



**SABANCI VAKFI**

**Philanthropy Seminars**

**"Innovative Approaches to Education:  
Curiosity, Imagination, Discovery"**

**Seminar Transcription**

**December 5, 2017**

**Sabancı Center**

**İstanbul**

**Speakers:**

**Selçuk řirin**

**Paul Collard**

**Moderator:**

**řirin Payzın**

**Şirin Payzın:** Dear guests, welcome. Good morning. This year is the 10th year of Sabancı Foundation Philanthropy Seminars. We said curiosity, imagination and discovery and we will be talking about education.

You've just listened to Music for Peace quartet. You've listened to four brilliant, young musicians. We greeted you with their little concert. I believe they deserve another applause. These young people were trained in Music for Peace Foundation. Music for Peace Foundation was among Sabancı Foundation Changemakers Program. And they have been providing musical training since year 2005 to young people and children on a complimentary basis. They are being organized all over Turkey. And they are trying to spread peace, which is something that the whole world and Turkey needs in the recent years, by way of music. They actually are giving voice to peace. Their objective, the objective of the foundation is actually to create an inclusive world, where libertarian and different colors and sounds take place in harmony, and which is based on human rights, to create such living quarters, cities and a country that we all greatly need. They are striving for this. Therefore, as I just mentioned, this foundation is training young people and students in many cities. Actually they are working about the subject that we will be talking about today.

And in our seminar we will be talking about education, new models in education, what novelties can there be in education, how can we make a difference and what will be the new approaches in education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, we said, "Curiosity, Imagination, Discovery". Why? Because we actually can carry out much different education models by using art, culture and technology. Exactly like what Music for Peace quartet you've listened to has done shortly before. As I said before, this year we are carrying out the 10th of Philanthropy Seminars. For these 10 years, we've listened to the representatives of many non-governmental organizations, which have become leaders in their fields. Or we listened to the people who have transform their personal stories into social activities. Many significant names came and went. First of all, in honor of the 10th year, let's see who we have hosted and with whom we put our signatures under important projects. We have a short film.

## **FILM**

Sabancı Foundation Philanthropy Seminars in the Tenth Year...

In 2007, we started out with "Global Perspectives on the Changing Role of Foundations" seminar to adapt to the changes and innovations in the world.

In 2008, we organized "Making a Difference Through Grant Programs" seminar with leading experts to discuss the importance of grant programs in social change.

We focused on accessibility and social participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in 2009. And we kept going with "Creating Accessible Societies" seminar.

In 2010, we discussed the role of philanthropy in solving economic, social and environmental problems of the world in "Can Philanthropy Change the World?" seminar.

In 2011, we said "Philanthropy From Generation to Generation". And we listened to the stories and experiences of a family with strong philanthropy legacy.

We wanted to raise the question of how innovative approaches in philanthropy contribute to quality education. And in 2012, we organized “Philanthropy for Education: Innovations and Opportunities” seminar.

In 2013’s “Challenging the Impossible” seminar, we learned about the struggles and experiences of woman leaders in creating social change.

In 2014, we told the stories of successful women who address women’s issues through art in “Featuring Award Winning Women” seminar.

The ninth Philanthropy Seminar titled "Love for Humanity Despite All" was held in 2016 where we listened to the stories of the ones who overcame the challenges they encountered and turned their love for humanity into action.

As before, we will continue to inspire civil society and rights based practices with our Philanthropy Seminars.

### **END OF FILM...**

**Şirin Payzın:** As I said before, Curiosity, Imagination and Discovery, we will be talking a lot about these today. Today we are hosting two distinguished guests. Our first guest is Paul Collard. He is coming from England. He has a foundation called “Creativity, Culture and Education”. And at this foundation he is working on significant projects about what I just mentioned, concerning how we can train these youngsters and children by including art and culture. He will be here soon and be my guest.

