A Critical View on Teacher Guidebooks as an Agent in Teacher Deskilling Process

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the views of teachers on teacher guidebooks and to analyse these views on the basis of the deskilling process. The data were collected from 67 teachers through an open-ended questionnaire, and analysed using content analysis method. Results showed that although most of the teachers considered the guidebooks necessary, they also made a number of criticisms. Among these, there were criticisms indicating that the guidebooks hindered teacher autonomy in various ways. Teachers' views and criticisms in this direction confirm that guidebooks have an important role in the deskilling process of teachers.

Keywords: Deskilling process; guidebooks; technician teacher; control; professionalism

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Introduction

Teaching profession and deskilling process

Teaching, one of the oldest and most universal occupations, is an important profession that plays a crucial role in shaping the society. Societies have many expectations (religious, political, economic, cultural, etc.) from teachers, and for this reason they always try to keep teachers under control. As teachers are always with students throughout a school day, they can have a huge impact on them. They have a great power of what qualities children will grow up with. Probably for this reason, from past to present, teaching has become a profession that various social groups, especially politicians, have had many expectations on one hand and found it dangerous on the other hand. Therefore, it has always been a profession which is kept under control.

According to Apple and Teitelbaum (1986), there is increasingly more external control on the content and processes of the classroom. This control over teachers can be seen in every aspect, from teacher training courses in education faculties to inadequate working and living conditions of teachers, and from discourse and practices that discredit teachers' profession to official procedures and programs implemented in schools. A closer analysis indicates that this control was realized via many ways, some of which include limiting the authority and autonomy of teachers, giving the educational decisions related to class and the students by the central authority which is far away from the real classes and pupils, and reducing teaching only to a physical, technical workforce. All these efforts to keep teaching under control can be considered as parts of the deskilling process.

Apple (1986, p.179) describes deskilling as a process in which employees lose control over their work. Ballet and Kelchtermans (2009) define deskilling concept as "the loss of certain professional skills due to their decreased importance on the one hand, and the increase of routine, often administrative, work-related tasks on the other hand". According to Wong (2006), deskilling is the transformation process of a profession from highly skilled work into highly unskilled work. In this deskilling process, as emphasized by Gür (2014), teachers are increasingly losing control over their work. As a result, they become workers who just implement the curriculum like robots and are technicians devoid of autonomy. In this understanding of seeing a teacher as a technician, the teacher must have basic competencies, apply the program in a standard way and be controllable (Yıldırım, 2011). Through this approach, teacher is not seen as an independent decision-maker, but as an implementer and worker who needs to be guided, conveying the content as it is, sticking to the standards and exam scores. The ideology within the teacher seen as a worker minimizes the need for knowledge at professional level through the instruction (Evans, 2010). Hargreaves, Earl, Moore, and Manning (2001, p.196) point that trying to reduce the need for support by writing all standards centrally, in great detail, in a "teacher-proof" way pushes teachers and teaching along the path of deprofessionalization. The deprofessionalized -unskilled teacher gradually steers away from the professional teacher who makes his/her own decisions, prepares and implements the classroom practices according to his/her students, effectively resolves the problems s/he has encountered and has higher-order thinking skills, and has gradually turned into a technician who applies the instructions unquestioningly and imparts the students only the knowledge needed for exams. Giroux (2011, p.126) states this as follows:

> Today, in the age of standardized testing, thinking, and acting, reason and judgment have been thrown out the window just as teachers are increasingly being deskilled and forced to act as semi-robotic technicians good for little more than teaching for the test and serving as a reminder that we are arriving at a day when the school curriculum will be teacher-proof.

Technician teacher approach has close relationships with competitive neoliberal economic policies; transformations in the teaching profession are among the consequences of neo-liberal policies surrounding the whole world. Emphasizing that these results are internationally prevalent, Apple

(2016) states that in this difficult time in education, attacks on educators at all levels and on their autonomy and their organisations have gained more visibility, and corporate models of competition, accountability, and measurement have been imposed. The loss of respect for the professionalism of educators is striking. In neoliberal approach, the teacher is nothing more than a technician of exam-oriented and corporate education (Yıldız, 2014, p.14). According to Connell (2009), the neoliberal practices and the audit culture in education see the teacher as a technician, doing pre-defined "best practice" with a pre-defined curriculum measured against external tests - a situation for which skill, but not intelligence, is required. Similarly, Sleeter (2008) states that some of the pressures of neoliberalism on the teaching profession include preparing teachers as technicians to implement measures aiming to raise student test scores and defining teacher quality with the testable knowledge in the content rather than professional knowledge. As Neo-liberalism evolves and strengthens, the teacher image traditionally seen as an autonomous professional "who grasps the social meaning of education and has the sufficiency that forms the basis for this comprehension, has social responsibility sense in the teaching-learning process, gives decisions related to his/her own professional behaviour, and refuses acceptance of the external control" is transformed (Ünal, 2015). In this process, the teacher, who is defined as any technical intermediate work-force on the market, is seen as an employee who is unable to comprehend the educational reality as a whole, who tries to teach the certain knowledge that s/he obliged to instruct by using certain teaching techniques and who sees his/her task is restricted to this (Özsoy and Ünal, 2010). As a result, teaching is gradually moving away from professionalism. Giroux (2011, p.135) strikingly remarks this transformation of qualification in teaching profession by his following words: "teachers, once the heroes in this coming-of-age narrative, are now a sideshow. Most are deskilled, reduced to technicians teaching for the high-stakes testing machine."

