section discusses the amendments made by the 2004 reform, and reasons for initiating a reform in 2004. This section also discusses both to the positive and negative criticisms of the reform.

III.1. Education in the Early Periods of the Turkish Republic

The student-centered, constructivist education model was applied in Turkey following the 2004 Primary School Education Reform. The Ministry of National Education aimed to overcome system-wide problems and make parallel amendments to the educational developments of other countries through the reform. Due to education's importance for the development and modernization of a country, the Turkish education system had to be rearranged in accordance with the demands of the contemporary world (The JDP Party Program, 2001).

Even though the 2004 Reform represents a significant change in the educational system of Turkey because of the structural change it accomplished, utilizing education as a modernizing tool dates back to the early periods of the Republic of Turkey. The goal of the founders of the Republic was to make Turkey an industrialized and developed country and education was considered as an important tool in this process. State officials formed a national educational system and initiated several reforms in order to modernize the country (Gezer, 1999: 9).

Two major reforms were initiated to modernize the country and accomplish national unity, namely abolishment of the caliphate and the promulgation of the *Tevhid-i Tedrisat Law* on 3 March 1924. *Tevhid-i Tedrisat* led to the establishment of unity in education because all foreign schools and minority schools were put under the control of the Ministry of National Education (Kaplan, 1999: 159). Consequently, the Ministry became the main body responsible for all educational regulations (Keskin, 2003: 3; Gezer, 1999: 37). After the establishment of unity in education, it became easier for the state to train students according to the state ideology. The Ministry is still the main body that deals with educational affairs.

Mustafa Kemal, the founder of the Turkish Republic, highlighted the importance of education for the development and modernization of Turkey. He considered schools as key places which would bring the country to modernity (Büyükdüvenci, 1995). He and his colleagues took the West as a reference point for Turkey's modernization. According to the modernization theory of development, experiences of the West in development constitute the norm for historical progress and need to be emulated by the rest of the world (Tabulawa, 2003: 13). In line with this theory, the Western education experts were invited to Turkey to present their recommendations about making more successful amendments in the education system.

John Dewey, who was one of the leading educationalists of the era, came to Turkey in 1924. Democracy has a central place in his studies on education. He stated that an educational system had to be in the same line with democracy and that countries could not be modernized without following democracy (Anton, 2004: 89). In his report titled Report and Recommendations upon Turkish Education in 1924, he emphasized the role of progressive educational theories in improving the quality of education and the necessity to make teachers familiar with progressive pedagogical approaches (Yılmaz, 2009: 25). Progressive pedagogy is similar to child-centered pedagogy. It favored education built upon an experience-based curriculum developed by both students and teachers (Columbia Encyclopedia Electronic Source, 2010).

In line with Dewey's recommendations on education, the Village Institutes (*Köy Enstitüleri*) were established in 1937 (Gezer, 1999: 64). The purpose of the Village Institutes was to overcome the disparity between rural and urban areas, to decrease illiteracy, to spread the national ideology and to achieve nation-based development (Başgöz, 1995; Kafadar, 2002). The Village Institutes' experience is significant for the current study because they were the first example of implementation of the constructivist pedagogy. The Institutes have several features differentiating them from other school types and making them closer to the constructivist model. The Village Institutes were not like the mainstream schools. Students educated in the Institutes had the chance to be trained in a profession. The main rationale of the Institutes was learning by doing. That is, students had the chance to learn and practice simultaneously. Consequently, unlike the common educational system, the educational system in the Institutes was not based on rote-learning (Karaömerlioğlu, 1998: 70). However, the Institutes were a short-lived project because they led to the emergence of harsh political and ideological debates. The unique experiment of the Village Institutes was terminated in 1954

(Dündar, 2000: 99). The closing down of the Institutes was also the end of the constructivist educational model experience. Except for the Village Institutes period, Turkey's main educational pedagogy was based on the behaviorist model until 2004 (Kocabaş, 2008: 1).

A modernization attempt still continues to keep its importance in Turkey's political agenda. However, even though Turkey experienced several crucial changes during the last decades, such as practicing neo-liberalism as the main state ideology with the January 24th, 1980 Economic Measures and obtaining a candidate status for the EU, it was 1968 when the curriculum was last modified. Therefore, there was the necessity to change the 1968 curriculum and, it was replaced with the new one through the 2004 reform, which is discussed in the next section.

III.2. The 2004 Primary School Education Reform

Educational reforms have become one of the most significant agenda topics of many countries in the last thirty years. Developments in communication, exchange of information and technology have caused a change in skills that people need to have. As a consequence of a shift from industrial economy to knowledge economy, education has become more sensitive to economic changes. This shift indicated the necessity of rearranging the education systems with respect to the demands of the contemporary world (Gültekin, 2007: 496). Many countries, including Turkey, have brought education and economy together through educational reforms addressing the needs of the market economy. These educational reforms, adopted in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, illustrate similarities in terms of adopting a constructivist and student-centered education model and a flexible curriculum which is sensitive to technological developments and demands of the economy (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007: 82).

The Justice and Development Party, which has been the ruling party of Turkey since 2002, stated in its party program that the national education system of Turkey was not sufficient to respond to the requirements of the contemporary world. For instance, it is not compatible with technological developments and not able to develop human capital efficiently. In the education section of the party program, the JDP says that “our party will make a fundamental reform in education” (The JDP Party Program, 2001). The major amendment made by the Party with the 2004 Primary School Education Reform constitutes the first fundamental educational change made in the neo-liberal era of Turkey.

Since the establishment of the Republic, the Ministry has made amendments in educational programs. However, none of the attempts have turned into a comprehensive amendment affecting all structures of education (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007: 83; Güven & İşcan, 2006: 99; Önal & Kaya, 2006: 23). Moreover, despite several changes made in the contents of textbooks and curriculum since the beginning of the 1980s, i.e. in 1983, 1989, 1993 and 1998, the 1968 curriculum was not completely renewed (Önal & Kaya, 2006: 23). Rather than changing the whole education system, the previous attempts only amended the contents of textbooks (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007: 82). That is to say, only the units of the textbooks were changed.

The 2004 Primary School Education Reform changed the structure/model of the educational system from a behaviorist education model to a constructivist educational model. Moreover, unlike the previous teacher-centered educational model, the student-centered model became the main model in education. The new educational system, which was reorganized accordingly with the constructivist and student-centered model, provides students a chance to apply what they learn from school in their daily lives. Moreover, it puts students in the center of the teaching process, which gives students a more active role during the learning process.

The new curriculum has a competency-based structure. The first five years of the primary school contains eight main competencies: Critical thinking, creativity, communication, inquiry, problem solving, using information technologies, entrepreneurship and language competencies in Turkish (The 2005 Curriulum, 2005). As will be explored in the following sections of this chapter, the Ministry of National Education sought to make education more responsive to the social and economic needs of Turkey and these competencies are critical in terms of making it easier to live and work in the contemporary world. This is because of the correspondence between the competencies and the business community's demands from employees. In the context of neo-liberalism and globalization, thinking creatively, adapting flexibly to new work demands, identifying and solving problems, and creating complex products constitute features that the business community expect from the employees to acquire (Windschitl, 2002: 135).

In addition to these changes, the 2004 reform changed the curricula of courses in order to make them compatible with the constructivist and student-centered models. In the context of the reform, the curricula of the primary school Turkish '*Türkçe*' (1-5), Life Knowledge '*Hayat Bilgisi*' (1-3), Science and Technology '*Fen ve Teknoloji*' (4-5) and Social Studies '*Sosyal Bilgiler*' (4-5) courses were rearranged in accordance with constructivist model by the Board of Training and Education '*Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı*' (TTK), which is the main body of the Ministry possessing responsibility for the preparation of curricula and textbooks. In a pilot study conducted in the 2004-2005 academic year these curricula were implemented in nine cities (Ankara, Bolu, Diyarbakır, Hatay, İstanbul, İzmir, Kocaeli, Samsun and Van) and in 120 primary schools (MEB Eğitim Bülteni, 2005a: 47). Consequently, the constructivist educational model began to be implemented throughout the country in the 2005-2006 academic year (Çınar et. al., 2006: 51).

Among the five courses mentioned above, the curriculum and textbooks of the social studies are analyzed in this study. Between 1926 and 1968, social studies were taught in three separate courses in the fourth and fifth grades: History, geography and civics. In the 1968 education program, these three courses were gathered together under the title of a social studies course and since then the name of the course has been social studies (Yaşar: 2005: 335). The Ministry of National Education prepared the last social studies program of the pre-2004 era in 1998. The compulsory education period was extended from five to eight years in 1998 and the social studies course began to be taught in the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh grades (Yaşar, 2005: 336, Önal & Kaya, 2006: 24). However, no fundamental changes were made in 1998 in the social studies curriculum. At the beginning of 2003, the Ministry of Education began to work on the preparation of a new social studies curriculum for primary school which was completed in 2004 (Canerik, 2005: 362).

III.2.1. *Why a new program?*

The question that ought to be asked with regard to the 2004 Reform is “why did the JDP government initiate the 2004 Primary School Education Reform?” In order to provide an answer to this question, the Ministry’s documents written on reform, i.e. report titled *Changing Years in Education 2003-2004*, *Education Bulletin* and the literature on this topic are examined.

In order to understand the motives behind the Ministry’s documents, the JDP’s approach towards education will briefly be highlighted. The party program and government programs of the JDP, which has been a single-party government for eight years, are two significant data sets that provide information about the JDP’s approach to the educational system. They indicate what education means for the JDP, and what the JDP expects from education.

The analysis of the JDP's party program and government programs answers one of the questions of this study: Why was the reform made in 2004? Although Turkey's economic system turned to neo-liberalism decades ago, the educational system was accommodated to neo-liberalism in 2004. It can be argued that being a single-party government made it easier to conduct a fundamental change in the educational system. Even the JDP states in its emergency action plan, declared on November 16 in 2002, and other government programs, that with the power of being a single-party government, their government will bring about solutions in a short period of time to the existing problems which have never been solved.

Both the party program and government programs signal what kind of amendments would be implemented by the JDP in education. The section on education of the JDP's party program begins with the statement that "according to our party, education is the main element of development that leads development in all other spheres. Therefore, societies which cannot use their human capital efficiently are condemned to lose their competition chance" (The JDP Party Program, 2001). Furthermore, the Party asserts that "curriculum of the contemporary education will be reorganized in accordance with the requirements of the century, with our necessities and with the skills that students will acquire" (The 58th Government Program, 2002). This reorganization will be achieved through quitting the education models based on rote-learning (The 58th Government Program, 2002). Moreover, the new education model will be student-centered (The 59th Government Program, 2002). It is important to take other countries' experiences as a guide to make the educational system more sensitive towards technological and economic developments. In this way, students will acquire crucial skills, such as being active participants, independent, productive, and being able to think critically (The JDP Party Program, 2001).

In a nutshell, in its party program and government programs, the JDP addresses the necessity of making reforms in the educational system in which global and internal requirements would be integrated. The following paragraphs state the reasons for making the reform.

In the report, named Changing Years in Education 2003-2004 '*Eğitimde Değişim Yılları 2003-2005*', the Ministry of National Education explains the reasons and targets of the 2004 reform.

Course programs were not in the same line with the present conditions, and that was one of the most problematic sides of the national education system. Turkey neglects all changes made in the education sphere so far. The curriculum was renewed 40 years ago... Students will not be like a computer disk any more after the new curriculum. Students will be educated as a student that produces, questions, thinks, follows the scientific developments and that are responsive to the needs of social life. (MEB, 2005b: 59).

Likewise, in the education bulletin, the Ministry of Education elucidates the reasons as,

There are changes and improvements in individual, social and economic spheres of life throughout the world. These changes and improvements are also seen in demographic structure, scientific understanding, science technology, professional relations and labor force quality, localization and globalization processes of Turkey. It becomes necessary to reflect all these changes and improvements into our education system and programs (The Education Bulletin, MEB, 2005a).