My other is Prof. Dr. Selçuk Şirin is a faculty member at New York University and is a professor there. However, you know more about him through media. Education means development. You can never have a good economy without education. Whatever you do in education, you may only achieve that in development. He always emphasizes this, always mentions this. Today, we will be listening to him. What can we do differently in 21st century? We will be talking about these.

Now, I have two notes. I like to carry out these meetings interactively. Therefore, here we will not only be listening to the speakers. Later we will have a panel. We will take your questions. When I was ending the panel last year I said, “The youngsters did not ask any questions. And I will be waiting for their questions next year.” I did not forget that. Since we are talking about education today, I would like to have questions from the young people who are sitting at the back rows. Not only from front rows, but also from the back rows, too, please.

We also have a hashtag. We will have your questions via Twitter with EğitimdeYeniYaklaşımlar hashtag. And we can start now. First, I would like to invite Sabancı Foundation Chairman of the Board of Trustees Ms. Güler Sabancı for the opening speech.

### **OPENING SPEECH**

**Güler Sabancı:** Yes, thank you Ms. Şirin. Yes, good morning. You all welcome to Sabancı Center.

I am glad and honored on behalf of Sabancı Foundation to be here at Sabancı Center on such a day with you. Distinguished guests, we will be listening to distinguished speakers in a little while. I would also like to say welcome to them, too. Paul Collard and Professor Selçuk Şirin.

Distinguished press members and dear students are also with us today. Yes, we heard shortly before. We are together here today at the tenth Philanthropy Seminar. We try to carry out the seminar each year during the week of 10<sup>th</sup> of December. Because as you know, 10<sup>th</sup> of December is World Human Rights Day.

This time, the timing is even better. With a beautiful coincidence, today we are carrying out our seminar on 5<sup>th</sup> of December, World Women's Right Day. Therefore, I would particularly like to congratulate World Women's Rights Day of all women on the World Women's Rights Day once more. Today is also a special day for Turkish women. Today, we gained our right to vote and stand for election. We remember Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who enabled us to have this right, with deep respect. Everyone is responsible in order to live in a society where all the individuals benefit equally from human rights. Everyone in all segments.

Yes, if we are talking about human rights, we know that the most fundamental of human beings regardless of the gender discrimination is the right to education. And therefore, this year we determined the topic of our seminar as education. And we are together in order to discuss the new approaches in education, to listen to our distinguished speakers, to get your questions and to better understand and evaluate this concept reciprocally. As you've just heard, until today while preparing the Sabancı Foundation Philanthropy Seminars our friends always tried to do this; Ms. Zerrin and the team paid strict attention to this; We bring the new approaches in civil society to the agenda and share the contributions that philanthropy make for social development. Yes, we tried to exchange views about philanthropy's globally changing and developing perspective and which needs of the society philanthropy should satisfy and also tried to bring these to the agenda.

Philanthropy is not only about providing funds. Philanthropy is not only about funds or donations. We perceive philanthropy in this manner at Sabancı Foundation.

This also means working for equality. Thus, we are working to provide every kind of source, not only regarding funding and donations but we are also working to enable people, individuals to protect their own rights and give them this support and self-confidence. There are fighting against inequalities and strengthening the civil society at the center of our activities.

Distinguished guests, the world is changing rapidly. Technological advancements are shaping the needs in many areas from business life to communal living. Yesterday, I was at a new tire making factory in Aksaray, Niğde. The factory is not yet opened. They are making test productions. However, the change is extraordinary. As you know, I started my career at a tire making factory in the year of 1978. The tire making factory in 1978 and the tire making factory of today in Aksaray... Soon, we will be listening to the differences in this respect from our speakers. Extraordinary digitalization. Machines are communicating with each other. It requires other competences. This new world, this new working order require other equipment. Therefore, I am eagerly looking forward to listen to the opinions of our speakers in this regard.

Yes, Innovative Approaches to Education; Curiosity, Imagination, Discovery. Our children shall gain their self-confidence and creativity at first in their families and then we need to improve their self-confidence and creativity without dulling these features within the school system. As I said before, we are all responsible in every area concerning this subject. And we all have a share in this transformation as a society, as the civil society, as families and as educators. We are all aware of this. I am quite hopeful concerning the latest developments and latest discussions in Turkey. Because everybody is stating their opinions and discussing about this topic.