Hargreaves (1994, p.14) explains the debates on the nature and transformation of the teaching profession through the concepts of professionalization and intensification-deskilling. While the professionalization approach remarks the changes and rises in the teacher's roles that in and out of the classroom, and advocates that these changes mean more professionalization; the intensification approach which emphasizes the deterioration of the teaching profession and steering away from professionalism, sees teaching as a routine and unskilled work, with its teachers who are not authorized to apply their own professional decisions. As stated by Ballet et al. (2006), intensification goes hand in hand with deprofessionalization and deskilling as a teacher's job is no longer conceived of as holistic but rather as a sequence of separated tasks and assignments decided by others. Apple (1986, p.32) states that teachers are increasingly facing more and more deskilling because of the technical control procedures on the curriculum. Easthope and Easthope (2000) also emphasize that teachers are increasingly controlled, deprofessionalized, and rather than being multi-skilled, they are becoming deskilled. As a result of these processes, many teachers try to fulfil this role obediently, without any questions. In the intensification/deskilling approach, teachers tend to obey and adapt to their own exploitation processes over time (Hargreaves, 1994, p.15). On the other hand, Goodman (1988) who deals with this process through the concept of disenfranchisement emphasizes that the disenfranchisement of teachers occurs when the curriculum and instruction preparation processes are separated from those who actually teach. It means that many decisions about teaching–learning process, such as what should be taught, why it should be taught, and how it should be taught are made without inputs from the teachers; as a result, teachers have little sense of ownership of their work.

Curriculum and Guidebooks in the Deskilling Process

Curriculum is the fundamental component serving as a bridge between national education policy and implementations at schools and guiding the teachers for all practices through learning-teaching process (Eryaman & Riedler, 2010). However, since new curricula put into effect in Turkey in 2005 could not provide the necessary guidance for teachers, some guidebooks were prepared and sent to schools all over the country. Within these guides all the followings are described in detail: attainments, content, methods and techniques, assessment tools, and even reinforcements, questions, and instructions. The guidebooks have been adopted by most of the teachers as it relieves them of planning and making preparations for the classes. Yet, these guides, supposedly prepared to lead the

teachers in a more efficient way, hinder both the flexibility of the curriculum and teachers' autonomy. It is reported that program developments in Turkey usually involve a large stakeholder's participation. For instance, the draft curriculum prepared in 2017 is reported to have been prepared, with the coordination of the related general directories, by the commissions formed with representatives, teachers, education experts, and academicians. It was also reported that parents, school administrators and experts all over the country also provided input in this process (Ministry of National Education [MONE], 2017). However, in terms of the stakeholder participation, it is difficult to say that the same sensitivity had been shown for the preparation of course books and other materials. Course books and guidebooks are prepared with the participation of a committee and with the approval of authorities, and the Ministery of Education distribute the guidebooks to schools in order to be used by teachers. This situation degrades the teachers' roles to being only the implementer of the curriculum prepared by some others. This approach sees teachers as technicians more than professionals, and it causes teachers to become more and more unskilled in the process.

Walsh, Brigham and Wang (2011) emphasize that the notion that gradually centralise and increase control over teachers' job and that sees teachers' job as transferring what is written in scripted curricula serves neoliberal policies and degrades teachers to technicians. The guidebooks, where all the things teachers will do in the classroom are scripted by the central authority, also reflect this technician teacher approach. In a teaching-learning process where each step in the classroom is determined by others, and the expectations are reduced to observable, measurable, and controllable behaviours in a purely behavioural-neo-liberal sense, it can not be expected that the teacher will make students gain a high level of cognitive and affective qualities, and it can not be expected that s/he herself/himself has these features or develop these skills as well. However, it should not be forgotten in this argument (at least theoretically) that guidebooks have a role as guiding teachers and helping them in teaching practices. Indeed, in the definition of the guidebooks done by MONE (2012) this point is emphasised as "a printed work prepared for the use of teachers, including various examples, exercises, units, subjects, themes, internet addresses related to learning areas, reading resources and other activities that will provide more effective use of the course book in the direction of the gains and clarifications contained in the relevant education and training programs". The problem here is that how much, in what direction and for what purpose is the "way" will be taught to the teachers. Are the guidebooks prepared for educational purposes, such as guiding teachers, or as a part of the efforts to keep teachers' work under control? Emphasizing the focus and purpose of controlling the teachers' work, Reid (2003) states that teachers are, and always have been, controlled. For this reason, Reid notes that this control over teachers should be questioned more. Smyth et al. (2000), emphasize that defining the curriculum by using methods or mechanisms which direct teachers to impart a defined curriculum, including content, sequence, methodology and assessment is an important part of control regime of teachers' work.

Göçer (2011) states that teachers' guidebooks contain clear and detailed guidance on how to conduct the activities at every stage of the course. Nevertheless, he also indicates the fact that the activities to be realized do not take into account the individual differences of the students, that the activities required in each theme are almost identical, and that the guidebooks are not sufficiently content-rich to develop mental and linguistic skills of the students. Here we can review some examples taken from the Turkish language teachers' guidebook (2015, 89):

Write the following sentences in the text on the board.

