



# Particular Section of Education, Critically Reflect on How Pedagogy has been influenced by Political Agenda in UK

Marlia Shukry

School of Education and Childhood Studies, University of Portsmouth

## Abstract

Politics is an art that influences people and to some extent uses as the power to control governance. It also entails making and execution of laws and policy. Politics influence education system both in broader and narrower sense. This essay will critically reflect the impact on political agenda on pedagogy with reference to vocational education. This essay will review "Wolf's report on vocational education". "Review of Vocational Education" was assigned to Alison Wolf with the intention to analyse the current status of Vocational education. Training in England and making a recommendation for improvement and future development of VET in England. The essay will review the analysis, outcomes and recommendation of the Wolf report and how the report has impacted the status of VET from a pedagogical perspective.

**Keywords-** Education, Pedagogy, Political Agendas.

## I. Introduction

In order to understand the impact of political agenda or politics on pedagogy, it is important to first understand the definition and concept of pedagogy. Term pedagogy deals with actions undertaken by the teacher to influence learning in students (Norton,2009). The importance of good education for children is now clearly understood, and this has led to a clear understanding of the importance of teachers who provide education to the children. Therefore a clear understanding of pedagogy leads to a clear understanding of the role of educators. This term is widely used in education literature, but it is assumed that it a self explanatory term (Butler and Spivak,2001). In order to understand the concept of the education, the process is important to examine the usage of term pedagogy, and it's the implicit assumptions about teaching and education. Clarity of the term "pedagogy" will assist in gaining a deeper understanding of how teaching is perceived and what practices will make teaching more influential (Loughran,2013p.76).

The term originates from Greek word *agogos* means "leader", a *paidagogos* was the name given to the slave who used to accompany boys to school and get them back. After school, his duty was to teach boys manners and taught other subjects too. In time, *pedagogue* came to mean simply "teacher", and pedagogy refers to teaching. Here are some of the ways in which various writers have defied pedagogy:

According to Oxford dictionary pedagogy as "the method and practice of teaching especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept". Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) goes beyond the concept and defines pedagogy as " The function or work of teaching; the art or science of teaching, education instructional methods" (2009, p. 42). Gildden & Bell (2002) describes the process of pedagogy and consider it as " the instructional techniques and strategies that allow learning to take place. It refers to the interactive process between teacher/practitioner and learner, and it is also applied to include the provision of some aspects of the learning environment (including the concrete learning environment, and the actions of the family and community" (p. 10 )

In England " pedagogy is usually taken to refer to the processes of teaching, in particular interaction with learners, but also planning and designing learning situations" European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015). However, the education department of Scotland considers "Pedagogy is about learning, teaching and development influenced by the cultural, social and political values we have for children ... in Scotland, and underpinned by a strong theoretical and practical base "( Education Scotland, 2005, p. 9).

Thus there is no single definition and unanimity observed in the defining the pedagogy. This is a highly debated term, and its definition is subjected to individual's fundamentals beliefs, opinions and values that assist in making decisions. Therefore in order to bring coherence to this debate around pedagogy term "Didactics" was used. This term describes the study of the relationship between learners, teachers and educational subject knowledge. The supporters of "Didactics" gave more importance to the uniqueness of school subjects and the presentation process of these subjects was also given equal importance. Didactics laid more emphasis on the processes of the individual learning and the specific content to be learned (the knowledge and the know-how). Still, the practical aspect of pedagogy that is the application of theoretical knowledge into practice was not present in this description. A wider definition of pedagogy was developed by Tochon and Munby (1993 which distinguishes didactics from pedagogy in the following way:

*"Pedagogy is concerned with our immediate image of the teaching situation. It is live processing developed in a practical and idiosyncratic situation. Didactic goals can be written down, but pedagogical experience cannot be easily theorised, owing to its unique interactive aspects. Though action research and reflection reveals the existence of basic principles underlying practical classroom experience, no matter what rules might be inferred, pedagogy still remains an adventure" (p. 207).*

As the pedagogy associated with vocation education is reviewed in this essay is also important to understand the concept of vocational education. The term 'vocational pedagogy' has varied meanings or expressions that reflect varied educational traditions and influences. "There is no formal definition of 'vocational education' in England, and the term is applied to programmes as different as the highly selective, competitive and demanding apprenticeships offered by large engineering companies and the programmes which recruit highly disaffected young people with extremely low academic achievement [...]. The many ways in which the term vocational is used reflect the many different purposes which 14-19 education serves and its large and diverse student body. Some qualifications are highly specific, oriented to a particular occupation. Others are more general, and are referred to sometimes as vocationally-related and pre-vocational."(WOLF 2011, p. 23)

