

Institution:	Goldsmiths, University of London
Unit of Assessment: 25: Education	
Title of case study:	Gender, Identity and Education
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)	

Paechter's research has attracted wide interest among educational practitioners and the broader public. As a result of this, she has been invited to contribute to radio programmes, Teachers' TV broadcasts, and other media for professional and general audiences. Her research has been widely reported in the media. It helps to shape public understanding of children and gender, and public debate about young people, both in the UK and internationally. She has influenced both high-level policy through her evidence to the Equal Opportunities Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and practice, through her presentations to groups of practitioners.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)
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Paechter, now Professor of Educational Studies at Goldsmiths, has been here since her appointment as Senior Lecturer in 2001. Her work focuses on the relationships between gender, power and knowledge, and on how these are played out in children's identity construction and curriculum forms. She has been particularly concerned to establish how children develop embodied identities in relation to home, school, and peer groups. This work has been carried out simultaneously through theoretical and synthesising writing, and through empirical research.^[1]

Paechter's proposal that masculinities and femininities are constructed and maintained within communities of practice was developed in a series of papers published from 2003, and expanded in her 2007 book *Being Boys, Being Girls*.^[2] In this body of work she develops an earlier framework established in relation to apprenticeship and workplace learning and applies it to gender identity construction, while introducing a developed concept of power relations into the communities-of-practice literature.^[3]

Her insight that children learn gendered behaviour from participating, as novice members, in communities of boys and girls and of men and women, has considerable explanatory force that can be applied to understand how children behave in group settings. It provides a framework not just for further research (where it has been applied in a range of fields) but also for practice. Understanding that children learn gendered behaviour from each other allows teachers and other practitioners working with children to intervene more effectively in children's learning, play, and peer relationships. This work also demonstrates the consequences of teachers using gender as a differentiator between groups of children, reinforcing stereotyped understandings which are already present in the peer group.

Paechter's ESRC-funded study of tomboy identities and active girlhood allowed her to instantiate her earlier theoretical work and to explore a little-researched group of primary age girls. She found that, while adults see tomboyism as a complete identity, children are more likely to consider themselves 'a bit tomboy', moving between tomboy and girly-girl identities.^[4] Paechter also found that school playgrounds were dominated by boys, so that girls were constrained from active play by the peer group as well as by inappropriate school clothing. The research suggests that schools can encourage girls to play more actively by providing a wider range of playground activities and reserving playground space for them.

Other findings from this study focused on the interaction between groups of girls in the playground, and on how different groups use various forms of local, peer-valued, knowledge to mobilise power in the group, including some children while excluding others.^[5]

Paechter's work on children's and teachers' gendered relationship to the school curriculum has encompassed a range of subjects, from mathematics and technology to physical education. Her work considers both the official and the hidden curriculum, and has led to recommendations for teachers and policy makers in a variety of publications and arenas. Her interest in embodied identities has led to further work on the physical and spatial aspects of schooling. She is developing ways of understanding how curriculum forms such as physical education, dance and drama are

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related to gendered identities. Her research suggests that there might be more productive ways of providing an active physical education, particularly for girls.^[6]

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Evidence of the quality of the research: The following references to the research evidence 2* or above as they are either published by well-regarded academic publishers or appear in peer-reviewed highly regarded international journals. [1], [2], [4] and [5] arise from ESRC-funded studies.

1. Paechter, C. (2006) 'Reconceptualizing the gendered body: learning and constructing masculinities and femininities in school' *Gender and Education* 18:2, 121-135 DOI:10.1080/09540250500380489
2. Paechter, C. (2007) *Being Boys, Being Girls: learning masculinities and femininities* Maidenhead, Bucks, Open University Press. Hard copy available on request from Goldsmiths Research Office.
3. Paechter, C. (2006) 'Masculine Femininities/Feminine masculinities: power, identities and gender' *Gender and Education* 18:3, 253-263 DOI:10.1080/09540250600667785
4. Paechter, C. (2010) 'Tomboys and girly-girls: embodied femininities in primary schools'. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 31:2, 221-235. DOI:10.1080/01596301003679743
5. Paechter, C. and Clark, S. 'Schoolgirls and power/knowledge economies: using knowledge to mobilise social power'. In Jackson, C., Paechter, C. and Renold, E., *Girls and Education* 3-16, 2010, Open University Press, 117-128. REF output – available in REF2
6. Paechter, C. (2013) 'Girls and their bodies: approaching a more emancipatory physical education'. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 21:2 DOI:10.1080/14681366.2012.712055

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)
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Paechter's work has attracted widespread interest over a long period, among both education practitioners and the wider public. Her research shapes public understanding and debate about gender and schooling, in the UK and internationally, through her participation in broadcast and online media and media reports of her findings. She has had a specific influence on European policy.