Ask students to separate these sentences into two sentences in the cause and effect relation and then to repeat these sentences or to write them in their notebooks. Once you have checked your students' writing, share the following sentences and make them become aware of the cause and effect relationship in the sentences (Note: The two-sentence form of these sentences in the cause and effect relation is on the next page).

In another example, after some instructions such as *"after reading the text, ask your students to find the main theme and the supporting ideas of the text"* and "tell them that their own writing

should also structured around a main idea and supporting ideas", the main and supporting ideas of the text are presented to the teacher in a ready-to-use format (p.92). Another example from the Turkish course guidebook is as follows (p.262):

Read the parts of the text to your students. To implement this method, stop at the places specified by numbers in your book during reading and ask the following questions in order:

1. ....

2. ....

Ask your students to identify the words they do not know in the story and write them on their notebooks.

Ask them to predict the meaning of these words, and then to find them in the dictionary and write the meaning in their notebooks.

Tell them to compare their own predictions with the lexical meanings of the words.

Ask students who predicted the meaning correctly to share how they predicted the meaning of the words with their classmates.

Tell your students to use the new words they have learned in a sentence.

.....

To illustrate this situation in another course, an instruction given to teachers in the fourth grade social studies guidebook (2015, p.113) was analysed, and it was found that everything to be done in the class was set out in full detail as follows.

Check whether the previous workbook activities you assigned were done.

Ask your students to answer the question in the "Preparation for the topic" section. Ask students what they should pay attention to when spending money.

Ask them to read the text titled "How do we meet our needs?", and to review the photos on the page.

Based on the instructions in the text, ask your students to tell what they see in the photos. Ask them examine the visuals, questioning in which fields they serve.

……………..

Based on these and more examples, it seems that the guidebooks went far beyond the guidance of the teachers, and that every step of the way was stereotyped and restricted. As it is seen clearly, the teacher is the implementer-technician. By hindering the need to think, to solve problems, to organize, or to questioning, the guidebooks, where all the things teacher will do in the class are scripted by the central authority, reduce the teachers' position to being only an obedient practitioner.

In order to have an idea of the general structure of the guidebooks, when the examples given here are carefully examined, it can be easily seen that the guidebooks restrain the teacher's autonomy in the classroom; that the guidebooks have the control over all the dimensions, from the question to the answer, of the learning-teaching processes; that these books do not leave any space to teacher for thinking, creating, planning and organizing on what is going on in the classroom. However, as stated by Demirkasımoğlu (2010), autonomy is a component of teacher professionalism and it provides both

an individual decision making area to achieve one's aims and an effect on controlling the situations related to his/her work.

According to Wong (2006), the best way to teach is that teachers have the flexibility to organize the curriculum according to the needs of their students. Emphasizing that teachers are not so passive in education processes and that they are always looking for a way or a space, Apple (1988, p.44) states that even though the elements of curricular control were effective in structuring the major aspects of their practices, teachers often respond in a variety of ways. According to the level and characteristics of their classes, teachers determine the teaching methods and materials to be used in implementing the curriculum, changing the goals or subjects when necessary and making various decisions about the teaching process. Apple and Teitelbaum (1986) emphasize that teachers should take action to defend their right to control the classroom, while Acker (1999, p.171) indicated that whether or not teachers are unskilled, it is clear that they are not empowered; despite that they have the power and skills to resist.

Research on teacher's guidebooks in Turkey indicates that teachers generally evaluate the guidebooks as necessary and beneficial (Ayvacı and Er-Nas, 2009; Genç et al., 2014; Göçer and Aktürk, 2015; Kırmızı, 2013). However, in the majority of these studies, it has also seen that the teachers indicate the inadequacies of the guidebooks. The inadequacies mentioned in these studies are related to some negative factors such as guiding teachers inefficiently, being inappropriate for students' level of development, and including inadequate alternatives and information for teachers. The teachers who participated in the study of Yaman and Demir (2015) were found to have never used guidebooks and the reasons for this were also the inadequacies of guidebooks. In all these research results, it is seen that teachers demand more guidance and desire to being shown a more and more accurate "way".

As it is reported in a small number of studies, teachers think that the guidebooks lack flexibility, confine them to a narrow pattern, discourage their creativity, and prevent them from thinking and commenting on the curriculum (Göçer, 2011, Göçer and Aktürk, 2015, Kulantaş, 2007; Taneri et al., 2014). Although they are few in number and indirectly described, these teachers who do not use and do criticize the guidebooks stated that the guidebooks hinder their professional practice. This point indicates that they have recognized the danger posed by guidebooks in deskilling process. The literature indicates a fairly extensive research which deals with the nature and effects of deskilling process in teaching profession (Acker, 1999; Apple, 1988; Apple and Teitelbaum, 1986; Easthope and Easthope, 2000; Giroux, 2011; Goodman, 1988; Gür, 2014; Hargreaves, 1992, 1994; Seddon, 1997). However, it seems that educational scientists are slow to deal with the issue in terms of teacher guidebooks because no studies were found to have analysed guidebooks and the teachers' views on these books regarding the professional deskilling process, while it is clear that this approach without any chance for teachers' autonomy will make teachers more ineffective, destroy their autonomy, and eliminate the possibility to arrange the instruction according to students' individual characteristics. This study which was conducted with this rationale analysed the views of teachers on teacher guidebooks and evaluated the views on the basis of the deskilling process.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' views about guidebooks and discuss these views on the basis of deskilling process. In line with this general purpose, the study aims to find answers to the following questions:

1. How often do teachers use the guidebooks?

2. What are the teachers' reasons for using or not using the guidebooks?

3. What are the teachers' views about guidebooks?

4. According to teachers' views, what are the positive or negative effects of guidebooks on

    professional development and performance?