The Ministry considered the educational system obsolete, which signaled the necessity for rearranging the system accordingly with the present conditions. The previous curriculum was not flexible enough to reflect the developments in science and technology (Gültekin, 2007: 484, Aykaç & Başar, 2005: 343). Moreover, the Ministry has necessitated making a connection between the curricula of the primary and secondary schools since 1998, i.e.

admission of the eight-year compulsory education (Yaşar, 2005: 330). Furthermore, low success performance of Turkish students at international tests such as the PISA², PIRLS³ and TIMSS⁴ called the behaviorist educational model into question (Gültekin, 2007; Kocabaş, 2008; Akpınar & Aydın, 2007; TUSIAD, 2006: 83). To illustrate, Turkey was placed 28th among 35 countries that took part in 2001 PIRLS (Gültekin, 2007: 486). During the preparation of the 2004 reform, the Ministry utilized the educational reforms of the countries that achieved high scores in international tests and have a constructivist and student-centered education model, such as Australia, England, Ireland, USA, New Zealand, Spain, Finland, Israel, Canada and Singapore (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007: 84). The new education curriculum had to provide students the opportunity of discovering their own personal skills, developing analytic and critical thinking and improving their problem solving skills (Kocabaş, 2008: 15; TUSIAD, 2006: 83). These changes correspond with the global tendency towards personal and emotional development, creative development and lifelong learning in primary school education (Gültekin, 2007: 485).

The necessity of reforming the Turkish educational system has been stressed by different actors. The following sections present views of the EU and non-state actors on the Turkish educational system in general.

² The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an internationally standardised assessment that was jointly developed by participating economies and administered to 15-year-olds in schools. Three assessments have so far been carried out (in 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009). Data for the assessment which took place in 2009 will be released on 7 December 2010. Tests are typically administered to between 4,500 and 10,000 students in each country (visit: http://www.pisa.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_32252351_32235907_1_1_1_1_1,00.html).

³ The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international comparative study of the reading literacy of young students. PIRLS studies the reading achievement and reading behaviors and attitudes of fourth-grade students in the United States and students in the equivalent of fourth grade in other participating countries (visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/Surveys/PIRLS/>).

⁴ The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) provides reliable and timely data on the mathematics and science achievement of U.S. 4th- and 8th-grade students compared to that of students in other countries (visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/timss/>).

III.2.2. *Accession to the EU and Education*

The accession process to the EU requires the implementation of several reforms in different spheres of life, including education. Turkey achieved candidate status in 1999, and “accession negotiations were opened in 2005 with Chapter 26, education and culture. Within this framework, curricular reforms were viewed as important steps to harmonize Turkish education with that of EU countries” (Altinyelken, 2010a: 4). In its annual progress reports, the EU underlined the deficits of the Turkish educational system and listed several recommendations.

The European Union 2001 Progress Report of Turkey states that the educational system, especially vocational education, has to become compatible with the demands of the labor market and a reorganization process has to be executed through the collaboration among the state, industrial and social actors (EU Progress Report of Turkey, 2001). Moreover, in order to improve the efficiency of the educational system, curriculum and teaching techniques need to be revised (EU Progress Report of Turkey, 2002). Additionally, a connection between education and the job market has to be solidified (EU Progress Report of Turkey, 2004).

Parallel to these, the Commission Report of the EU (2001) entitled the Future Targets of Education Systems, states that science and communication technologies have to be integrated into educational systems. Skills which are necessary for individuals to have a place in the contemporary system, such as adaptability, tolerance to others and authority, problem solving and risk-taking, need to be acquired via education. Educational systems have to teach students to be entrepreneurs. However, the Commission Report criticizes current educational systems mainly in terms of not preparing students in accordance with the entrepreneurship principle. It mentioned that schools and educational institutions have to include entrepreneurship in their

curriculum. Consequently, young people have a chance to improve these skills during their education at school. It is significant to teach students to be entrepreneurs from early ages on because studies indicate that entrepreneurship skills develop in early ages like 12 and 13 (EU Commission Report, 2001). Both in Turkey's progress reports and Commission's general report on educational systems, the EU highlights the importance of the adaption of educational systems to the knowledge and competition based economy.

In 2004, Turkey participated in the Socrates education program of the EU which encompasses all spheres of education in activities such as the Comenius Program and the Erasmus Program. The Comenius Program includes pre-school, basic and high school education. Amendment and the development of curriculum and teaching techniques, implementation and generalization of these changes are among the project spheres of the program (MEB, 2010a). In addition to the Comenius Program, the Support to Basic Education Program was executed by Turkey and the EU between 2002-2007, which aimed at decreasing the inequality between rural and urban areas, and between male and female students in terms of participation in basic education. The 2004 Primary School Education Reform was funded by and prepared within the context of this program (MEB, 2010b).

III.2.3. *Non-state Actors in Education*

Similar to the European Union, the business world in Turkey has been emphasizing the necessity of reforms to the educational system since the early 1990s. TUSIAD (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association), which was founded by the biggest capitalists in Turkey in 1971, explains the importance of education for the economic development. The TUSIAD report, published in 1990, entitled Education in Turkey: Problems and Structural Adjustment Recommendations for Change, states that as a consequence of the shift from

industrial society to information society and improvements in science and technology, the structure of societies change. As a response to this change, educational systems need to be restructured. According to TUSIAD, the main responsibility of education is to meet economic demands. Therefore, in a highly competitive world education has to produce competitive individuals. TUSIAD also explains that a reform in education should not be done solely by the state itself. Collaboration between the state, the business world and education is crucial.

Albeit the constructivist and student-centered education model began to be implemented in 2004, TUSIAD noted the significance of this model in its 1990 report. The report says that the 1968 curricula are not sufficient to respond the demands of the contemporary world. The new education system has to be far away from rote-learning and teach students how to learn. Critical thinking, problem solving, researching and team-working skills have to be taught as well. In the Expectations from the 2000s section of the reform, TUSIAD lists its expectations from the educational system of the 21st century, which corresponds to the changes made with the 2004 Reform. This section of the reform states that students are the human capital of Turkey which can be used as a significant tool to have a better place in a competitive global world. Moreover, according to the report, the new educational programs have to be developed accordingly with necessities of the business world. These necessities include learning to learn, being knowledgeable about economics, carrying on business and making profit, being compatible with team work and being entrepreneurial.

In the 2006 report called Education and Sustainable Development: Turkish Experience, Risks and Opportunities, TUSIAD also highlights the significance of PISA in terms of helping countries to figure out their possible future positions in the competitive world. The low success rate of Turkish students illustrates that the educational system had fundamental

problems. TUSIAD states that the investment in education means investment in human capital which, at the end, means the improvement in the well-being of a country. Therefore, the educational system, which is formulated accordingly with the market which is based on competition, is crucial to achieve sustainable growth and the development of Turkey.

The TUSIAD reports indicate that its members have been supporters of the educational reform since the early 1990s. Parallel to ideas of the EU, they have expressed the necessity of implementing a constructivist and student-centered education and it is the JDP government which responded to this necessity through the 2004 reform. Although neither the EU nor the TUSIAD had a leading role in the 2004 reform process, their reports, discussed above, show that they have pointed at the significance of adapting education to the market economy.

Unlike the previous curriculum and curriculum preparation processes, the 2004 Reform was prepared with the collaboration of the business world, NGOs, unions, universities, schools, parents and students. For example, during the designing process of the reform, the curriculum committees got advice from 2259 teachers, 697 examiners, academics from 8 different universities (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007: 86), 38 NGOs and associations such as the Open Society Institute and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Canerik, 2005: 367), 26304 students and 9192 guardians (Yaşar, 2005: 331). This collaboration is not surprising, in fact, the JDP welcomes and highlights the importance of the collaboration with the business sector and NGOs both in its party program and government programs. For instance, the 58th government program states that “the JDP government will increase the participation of civil society organizations in public administration. The business world, syndicates, trade associations, and voluntary organizations will have a chance to discuss their problems with state officials, and solutions to the problems will be found together” (The 58th Government Program, 2002).

Previous sections have discussed the reasons that lead the JDP government to make the educational reform and the reform process itself. In the next section, criticisms of the reform phase will be discussed.

IV.2.4. Reactions towards the 2004 Reform

The 2004 Primary School Education Reform received both positive and negative reactions. Like the Ministry of National Education, supporters of the reform emphasize the necessity of catching up to other educational changes seen in other countries and the inadequacy of the Turkish education system in terms of supporting economic development (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007; Kocabaş, 2008). Unlike the previous primary school curriculum, the new curriculum is more sensitive to the developments in the economy. There is much emphasis on entrepreneurship, production, life skills and many economic terms, which are necessary to have a better place in a globalized world (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007: 84).

The critics of the reform can be divided into two camps. On the one hand, there are critics of the preparation and implementation process of the reform; on the other hand, there are critics of the curriculum content. Compared to other countries' reform processes in terms of the time period of the preparation, critics of the preparation claim that the 2004 reform was prepared in a short period of time, i.e. one year. Moreover, its pilot practices were completed in one year and began to be implemented throughout the country after that, which means that there was not a gradual change, but a sharp transition to new curriculum (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007: 86; Gültekin, 2007: 490; Canerik, 2005: 362; Yaşar, 2005: 330). Yaşar (2005: 330) states that there have been several amendments and new practices in the Turkish educational system previous to this one like course pass and credit system, however they could not be successful

due to lack of gradual change, therefore the sharp transition may prevent the reform to be successful implemented.

In addition, due to the contemporary conditions of many schools, i.e. crowded classes, lack of technological materials and so on, the reform may not be applied as it is expected (Gültekin, 2007: 493). Parallel to this, there can be significant differences in terms of schools' capacity to implement reforms because of differences among schools in terms of the quality of infrastructure or the capability of teachers (Altınyelken, 2010a: 1). Furthermore, Yaşar (2005: 341) asserts that even though the student-centered model was adopted in the social studies curriculum, the curriculum does not indicate a student-centered stance in a real sense due to the variability in teacher competencies and supervisory powers.

Educational systems of the neo-liberal era in general and the 2004 Reform specifically are criticized due to the curricular emphasis on economic activities and individualism. Hursh (2000) states that in order to understand the logic behind the amendments made in education, the question that should be asked is what kind of knowledge and idea is valued by the state. According to him, since the 1980s, neo-liberal ideas have been valued by many states. In the last thirty years, education has turned into a sphere that gives importance to the knowledge serving economic productivity. In this respect, educational policies are repealed or reorganized in order to make them economically more efficient, as was done with the 2004 Primary School Education Reform. However, Yıldız (2008: 25) argues that changes in the educational systems neglect child rights due to their heavy focus on neo-liberal values. Rather than providing students the opportunity to develop themselves in the way that they really want, they are educated as economic inputs of neo-liberal economy and future labor power.

In his critique on the language used in the curriculum, Adıgüzel (2010) states that as a consequence of the integration of a market specific language, like performance homework, project homework, team work, and performance evaluations (at the end of each unit); the curriculum and textbooks have become the materials based on economic concepts. This integration makes it possible to educate students through market terms. In this respect, amendments also increase the possibility of intellectual transformation of students towards a market-oriented path because of being exposed to market terms (Adıgüzel, 2010; İnal, 2009: 692).

Hursh (2000) criticizes the idea that in neo-liberal societies “schools should aid the economy to function as efficiently as possible by sorting and training students for their ‘probable destinies’ in the workforce”. Giroux (2008) claims, “under the existing regime of neo-liberalism, commercialized spheres appear to be the only places left where one can dream about winning a chance at living a decent life or mediating the difficult decisions that often make the difference between living and dying” (p. 163-164). Furthermore, the educational system aims to impose the idea that competition is a natural characteristic of human beings. Students are taught that people are born with different skills, thus it is rational that the ones who are more skilled get better places in a society. In order to be more successful, a person should work hard and seek new opportunities that suits his/her skills (Ünal, 2008: 9). In the new curriculum, the Ministry of National Education emphasizes producing rational individuals who are responsive to the economy (Sayılan, 2006; İnal, 2005). İnal (2008) argues that the constructivist education model is both an individualist and a market-friendly model. Amendments made in the curriculum, such as emphasis on entrepreneurship, competition and career, indicate that producing students who comply with new skills has become a new

purpose of the national education system as an addition to the purposes of the old curriculum; i.e. producing nationalist and conservative individuals (Sayılan, 2006: 3).

Neo-liberal ideology supports individualism and each individual is portrayed as a potential competitor of others (Yıldız, 2008: 26). However, in order to prevent individualism being a threat to the continuity of the society, conservative values like solidarity or charity are also favored (ibid.: 26). As an example, even though the Ministry of National Education's statement about the reasons for the new curriculum, i.e. students will be responsive to the needs of social life, does not sound neo-liberal, social sciences textbooks present social cooperation and being responsive to the needs of social life as the responsibility of foundations and associations. As an example, the fifth grade social studies textbooks have a chapter called People Working for the Society, (*Toplum İçin Çalışanlar*). The sixth part of this chapter, called They are All Philanthropist (*Onlar Birer Hayırsever*), underlines the contributions of business associations and foundations, such as the Sabancı Foundation and the Koç Foundation, to service sectors like health and education.