According to Lucas ( 2013), vocational pedagogy is "the science, art and craft of teaching and learning vocational education. Or you could say more simply that vocational pedagogy is the sum total of the many decisions which vocational teachers take as they teach, adjusting their approaches to meet the needs of learners and to match the context in which they find themselves"(p.2).Lucas further says that vocational pedagogy is not sufficiently researched and theorised. This view of Lucas is supported by (Knowles, 1984) where he mentions that in terms of research more importance is being given to academic education as compared to VET referred VET as 'poorer cousin' of academic education.

The link between pedagogy and political agenda is not a new one, and from past many years, successive governments implement laws related to education and education policies according to the understanding of the knowledge. Pedagogy is and always has been political (Giroux & Maclaren,2014). Freire ( 1994) mentions that " viewing education as a neutral entity is a contradiction in terms since whether at the university, high school, primary school, or adult literacy classroom, the very nature of education has the inherent qualities to be political, as indeed politics has educational aspects"(p.3). From Freire's perspective actions associated with education are political in nature, and political actions are educational in nature.

In our case, vocational pedagogy polity is influenced by two main characters. First is the politicians who are instrumental in the formation of educational and second one are the teachers who will be teaching specific subject will impact the policy as well as its implementation. The understanding of the concept of knowledge of vocational education and its impact on the professional development of students also impacts the policy formation and implementation. Therefore there is a high possibility of instances where political agenda or policy related to teaching may not match with what teachers consider are best practices for students. Therefore in order to understand the impact of political decisions on the pedagogy Wolfs report on VET will be analysed.

"The Review of Vocational Education in England" was commissioned by the Coalition government soon after they came to power on in 2010. The reason behind commissioning this review was cited in Written Ministerial Statement (Gov.UK,2010) that states

*"for many years [the English] education system has failed to value practical education, choosing to give far greater emphasis to purely academic achievements. This has left a gap in the country's skills base and, as a result, a shortage of appropriately trained and educated young people to fulfil the needs of [English] employers (para,5).*

This review was done to understand the current status of vocational education in England and for considering ways in which vocational education can be improved for 14-19 years old by analyzing "institutional arrangements, funding mechanisms, progression from vocational education to work, higher education and higher level training, [and] the role of the third sector, private providers, employers and awarding bodies" (ibid.).

Next section gives a brief introduction of Wolf's report and highlights recommendations and its impact on vocational pedagogy. As total 27 recommendations were given by this report and due to words constraint, all the recommendations could not be discussed a recommendation that has a major impact on the vocational pedagogy has been discussed in detail. The analysis done by various other researchers on Wolfs report and the results of some of the recommendations that were implemented by the Coalition government will be discussed in the next section. The discussion will be centred around the impact of the recommendation on the pedagogy of Vocational education.

The Coalition Government's policy towards education was dependant on two principles one is related to autonomy and the other with accountability. The Government strongly believed that schools are most effective when they are given more independence on the method of teaching and when the schools have been provided with a robust framework of accountability. There was some amount of independence provided to the school on how they wish to teach however what subject the school can teach was not given that much of freedom. Wolf's report mentioned that reforms in VET are required to stop educational institutes from providing qualifications that are easy to acquire however offer limited value to students in future. Many of the recommendation from Wolf's report was accepted, and the first cohort affected commenced Key Stage 4 in September 2012 and completed it in the summer of 2014. In this, there was a reduction in the range of qualification that is included in the Performance Tables. Department for Education published an annual list of 'high value' vocational qualifications that counted towards Performance Tables

(DfE, 2012) alongside 'academic' qualifications such as GCSEs and AS levels. As in previous Performance Tables, the percentage of pupils attaining at least five GCSEs including English and mathematics at A\*-C grades remained the 'headline' accountability measure (Parmeshwarn and Thompson, 2015).