5. What are the teachers' suggestions about guidebooks?

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study, which utilised phenomenology design, is qualitative in nature. Phenomenology studies focus on phenomena which we recognise but would like to explore more in depth and comprehensible information about it. (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, 69). These studies aim to identify how some phenomena are perceived, defined, felt, criticized, and comprehended by others (Patton, 2002, 104). Data sources in phenomenological studies are individuals or groups who experience, express or reflect the phenomena which the study focuses on (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, 71). Teachers are supposed to use the guidebooks for classroom practices; the present study aims to explore views of teachers about these guidebooks. This way, superiority and limitations of these books are explored from the viewpoints of people who know them best.

Participants

The research data were collected using a questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions administered to the participants through internet. Therefore, the participants were not limited to a certain geographical region. The participants consisted of a total of 67 teachers including 29 primary school teachers and 37 subject-matter teachers. Of all the participants, 44 were female and 23 were male. Personal characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 *Personal Information of the Participants*

Variables	Sub-Dimensions	n	%
Gender	Female	44	65.67
	Male	23	34.32
Subject Matter	Primary school teacher	29	43.93
	Subject Matter teacher	37	56.06
Service Year	0-5 years	10	14.92
	6-10 years	20	29.85
	11-15 years	15	22.38
	16-20 years	10	14.92
	21 years and over	12	17.91

Data Collection Instrument

The data were collected using the "Teachers' Opinions on Guidebooks Questionnaire" prepared by the researcher. The questionnaire was mainly formed with the studies in the related literature (Ayvacı & Er-Nas, 2009; Genç, Güner & Güner, 2014; Göçer, 2011; Göçer & Aktürk, 2015; Kırmızı, 2013; Kulantaş, 2007; MONE, 2012; Yaman & Demir 2015). As a result of the review of these studies, a draft was formed with the questions to be used for identifying teachers' views about guidebooks. These draft questions were sent for expert opinions to five instructors in the field of program development and instruction, two classroom teachers, and two subject matter teachers. The form was revised according to their views. Hence, the questionnaire included one close-ended and six open-ended questions that aimed to identify how often teachers use the guidebooks, reasons for using and not using the guidebooks, views about the guidebooks, negative and positive sides of the guidebooks in terms of teachers' professional development and performance, whether teachers find

these books necessary, and teachers' suggestions about guidebooks. The beginning of the questionnaire included questions which aimed to identify personal information about teachers (e.g. gender, subject matter, service year).

Data Collection Procedure

Teachers' Opinions on Guidebooks Questionnaire was administered to teachers through the "https://www.onlineanketler.com" website, which enables the preparation and administration of online questionnaires. Therefore, the researcher shared the website link to access this questionnaire through her social media (Facebook) account together with the instructions needed for responses. To reach more participants, she also asked other teachers she knew to share the questionnaire in their social media accounts. Teachers who wanted to participate responded the questionnaire by clicking the link provided. Hence, participation, which was completely volunteer, was enhanced without any worries on the participants' side as to revealing their identity and views. The questionnaires, which had been submitted by the deadline given, were collected in a folder. 71 teachers answered the questionnaire, four of them were found invalid, and the analyses were performed on the basis of 67 teachers' questionnaires.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using the content analysis. For this purpose, raw texts were obtained in the manner that the responses given to each question were one under the other, and these texts were read carefully line-by-line. Then, based on the raw data, a code list was drawn to classify participants' responses, and these coded responses were clustered into meaningful categories. Since each participant could state more than one response, calculated frequencies of the codes emerged from the data were based on the frequency of the answers. The main themes derived from the participants' responses and the related codes are presented in the findings section.

Validity, Reliability and Ethical Considerations

To increase validity and reliability of the study, the findings obtained from the analyses were presented without any interpretations. Besides, excerpts from the quotations of the responses were used in order to provide a more detailed picture of the teachers' views about the guidebooks. The criterion in choosing direct quotations to highlight in the text was providing a supportive evidence of and a sufficient example to the related main themes. Capital T (teacher) and numbers are used in the presentation of the excerpts (T1, T2, …; for example, "T8" shows the eighth teacher in the transcripts). Discussion of the results was based on the main findings of the study. In addition, volunteer participation and confidentiality of the identities were also considered as ethical issues. For this reason, the questionnaire was sent to teachers via internet. The website keeps the identity of the respondent confidential even to the researcher. At the beginning of the questionnaire, detailed explanations were provided about the purpose of the study and the way the questions should be answered. It was also stated that the data to be obtained from this study would not be used for any other purposes.