This study argues that emphasis on social cooperation from this perspective represents the impact of neo-liberal ideology in education. An active participation of business associations and foundations in service sectors is legitimized under the name of charity. This verifies the dilution of welfare state regulations. Public services are presented in textbooks as the responsibility of business associations and foundations. To put it differently, the focus on these actors' participation in public services indicates that public services are shown as a sphere in which interest groups can take a place. In this respect, the new textbooks support privatization in education and health through highlighting the importance of business foundations' contributions.

To conclude, after its first practice during the Village Institutes, i.e. between 1937 and 1954, the constructivist education model began to be practiced in Turkey in 2004. Regarding deficiencies in the Turkish education system and developments in the world, the Ministry of National Education rearranged the primary school education in 2004. The studies on rearrangements began in 2003 and were finalized with the 2004 Primary School Education Reform. Similar to educational reforms of many other countries, the 2004 reforms reorganized primary school education according to the constructivist and student-centered education models. In addition, in order to make the content of education compatible to requirements of the contemporary world, the reform put the emphasis on competencies, which affiliates the subjects taught at schools to the demands of business world.

Although the constructivist model has been implemented since 2004, a necessity for reorganizing the educational system according to this model has been stressed both by the EU and TUSIAD since the 1990s. The reports of the EU and TUSIAD highlighted that Turkey's education system have to be in line with the requirements of the business world, and the constructivist education model is the most appropriate model to achieve this.

The crucial point, which should not be disregarded, are the amendments made in the content of the primary school education by the 2004 reform. Reorganization of education accordingly with the market demands suggests an integration of neo-liberal discourse both in the curriculum and textbooks. The purpose of the study is to analyze the integration of the neo-liberal discourse in primary school education through the analysis of both the social studies education curriculum and textbooks.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research methodology and design of the study. In order to analyze the impact of neo-liberal policies on education, three different methods of inquiry are utilized in this study: Temporal time difference analysis, content analysis and in-depth interviews. The details of the analyses are presented below.

IV.1. Temporal Time Difference Analysis

This study utilizes the temporal time difference analysis in the analysis of the social studies curricula. The purpose in conducting this analysis is to make a comparative and descriptive study of how the curricula have changed in terms of the structure and subjects they cover over time. In this respect, formal features of the social studies curricula is described, the percentage of space devoted to several subjects, such as individualism and technology, are identified. Based on the findings, the curricula are compared.

The temporal time difference analysis covers the 1968 social studies curriculum and the 2004 social studies curriculum. Even though this study focuses on the education system in the neo-liberal era, the 1968 curriculum was in practice until 2004. To put it differently, the curriculum did not change from 1968 to 2004. As such, the 1968 curriculum book is one document in the analysis. The other document is the 2004 curriculum book which is the newest social studies curriculum. The curricula were chosen to be analyzed because they are major documents which present the content of courses. Moreover, their analysis illustrates differences in the Ministry of National Education's approach towards social studies courses.

In this respect, a comparison of the findings of the curricula's analysis helps to illuminate the rationale behind the 2004 reform.

IV.2. Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from texts (Weber, 1990: 9). Researchers utilize the content analysis to explore both which words appear in the text and how they are used (ibid.: 44). In other words, content analysis helps to find out the relation between the key words and their usage. However, in order to illustrate the relationship between the key words and their usage, conducting both the quantitative and qualitative content analyses is necessary. Therefore, this study utilizes both the quantitative and qualitative content analyses in the analysis of textbooks. This section firstly presents the former, secondly presents the latter.

Quantitative content analysis is limited by its focus on the quantitative nature of its examination. In addition, it is not appropriate to illustrate the causal relationship between variables (Maslak, 2008: 90). The data of the quantitative analysis cannot reflect the inherent meaning of the words. The meaning is produced through the relationship among the words in a text. While the quantitative content analysis enumerates of the words, the qualitative content analysis demonstrates the relationship that exists between the words. That is, what the words really signal in the books. In brief, implementation of the quantitative and qualitative analyses together increases the construct validity through complementing each other.

In order to conduct both the quantitative and qualitative content analyses, a coding sheet was prepared. The preparation process of the sheet began with a critical literature review on theoretical debates. Its preparation referring to the related literature increases the internal

validity of the study because of making it possible to measure what the study really wants to measure. In addition to the literature, contents of several social studies textbooks published between 1980 and 2009 were scanned before the preparation of the sheet in order to have a general idea about the topics and issues covered in those books.

Based on the literature on neo-liberalism and neo-liberalism and education, the key words forming the coding sheet were determined. The literature argues that since the beginning of the 1980s, consumption has become more important (Hartley, 2009: 425). In addition to consumption, there has been a strong emphasis on production as well (Gökçe, 2000: 107). Therefore, government policies must be amended in a way that is consistent with the contemporary culture of consumption and production (Hartley, 2009: 425). In a consumption-oriented world, advertisement has crucial role in order to make people believe and behave as if they are for the market (Gitlin, 1979: 255 in Apple, 2006: 76). Based on these arguments, the following key words are added to the coding sheet: Consumer, consumption, shopping, purchasing, producing, production, advertisement and marketing. Another focus in neo-liberalism is on competition and entrepreneurship (Read, 2009: 27, Harris, 2007: 134). Competitive nature of neo-liberalism forces human beings to invest in their skills and abilities in order to be preferred in the market place (Read, 2009: 28). Individuals are encouraged to see themselves as entrepreneurial and competitive individuals (Harris, 2007: 134). The key words signaling entrepreneurial and competitive culture of neo-liberalism are included in the sheet. These words are entrepreneurship, competition and investment. Moreover, individuals in the neo-liberal era are very much career-oriented (Apple, 2006: 199), and notions of vision, mission and charisma are used frequently (Hartley, 2009: 425). Therefore, career, individual success, leadership, vision and mission are among the key words in the coding sheet. In order to find out whether the privatization-oriented nature of neo-liberalism is present in the

textbooks privatization is put into the sheet. In addition to these words, some basic economic terms, i.e. import, export, commerce, internal commerce and external commerce, are also presented in the coding sheet with two purposes. Firstly, they will show whether the usage of economic concepts have become more common. Secondly, their analysis will enrich the qualitative analysis because this study will assess whether the context or usage of these words changed in the neo-liberal era.

The coding sheet is composed of four main categories: Enterprise, consumption, individual and economic activities. Each of these categories contains the key words listed above which makes 22 in total. Categorization is made to facilitate both the coding and analysis processes of the textbooks. The key words were enumerated in the quantitative content analysis section and the contexts in which these words are used were analyzed in the qualitative analysis section.

The categories and key words forming the coding sheet are listed in the Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1. Coding Sheet

Coding Sheet	
Category I	Enterprise
	Entrepreneurship
	Marketing
	Investment
	Advertisement
	Competition
Category II	Consumption
	Consumer
	Consumption
	Shopping
	Purchasing
Category III	Individual
	Individual success
	Career
	Vision

	Mission
	Leadership
Category IV	Economic Activities
	Import
	Export
	Commerce
	Internal commerce
	External commerce
	Privatization
	Producing
	Production

IV.2.1. *Quantitative Content Analysis*

The key words listed above are enumerated in the quantitative content analysis section of this study. These words were counted for frequency, not presence. Counting for presence is not sufficient to examine to what extent neo-liberal ideology is represented in textbooks due to its inability in illustrating how many times the key words are used. Hence, counting for frequency serves better for the purpose of this study. Additionally, coding for frequency increases the validity of the study because the number of times that the key words appear in textbooks provides broader perspective about the text than coding for presence. The number of times that each word appears is assumed to be indicators of its importance. After the enumeration, a table was created which illustrates the total number of times that each word is used in each textbook. After the enumeration, a table was created which illustrates the total number of times that each word is used in each textbook. In order to find out whether the difference between the pre- and post-2005 textbooks in terms of containing the key words is significant or not, an independent sample t-test was conducted.

IV.2.2. *Qualitative Content Analysis*

The analysis of the representation of neo-liberal terms solely through the quantitative analysis is not sufficient enough to explain within which context they are used. The quantitative

analysis indicates the frequency of the words, however for the purposes of this study it is also significant to explore in which context the words are used. Therefore, in order to make clear the meaning and usage of the key words, the analysis is enriched by the qualitative content analysis.

In qualitative content analysis, the contextual use of the key words is analyzed. The qualitative content analysis includes both manifest and latent content analyses. While the former is about what the text explicitly says, the latter is about what the text implicitly talks about (Krippendorff, 2004; Graneheim & Lundman, 2003). The utilization of manifest and latent content together increase the validity of the study because the latter strengthens the analysis due to its reference to implicitly expressed contents.

IV.2.3. Population of the Content Analysis

The fourth and fifth grade primary school social studies textbooks that have been published by the Ministry of National Education since 1980 constitute the population of this study.

There are three main criteria in the selection process of the textbooks; first, primary school textbooks that have been published since the beginning of neo-liberalism in Turkey; second, published by the Ministry; third, used in the fourth and fifth grades.

There are several reasons in analyzing the textbooks. First and foremost, content of the educational materials reflect the values and ideals of the state (Özdoğan et. al., 2004: 1), and textbooks are one of the most crucial educational materials in teaching and learning processes at all grade levels (Harmon et. al., 2000: 253). They possess a significant role in the ideological and economic reproduction processes (İnal, 2005: 701). In addition, in the developing countries like Turkey textbooks are crucial educational materials because of

inadequacy in providing other supportive materials, hence teachers mostly utilize textbooks in teaching (Önal & Kaya, 2006).

The reason for examining primary school social studies textbooks is that the 2004 Primary School Education Reform made amendments in the contents of the primary school Turkish (1-5), Life Knowledge (1-3), Science and Technology (4-5) and Social Studies (4-5) textbooks (MEB, 2005a: 47). Among these courses, the social studies course and its textbooks provide information about daily life which makes it more appropriate to represent the neo-liberal ideology. In brief, the goal of this study is to examine to what extent students are educated in accordance with the neo-liberal ideology even starting from the first echelon of primary school.

Although the content analysis of this study consists of the textbooks published by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry is not the monopoly in the publication of textbooks. There are several private textbooks publishers. However, these publishers have to get authorization from the Ministry before the publication, and content of their textbooks has to be in line with the Ministry published textbooks. That is to say, the Ministry is the final decision-maker. The Ministry publications and private publishing can be used either in public or private schools. However, this study delimits itself to the Ministry publications in order to have a consistency among the textbooks analyzed. The private publishing companies may change over time, i.e. new publishers can join or previous ones can leave the sector. Therefore there have not been any textbooks published by the same private companies since 1980. Consequently, analyses in this study cover the Ministry published textbooks.

Textbooks of the new programs began to be published after the one year pilot practice, and the Ministry publishes one textbook each year, even if there is no change in the content. The structure of social studies textbooks changed with the implementation of the 2004 Primary School Education Reform. In the pre-2004 era, there were only main textbooks. However, since the reform, there have been both a main textbook and a workbook.

Since 1980, the Ministry of Education has published 60 social studies textbooks: 30 books for the fourth grade, 30 books for the fifth grade. Since the reform, it has published 5 workbooks. Even though the Ministry publishes textbooks each year, the content of the textbooks does not change each year. The years that correspond with the time that the content of the textbooks were changed are 1980, 1990, 1998 and 2005. In other words, from 1980 to 1989, 1990 to 1997, 1998 to 2004, and 2005 to 2009 the same textbooks were published repeatedly, thus the topics and structure of the textbooks are identical. Therefore, analysis of one textbook published within these time periods provides information for all other books of the period. The content analysis of the fourth grade textbooks covers the years 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2006, and the fifth grade covers the years 1980, 1990, 1999 and 2006. The selection of the textbooks is based on changes made in the textbooks. As noted above, both for the fourth and fifth grades, 1990, 1998 and 2005 constitute the years that match up with the first edition of the textbooks. However, due to the lack of 1998 and 2005 textbooks in the Ministry of National Education’s archive library, the analyses were made with 1999, 2000 and 2006 textbooks. All in all, 10 textbooks were analyzed in this study. Table 5.2 lists the textbooks analyzed in this study.