Yes, Paul Collard came from England and Professor Selçuk came from New York for us. All together we will listen to and share their views. As Sabancı Foundation, we are trying something new, too. We have a new pilot practice; I want to speak about that. As you know, as Sabancı Foundation we built many schools. There are schools of Ministry of Education. However, for the schools bearing our name, which I see some teacher from our school here today, I see some from Sakıp Sabancı High School, we are trying to support these schools bearing our name as much as we can. Lately, we are working on a project about what novelties can be done in these schools. We chose a school. In this school, we are measuring the climate, which means the school culture. In this school, we are experiencing a project, which is based not only on students but also on collaboration of teachers, parents and school managers and in this project we are trying to find out how to make not only the education but also the climate at school more constructive and more efficient. In other words, we need to try out some new models. If they are successful, we need to spread them. And we are trying to contribute in some way to this at the Foundation. Obviously, improving the school's climate, increasing the efficiency in that manner and also the dialog of partners is quite important. It is quite significant for the partners to listen to and understand each other. We were told that beyond only the understanding between the students and teachers, the whole climate in the school, the sharing, listening and understanding between the partners make a great contribution for the educational quality improvement. We discussed this and now we are running a test... Hopefully we, as Sabancı Foundation, will be sharing the results of this test, of this pilot project at the next seminar.

Now, I don't want to talk more. I asked the young people from Music for Peace you've just listened to, they've been playing for five years. And now, they started to teach. It is the natural course of things anyway. I would like to thank you all for coming today, for participating in our seminar. And I also would like to thank our speakers in advance for what they will be sharing today. And I wish that we will have a nice and useful day. Thank you.

**Şirin Payzın:** Thank you. We thank Ms. Sabancı very much.

Now, our first guest is Prof. Dr. Selçuk Şirin. As I mentioned before, Professor Şirin is an academician, a professor at New York University. But most probably you know him from media. Because he has a very important characteristic. He achieved as popularly said to bring a topic, which is not widely discussed but mentioned briefly when necessary such as education into our lives. He put the importance of education into our heads by mentioning the balances between technology, education and development by applying these to the simple, street language and raising the topic of education insistently and repeatedly in every environment, even if it is a political discussion. In this sense, he made precious contributions for the discussion of the system of education in Turkey. Of course, as he will be explaining soon, he is doing scientific researches and writing many articles. He has research studies,

books and articles in every field, particularly in the field of economics and behavioral sciences. Today, we will be discussing the 21st century models, what we should and should not do and their consequences with him. I would like to invite him here to deliver his speech. Professor Doctor Selçuk Şirin. Thank you very much. Please come to the stage.

**Selçuk Şirin:** Thank you very much for this lovely introduction. Am I the only Turk delivering a speech on this platform? Wow. Because I checked that list and I saw that at least all the names were foreign. Thank you very much for trusting in my, I hope I will not embarrass you.

Now, I want to dream a little bit, however, the last time I was talking with young people, they asked me, “But they will be down-to-earth dreams, right professor?” I said, “No. On the contrary. Let’s chase rainbows.” My dream is this; you know; we are a country with 80 million population. We are living in a great geography. We have a magnificent historical accumulation. We have come from all parts of the world and get together here. We call it the door of nations. When I say dreams on these lands, a couple of indicators come to my mind. For example, one of them is let our per capita income be 30 thousand dollars. Why not?

One another is in terms of quality of life, let us be at least on average in the world. In that sense, this is not a big dream, it is a down-to-earth dream. But most importantly, about our children, we are a young population, we are a dynamic country, the average age of population is below 30. Let us dream that we are one of the ten, fifteen countries who have the best education in the world. Or since we are one of the G20 countries, let us be one of the first 20. I dream about such things. As you can see, I don’t do what I advise to the children.