Findings

Findings Regarding Teachers' Use of Guidebooks

Among 67 teachers who participated in the study, 8 teachers answered the question about whether they used the guidebooks as "never", 11 teachers as "rarely", 18 teachers as "sometimes" and 30 teachers as "always". As a result of the content analysis performed on the statements made by the teachers as the reasons for their answers, it was found that the statements made for the answers of

"never" or "rarely" consisted of the codes gathered under three themes. These themes and the codes which are within the scope of these themes are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 *Teachers' Reasons for Not Using the Guidebooks*

Theme 1: In terms of the scope of the content (n:28)	n
Being not descriptive enough	9
Including insufficient content	8
Being not realistic/up-to-date/practicable	2
Including many errors	2
Being inappropriate for the age level	2
Including unnecessary sections	2
Being very intense	2
Being inappropriate for individual differences	1
Theme 2: In terms of the Sequence of the content (n:9)	n
Having complicated /not systematic sequence of content	4
Being prepared imprecisely	2
Being visually unattractive	1
Being uninteresting	1
Being written in very small font size	1
Theme 3: Creativity (n:5)	n
Being restrictive for teachers' /students' creativity	2
I'm developing alternative ways on my own	2
They affect my performance in the course negatively	1

n= number of participants who expressed views about each code/theme

Table 2 shows that the dimension which was the most difficult for teachers regarding the guidebooks was related to the content selection. Under this theme, the problem which was most frequently mentioned by teachers was that the content was not descriptive enough and it was insufficient in terms of attainments. The other two themes were the sequence of the content and creativity. The quotations from the opinions of the teachers who stated that they did not use the guidebooks are presented below.

I am using them because I have to use. Their content is very bad and quite useless (T42).

I cannot go beyond the objectives as an implementer of the program, therefore, I rarely look at the guidebooks to see the objectives. However, I myself use alternative methods for the teaching and learning process, assessment, and evaluation, because I think the guidebooks are actually restricting teachers. As if to say you cannot go beyond this framework (guide)... (T8).

The findings obtained from the statements of the teachers who stated how often and why they used the guidebooks are presented in Table 3, and their responses included "sometimes" (n:18) or "always" (n:30). The reasons are also presented in the table.

Table 3*Teachers' Reasons for Using the Guidebooks*

Theme 1: Guidance in the teaching process (n:33)	n
To comply with the daily plan/attainment and subject order	12
Because they are instructive/guiding for teachers	6
To see/determine the subject and scope of the course	5
For the planned and systematic progress	4
To make preliminary preparation for the course	2
Because they contain effective and good examples of activities	2
To conduct some activities in coursebooks	1
To associate the courses	1
Theme 2: Evaluation activities (n:6)	n
For the assessment and evaluation activities	3
Because the information in the guides is asked in (national) exams	2
Because they contain high-quality questions	1
Theme 3: Adding variety to the course (n:5)	n
Because they offer alternative activities	1
To implement interesting activities	1
To take an example	1
Because they are rich in method-technique	1
To attract students' attention	1
Theme 4: Their being obligatory (n:4)	
Because I have to use	4

n= number of participants who expressed views about each code/theme

An analysis of Table 3 which presents the reasons of the teachers who stated that they used the guidebooks shows that the answers given were gathered under four themes and the opinions were focused on the *Guidance in the teaching process* (n:33) theme. On the other hand, six teachers stated that they used the guidebooks in the assessment and evaluation activities while five teachers stated that they used them for adding variety to the course, four teachers stated that they used the guidebooks just because they had to use them.

I *use them to follow the attainments of the subjects that we will discuss. Sometimes, guidebooks may have effective and good examples for the activities. Besides, it is certainly necessary to follow the instructions in the guidebook to have students make some activities in the course books (T14).*

I use the guidebooks because they allow me to progress in a more planned and systematic way. In addition, I like their guidance in understanding and interpreting the text (T24).

They help me to make preliminary preparation for the course. In particular, to determine the limits of the subject I teach... Thus, I can save time without going into unnecessary details (T28).

Findings Regarding Teachers' Opinions on Guidebooks

The findings obtained from the answers given by the teachers to the question "What are your opinions on teacher guidebooks?" are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 *Opinions on Teacher Guidebooks*

Theme 1: Insufficiency/nonconformity (n:44)	N
Having insufficient information in Activities / examples / exercises /	21
Containing errors	9
Being very intense (there are too many attainments/subjects, cannot not be completed on time)	6
Not being clear and understandable (being complicated)	5
Having too many details/unnecessary details	3
Theme 2: Poor Printing - Design (n:14)	**N**
Being prepared imprecisely	8
Having less visual elements	3
Having small font size	2
Being too thick	1
Theme 3: Lack of Integrity (n:6)	**N**
Including some pictures that are not associated with the subject	1
Including contradictory attainments and activities	1
Lack of subject integrity	1
Being not distributed in a balanced way according to classes	1
Being detached from the real life	1
Ignoring long-term attainments	1
Theme 4: Inappropriate for students' level (n:7)	**N**
Being inappropriate for the student level	4
Providing insufficient feedback	1
Being far from TEOG (Exam for Transition from Primary to Secondary Education) rationale	1
Ignoring individual differences	1
Theme 5: Non-functionality (n:15)	**N**
Not Being useful/efficient/functional/necessary	9
Not being up-to-date	3
Causing teachers to lose time (esp. filling evaluation forms)	2
Including many activities that do not have any educational value	1
Theme 6: Blunting Creativity (n:13)	**N**
Preventing creativity	4
Restricting teachers/making them robotized/making them inactive	4
Raising monotype people	2
Being far from scientific and universal values	1
Being based on a uniform approach	1
Interfering with the self-development of the teacher	1
Theme 7: Positive Opinions (n: 30)	**N**
Being instructive/ helpful in conducting the course	14
Being functional/useful	6
Being useful in the planned progress	5
Being good / not bad	3
Being contributive in choosing attainment	2

n= number of participants who expressed views about each code/theme

As it is seen in Table 4, teachers' opinions on guidebooks are gathered under seven themes, six of them contain negative opinions and one of them contains positive opinions. While insufficiency /nonconformity (n:44), poor printing-design (n:14), lack of integrity (n:6), inappropriate for students' level (n:7), non-functionality (n:15) and blunting creativity (n:13) were the themes that included teachers' negative views about guidebooks; 30 teachers were found to state positive opinions about guidebooks. Some quotations from teachers' opinions are presented below:

T*eachers should be able to use the methods, techniques, activities, assessment and evaluation approaches they want. I think guidebooks restrict teachers (T8).*

I never stick to the guidebook because it is highly insufficient. It is not clear and understandable. I find its content useless (T16)

I feel like a programmed robot when I constantly remain stick to guidebooks. .... I think guidebooks prevent teachers and waste their creativity (T19).

Guidebooks should be used because they help in guiding the course process and progressing in a planned way. .... The use of guide shortens this process (T24).

The presence of instructions presents a content that makes teachers inactive as if to say do this on that page, do this in this question and write this in this activity (T48).

In fact, guidebooks are not needed in democratic, secular, scientific, contemporary and free education systems. It is also a fact that guidebooks interfere with the self-development of the teacher. Guidebooks restrict teachers and make them lazy (T61).

Findings Regarding Teachers' Evaluations on Guidebooks in Terms of Professional Development and Performance

The participants were asked "What do you think about the guidebooks in terms of your professional development and performance?" Analysis of the answers given to this question is presented in Table 5.

Table 5 *Findings Regarding the Contribution of the Guidebooks to Professional Development and Performance*

Theme 1: Preventing the teacher development (n:35)	N
No contribution/Unnecessary	26
Being restrictive for the development if you stay stick to them a lot	4
Being an obstacle for those with high performance	2
Causing teachers to become atrophied	2
Restricting to generate different ideas	1
Theme 2: Contribution to professional development and performance (n:28)	N
Being useful / making contributions	11
Being helpful instructive/suggestive/productive in teaching	9
Increasing teachers' performance	8
Theme 3: Contribution to planning and implementation (n:19)	N
Enhancing/saving from preparing plan and/or practice	6
Being a good guide during the early years of the profession	4
Allowing to conduct the course in a more efficient way	3
Ensuring to be prepared to attend the class	2
Preventing waste of time	2
Contributing to the assessment and evaluation	2
Theme 4: Contribution to developing different perspectives (n:5)	N
Providing different perspectives in Planning/teaching/evaluating	5

n= number of participants who expressed views about each code/theme

As it is seen in Table 5, 35 teachers indicated that guidebooks do not make any contribution to teacher development or have an effect in preventing the professional development of the teacher. 26 teachers, who stated that guidebooks were unnecessary, mentioned that these books did not make any contribution to teachers' professional development and performance. 28 teachers stated that the guidebooks make positive contributions to their professional development and performance, 19 teachers emphasized that the guidebooks contribute to planning and implementation, and 5 teachers

stated that they contribute to the teachers' development of different points of view from various perspectives. Some quotations from these teachers' statements are presented below.

I think they do not contribute to the professional development. Because I see that they have no knowledge or skill that would provide me more than I have (T14).

Guidebooks make contributions in terms of the profession because they enlighten teachers on how to make the course more appropriate. They affect our performance positively (T37).

I do not think that they contribute to my professional development. On the contrary, I am one of those people who believe that the person can develop by investigating and acting in accordance with his/her needs. ... In terms of performance, I think that they make things easier and save teachers from preparing plans (T60).

Teachers' Suggestions for the Guidebooks

An attempt was also made in the study to determine teachers' suggestions for the guidebooks. These suggestions were gathered under seven themes (Content, Visuality, Activities, Flexibility, Preparers, Sense of modern education, and Conducting the course) in the content analyses. These themes and the codes they contain are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 *Suggestions for the Teacher Guidebooks*

Theme 1: Content (n:29)	n
They should be simplified/Unnecessary details should be removed/shortened	7
They should be reviewed and mistakes should be eliminated	7
The content should be enriched	5
Assessment questions / exercises should be added	4
Assessment questions / exercises should be added	3
Content should be more practicable	2
More questions should be included	1
Theme 2: Visuality (n:16)	n
CD, video or flash memories should also be given instead of/along with the guidebooks	5
Visual elements should be increased and material support should be provided	5
They should be prepared in the form of booklets	2
Print quality should be increased	2
Course materials should be delivered instead of books	1
Larger fonts should be used	1
Theme 3: Activities (n:15)	n
Activity diversity should be increased and enriched	6
Activities leading to different ways of thinking should be included	3
More realistic activities should be prepared	2
Introduction to the course activities should be increased	1
Less costly activities should be included	1
A book containing the successful activities of teachers should be distributed	1
Teachers should be given the chance to choose activity	1
Theme 4: Flexibility (n:13)	n
School/Classroom/ Changing characteristics of students should be taken into account	5
It is necessary to be flexible	3
It is necessary to get prepared multilaterally	1
Assessment forms should be prepared in accordance with students of all levels	1
They should contain materials that will appeal to students of all levels	1
They should be organized regionally	1
The games, songs, various activities considering individual differences should be added	1
Theme 5: Preparers (n:12)	n
Teachers' opinions and suggestions should be taken into account	7
They should be prepared together with the commissions consisting of teachers and academicians	3
It is necessary to receive support from the domain experts while preparing them	2