Table 5.2. Population of the content analysis

Publication Year of the Fourth Grade Textbooks	Publication Year of the Fourth Grade Textbooks
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1980	1980
1990	1990
2000	1999
2006	2006
2006 (Workbook)	2006 (Workbook)

IV.2.4. Data Collection Process

The collection and preliminary content analysis of the textbooks began in June, 2009 with the purpose to identify the number of the textbooks archived and to have a general idea about the content of textbooks. The textbooks are archived in the Archive Library of the Ministry of Education's Department of Publications Office in Ankara; therefore, both the collection and preliminary analysis of the textbooks were made in Ankara. Then, the content analysis of the textbooks was conducted in March, 2010.

Execution of the analysis only by the researcher can be considered as a limitation because there is no double check of the analysis, i.e. lack of inter-rater reliability. Moreover, Gottschalk (1995) states that the issue of reliability of content analysis that "may be further complicated by the inescapably human nature of researchers" therefore "coding errors can only be minimized, and not eliminated". In order to minimize the possible errors, overcome the limitation of being the sole researcher and improve the reliability of the study, the textbooks were re-coded in May, 2010. To put it differently, re-coding should increase the validity and reliability of the study.

IV.3. In-depth Interviews

Semi-structured in-depth interviews are significant data collection tools that enable the researchers to have a deeper comprehension of the topic studied through a communication with the actors involved. This method enables researchers to conduct "more interactive kind

of interview, the researcher has much better chance of learning from the respondents what the different significances of circumstances are for them” (Sayer, 1992: 246). Moreover, ‘the respondents are not forced into an artificial one-way mode of communication in which they can only answer in terms of the conceptual grid given to them by the researcher’ (ibid.: 246). In line with Sayer’s statement, the semi structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the officials who took part in the reform process. The purpose in conducting in-depth interviews was to give voice to the architects of the reform, which would increase the possibility of making a more objective interpretation during the qualitative content analysis of the textbooks.

Before the interviews, based on the literature review and the preliminary content analysis of both textbooks and the 2004 program, several topics for in-depth interview questions were determined. Formulation of the semi-structured in-depth interview questions made interviewing systematic and comprehensive. Moreover, preparation of the main questions before the interviews was significant in order to determine the path followed during the interviews. Conducting a semi-structured interview, rather than structured interview, was fruitful in the sense that it gave the chance to ask follow-up questions formulated in accordance with the answers of the interviewee. In-depth interview questions mainly addressed a range of issues, including the rationale behind the curriculum change, preparation process of the reform, challenges and criticisms of different actors (See Appendix).

Five semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in this study. One of these interviews was conducted with the head of the General Directorate of Primary Education who was in office during the reform process. The rest was conducted with members of the Social Studies Course (4-5 Grades) Curriculum Committee. The committee is composed of nineteen

members: director of the committee (1), history experts (3), geography expert (1), program development specialist (1), assessment specialist (1), and teachers (12). The interviews were conducted with the four members of the committee. In the selection of the key informants, purposive sampling was utilized. The General Directorate of Primary Education and some of the committee members are academicians and their contact information is available on the Internet. Consequently, they were informed about this study via e-mail and asked whether they would like to contribute through in-depth interviews. Four of them accepted the invitation to be interviewed while two of them rejected because of being abroad. On the other hand, except for the five academicians, the rest of the social studies curriculum committee members are teachers and their contact information is not available on the Internet. However, the contact information of three teachers were given by the academicians who accepted to interview. Similar to academicians, teachers were informed about this study, one of them was interviewed. When information from the interviewees became redundant, interviews were terminated.

The in-depth interviews took place in the second week of March, 2010 and the second week of May, 2010. Each interview was about one to two hours long. All of the interviews were taped, and after the interviews all the records were transcribed. These transcriptions were used for quoting in the analysis when it was necessary. To provide a guide for the quotations from the key informants, the categories used to refer to these informants are as follows: *Key informant A*, *Key informant B*, *Key informant C*, *Key informant D* and *Key informant E*.

The interviews were analyzed by using ATLAS.ti, a computer software program used in qualitative data analysis. For this purpose, the interview data was coded through the codes related to the reasons for the reform, actors of the reforms, the reform process, impact of

international actors such as the European Union, comments and criticisms made on reform, the significance of textbooks and the contemporary problems of primary education. Later, commonalities and divergences among the responses of the informants were sorted out. However, during this analysis process the purpose was not to generalize the responses. It has been considered that the analysis is based on the individual viewpoints of the informants. Therefore, the purpose was to depict the opinions of some committee members as regards the reform.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRICULA AND TEXTBOOKS

In this chapter I explore to what extent neo-liberal ideology is present in the public primary school education in Turkey by analyzing both the social studies curricula and textbooks for the fourth and fifth grades. The first section examines both the 1968 and 2005 social studies curricula in descriptive and comparative ways. The second section reports the results of the quantitative content analysis of the pre- and post-2005 textbooks. The third section presents to the qualitative content analysis of the textbooks and discusses the findings of the analysis.

Additionally, some quotes from the in-depth interviews are also given throughout the chapter when it is necessary.

V.1. Temporal Time Difference Analysis of the Social Studies Curricula

This section of the chapter gives a descriptive analysis of the fourth and fifth grades' social studies curricula published in 1968 and 2005. The main purpose of the section is to display the structure of the new curriculum. In order to illustrate the amendments in the new curriculum, the section is enriched with the analysis of the 1968 curriculum.

The 2005 curriculum is divided into four main parts: Introduction, social studies sample activities for the fourth grade, social studies sample activities for the fifth grade, and sample forms for assessment. It is structured on learning spheres, competencies and skills which will be discussed later. These categories are integrated into each part of the curriculum and illustrate the topics deemed by the Ministry of National Education. Unlike the 2005 curriculum, learning spheres, competencies and skills are not present in the 1968 curriculum. Instead, the previous curriculum was based on the purposes of the social studies course. The purposes are listed under four main groups, namely duties and responsibilities of citizenship, relationship among human beings living in a society, informing students about their environment, country and the world, and teaching students to acquire a decent life.

Compared to the 2005 curriculum, the 1968 curriculum put more emphasis on being a member of the society. Several parts of the 1968 curriculum stressed that the primary school education has to teach students the idea that interests of the society come before their own interests. Additionally, the curriculum states that students learn in the primary school that “in order to acquire an individual well-being, first of all the society has to be developed” (The

1968 Curriculum, 1968: 8). The 2005 curriculum, on the contrary, does not underline the importance of society's interest. The curriculum further claims that "education teaches students to live in collaboration" (The 2005 Curriculum, 2005: 7). The new curriculum signals the importance of knowledge production and knowledge usage stating that knowledge has become the main factor determining everything in the world. In this respect, the people who produce and use knowledge are superior to everyone else. The new curriculum also focuses on the developments in science and technology. The emphasis on science and technology in the 2005 curriculum indicates the impact of a shift from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy. Especially in the last decade, knowledge began to be considered as a capital which signals the necessity of making rearrangements in the educational system accordingly with the knowledge economy (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 330). Furthermore, as a result of the shift to knowledge economy the role of education in the creation of human capital becomes more significant (ibid.: 332). The *Key informant B* stated in the interview that "*like other countries, Turkey has been in transition from an industrial to knowledge society, and this shift had to be represented in the educational system*". The 2005 curriculum shows that the reorganized primary school social studies course is centered on the idea of knowledge production and knowledge usage.

Another difference between the 1968 and 2005 curriculum is the assessment methods. The 2005 curriculum combines classical and alternative methods. In the 1968 curriculum, the main assessment methods were tests and essay questions. However, assessment methods and tools in the 2005 program are: Observation, performance homework, interviews, self-evaluation forms, student folders (portfolio), projects, posters, tests, matching, filling the blanks and essay questions. Through increasing the number of assessment methods and tools, the social studies curriculum committee aims to make the assessment process sensitive to

differences among students. However, the addition of the alternative assessments can be considered as one of the implications of neo-liberal policies on education. Performance has become the main reference point of thinking in the neo-liberal society (Harris, 2007: 135). In this sense, “a further consequence of marketization of education has been the increased emphasis on performance and accountability assessment, with the accompanying use of performance indicators and personal appraisal systems” (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 327).

Over all, those are the main differences between the 1968 and 2005 curricula. The following sections provide detailed descriptive information about learning spheres, competencies and skills used in the new curriculum.

V.1.1. *Learning Spheres*

The 2005 curriculum defines learning sphere (*öğrenme alanı*) as a structure which defines a relationship among skills, concepts and values, and thus organizes the education process (The 2005 Curriculum, 2005: 96). In the curriculum, there are eight learning spheres in each grade. The tables below show learning spheres and the units related to the learning spheres. Learning spheres indicate that there is a specific emphasis in each unit. For instance, the fourth units of the fourth and fifth grade textbooks are devoted to topics related to production, delivery and consumption. The tables also indicate the class hours devoted to each learning sphere. Table 6.1 illustrates the percentage of each learning sphere and unit within the curriculum. Table 6.2 illustrates the total time that would be devoted to each learning sphere and unit. The tables display that there are no great differences between the spheres or units in terms of their percentage within the curriculum or class hour.

Table 6.1. Learning Spheres, Units and their Class hour for the 4th Grade Social Studies Course

Learning Sphere	Units	Class hour
Individual and Identity	Everyone has an identity	12
Culture and Heritage	I am learning my past	15
Human beings: Places and Environment	Where we live	15
Production, Delivery and Consumption	From production to consumption	15
Science, Technology and Society	Fortunately, there	12
Groups, Foundations and Social Organizations	People working for the society	12
Power, Management and Society	Human beings and management	15
Global Linkages	My friends in abroad	12
	Total	108

Table 6.2. Learning Spheres, Units and their Class hour for the 5th Grade Social Studies Course

Learning Sphere	Units	Class hour
Individual and Identity	I am learning my rights	12
Culture and Heritage	Step by step Turkey	15
Human beings: Places and Environment	Learning our environment	15
Production, Delivery and Consumption	Our production	15
Science, Technology and Society	Realized dreams	12
Groups, Foundations and Social Organizations	People working for the society	12
Power, Management and Society	One country one flag	15
Global Linkages	All our world	12
	Total	108

V.1.2. Skills and Competencies

There are fourteen skills in the curriculum that the fourth and fifth grade students are expected to acquire:

1. Critical thinking
2. Creative thinking

3. Communication and empathy
4. Research
5. Problem solving
6. Decision making
7. Science technologies usage
8. Entrepreneurship
9. Correct and efficient usage of Turkish
10. Observation
11. Space perception
12. Time and chronology perception
13. Change and sustainability perception
14. Social participation

In addition to the skills, there are seven intermediate/minor competencies in the curriculum as components of the skills: Disaster education competencies, entrepreneurial competencies, human rights and citizenship competencies, development of career awareness competencies, private education competencies, psychological counseling and guidance competencies, and health culture competencies.

As explained previously, there is no section in the 1968 curriculum on competencies or skills, which means that the skills and competencies listed above were added to the social studies curriculum with the 2004 reform. Instead of those skills and competencies, there is an

emphasis on the 1968 curriculum on being a good citizen. It describes a good citizen as a person who lives for his/her country. Among the skills and competencies listed in the 2005 curriculum entrepreneurship is especially important in terms of signaling the impact of the neo-liberal discourse on education. Many scholars note the entrepreneurial nature of the neoliberal world (Apple, 2001; Harris, 2007; Hursh, 2005; Read, 2009). They argue that the creation of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial culture is one of the most significant and perceived signals of neo-liberal policies. Furthermore, educational systems serve neo-liberalism through leading students to skills and competencies necessary to be part of the marketplace. The 2005 curriculum aims to familiarize students with the entrepreneurial culture. To illustrate, the entrepreneurship skill set consists of seven targets: Recognizing occupations and workplaces around them, recognizing well-known and successful entrepreneurs around them, exploring the roles of individuals in the economy as a worker and consumer, realizing the importance of education for their future, acquiring essential economic terms, understanding the difficulties that entrepreneurs face, presenting innovative ideas and designing new products (The 2005 Curriculum, 2005: 48).

There are several examples in the classroom exercises section of the curriculum which illustrates how learning spheres, competencies and skills are practiced. Some of the exercises, for instance, imply entrepreneurship. The fourth unit of the fifth grade social studies course is named Our Production (*Ürettiklerimiz*) and consists of six exercises. One of the exercises is Map of life (*Hayat haritası*). This exercise begins by asking students whether there are entrepreneurs around them. Teachers are expected to introduce to the class one of the well-known entrepreneurs of Turkey and, give examples from the business life of this person. At the end of the exercise students are also asked to introduce one of the entrepreneurs around them or of Turkey (ibid.: 371). Another exercise is called I Make, I Sell (*Yapıyorum, satıyorum*). In this exercise students are asked to design a product and prepare a project

illustrating how they will market the product. The curriculum says that while preparing the project, students will go through all of the marketing steps: Packaging the product, selling and preparing advertising campaign. Then, these projects will be presented in the classroom. This sample exercise also suggests that “While presenting their projects, students will be told to market their product *through considering their classmates as their customers*” [emphasis added] (ibid. 372). Furthermore, the end of the exercise instructs that these products can be sold, and the income can be used for classroom or school necessities.