The earlier government provided incentives to the school to encourage their students to enrol in non-GCSE qualifications because of equivalence measures, which allowed these non-GCSE qualifications to contribute alongside GCSEs in Performance Tables (Fuller and Unwin, 2011). The Wolf Review showed that the introduction of equivalence measures had led to a major rise in the number of vocational qualifications offered to 16 year olds in England between 2004 and 2009 (Wolf, 2011, p.47), but argued that these qualifications were not as rigorous as GCSEs, thereby limiting progression both on to the next level of study and on to employment (Fuller and Unwin, 2011). Wolf report on this topic argued that "the previous weightings assigned to thousands of vocational qualifications were creating incentives for schools to encourage young people to take courses that were not necessarily in their interests" (Wolf, 2011, p.90). Taking this into consideration this recommendation the government removed the majority of GCSE-equivalent vocational qualifications from the school performance league tables. Twelve months after implementation of this change IPPR (Institute of public policy research) conducted research to find the impact of this decision on the schools that offer vocational education. IPPR took the survey of teachers and found that Wolf reports recommendation to take action against perverse incentives in the league table system was correct. However, IPPR found that this action has to lead to the creation of the perverse incentives in another way, as many vocational courses that offer value are not being offered by the schools as they do not contribute towards league table positions. Prior to application of this policy vocational qualifications were given the weight that was one or more GCSEs while calculating league table scores (Muir, 2013). However, the policy proposed the complete removal of most of this qualification from performance tables due to which many schools have stopped offering this vocational course In spite of the fact that some of this course offer good value to students. This view was also supported by Harrison et al. (2012) where he raised concern over the reduced provision of some of the important and practical related key stage four qualifications like ASDAN. Indeed, the government itself mentioned that "there may be pupils for whom the most appropriate qualifications are those not included in the performance tables. Where it is in a pupil's best interest, the school is encouraged to teach qualifications not included on the list." (Department of Education, 2012).

The Wolf's report displayed concern about young people between 14-19 who leave education with little or no knowledge about basic mathematics required to do some essential task that requires calculations and also lack the ability to communicate in English. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) comment on the report was: "Around half of the employers report problems with the literacy and numeracy of their staff, so we support plans for all young people to continue to study English and Maths if they do not achieve A\*-C at GCSE" (CBI, 2011). "England is almost unique among developed industrialised nations in not requiring any student to study mathematics or the English language beyond the age of 16. At age 16 just under half have reached the required standard in mathematics and English of a GCSE pass at grades A\*-C and at age 18 half are still below this standard" (WOLF 2011, p. 83). Therefore the Report recommended that students failing in mathematics and English at age 16 need to continue to study mathematics and English till they attain the age of 18 with the aim of reaching the standard of a GCSE pass at Grades A\*-C.

***Recommendation 9:** Students who are under 19 and do not have GCSE A\*-C in English and/or maths should be required, as part of their programme, to pursue a course which either leads directly to these qualifications, or which provides significant progress towards future GCSE entry and success. The latter should be based around other maths and English qualifications which have demonstrated substantial content and coverage; Key Skills should not be considered a suitable qualification in this context. DfE and BIS should consider how best to introduce a comparable requirement into apprenticeship frameworks" (Wolf, 2011).*

However there this recommendation can be critically reviewed by considering Ewens (2012) views. According to Ewens(2012)

*"that problem with literacy and numeracy predate the last two years of compulsory by many years and, at least in part, have their roots in early childhood. Essentially, any expectations that change in pedagogy in the last two years of compulsory education can reverse the cumulative effects of issues that have their origins in part in the pre-school years are doomed to disappointment. A review of the provision at key stage 4 could reasonably take account of existing research on the identification and improvement of poor literacy and numeracy in earlier childhood" (p.13 ).*

Introducing math does give importance to numeric and arithmetic abilities, however, laying too much of stress on math make students ignore the more important aspect and skills associated with real life world which is dynamic (Tickly and Wolf,2000). According to Bynner and Parsons (2000) poor numerical ability comparatively, cause more damage than poor literacy skills with if considered from one's employability perspective. However, Wolf reports providing stress on both language skills and mathematical skills.

This change also impacted the curriculum as due to this change in policy colleges now have to change their approach towards teaching English and Math. In many cases, college's work load has increased due rise in a number of students taking compulsory English or Maths post GCSE as they failed to obtain grade C or above. Additionally, students who have not attended English and Maths GCSEs were generally not interested in learning these subjects along with vocational courses. Institutions teachers have to put in extra efforts to increase the engagement level of these students. For example, Dagenham College opted for innovative methods and digital medium for teaching( Centre for Post - 14 Research & Innovation, 2014).