Policy makers

In Paris on 5 December 2008, Paechter gave an invited talk to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, entitled 'Teachers' behaviour towards girls and boys'.^[1] The research was used as evidence in an enquiry conducted by this committee into teachers' behaviour towards girls and boys. It features substantially in the resulting report, 'The rights of today's girls – the rights of tomorrow's women', used by the Committee to convince the Parliamentary Assembly of the need to address the widespread problem of unconscious gender discrimination in schools.^[2]

Teachers and other education practitioners

Paechter's work has reached education practitioners in various ways. In 2008 it was the focus of an article in the Times Educational Supplement, 'Ladettes Lose Out', which discussed her observations of classroom gender discrimination unwittingly proliferated by teachers, warning teachers of the dangers of failing to be carefully objective. The TES is the largest publication for teaching professionals which is read in print by 408,000 (and online by 5.9 million).^[3] This article led to Paechter being invited to give a keynote speech to the Girls' Schools Association Annual conference for headteachers, in November 2012. Several headteachers subsequently discussed her speech in their school newsletters and blogs.^[4] Paechter's research on primary school playgrounds was the subject of a Teachers' TV programme first broadcast on 8th January 2006. She was interviewed for a subsequent item on bullying on 22nd September 2006.^[5]

She was invited to develop a video about "ladettes" for TrueTube, an award-winning education website for schools with videos for teachers to use in PSHE teaching, which currently receives more

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than 1 million hits per month from 130 countries. Paechter's video is on the True Tube website and has been disseminated across the internet on MySpace and YouTube, where it has received nearly 2000 views.^[6]

She has talked to teachers and other educational practitioners (including childminders and teaching assistants) at INSET days and workshops. She gave an invited keynote lecture on children and gender at a day conference for Wokingham Borough Council Children's Services on 17th March 2012, attended by 94 delegates from local childcare services, including registered childminders. As a result, Wokingham purchased 100 copies of a book by Paechter's PhD student Barbara Martin, *Children at Play* (2011), which has an introduction by Paechter, one for each childcare provider in the Local Authority.

As a result of her book *Being Boys, Being Girls* (2007) being published in Portuguese, she has twice been invited to contribute articles to the publication for education practitioners in Brazil, *Pátio - Educação Infantil*. This journal has been adopted by the Ministry of Culture Education for distribution to all Brazilian public schools, giving it a circulation of over 181,000 copies, and broad influence in this large country.^[7]

Paechter has also contributed to dialogue among teachers about the gendered politics of staffrooms and how it can affect learning in the classroom. In 2008, she wrote a piece 'Opening up the staffroom as a site for professional learning' for *Curriculum Briefing*, an education resource for teachers delivered to around 500 staffrooms. Paechter's observations have formed the centre of three *TES* articles on the topic, in 2004, 2009 and 2010.^[8]

Public debate

Paechter has spoken on the BBC Radio 4 show *Woman's Hour* four times since 2008 on the subject of gender, identity and schooling. The 27th June 2008 programme led to a subsequent *Woman's Hour* listener discussion on 30th June.^[9] Her work on tomboy identities and related issues concerned with girls' friendship groups and physical activity has been widely taken up in the mainstream media. Extensive press reporting of her findings in 2006 and 2007 led to readers' letters and comment items. In 2012, newspaper articles and radio appearances prompted by the publicity surrounding her speech to the Girls' School Association again led to international public debate about issues arising from her research. Online versions of a *Daily Mail* article about her work were syndicated around the globe, attracting numerous public comments. A *BBC World Service* interview gained 58 'likes' and 27 comments on the BBC website in a few hours after broadcast. An article featuring Paechter's research in the *Times* was discussed on the ITV programme *Loose Women* on 16th November 2012, garnering 23 comments on the programme's Facebook page.^[10]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Note re accessing the materials listed below: All are additionally available in hard or electronic form on request from Goldsmiths Research Office.

1. '[Teachers' behaviour towards girls and boys](#)', Paris, 5 December 2008
2. Equalities Committee, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, [The rights of today's girls – the rights of tomorrow's women](#), Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 7 May 2009
3. Paechter's work is the entire focus of the article '[Ladettes' lose out](#)' (published in *TES* Newspaper on 9 May, 2008)
4. Girls' School Association (GSA) three-day conference for headteachers on 19th November 2012: *Our Girls, Our Future; preparing young women for their future lives*. Examples of Headteacher blogs/newsletters commending the lecture include those at [drhelenwright.com](#), [Redmaids](#), and [NotreDame](#).
5. [Teachers' TV](#): Files of the relevant programmes are available from Goldsmiths' Research Office.
6. '[Ladettes and Booze](#)' - Professor Carrie Paechter on whether binge-drinking amongst women is a new cultural phenomenon, and what the issue has to do with feminism and class issues, relevant to PSHE, Citizenship, KS3 & KS4.

7. Copies of both articles are available from Goldsmiths Research Office
8. '[The Staffroom: Enter if you Dare....](#)' by Hannah Frankel (published in TES, 2 November 2010); and '[Which Tribe are You?](#)', by Meabh Ritchie (published in TES on 20 November, 2009).
9. Woman's Hour appearances:
 - BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour (12 May 2011) with Jenni Murray, asking the question "[Are we free to be the people we want to be without a veneer of acceptable femininity?](#)",
 - BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour (27 Jun 2008) [Joining Celia Lashlie](#) investigating the ways boys develop through their teenage years, looking at women teachers, and comparing with teenage girls. A file of the subsequent discussion with listeners can be obtained from Goldsmiths' Research Office
10. Responses to interview on *Loose Women*: Cuttings/printouts can be provided by Goldsmiths Research Office.