These exercises have several crucial implications. First of all, they show that supermarket, production, selling, marketing, entrepreneurship, advertising and shopping enter into schools. The second exercises indicated that the new curriculum leads students to be active actors of the market place. Students are taught how to design, produce, advertise and sell a product. It is important to note that the curriculum directs the classmates to be considered as costumers. The classmate relationship turns into a seller-customer relationship and encourages students to put the exercise into practice in real life through selling their products for money. There are several passages and exercises in the textbooks similar to these exercises. Their analysis and discussion will be given in the qualitative content analysis section of the chapter.

V.2. Content Analysis: Social Studies Textbooks

In this section, the findings of the content analyses of the fourth and fifth grade social studies textbooks, published before and after the 2004 reform, will be compared. Firstly, results of the quantitative content analysis will be given. Secondly, in order to illustrate in which context the key words are used, the results of the qualitative content analysis will be given.

V.2.1. Quantitative Content Analysis

The quantitative content analysis is conducted through several key words (i.e. entrepreneurship, marketing, investment, advertisement, competition, consumer, consumption, shopping, purchasing, individual success, career, vision, mission, leadership, import, export, commerce, internal commerce, external commerce, privatization, producing and production) which were grouped under four categories (i.e. enterprise, consumption, individual and economic activities). As explained in the methodology chapter, those key words are selected referring to the literature on neo-liberalism and, neo-liberalism and education. In this section, results of the quantitative content analysis will be represented based on these categories.

Under the first category, i.e. enterprise, I enumerated the key words: Entrepreneurship, enterprise, marketing, investment, advertisement and competition. Table 6.3 shows how many times these words are used in the textbooks.

Table 6.3. Number of Usage of the Keywords Listed in the Coding Sheet’s First Category

C-I: Enterprise				
Grade: 4 & 5	Year: 1980	1990	1999/2000	2006
	Page #: 493	Page #: 573	Page #: 318	Page #: 415
	Usage (#)	Usage (#)	Usage (#)	Usage (#)
Entrepreneurship	0	0	1	3
Marketing	0	0	1	3
Investment	0	0	0	4
Advertisement	0	0	0	13
Competition	0	2	1	0
Total	0	2	3	23

Table 6.3 illustrates that the key words of the first category used more in the post-2005 textbooks published. Investment and advertisement are not used in the pre-2005 textbooks. Among the key words, competition is the only key word that is not presented the post-2005

textbooks. However, it is emphasized several times in an implicit way in the post-2005 textbooks and its examples will be given in the qualitative content analysis section. Over all, keys words of the first category are used more in the post-2005 textbooks, i.e. 23 times, than in the pre-2005 textbooks, i.e. 5.

Under the second category, i.e. consumption, I enumerated the key words: Consumer, consumption, shopping and purchasing. Table 6.4 shows how many times these words are used in the textbooks.

Table 6.4. Number of Usage of the Keywords Listed in the Coding Sheet's Second Category

C-II: Consumption				
Grade: 4 & 5	Year: 1980	1990	1999/2000	2006
	Page #: 493	Page #: 573	Page #: 318	Page #: 415
	Usage (#)	Usage (#)	Usage (#)	Usage (#)
Consumer	0	0	1	30
Consumption	2	5	13	62
Shopping	19	12	7	35
Purchasing	8	3	0	29
Total	29	20	21	156

Table 6.3 shows that there is a significant increase in the usage of words related consumption. This increase is consistent with the argument that the neo-liberal ideology emphasizes on consumption. As Gökçe (2000: 107) asserts, education systems which were reorganized according to neo-liberalism try to make students familiar with consumption and production habits, and aim to be internalized.

In the third category, i.e. individual, I enumerated the key words: Individual success, career, vision, mission and leadership. Table 6.5 shows how many times these words are used in the textbooks.

Table 6.5. Number of Usage of the Keywords Listed in the Coding Sheet’s Third Category

C-III: Individual				
Grade: 4 & 5	Year: 1980	1990	1999/2000	2006
	Page #: 493	Page #: 573	Page #: 318	Page #: 415
Individual success	0	0	0	0
Career	0	0	0	2
Vision	0	0	0	0
Mission	0	0	0	0
Leadership	0	0	0	6
Total	0	0	0	8

Table 6.5 shows that among the categories, the third one is the one whose key words are least repeated. Individual success, vision and mission are the three key words that have never been used either in the pre- or post-2005 textbooks. Even so, the tables illustrate that the key words career and leadership is present only in the 2006 textbooks.

In the last category, i.e. economic activities, I enumerated the key words: Import, export, commerce, internal commerce, external commerce, privatization, producing and production.

Table 6.6 shows how many times these words are used in the textbooks.

Table 6.6. Number of Usage of the Keywords Listed in the Coding Sheet’s Fourth Category

C-IV: Economic Activities				
Grade: 4 & 5	Year: 1980	1990	1999/2000	2006
	Page #: 493	Page #: 573	Page #: 318	Page #: 415
	Usage (#)	Usage (#)	Usage (#)	Usage (#)
Import	6	1	0	13
Export	3	4	1	18
Commerce	37	96	31	17
Internal commerce	4	11	1	1
External commerce	7	13	4	1
Privatization	0	0	0	0
Producing	64	38	7	69
Production	5	32	35	120
Total	126	195	79	239

The key words of the last category, i.e. economic activities, are the most frequently repeated ones both in the pre- and post-2005 textbooks. However, parallel to the results of the previous categories, Table 6.6 displays that the key words of this category is used more in the post-2005 textbooks than the pre-2005 ones.

Table 6.7 below displays the sum total of the key words used both in the textbooks in each year.

Table 6.7. Sum Total of Usage the Keywords Listed in the Coding Sheet

	1980	1990	1999/2000	2006
C-I: Enterprise	0	2	3	23
C-II: Consumption	29	20	21	156
C-III: Individual	0	0	0	8
C-IV: Economic Activities	126	195	79	239
Total	155	217	103	426

Table 6.7 shows that presence of the key words in each category increased in the textbooks published according to the new curriculum. The key words are used more than twice as much in the post-2005 textbooks compared to pre-2005 textbooks. The 2000 textbook is almost half as long as the other textbooks. Nevertheless, in order to find out whether this difference is significant or not, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The keywords used in the 1980, 1990, and 1999/2000 textbooks were averaged to form an overall composite named as pre-2005 textbooks. The analyses revealed that there was a significant difference between pre-2005 ($M = 7.19$, $SD = 13.92$) and post-2005 textbooks ($M = 19.36$, $SD = 29.88$), ($t(42) = -1.73$, $p = .09$). The difference between the textbooks was marginally significant, given the low sample size. However, the finding indicated that the keywords were used more in the post-2005 than the pre-2005 textbooks.

To conclude, this result illustrates the fact that students educated with the new textbooks are exposed to the neo-liberal discourse more than the students educated in the pre-2004 reform era. Based on this finding, this study argues that the post-2005 textbooks familiarize students with the neo-liberal concepts, and thus direct them to think within the framework of neo-liberalism. The next section will provide examples from the textbooks showing in which context these words are used.

V.2.2. *Qualitative Content Analysis*

In this section, findings of the qualitative content analysis of the textbooks published in the pre- and post-2005 will be discussed. This section will show in which context the key words enumerated in the quantitative content analysis are used in the textbooks. Even if there are some key words that have never been used, and thus cannot be enumerated, there is language in the textbooks which imply these words. In this respect, the qualitative content analysis helps to depict the implicit usages. The qualitative content analysis will be supported with the findings from the in-depth interviews where relevant.

The post-2005 textbooks differ from the pre-2005 textbooks in terms of their portrayal of the individual. The pre-2005 textbooks define the individual as a member of family and society. There is a strong emphasis on the significance of living in and for the society and country. After 2005, there is less emphasis in the new textbooks on being a member of a family or society. The focus shifts from a society-based description to an individual-based description of the individual. To illustrate, the pre-2005 textbooks have sections named Importance of family (*Ailenin önemi*), Importance of living in a society (*Toplum içinde yaşamamanın önemi*), and Importance of collaboration and solidarity in community life (*Toplum hayatında işbirliği ve dayanışmanın önemi*). The 1980 textbook states, for instance, that “we work to be a

wealthy country". In brief, the pre-2005 textbooks point at living for the society. In other words, society has superiority over individuals.

In contrast, the post-2005 textbooks have less emphasis on working for the society; instead they claim that the society appreciates successful individuals. There is a section in the new textbook titled I am a citizen of the Turkish Republic (*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Vatandaşıyım*), which is only about the national identity card and what kinds of information is written on the card. There is no emphasis on being a member of the society.

The differences between the pre- and post-2005 textbooks in terms of representing individual illustrates that the latter has a more individualistic stance. The focus on the importance of society disappears in the post-2005 textbooks. Unlike the previous books, as Sayılan (2006: 49) also rightly argues, the idea of people for the society is not present in the new textbooks; instead emphasis on the self-interested individual has become prominent. This situation verifies the argument that people of the neo-liberal era are more prone to be competitive and self-interested individuals competing for their own material gain (Giroux, 2008: 113). In other words, the neo-liberal individual strategizes for her or himself among various social, political and economic options (Brown, 2005: 43 in Read, 2009: 35).

Although individuals are not represented as social beings in the new textbooks, there is a section about civil society organizations. The textbooks published both before and after the reform discuss the importance of civil society organizations. The civil society organizations listed in the pre-2005 textbooks are Turkish Red Crescent Society (*Kızılay*), Social Services and Child Protection Agency (*Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*), Yeşilay, Turkish Air Association (*Türk Hava Kurumu*) and National Education Foundation (*Milli Eğitim Vakfı*). In addition to these organizations, the post-2005 textbooks list other

organizations, such as the Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of National Habitat (*TEMA*). Despite this similarity between the old and new textbooks, the latter differs from the former in terms of its emphasis on the participation of business foundations in public services. In the former, civil society organizations do not have an active role in providing public services; instead, they support the state when it is required. However, the section in the fifth grade textbook entitled They are all philanthropist (*Onlar birer hayırsever*), exemplifies the participation of the business sector in public services stating that “well-known businessmen and companies of our country carry out social projects through their charitable foundations. They work for the public through being active in different social spheres, such as education, health, art and sport”. The Sabancı Foundation, İzzet Baysal Foundation, Kadir Has Foundation and Koç Foundation are some examples of the foundations introduced in this section.

Emphasis on the participation of the business world in public services corresponds with the idea of the new governance which supports a partnership among state, civil society and the market. As discussed in the first chapter, in the neo-liberal era “state, market and society are embedded in each other and constructed by their interactions with one another” (Riain, 2000: 187). The addition of the business community’s participation in the public sphere in the post-2005 textbooks has two crucial implications. Firstly, public services like education and health are presented as if they are under the responsibility of the business world. Secondly, this participation implies the privatization of public services. Although privatization in public services has been intensified since the 1990s, participation of the business world began to be introduced as a course topic with the 2004 reform. Moreover, while civil society organizations and charitable foundations are presented in the textbooks, there is not any example stressing the significance of unions under which labor can gather to protect their rights. Harvey (2005)

considers the lack of emphasis on unions by declaring that individuals in the neo-liberal era are “supposedly free to choose, they are not supposed to choose to construct strong collective institutions (such as trade unions) as opposed to weak voluntary organizations (like charitable organizations)” (p. 69). Referring to the introduction of civil society organizations and charitable foundations without saying a word about unions, this study argues that students are taught only one side of the social collaboration.