Wolf reports also emphasised on work experience, apprenticeships and Funding. Wolf's report emphasises advantages associated with an apprenticeship for young people and this importance of apprenticeships is highly recommended where the youth unemployment is on the rise. Research quoted in the Report shows that "apprenticeship increases earnings and improves future employment chances" (MCINTOSH 2007 qtd. in WOLF 2011, p. 153).

On the basis of a recommendation from Wolf, there have been changes done to 16-19 study programme. Students opting for VET programme has to undergo 675 planned hours of the study programme. Planned hours are "the activities in each student's study programme in an academic year constitute the planned hours". Out of this 675 hours, 440 is spent on students a vocational certificate and 100 hours towards "quality work experience" and other hours distributed for areas such as enrichment and tutorial (Department for Education, 2015). Institution's funding gets negatively impacted in case of deviation of planned hours. Below mentioned are the comments received as a reaction to the above recommendation from researchers as well as educators:

Deborah Ribchester, 14 to 19 and curriculum senior policy manager for the Association of Colleges, said: "Probably the most significant change for colleges has been the move from funding for qualifications to funding per student for a coherent study programme based on a set of overarching principles" (Whittaker,para7). Ribchester further mentions that the policy has given colleges flexibility to design the study programmes that fulfil the demands and need of the students. The beneficial aspect associated with the programme is that activities that need qualification and non qualification both are given equal weight.

Dr Stephan Jungnitz, the colleges specialist for the Association of School and College Leaders, mentioned that "The report recommended that the funding system should be simplified to free up resources for teaching and learning. Since the report came out, 16-19 funding has fallen by around 25 percent in real terms. Colleges simply do not have the resources available, no matter how well intentioned the recommendation"(Whittaker,2014, Para 12).

Lynne Sedgmore, chief executive of the 157 Group, said that since the report, vocational education had enjoyed a “higher profile and a more adult debate about its future”.

*“At grass roots level, funding mechanisms remain complex, and there is still a degree of central prescription around issues such as work experience and Maths and English qualifications which goes against the initial spirit of her recommendations” (Whittaker, 2014, Para 17).*

However, this reform was not welcomed by some of the researchers. As Gleeson et al. (2015) argue that due to such reforms motivate teachers to be obsessed with measuring rather than teaching. Teachers spent most of their time in dealing with matters of politics and policy. They give first priority to providing information and meeting the needs of the structure (political agendas and thereby teaching and learning are given second priority. Canning (2012) criticised Wolf Report for displaying narrow approach towards the impact of VET on the school curriculum. The " discontinued Young Apprenticeship (YAs) programme" that intent to provide KS4 “access to industry-specific learning and work experience” (p. 7) was criticised by Acquah and Huddleston (2014). The aspect that was criticised was that some of the VET programmes did not have the intention to improve general attainment however focussed on the improvement of other aspects like attendance and re-engaging students who felt “valued to be treated as adults” (Acquah, and Huddleston, 2014)

For increasing the quality of education and generating more interest of young people towards study many changed were made in the educations sector. The political agenda associated with these changes was to ensure that young people are ready to accept the challenges of work and higher education ( Department for Education, 2015). One of the important change that was undertaken was to raise the participation age (RPA) from 16 to 18 in 2014. Some of the positive aspect associated with this change was that RPA provided higher inclusion in education especially due to RPA, attention was drawn towards VET (Acquah and Huddleston, 2014). However, Acquah and Huddleston (2014) further point out the fact that RPA requirement does not come under the jurisdiction of local authorities. Therefore once students move out of school and opt for different versions of learning and training, there is no way to track them. Moreover, for RPA collaboration between education, training providers and employers are required. The interaction of these entities will further impact the change (Maguire, 2015). One clear impact of RPA was high enrolment of students in courses. RPA made a “compelling case for the development of a strong VET for the labour market. It often criticised as an ideological tool that is used by a government move the statistical number of unemployed youth into education (Acquah and Huddleston, 2014).

Lupton, Unwin and Thomson (2015) presented a working paper that examined the social policy of further education (FE) and higher education (HE) of Coalition government. In this working paper, they have mentioned that there were many issues associated with the government policies. They mentioned about the observable trend that showed many young people unable to get in the labour market, increase in a number of low skilled workers and decrease in the requirement of youth labour. Taking into consideration this trend it can be said that reforms in VET policy were undertaken taking into consideration the employment generation capacity of VET courses than learning. Thus this point proves the earlier point discussed in the essay where it was mentioned that the perspectives of teachers and politicians on knowledge and its outcomes might vary.