Theme 6: Sense of Modern Education (n:11)	n
They should be prepared again in accordance with the sense of modern education	3
They should be updated continuously	3
They should be prepared from universal morality and tolerant perspective	1
Learning by doing and experiencing should be kept in the forefront	1
They should contain activities that lead to thinking and generating ideas, not by rote	1
Techniques and methods/practices that will give new ideas to teachers should be included	1
They should not be prepared according to the exam system	1
Theme 7: Conducting the Course (n:7)	n
The time should be arranged in a more realistic way	3
There should be sample lectures	2
Planning should be made according to teacher's knowledge	1
Information about conducting the course should be provided	1

n= number of participants who expressed views about each code/theme

Among the suggestions of the teachers, those related to the content of the guidebooks constituted the largest group (n:28). 16 teachers made suggestions in the visuality theme. While teachers made such suggestions as "Activity diversity should be increased and enriched" in the Activities (n:15) theme, the suggestions of "School/Classroom/ Changing characteristics of students should be taken into account" was the first suggestion in the Flexibility (n:13) theme. While the suggestion of "Teachers' opinions and suggestions should be taken into account" was mostly mentioned in the Preparers theme (n:12), teachers mentioned in the Sense of Modern Education theme (n:11) that the guidebooks should be prepared again in accordance with the sense of modern education and should be updated continuously.

Discussion

Ministry of Education provides teachers with the guidebooks to be used for classroom practices. This study examined teachers' opinions on these guidebooks. Findings show that the teachers had both positive and negative views about the guidebooks. First group of findings included the teachers' positive opinions about the guidebooks. One of the findings is related to the frequency of teachers' using the guidebooks. Nearly half of the teachers (30) stated that they always used the guidebooks. When the reasons for using the guidebooks were examined, it was found that the participants often talked about their guiding role in the teaching- learning process. In this respect, teachers indicated that they saw the guidebooks particularly useful for "contribution to professional development and performance" and "contribution to planning and implementation". In other studies about the topic, teachers expressed favourable opinions on guidebooks in a similar way (Ayvacı and Er-Nas, 2009; Genç et al., 2014; Göçer and Aktürk, 2015; Gür, 2014; Kırmızı, 2013). Based on these results, it can be said that the teachers generally adopt and use the guidebooks.

Although they directed many criticisms, teachers seem to have adopted the guidebooks well. They might think that these guides save them from planning, preparing for the lessons underlying their adoption of these books despite their criticism. Teachers, especially those who see their own task as only to practice the guidebook as it is, might perceive these guides as a great source of comfort. This notion is supported by the fact that teachers who participated in the study conducted by Gür (2014) were found not to question the expected teacher role in these books. However, many teachers' indicating that the guidebooks are useful does not mean that they adopt the type of the teacher prescribed by these books or they apply the instructions given in the guides without questioning. Indeed, the teachers who indicated that they sometimes benefited from the guides did not apply the guidelines exactly, but merely pointed out that they were benefiting from these books to examine the attainments and get ideas, which can be considered as an indicator that the teachers are actually very critical of the guidebooks. As Gur (2014) states, control mechanisms have step-by-step planning of teachers' work, but this does not mean that teachers apply these books as obedient workers without questioning them at all. Many teachers in the study noted that even though they were using the guidebooks, they were also preparing additional activities, they did not find some guidelines appropriate, and they often examined the guidebooks just to get different ideas. These findings can be

handled in such a way that teachers do not completely give up the autonomy on their profession. As emphasized by Apple (1988, p..44), teachers do not silently comply with these processes and create spaces in various creative ways where they can make decisions about the educational process as an autonomous individual in their schools.

Another important finding in the study is that teachers had some negative opinions and criticism about the guidebooks. When the teachers' opinions on the guidebooks were examined, it was found that 30 positive opinions were expressed under one theme, while 99 negative opinions collected under six themes such as inadequacy, inefficiency, printing-design weakness and teacher's creativity. In this context, teachers seem to have generally negative opinions about the guidebooks. However, considering only 19 teachers out of 67 never or rarely used the guidebooks, it can be said that the teachers continue to use the guidebooks despite their criticims. When the reasons for why teachers use and do not use the guidebooks are examined, it is seen that they expressed 48 opinions as the reasons for using and 45 opinions as the reason for not using the guidebooks. The fact that these results are very close to each other also supports the comment that teachers keep using the guidebooks. Another supportive finding is that only 15 of the teachers found the guidebooks unnecessary. Based on these findings, it can be said that teachers have some criticisms of guidebooks, but they are trying to use them as guides in general and believe that these books should be provided. These findings remind us Milner's (2013) statements about the possible two-way effects of the scripted curriculum on teacher professionalism. According to Milner, a scripted and narrowed curriculum might move teaching closer to a professional status by defining what should and will be covered, but to the contrary, this kind of curriculum moves teaching away from professionalization by not allowing teachers to rely on their professional judgment to make curricula decisions for student learning, with the consequent sacrifice of higher-level learning, creativity, flexibility, and breadth of learning (p.i).