Another difference between the pre- and post-2005 textbooks is their approach towards the concept citizen. All of the textbooks published before the reform have a section presenting responsibilities of the state and citizens. Regulating social life, protecting the country’s security and increasing wealth of the society are among the responsibilities of the state. In return, complying with the laws and regulations, participating elections and paying taxes are among the citizens’ responsibilities. Unlike the pre-2005 textbooks, the post-2005 textbooks do not have any section mentioning responsibilities of the state to its citizens. On the contrary, there are passages indicating that the responsibilities of citizens have been broadened. The pre-2005 textbooks say that students are responsible to keep their school and neighborhood clean and tidy. In the post-2005 textbooks, students have more responsibilities than keeping their school clean and tidy. For instance, they are encouraged to contribute to their school’s budget. In the fourth grade textbook there is a section named Solidarity in social life (*Toplum hayatında dayanışma*), and one of the passages of the section is entitled Fair (*Kermes*). This passage narrates that Zeynep and Kemal, two students in the primary school, had some problems throughout the academic year due to several deficiencies of their school. In order not to have similar problems again, they decided to collect money necessary for their school’s needs through organizing a fair. The passage states that “in the fair students sold both the products that they made in the classroom activities during the year, and the items given by

shopkeepers of the neighborhood. At the end of the fair they earned great amount of money, which was used for their school's renovation”.

This example illustrates that students should feel responsible for the renovation of their school. The passage normalizes the situation that the budget necessary for the reconstruction of a school can be provided by students. The citizen profile in this example has a responsible and self-regulated character. Students would act with personal responsibility to find out a solution for their school's several deficiencies. An absence of this kind of examples in the pre-2005 textbooks signals the change witnessed in the state's expectations from its citizens. This example shows students as being responsible for collecting the money for their school's renovation without discussing whether this should be the responsibility of the fourth grade primary school students or not. The example shows that the state is not responsible for the welfare of its schools; instead the state aims to shape a particular type of individual who could feel responsible for the welfare of his/her school.

Harris (2007) argues that, in neo-liberal societies, individuals are encouraged to see themselves as entrepreneurial individuals, active citizens and consumers. A citizen is to be consumer first and foremost (ibid.: 42). The emphasis on production and consumption increased in the post-2005 textbooks as it is reported in the quantitative content analysis. The 2005 social studies curriculum underlines the importance of being a producer. There is even a specific learning sphere, called Production, Delivery and Consumption. The post-2005 textbooks also consist of several examples about production and consumption. Although there are sections in the pre-2005 textbooks about production and consumption, they are different than the post-2005 ones. Unlike the former, the latter contains examples directing students to be an active producer, a consumer, and even a salesperson. Passages, examples and exercises in the new textbooks illustrate that the focus is not only on being a producer; instead

production is done with the purpose of selling. To illustrate, the fifth grade workbook has an exercise named I Make, I Sell (*Yapıyorum, satıyorum*). The content of this exercise is organized in the following way. First, students are asked to design a product, and then draw a show card for their product in an empty frame given on the page. The second question of the exercise is “For what purpose is your product used?” The third and fourth questions are the most interesting ones in terms of indicating association between producing and selling. The third question asks “How do you present your product to a consumer?” There are pictures of television, newspaper and radio which represent alternative ways to advertising the product. Moreover, a sub-statement suggests that “You may write advertising films used in all these communication devices”. Presentation and advertisement of the product continues with a question addressing selling. The fourth question asks “Where do you plan to sell your product?” Options are bazaar, fair, home, school, neighborhood, and other. The exercise ends with the questions “While doing all this, in which stages did you have problems?” and “If you make another project in what points will you be more careful?”

First of all, this kind of example is not present in the pre-2005 textbooks. They ask questions like “What kind of agricultural products are produced in the region that you live in?” and “Are there any industrial organizations in your region? What do they produce?” The example from the post-2005 textbooks shows that production is done with the purpose of selling, thus of earning money. It is seen from the new textbooks that they lead ten or eleven year-old children to production, marketing and selling. One of the crucial points in the exercise is the presentation of schools as a place in which students can sell their products. This implies that schools are not only the places in which students are educated; but also places in which the market can enter. All this illustrates that in the neo-liberal era, education has more stress on

economic relations and aims to make students internalize consumption and production habits (Gökçe, 2000: 107).

As highlighted above and seen from the exercise I Make, I Sell, the textbooks do not only encourage students to be producers, but also to be salespersons. In this respect, because of having a crucial role for both selling and marketing, advertisement is introduced to students. For example, there is a passage about advertisement in the fifth grade textbook. The fourth unit of the book mentions the association between advertisement and money earning. At the very beginning of this unit, there is a passage stressing the importance and process of publishing a school magazine. This passage is written as if a student narrates and it says that “we provide money necessary to publish our magazine through advertisements we get for the magazine”. Contrary to the post-2005 textbooks, there is no topic in the pre-2005 textbooks about advertisement. To put it differently, advertisement enters into the textbooks with the 2004 reform. This is because of the fact that consumerism has become more important in the last decades (Hartley, 2009: 425). Regarding the impacts of advertisements on human beings, Gitlin (1979) states that “advertisements have a significant role in order to make us believe and behave as if we are for the market, but not for the public, and as if we are more consumer than citizen” (as cited in Apple, 2006: 76).

There is another example about advertisement in the fourth chapter of the fifth grade textbook which also contains other key subjects, such as encouraging students to compete, sell and mass-produce. Although it is a quite long passage, it is worth to be quoted thoroughly to illustrate all these issues.

We Are Also Producers

Bengisu, Anıl and Cem learned that there is going to be a kite festival in their town next Sunday. Bengisu offered her friends to make a kite

together. They first made a plan and a division of labor. Anil offered to make some kites and then to sell them. Their kite has to be different and better quality than others.

They designed the kite in a marbled pattern and hexagonal shape, with a colorful tail. They also find a name for their kite: 'marbled kite'. They did not forget to prepare **advertising posters**.

There are many colorful and different kites at the festival. However, marbled kite still attracted all the attention. Their advertisements had a big contribution to this attention. Kids received five orders in the first day of the festival. They decided to come together every weekend to make new kites. Bengisu has a dream of being aircraft engineering. She began to think about that more seriously.

They imagined themselves in a plane company as designers of the most liked flying models. They even think that they set up a plane factory and produce their own designs.

First of all, it is implied at the very beginning of the passage that the purpose is not only to attend the festival, but there is an emphasis on selling. That is, apart from taking part in the festival, students aim to make and sell kites. Even though there would be only a festival, not a competition; there is still an emphasis on making "different and better quality" kites than other students. Regarding this example, it is possible to say that it encourages students for competition because in neo-liberalism the main focus is on competition (Read, 2009: 27). Creation of a competitive culture or competition itself is one of the most crucial signals of neo-liberalism, and educational systems in the neo-liberal era seek to promote competition and self-interest (Giroux, 2008: 113). In the interviews, the key informants highlighted the importance of competition. They underlined the point that the world that we live in is a globalizing and highly competitive world and, there is the necessity to adapt changes and be competitive as much as possible. However, neither the behaviorist model nor the 1968 curriculum was responsive to the contemporary social and economic needs of both Turkey

and the world. The *Key informant A* stated that “*there is a big difference between the Turkey’s socio-economic structures of 1968 and 2000s. We are now living in an economically global world. Our children have to take an active role in this system*”. Parallel to this statement, the *Key informant E* said that “*Turkey’s growth rate was important for us [the committee]. Whether you accept it or not, Turkey has become a service society. Turkey succeeded in industry and commerce especially in the 2000s. It was not possible that the success in industry and commerce would impact other spheres of life*”. The *informant E* continued stating that “*we have to educate students as being compatible to next centuries*”. That is, “*what Turkey needs today is the skilled labor power. This is what the future wants from us: A skilled labor power*” said the *Key informant D*. Another significant point in the kite sample is the implicit focus on mass-produce. As a consequence of taking orders at the festival, those students begin to spend their weekends in order to make kites, which means that the students who are only in the fifth grade of the primary school prefer to give up their free time in order to earn money.

As previous passage exemplifies, the post-2005 textbooks aim to impose the idea that competition is necessary to be successful. Even though competition is not among the key words appearing significantly in the quantitative analysis, its implicit usage is very obvious.

In one of the sections of the 2005 textbooks, as an essay question students are asked:

Imagine yourself as a manager in a factory. Other factories produce same products with your factory at a lower cost. If this situation continues, your sales will decrease and you will lose money. In order to prevent this, you have to undersell your products. In this respect, what kind of measures will you take? Summarize.

This exercise leads students to identify themselves with the people of the business world. However, it is worth questioning whether the fourth or fifth grade students need to identify themselves with a factory manager and think on how they would have increased sales and profits if the company that they worked in had losses. Contrary to the 2005 textbook, the pre-2005 textbooks do not have examples encouraging students for competition or to consider themselves as if a manager in a factory. There are passages in the all pre-2005 textbooks about industry and commerce. However, they provide only descriptive information like “most of the products that we use are produced in factories”. Moreover, although the post-2005 textbooks underline the importance of profiting at a factory level, the pre-2005 textbooks highlight its importance on a regional level stating that “development in commerce means the development of that region or city”. This can be related to the fact that the comparison of the textbooks in general indicates that the pre-2005 textbooks underline importance of the country’s development more than the new textbooks, which shows that the emphasis shifts from the country’s development to the company’s development.

Emphasis on competition is present in the key informants’ statements as well. To illustrate, the *Key informant B* noted that “*Do we know what kind of a place the world will be in 2040? No, because there is a rapid growth. There is a transformation of knowledge to technology. Students being educated with previous curricula would not be able to compete with other countries. What do we need? We want people who can compete in China, Japan, Brazil, and Chile as a statesman, insurer, salesperson, graphic designer*”. This statement illustrates that one of the purposes of the 2004 reform is to reorganize the content of education, and thus make students competitive. The statement also verifies that amendments made in the educational systems in accordance with the requirements of the market economy enable countries to be responsive to changing conditions within the international marketplace (Hursh,

2005: 5). Moreover, the statement signals that the educational system is expected to create the conditions necessary to be a competitive actor in the global economy. Another important point is the stress on knowledge and technology. As mentioned above, due to the shift to knowledge economy the expectations from education has changed. In this respect, compared to the pre-2005 textbooks, the post-2005 textbooks have more emphasis on technology which will be discussed below.

The focus on competition in the new textbooks also implies that it is necessary to be competitive in order to be successful. Furthermore, in order to be able to compete in the competition-oriented neo-liberal world, individuals have to invest in his/her skills or abilities and be an entrepreneur of him/herself which signals the neo-liberalism's perception of students as human capitals (Read, 2009: 28; Apple, 2004: 99). The major purpose of the neo-liberal reforms in general is to transform what counts as a good society and a responsible citizen, and based on this, it seeks to produce a good student in schools who will be compatible with the market through making a continual enterprise of themselves (Apple, 2001: 414). Therefore, together with encouraging students for competition, the new textbooks are full with implications for an entrepreneurial nature of the neo-liberal world. The analyses of the textbooks illustrate that the new textbooks have an emphasis on entrepreneurship which is not present in the pre-2005 textbooks. For example, while the special weeks celebrated in March in the post-2005 textbooks consist of Entrepreneurship Week and Yeşilay Week, the pre-2005 textbooks consist of Yeşilay Week, Forest Week and Library Week. In other words, entrepreneurship is added into the post-2005 textbooks as a special week while it is not present in the pre-2005 ones. Similar to competition, even though entrepreneurship does not come out significantly in the quantitative content analysis, there are several examples in the 2006 textbook addressing entrepreneurship implicitly. The fifth grade workbook, for instance,

contains several examples about entrepreneurship. An exercise introduces a young entrepreneur, Mehmet, who is almost in the same age as the fifth grade students. Introduction part of the exercises reads:

Mehmet is 12 years old and lives in Palamutbükü, Datça, Muğla. He dreams about establishing *chain stores* in the future which would *market* the organic products produced in his village. He believes that in order to make his dream come true he has to have a *business administration* education [emphasis added].

After this explanation, students are asked the following questions,

Q-1: What the products Mehmet could sell?

Q-2: By whom, where and how could Mehmet's products be produced?

Q-3: What could we do to contribute to our family budget?

Q-4: Mehmet wants to sell one of his products more. What do you suggest him to do?

Q-5: What schools should Mehmet go to have a business administration degree?

Q-6: Please draw an advertising poster in the blank left for the promotion of Mehmet's products.

Both the introduction part and each of these questions exemplify presence of the market-oriented discourse in the new textbooks. It is possible to argue that examples, like young entrepreneur and to-be-businessman Mehmet, have the potential to direct students in production, entrepreneurship, sale and profit-oriented thinking. Gök (1999: 1) argues that the current education system serves more for the internalization of the state's ideology and, in this internalization process schools have prepared and directed students to the occupations that are necessary for the market economy. The examples given from the post-2005 textbook above indicate that students are led to think like an entrepreneur, a salesperson and businessman.