I dream about such things. As you can see, I don’t do what I advise to the children. These are quite down-to-earth dreams; these are all possible things. Now, in this sense, when you say, “How can we make this happen?” there is a study that a psychologist called Ericsson conducted. Ericsson says that, these people we call geniuses are probably not born geniuses so he researches how they become geniuses. He includes 100 Nobel Prize winner scientists in his study. There are 100 people who won gold medals on Olympics, he includes them. For example, there are 100 pianists, who were chosen for big concerts, he includes them. I mean, he includes 100 journalists who won the Pulitzer Prize. But you get what I am talking about, right? He tries to understand how these people on the top came to the point they are at the moment.

There is a very popular side of this research. You’ve most probably heard about the 10.000-hour rule, right? Everyone has heard about it. That rule comes from this research, from Ericsson’s research. This 10.000-hour rule became quite famous but actually we are skipping the beginning of the research. He says that everything starts with a big dream. First, there has to be a vision. In other words, before you go to the top of that mountain, you have to see yourself there. This is the first thing. He says, I am going to win a gold medal. I am going to win a Nobel Prize, I mean in the field of four main sciences, I am going to win a Nobel Prize for chemistry. Or I will be giving a concert here etc., it means to reach that peak. That is very significant, that first part, and I love this subtitle very much; Imagination part. Without that part, let alone 10.000 hours, even if you work for 100.000 hours, it doesn’t mean anything other than working like a slave. You don’t have an objective.

Still, the second and third step of Ericsson's research are quite important, too. Assessment. In order to reach to that peak, you first should know where you are at the moment because this is a journey. You know, you look at Google, you're going to go somewhere, then where are you? You can't know where you'll be going without knowing where you are. And another one is constant feedback. Am I moving forward? Am I progressing? Am I regressing? Is what I am doing working or not?

Now. When I think about dreams, this is one of my favorite dreams. In year 1919, Mustafa Kemal came to Erzurum, which is very close to my hometown. He came to Erzurum. An ex-pasha who was deprived of all his titles, wanted for death penalty and who did not even have an adjutant at his service. He came and Mazhar Müfit was a governor, he used to be governor of Bitlis but he was relieved of his duty. When he was going to İstanbul, he heard that Mustafa Kemal is in Erzurum. He decided to go and see him. The date is the night tying 7th of July to 8th of July. Before he went to bed, Mustafa Kemal said, "Write these down." He made a list that night and I assume as you've mentioned, the right to vote and to stand for election was in that list. The first article of the list is; the government form would be republic. And he was a pasha deprived of all his titles. Think about those conditions. An empire that is losing, that is being destroyed. And a pasha deprived of all his titles. He didn't even have a single adjutant. He made Mazhar Müfit wrote that list down. And what did Mazhar Müfit say? "No offense Pasha, but you have side that is chasing rainbows." And this is the photograph. Now think about it, this was year 1919. And how many later the republic was established? I mean it was 4 years later, back then he started that list. And in 10 years he completed the list. He did not give up dreaming even under those conditions. This is very important. We need to discover these moments. This is at the origin of all the successful people, all the great projects and all the innovations.

We need to appreciate this. Now, let's look at the Ericsson's stages. Where are we? We should first know where we are so that we can progress accordingly. 1) Idle potential. Turkish population is very young, I mentioned this before, the ratio of the population whose ages are under 30 is 50%. Now, what are we doing with these young people? When we sort these as, "Are they at school? At work? Are they attending any courses?" We see that every one of three youngsters are neither at school, at any course nor employed.