When teachers were asked to evaluate the guidebooks in terms of the contribution to their professional development and performance, the most frequently stated views were that the guidebooks hindered the teacher development. In addition to the opinions expressed here, opinions such as "guidebooks can be restrictive in professional development if you remain stick to them a lot", "restricts to produce different ideas", "a hindrance for teachers" and "blunts the teachers" have also appeared in the "blunting the creativity" theme. Under this theme, teachers emphasized that guidebooks robotize teachers, turn them into workers, draw them away from the scientific and universal values, lead them to raise monotype individuals and maintain traditional education. Teachers in Göcer's (2011) study also expressed that they do not use guidebooks very often, the guidebooks deteriorate the creativity of teachers and direct them to be free-riders. In other researches on teacher guidebooks in Turkey, parallel findings have been reported (Göçer and Aktürk, 2015; Kulantaş, 2007; Taneri et al., 2014). When teachers' views are carefully analysed, it can be seen that they have actually described the characteristics of a teacher who is obedient and not autonomous and who has adopted the practitioner role that neo-liberal policies want to see. These teachers are criticizing the guidebooks simply because the guides are transforming them into workers and taking their autonomy from their hands. Similar criticisms echoing in the words of a Chinese teacher participated to Wong's (2006, p.29) study "… But now, we are just like factory workers to accomplish the handed down working tasks". And another example can be given from a teacher participated in the study conducted by Hargreaves (2003) who emphasized that "teachers were worn down by the loss of creativity and spontaneity in their work and wounded by the theft of their autonomy"

"I spent years learning how to teach, learning why kids learn, how they learn, what I can do to help that happen. And suddenly the state says, "No, none of that means anything. None of that means anything at all. We're going to tell you what to teach." Essentially, tell you how to teach."

Conclusion and Recommendations

As a conclusion; it could be asserted that teachers generally adopt and use the guidebooks, despite their criticism. Guidebooks can serve as a very valuable tool for novice and underqualified teachers. However, many teachers state that they do not follow the guidebooks exactly, and they have a critical point of view. Most of the teachers in this study believe in the necessity of the guidebooks but criticize them in many ways. The fundamental criticism is about their adverse effects on teachers' autonomy. On the basis of these results, it can be said that the guidebooks may have some benefits in showing the "way" to the teachers, but the teachers are uncomfortable that these guides show the entire way with all its details. Teachers point to the «hindering/restricting the development and creativity of teachers and robotizing» role of the guidebooks. These teachers criticize these books for deskilling and turning them into «technicians» through the process. Therefore, it is necessary that these guidebooks are prepared with the qualities enhancing and empowering rather than harming the autonomy, creativity, and higher order thinking of teachers. This is the only way to provide teachers raise a new generation possessing these qualities.

When these views of teachers are carefully analysed, it could be realized that the teacher characteristics they mentioned such as adopting the implementer role, being obedient, not being in need of any further questioning, not having the autonomy were exactly the qualities neo-liberal policies demand. Therefore, it can be said that apart from the teachers, the system itself should be improved with all its dimensions. But unfortunately as it is emphasized by Smyth et al. (2000) who tried to contribute to the theoretical explanations about what is happening to teachers' work:

"The governments have a tendency to explain the crisis in teaching mostly through individualizing the problems in such a way that blame on the victim understanding in which the discourse is constructed around the idea that the educator who must change, not the structure and organization of the work itself".

To conclude, it can be said that teachers, of course, should be more and more skilled and empowered, but this does not mean that it is only the teachers who need to be improved. The system as a whole, with its all dimensions, should be empowered. Other points should be specified as follows: first, if the teachers do not have any autonomy or any control right on their own work, it is almost impossible to raise autonomous individuals required for a democratic society. Therefore, teachers must be included in comities who prepare the guidebooks. Second, not only the teachers, as sated by Goodman (1988), if we are to effectively struggle with the deskilling process of teachers, several groups of people must be involved in the process; policy makers, teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers can play a significant role in empowering teachers. Third, both curriculum and the guidebooks must consider the needs of all regions and all students in the country. Fourth and the most important, we have to educate teachers who are aware of and able to resist creatively the spread of attempts that aiming to take their autonomy from their hands. We have to educate teachers who are able to create spaces to struggle with these attempts in their classroom, school and in the society as a whole. We need teachers who see the school as a collective community where people work, develop and liberalise cooperatively, rather than teachers who see school as a factory and themselves as factory workers.

One of the limitations of this study is that it made a general analysis of teachers' views about guidebooks, and it did not focus on any grade level or course. Although identification of the course is not among the purposes of the study, it was not possible to identify to which book the collected information belonged. Therefore, future studies might focus on each course separately and thus reveal clearer views of teachers about guidebooks.

Another limitation might include the fact that the participants' views were identified via a form submitted online. As this case kept the participants' identity totally confidential, it is considered to provide more objective evaluations about guidebooks. Besides, it enables to reach much more participants in comparison to the numbers that could be reached through interviews. However, this

method not only took away the advantages of face-to-face communication but also decreased the chance of obtaining deeper and detailed opinions as there were no opportunities to ask instant questions. Therefore, future studies might include different qualitative methods such as observations and interviews.

As the present study was designed as a qualitative one and was based on the data obtained from a relatively small group, it is not possible to generalize the findings to a large population, which could be considered another limitation. Future studies might involve larger teacher groups and more quantitative data collection tools such as questionnaires and scales. A better idea could be conducting mixed method research which benefits from the superiority of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches.

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