Students are expected to gain the ability of anticipating the need for a product, designing a product and marketing of a product. The new textbooks verify that states of the neo-liberal era are the creators of the appropriate market conditions which includes the production of entrepreneurial individuals who are enterprising and competitive (Harris, 2007: 18) and will work for the market. In this sense, as Harvey (2005: 79) points at, the neo-liberal state play an important role in creating a good business climate. In short, the new textbooks' emphasis on entrepreneurship and competition indicates that the national education system aims to make students complying with new skill demands, which will also help the state to be a competitive actor in the global and neo-liberal world. Regarding entrepreneurship, the *Key informant E* said that “*we want students to be producers. And production means entrepreneurship. We believe in the necessity of this [entrepreneurship]. We believe that a good citizen has to be an entrepreneur as well*”. This statement is crucial because of reflecting the idea that being a good citizen necessitates being an entrepreneur. Moreover, the *Key informant D* stated that “*Education has to prepare students to a real life and there is an economy in the real life. However, Turkish education system was obsolete to reflect the relationship between economy and education. The purpose of education is to create good consumers and producers*”. Parallel to the statements of the key informants, the citizen that is portrayed in the new textbooks is a consumer and entrepreneur more than a citizen. As regards, risk taking entrepreneur becomes the hero of neo-liberalism (Peters, 1984: 193). Apple (2001: 414) criticizes the tendency of the neo-liberal reforms in terms of describing the citizen as an individual who will be compatible with the market through making a continual enterprise of him/herself. Giroux (2005: 12) states that education is significant factor in what ways the state aim to direct its citizens and knowledge should not be used for future careers in the market; instead it should be used for promoting human freedom and social justice.

As regards the in-depth interview question, “what prompted the 2004 reform?”, the key informants noted that education system in many countries, including developed, developing and less-developed ones, is run by the constructivist model and Turkey had to be progressive as well. The *Key informant C* said that “*will Turkey be lag from the global developments without making changes?*” The *Key informant E* stated that “*we were in a junction: either being isolated from the world or heading towards an education system based on production and cognition*”. The informants’ statements verify that Turkey followed a similar pattern with many other countries in order to be part of a global system. Moreover, they stated that the previous curriculum was not compatible with technological developments; therefore it should be rearranged accordingly with these developments. The *Key informant B*, for example, stated that “*in the contemporary world, there is a transition from knowledge to technology. However, it was not possible for our children to compete with other country’s children with the previous curriculum which was not sensitive to economic and technological improvements*”. The pre- and post-2005 textbooks signify the addition of new sections about technology. The old and new textbooks differ at some levels. Firstly, in the former only two pages are devoted to technology while there is a whole unit in the latter entirely devoted to technology. Secondly, even though passages both in the pre- and post-2005 textbooks mainly underline the importance of developments and improvements in technology, the post-2005 textbooks contain several statements and exercises indicating the association between technology, the business world and economy. Olssen and Peters (2005: 331) interpret this association stating that transition from industrial economy to knowledge economy necessitates the rethinking of the relationship between education, learning and work. The *Key informant B* noted the power of knowledge stating that “*In order to guarantee the future of Turkey, we have to create students who are competitive and this happens only if students acquire necessary skills, and access and produce knowledge*”. The statement shows that

according to the key informant the purpose of education has to be to create competitive students. The informant considers the knowledge as tool that gives power to students to be competitive in the international arena. In short, the knowledge economy requires the educational system that determines the future of work and prepares the society for the contemporary world (ibid.: 331). In this respect, an emphasis on the relationship between technology and economy in the post-2005 is not an exception.

There is a section in the post-2005 fourth grade textbook titled Developments in Transportation Technology (*Ulaşım teknolojisindeki gelişmeler*). This section introduces different transportation means in big cities. However, the introduction is made via an example from a businessman's one day of life. The section says that "Today there are several transportation means especially in big cities. For example, Önder Bey who works as a foreign trade manager in a textile firm lives in Kozyatağı, Istanbul. He is going to attend to a fair in Germany. In the morning, he goes to Üsküdar to the ferry dock. Then, using a tramway and underground, he reaches Atatürk Airport. Then, he get on a plane and goes to Germany". In contrary, there is no similar narration in the pre-2005 textbooks. The section titled Transportation (*Ulaşım*), in the pre-2005 books introduces different types of transportation, but without making any affiliation with the business world.

Similarly, in the post-2005 fifth grade workbook there is an exercise called Transportation (*Ulaşım*). In this exercise after transportation is defined as an economic activity several questions are asked, such as "How is transportation, which is an economic activity, made in the place that you live in?" Likewise the definition given at the beginning of the exercise, this question highlights the economic side of transportation. Another question is: "You have a plane company. What do you do in order to make people prefer your company?" It ought to

be asked that, if the purpose of this unit is to introduce transportation means to students, then how this question meets the purpose. Parallel to previous examples given from the post-2005 textbook, this question leads students to identify themselves with a company owner, and makes them to think about how to produce ideas that would make their company's product preferable. On the other hand, the questions asked about transportation in the pre-2005 textbooks do not have any leading feature. It is asked, for instance, "Is there a bus station, train station, harbor or airport in the place that you live in?" and "What kind of transportation vehicles are used in the place that you live in?" This difference between the old and new textbooks shows once again that the latter consists of examples leading students to think as if they are active actors in the market economy.

As regards the necessity of preparing a reform in education, the *Key informant E* stated that "*Turkey has had a promising progress in economy. Look at the economic performance of Turkey since the 1990s. In order to protect and improve our economic success, we have to amend our education system and educate people to be sensitive towards these demands*".

Moreover, with regard to compatibility with global changes, the *Key informant C* underlined the importance of catching up with these changes, stating that "*we cannot be successful if we resist transformation. Otherwise we produce imperfect students*". These two quotations have two implications. Firstly, education is for the market economy. Secondly, students who are not compatible with the market are considered as imperfect. However, there is one crucial point which has been neglected during the reform process. Those students who try to be familiarized with economic activities and terms are only ten or eleven year-old. That is to say, entrepreneurship, production, sale and other terms all appeal to adults, but not to students (İnal, 2005b). As regards the changes made in the education system with the 2004 reform, Yıldız (2008: 25) argues rather than providing students the opportunity to develop themselves

in the way that they really want, they are educated as economic inputs of neo-liberal economy and future labor power.

The examples indicate the presence of the themes implying neo-liberal ideology either in implicit or explicit ways. Referring to those examples, it is possible to assert that they direct students to think as if they were entrepreneurs, investors, salespersons or business man. In this regard, students are expected to learn to foresee the necessity of producing a product, designing the product, making a production plan, conducting a market research, and marketing the product. Consequently, it is seen that no place is left to students in which they can think differently from the market demands. The so-called freedom of choice is restricted to the choices presented by the neo-liberal market, hence “under the existing regime of neo-liberalism, commercialized spheres appear to be the only places left where one can dream about winning a chance at living a decent life or mediating the difficult decisions that often make the difference between living and dying” (Giroux, 2008: 163-164).

Findings of the presents study verify that both the 2005 social studies curriculum and post-2005 textbooks and workbooks possess a market-friendly structure because of being prepared in accordance with the requirements of the global economy, which is dominated by neo-liberal ideology. There are several passages and examples used in the books and, exercises and activities assigned to students reflecting impact of neo-liberal ideology on education. On the one hand, as Apple (2006: 101) argues, integration of the neo-liberal discourse into the curriculum and textbooks does not necessarily mean that all students educated with the new program will be market-oriented because of the fact that education is not a mechanical process. However, on the other hand, the results of analyses shows that the new textbooks have more neo-liberalism centered discourse which may increase the possibility of leading

students to market and cost/benefit-oriented thinking. The purpose of creating students complying with the market is implicitly present in the statements of the key informants as well as discussed above. Nevertheless, the new curriculum needs to be substantiated through further studies being conducted in the coming years to assess to what extent it manages to adapt students to the neo-liberal world.

To conclude, the analyses based on the comparison of curricula and textbooks shows that the 2005 curriculum and post-2005 textbooks have more emphasis on neo-liberal values. The 2005 curriculum has a more individual-centered stance which illustrates the individualistic nature of neo-liberalism. Several neo-liberal concepts, like entrepreneurship, are added into social studies curriculum with the 2004 reform. Unlike the 2005 curriculum, the 1968 curriculum has a more society-centered stance. The importance of being a member of a family, society and country was heavily underlined. The emphasis in the 1968 curriculum is on living for the society and country. While the 1968 curriculum is centered on the idea that the country's interests come before the individual interest, the 2005 curriculum is centered on competencies and skills encouraging students to invest in themselves, and thus leading them more to an individualism-centered thinking.

The findings of the analyses of the textbooks are in the same line with the analysis of the curricula. The quantitative analysis displays that several key words implying neo-liberalism is used more in the post-2005 textbooks which indicates that the new textbooks presents neo-liberal concepts more than the pre-2005 textbooks. The qualitative analysis gives examples indicating in which context the key words are used in the textbooks. Similar to the 2005 curriculum, the post-2005 textbooks has an emphasis on being an individual, not on being a member of a family or society. Parallel to this individualism-oriented stance, the post-2005

textbooks contains several sections encouraging students to be competitors and entrepreneurs. The passages and examples discussed in this chapter in general show that the post-2005 textbooks are organized in a way that consider students as human capitals and active actors of the market.

All the findings of the analyses illustrate that the Ministry of National Education reorganized the content of the educational system in a way that focusing on leading students to adapt and develop new skills that the business world necessitates. The transformation in the discourse of education signifies a new understanding of human nature and social existence (Read, 2009: 26). Students are encouraged to see themselves as lifelong learners, as entrepreneurial individuals, and as active citizens and consumers (Harris: 2007: 136). In this sense, students are also encouraged to make investment in themselves by means of education in order to have a better place in the market in the future (Tabulawa, 2003: 14). As discussed previously, in the neo-liberal era educational system focuses “on producing efficient workers who are able to adapt and develop new skills and work toward the goals of ownership” (Hursh, 2000). This study illustrates that the content of education which is reorganized according to the constructivist education model well fits with the demands of the economic system. The main principles of the constructivist model those thinking creatively, adapting flexibility to new work demands, identifying and solving problems and creating complex products in collaboration with others, are similar with the requirements of the business community from employees (Windschitl, 2003: 135). Through changing the traditional practices in schools, the constructivist model paves the way “to produce individuals whose mind set would be compatible with political conditions deemed necessary for the penetration of the free-market economic system” (Tabulawa, 2003: 18).

In short, the analyses presented in this chapter signify that the neo-liberal discourse has been heavily emphasized in the social studies curricula and textbooks since the implementation of the 2004 primary school education reform. Based on the analyses of this chapter, the next chapter will present the summary and evaluation of the research findings and, the suggestions for further research.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Summary and Evaluation of the Research Findings

This study examined the impact of neo-liberalism on education in Turkey through the analyses of the primary school social studies curricula and textbooks. The main purpose was to figure out to what extent the neo-liberal ideology is represented in the fourth and fifth grade social studies textbooks since 1980. Although analyses cover the years between 1980 and 2009, the specific focus of the study was on the 2004 Primary School Education Reform, which is the first structural amendment in primary school education since 1968. Analyses were based on the comparisons of the 1968 and 2005 curricula and, the pre- and post-2005 textbooks in terms of representation of neo-liberal discourse.

The findings of this study show that compared to the pre-2005 curriculum and textbooks, the post-2005 curriculum and textbooks have more emphasis on neo-liberal values. In line with the argument that educational system serves neo-liberalism through leading students to skills and competencies necessary to be part of the marketplace (Apple, 2001; Harris, 2007; Hursh, 2005; Read, 2009, Inal, 2009), there are several passages and exercises in the post-2005 textbooks implying the neo-liberal language, such as individualism. On the contrary, the pre-2005 textbooks mainly emphasize the significance of being part of a family, society and country. The post-2005 textbooks shift the focus from society-based explanation to individual-based explanation of individual, and have a more individualist feature. Unlike the pre-2005 textbooks, participation of the business world in public services was integrated into the post-2005 textbooks. The idea of privatization of education implicitly takes place in the

textbooks. Furthermore, the post-2005 textbooks represent a citizen as a producer, consumer and entrepreneur and consist of several passages and exercises leading students to production, marketing, advertising, consumption and entrepreneurship. The emphasis on the marketing, advertising and consumption makes students familiar with the market terms, and thus contains the potential to direct students to behave accordingly with the demands of market. Based on the findings of the analyses, this study concludes that representations of neo-liberal ideology in the social studies curriculum and textbooks have increased with the implementation of the 2004 reform.