The above discussion focused on the impaction of political agenda on the pedagogy however it is important to note that changes in global educational and economic scenario also derived the policies and political agendas for pedagogy. The changes to vocational pedagogy were undertaken due to economic reasons however if looked from a global perspective the intentions behind the changes undertaken seems to be justified. Although in some cases the impact may not always be positive however there is a wider level of benefits associated with these changes. The European Council in 2008 mentioned that “curricula should be used as a tool to encourage more learner-centred approaches in education and training” (European Centre of Vocational Training, 2015)

The UK along with France and Ireland was the first to opt for changes and set up new frameworks. Moreover, they also adopted some of the recommendations related to good practices and initiative that European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training proposed in 2015. While discussing the impact of policy on pedagogy, it is important also to understand the factors that drive specific policy. In the current situation where Britain has voted to leave out of the European Union and higher restrictions on the immigration procedures, the country can no more rely on skills of immigrants. Therefore this political unrest on both home of global front demands changes in policy. As mentioned earlier that pedagogy is highly political and education is closely associated with politics these changes will impact the future teaching, assessing and curriculum.

Above discussion shows that political agendas greatly impact the education pedagogy. In order to improve the pedagogy policies, it is important that effectiveness of the policy should also be considered. Therefore in order to have an effective policy, the outcomes of the policy should be properly discussed, debated and then the policy should be implemented. As the changes in the field of education, especially in VET, lay more stress on improvement of the quality of education being provided to the students. Many researchers insist that changes and improvements should come from the teachers rather than from the policy makers. As obvious from the statement by Lucas, Spencer, & Claxton (2012) where they say “classroom, in understanding the many decisions teachers take as they interact with students” (p. 13). This view is also supported by Coffield (2008 ) who stresses on the equal participation of teachers right from the policy formation to its implementation as they teachers are instrumental in turning “policies into courses, curricula and purposeful activities in classrooms” (p.31). Political agenda also look for the development of the students however if they do not build good working relationship and understanding with the teachers they this will impact learners negatively.

## **II. Conclusion and Future works**

Politics influence people and to some extent uses as the power to control governance. Moreover, it entails making and execution of laws and policy. Politics is art influence education system both in broader and narrower sense. This paper critically reflects the impact on political agenda on pedagogy with reference to vocational education. It also illustrates "Wolf's report on vocational education". "Review of Vocational Education" was assigned to Alison Wolf with the intention to analyse the current status of Vocational education. Training in England and making a recommendation for improvement and future development of VET in England. The article reviews the analysis, outcomes and recommendation of the Wolf report and how the report has impacted the status of VET from a pedagogical perspective. Several issues have been notice in UK in specific and all the world in General. Finally, many studies need to be applied in this topic in order to provide more understanding.

## References

- Acquah, D. K., & Huddleston, P. (2014). Challenges and opportunities for vocational education and training in the light of Raising the Participation Age. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 1-17. doi:10.1080/13596748.2013.872915
- Butler, J., & Spivak, G. C. (2001). What is critique?. *concern*, 30(2), 225-248.
- Canning, R. (2012). The Vocational Curriculum in the Lower Secondary School: Material and Discursive Practices. *Curriculum Journal* , 327–343.
- CBI (2011) English and Maths if they do not achieve A\*-C at GCSE” [www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2011/03/cbiresponds-](http://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2011/03/cbiresponds-)
- Centre for Post - 14 Research & Innovation. (2014, May 21). 16-19 Study Programmes- English and Mathematics. United Kingdom.
- Coffield, F. (2008). *Just suppose teaching and learning became the first priority...* London: Learning and Skills Network.
- Department for Education. (2015, May 8). *2010 to 2015 government policy: young people*. Retrieved from Gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-young-people/2010-to-2015-government-policy-young-people>
- Department for Education. (2016, January). *16 to 19 study programmes*. Retrieved May 2017, from Departmental Advice for Education Providers On the Planning and Delivery of 16 to 19 Study Programmes: Retrieved from [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/493452/16\\_to\\_19\\_study\\_programmes\\_departmental\\_advice\\_Jan\\_2016\\_update.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/493452/16_to_19_study_programmes_departmental_advice_Jan_2016_update.pdf)
- Department of Education (2012) Qualifications for 14-16 Year Olds and Performance Tables. Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/Post16Learning/Page1/DFE-00065-2012> Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2013). Quality Area 1 –Educational program and practice.
- European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. (2015). *Vocational pedagogies and benefits for learners: practices and challenges in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015: Publications Office of the European Union
- European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. (2015). *Vocational pedagogies and benefits for learners: practices and challenges in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Ewens, D. (2012). The Wolf report on vocational education.
- Freire, P. (1985) *The Politics of Education*, London, Macmillan from didactics to pedagogy’, *Teacher and Teacher Education*, 9(2), pp. 205–18.
- Giroux, H. A., & McLaren, P. (Eds.). (2014). *Between borders: Pedagogy and the politics of cultural studies*. Routledge.
- Gleeson, D., Colley, H., & Wahlberg, M. (2005). Improving Teaching and Learning in Further Education: Towards a Genealogy. *British Educational Research Association Annual Conference*, , (pp. 1-14). Glamorgan.
- Gleeson, D., Hughes, J., O’Leary, M., & Smith, R. (2015). The State of Professional Practice and Policy in the English Further Education System: A View From Below. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 78-95. doi:10.1080/13596748.2015.993877
- Gov.uk (2010), Written ministerial statement by Michael Gove on the Wolf review of vocational education , <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/written-ministerial-statement-by-michael-gove-on-the-wolf-review-of-vocational-education>
- Harrison N, James D and Last K (2012) The impact of the pursuit of ASDAN’s Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) on GCSE attainment, ASDAN and UWE Bristol. <http://www.asdan.org.uk/media/downloads/UWE%20report%20%20final.pdf>
- Loughran, J. (2013). *Developing a pedagogy of teacher education: Understanding teaching & learning about teaching*. Routledge.