Analysis of the educational system in the neo-liberal era necessitates the understanding of the arguments of neo-liberalism and how it influenced state institutions, and particularly education. In this respect, earlier chapters of the study were devoted to the theoretical debates on neo-liberalism and its impacts on public services. For the last three decades, rather than being a public good, public services, such as education and health, have become a market commodity. Especially the General Agreement on Trade and Services, which was signed in the mid-1990s, provides a political and legal framework for privatization of education (Scherrer, 2005: 384). However, the state is still the main actor in the educational regulations (Olssen and Peters, 2005: 339) and serves the continuity of the market economy through making amendments in the content of educational systems (Hursh, 2005). As Apple (2006: 165) rightly notes the idea that education is an ideological tool of the state has become inured, thus we almost forget this fact. But, the recent literature illustrates that forgetting the role of the state in reproduction process means to neglect the important role acted by the state for the continuity of the system. The current study shows that in the neo-liberal era, on the one hand schools are commodified through privatization policies, on the other the content of educational system is commodified (Apple, 2004: 105).

Rather than focusing on privatization of education, the focus of this study was on educational reform processes changing the educational models and content of education. An analysis of the production and circulation of discourses is important, because focusing on the knowledge of policy as a practice makes it possible to consider a significant ‘fact’ of modern life: Power is exercised less through brute force and more through the ways in which knowledge (the rules of reason) constructs the objects by which we organize and act on the issues, problems, and practices of daily life (Popkewitz, 2000: 18). Neo-liberalism is underpinned by the rise in the importance of knowledge as capital in the twenty-first century which forces countries to make amendments in educational sphere (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 330). The role of education in the creation of human capital and in the production of new knowledge becomes more prominent with the knowledge economy. This is because the shift from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy “involves a fundamental rethinking of the traditional relationships between education, learning and work, focusing on the need for a new coalition between education and industry” (ibid.: 331-332). In this sense, education is viewed as a form of knowledge capital by the states and international financial organizations that will determine the future of work, the organization of knowledge institutions and the shape of society in the years to come (ibid.: 331).

With the impact of the shift to knowledge economy, neo-liberalization policies in many countries are centered on the national educational reforms. These reforms were based on a constructivist educational model which has been criticized by many scholars. Even though the constructivist model has a more student-centered stance compared to the previous model, i.e. behaviorist education model, educational systems reorganized accordingly with this model have been under the influence of the neo-liberal policies and integrated neo-liberal jargon into education. The purpose of the architects of the new educational reforms is “to create teaching

and learning conditions conducive to the nurturing of creative, flexible and cooperative citizens and workers” (Carney, 2008: 41). In this sense, entrepreneurial, competitive, consumerist and individualist nature of neo-liberalism has taken significant space in education since the implementation of the new reforms.

Similar to the many other countries’ reform experiences, the Ministry of Education in Turkey reorganized the curriculum for primary school education and adopted the constructivist education model through a reform named the 2004 Primary School Education Reform. Globalization, changes in the economic structure of Turkey, global shift to constructivist model and insufficiency of the behaviorist model, transition from industrial economy to knowledge economy and accession process to the European Union were the main reasons to implement the reform. The reform attracted some degree of reaction due to its more emphasis on economic activities and individualism. The critiques argue that the amendments in the educational system have increased the possibility of intellectual transformation of students towards market oriented path (Adıgüzel, 2010; İnal, 2009: 692).

In the neo-liberal era, states began to provide education addressing economic knowledge, skills and behaviors in order to create individuals responding to the demands of the economic system and to spread the consumption and production habits (Gökçe, 2000: 107). The amendments made in the primary school social studies curriculum and textbooks verify that the Ministry of National Education seeks to promote neo-liberal ideology through encouraging student conformity to the market norms. To recall the information gathered from the in-depth interviews, the students who are not compatible with the market are viewed as imperfect students. In the neo-liberal era, the so-called freedom of choice is restricted to the choices presented by the neo-liberal market. Hence, unless a person behaved in accordance

with the requirements of the market, he/she would have been considered as ‘imperfect’. This study contends that in order not to be labeled as an imperfect, students ought to be producer, consumer, competitor, entrepreneur, sales person, advertiser, and individualist. In brief, they have to internalize the neo-liberal ideology (Soedeberg et. al., 2005: 12). However, the creation of profits or future careers in the market should not be the purpose of knowledge; in fact it should focus on promoting human freedom and social justice (Giroux, 2008: 146). The educational system in the neo-liberal era, however, provides a sphere for human freedom and social justice whose borders are also determined with the requirements of the neo-liberal market.

All supposed benefits of constructivist learning model, such as thinking creatively and adapting flexibility to new work demands, are the same with the premium that business community place on employees (Windschitl, 2002: 135). In this sense, states contribute to permanence of the neo-liberal system through building human capital that will work for the market (Apple, 2001). For instance, in the Seventh Five-year Development Plan, the State Planning Organization (DPT) of Turkey underlines the responsibility of the national education system in educating students with a full set of skills that are necessary to be part of the market (DPT, 1995: 27). Likewise, in its party program and government programs, the JDP states that the national education system has to be reorganized to make it compatible with the contemporary world. In addition, as Apple (2001: 410) reminds us there are multiple actors in the social field of power that has an impact on the way how education is going to be organized. It is this differential relation of power that moves education in particular directions in many countries. Within neo-liberalism’s market-driven discourse both the state and corporate powers aim to produce competitive, self-interested individuals who compete for their own gain (Giroux, 2008: 113). Similar to the DPT’s report and the JDP’s statements, the

EU and TUSIAD published several reforms since the 1990s indicating the importance of reorganizing the educational system with the necessities of the economy. Although neither the EU nor the TUSIAD had a leading role in the 2004 reform process, their reports, which were discussed in the previous chapters, show that they have pointed at the significance of adapting education to neo-liberal ideology.

The content of the educational systems have entered into the process of transformation with neo-liberalism. The educational reforms in many countries, including Turkey, consist of curriculum and pedagogical changes. These reforms, which have been structured on the constructivist model, have a market-friendly feature, and thus they harmonize the content of education with the neo-liberal market. This study exemplified the transformation of education through the analysis of the reform initiated in Turkey. The findings of the analysis of the new social studies curriculum and textbooks show that the 2004 Primary School Education Reform introduces the neo-liberal discourse into the educational system of Turkey. Without disregarding that education is not a mechanical process, and thus the neo-liberal discourse centered educational system does not inevitably means that students will be a part the market, this study argues that the 2004 Primary School Education Reform facilitates directing students to think within the framework of the neo-liberal. Therefore, this study concludes that the new educational system seeks to promote neo-liberal ideology and contains the possibility of creating neo-liberal individuals.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study highlighted the importance of the fact that the students are exposed to the market-driven discourse beginning from the primary school. This is important because as the examples given in the previous chapter indicate the primary school students are led to identify

themselves with the actors of the business world. Moreover, the examples also encourage them to think as if they were already active actors in the market. Reorganization of the content of the educational system in accordance with neo-liberalism points out that commodification of education is not the only way to adopt education to neo-liberalism. Students have also come to be commodified with the new educational reforms. Therefore, this study argued that the next generations will be more competitive and self-success oriented. Nevertheless, this argument needs to be substantiated through further research. That is to say, more studies that assess the implementation of the curriculum on the ground have to be conducted.

This study analyzed only the primary school social studies curriculum and textbooks. The findings of this study can be compared and enriched with the analyses of the other courses' curriculum and textbooks. Such further research would provide a more comprehensive analysis of the 2004 reform. In addition, even though the 2004 reform reorganized the curriculum for primary school education, the content of secondary school and high school education can also be analyzed. This analysis would illustrate the similarities and differences between the educational levels in terms of their representation of neo-liberal ideology.

Another point that deserves investigation is the comparative analysis of content of the educational reforms. That is to say, contents of the curriculum and textbooks reorganized in accordance with the constructivist educational model in many countries can be compared. This further research would be beneficial at two points. First, as discussed before, during the preparation process of the 2004 reform many other countries' educational reforms were taken as a guide. In this sense, comparative content analysis of these reforms and the 2004 reform would indicate the common and different sides of the reforms. The findings of this further research can be used to find out the national differences among the reform processes. Second,

a comparative analysis of the content of the educational systems would investigate to what extent neo-liberal discourse has been diffused into education in several countries. In this sense, such further research would provide a general portrayal of the affiliation between neo-liberal ideology and education.

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APPENDIX: In-depth Interview Questions

In-depth Interview Questions / *Derinlemesine Mülakat Soruları*

1-) Several changes were made with 2004 Primary School Education Reform. What are the factors that caused to change the curriculum in primary school education? What is the reason to make the reform in 2004? Who was the head of the reform?

2005 yılında uygulamaya konan İlköğretim Eğitim Reformu ile müfredatta değişiklikler yapıldı. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın böyle bir değişikliğe gitmesine sebep olan faktörler nelerdi? Neden bu dönemde değişiklik yapıldı? Bu reformun mimarları kimdi?

2-) What has been done during the preparation process of the reform? Who took place in this process?

Reformun hazırlık sürecinde neler yapıldı? Bu süreçte kimler rol aldı?

3-) How did the proposal and admission processes work? Are there any documents of these processes? If yes, how were these documents prepared, and by whom? Where are these documents archived?

Reformun öneri ve kabul süreci nasıl işledi? Bu sürece dair resmi dokümanlar var mı? Varsa, bu resmi dokümanlar ne şekilde ve kim/kimler tarafından hazırlandı? Dokümanlar nerede arşivleniyor?

4-) Who were responsible for the implementation of the reform?

Reformun birebir uygulanmasında kimlere ne roller düştü?

5-) In the formation process of new reform, did Ministry of Education take other country's education system as a sample? If yes, which countries' system was taken as a sample and how did the ministry utilize from the sample?

Reformun hazırlanmasında başka ülkelerde uygulanan eğitim sistemleri örnek olarak alındı mı? Evetse, hangi ülke ya da ülkelerin eğitim sistemleri örnek alındı, neden? Bu sistemlerden ne şekilde faydalanıldı?

6-) What differentiates it from behaviorism education model? What does constructivist education model aim to achieve?

Yapılandırmacı eğitim modelini davranışçı eğitim modelinden ayıran özellikler nelerdir? Yapılandırmacı eğitim modelini benimsemekte Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın amacı neydi?

7-) The contents of the textbooks were also changed with the reform. What is the reason of this change? What was the procedure for the determination of textbooks' authors? And, what was the procedure in the pre-reform period?

Reformla birlikte ders kitaplarının içeriklerinde de değişiklik yapıldı. Bu değişikliğin nedeni neydi? Reform sonrası içeriği yenilenen kitapların yazarları nasıl belirlendi? Daha önceki dönemde yazarlar nasıl belirleniyordu?

8-) Has the reform been criticized? If yes, who/ which groups criticized?

Reforma çok tepki oldu mu? Evetse, tepkiler hangi çevrelerden geldi?

9-) Are there any parts of this program that the ministry aims to make amendments /improvements in the future? If yes, which parts?

Bu eğitim reformuna yönelik Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın ileride yapmayı planladığı değişiklikler var mı? Evetse, reformda ne gibi değişiklikler yapılması planlanıyor?

10-) Despite the people that support the 2004 Primary School Education Reform, there are also others that criticize it. What do you think about the argument that the amendments made in the curriculum and contents of textbooks direct students in thinking within the framework of neo-liberal ideology?

Reformla ilgili olarak şuana kadar yaptığım okumalardan şöyle bir kaniya vardım. Bazı yazarlar, akademisyenler 2004 İlköğretim Eğitim Reformu'nu gerekli görerek desteklerken, diğerleri reformu çeşitli yönlerden eleştirmekteler. Mesela neo-liberalizmi yansıtan kelimelerin arttığına yönelik argümanlar mevcut. Sizin bu eleştiriler konusunda düşünceleriniz nelerdir?

11-) Do you think that this reform succeeds? If no, why?

Sizce reform amacına ulaştı mı? Hayırsa, neden?

12-) According to you, what is the main problem of primary school education in Turkey right now?

Sizce bugün Türkiye'de ilköğretimin en önemli sorunu nedir?

13-) Are there any names that you can suggest me to talk about the reform?

Reformla ilgili olarak başka kimlerle görüşebilirim?