- Lucas, B., Spencer, E., & Claxton, G. (2012). *How to teach vocational education: a theory or vocational pedagogy*. London: City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development. Retrieved from <http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/140814-how-to-teach-vocational-education-en.pdf>
- Lucas, N. (2013). One step forward, two steps back? The professionalisation of further education teachers in England. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 389-401. doi:10.1080/13596748.2013.847221
- Lupton, R., Unwin, L., & Thomson, S. (2015). *The Coalition's record on Further and Higher Education and Skills: Policy, Spending and Outcomes 2010-2015*. London: Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion., <http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/spcc/wp14.pdf>
- Maguire, S. (2013). Will raising the participation age in England solve the NEET problem? *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 61-76. doi:10.1080/13596748.2013.755816
- Maguire, S. (2015). NEET, unemployed, inactive or unknown – why does it matter? *Educational Research*, 121-132. doi: 10.1080/00131881.2015.1030850
- Muir, R. (2013). The impact of league table reform on vocational education in schools. *Institute for Public Policy Research*. Available from: [www.edge.co.uk/media/102394/league-tables-vocational\\_jan2013.pdf](http://www.edge.co.uk/media/102394/league-tables-vocational_jan2013.pdf).
- Murphy, P. (2008). Defining Pedagogy. In T. O. University, *Pedagogy and Practice: Culture and Identities* (pp. 28-39). Milton Keynes: The Open University.
- Norton, L. S. (2009). *Action research in teaching and learning: A practical guide to conducting pedagogical research in universities*. Routledge.
- Oxford Dictionary. (2017, April 18). *English Oxford Living Dictionaries*. Retrieved from Oxford Dictionaries: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/pedagogy>
- Phillips Jr, J., & Hawthorne, R. (1978). Political Dimensions of Curriculum Decision Making. *Educational Leadership*, 35(5), 362-6.
- Rodeiro CLV (2007) A Level Subject Choice in England: Patterns of Uptake and Factors Affecting Subject Choice, Cambridge Assessment. [http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/digitalAssets/114182\\_Survey\\_Report\\_-\\_Final.pdf](http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/digitalAssets/114182_Survey_Report_-_Final.pdf)
- Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Sylva, K. Muttock. S., Gilden, R. & Bell, D.(2002). *Researching effective pedagogy in the early years*. DfES Research Report, 365.
- Tikly, C., & Wolf, A. (Eds.). (2000). *The maths we need now: demands, deficits and remedies*. Institute of Education, University of London.
- Tochon, F. and Munby, H. (1993) 'Novice and expert teachers' time epistemology: A wave function to vocational-education-report
- Whittaker, F (2014), What has happened to 14 to 19 vocational education? <https://feweek.co.uk/2014/03/28/what-has-happened-to-14-to-19-vocational-education/>
- Wolf, A. (2011). *Review of Vocational Education- The Wolf Report*. London: Department for Education.