We see that every one of three youngsters are neither at school, at any course nor employed. Well, where are these 15-year-old young people? The previous statistic was covering people above 15 and below 30 years. You know, there is an international test that measures the skills of 15-year-old young people, PISA, I assume everyone here know this test, I don't need to explain it. It measures the ability to read science of mathematics. It is being done once every 3 years. When it was first done, we were the 33th among 41 countries. Where are we now? We rank 50th among 70 countries. What does that mean? We are a G20 country but our children are not among the first 50 countries. Of course, the ones who follow my studies know that I also have another special problem, Syrian children. I say that we shouldn't separate them from our own children. We have a special situation here. Almost 3 million people came to Turkey from Syria and most of them are children. And a good part of them are not going to school. Only 50% of the Syrian school-age children are going to school. And most of these schools are makeshift buildings. Only 30% of the children at the age of middle school and less than 10% of the children at the age of high school attend school. Where are the others? The others are on the streets.

Now, the reason why I am mentioning these points is this: where are here. I told you about my dreams at the beginning. When we ask how to progress from here; we have an opportunity. That opportunity came to us with technology. We need to make the best of that opportunity but we also have a chance there. In other words, we will not be waiting at this door for ten, fifteen, twenty years. A new race is starting. Think of it this way; let's say that until now the ones who run fastest were given a gold medal. Think of it as industrialization, the last century. And then they say, "We will not be giving medals to the runners anymore. There is a new sports branch. Whoever is the best in this branch will win the medal." Therefore, whatever that new field is, we call it twenty century skills, coding, this or that but whatever that is, we are at the same level with England. In that sense, we became equal. There is an opportunity. Will we use that opportunity that is coming with technology? That is the question.

Now, when we say education, there are three components. 1) Decision makers. There are politicians among this group but there are also school managers, too. 2) Parents and 3) educators. Now the good thing is, and that is what Ms. Güler Sabancı mentioned during her opening speech, there is a good point here. For the last six months, it's not been a year yet, these three components came to an agreement in Turkey. What did Distinguished President of the Republic say? "I'm not satisfied with education." There is a research conducted by İPSOS concerning the parents and Habertürk published it a couple of weeks ago. Half of the participants of that research say "Education will gradually be worse." In other words, they say, "I am not satisfied with education now. And it will be much worse 10 years later." There is a research conducted by educators, Eğitim-Sen, it states that 70% are not satisfied. This is very important and valuable and it is giving me hope. Because if you have any problem, as long as you do not accept the problem, you will not be able to take the road to solve the problem. Now, at least these three components came to an agreement in determination of the problem.

Now, I explained where we are. And I shared my dreams about where I believe we should be going. I'm skipping the feedbacks, maybe I will talk about the details during the panel. I would like to spend my last 7 minutes and 27 seconds by talking about these three problems, the data I shared at the beginning and sharing three of my dreams. The first one is Project HOPE. It was year 2012, of course in year 2012 when Syrian refugees first came to Turkey, when their number was not even half a million, we went to border gates and conducted the first extensive field research with Syrian youngsters and Syrian children. As New York university, Bahçeşehir University and City University of New York. And we published this research. Let me tell you two of the results of this research; One of every two Syrian children is experiencing post-traumatic stress syndrome. This means that they wet their beds, they want to kill themselves. They believe that tomorrow will be worse than today. In the same manner, depression. Half of the participant, half of the Syrian children are suffering from depression. Why? Because almost one third of these children are orphans. They lost one of their parents or one of their siblings. And they suffered a great trauma in terms of violence. Therefore, after this research, of course conducting a research is not enough, then you feel a responsibility. We need to do something here. But what can we do? You cannot find a teacher who knows Arabic in Turkey. There are no psychologists, psychiatrists who know Arabic in Turkey. In other words, we do not have enough experts to serve millions of people.

And at that point we discovered the technology. Will we be able to upskill them to a certain level by using this technology? Can we offer them some sort of therapy? What is this? We are talking about a project with four dimensions. One of them is; can we teach them Turkish?



Another one; can we teach them coding? The third one is managerial skills which means using the intelligence more efficiently? Can we teach that? But the fourth one, which is also the most important one for me is; can we give hope to these children? In other words, when these children are suffering from depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, they will not be able to learn the others.

Therefore, at first, we need to solve this. Now, I have two sons, at ages of ten and fifteen. There is only one thing they do in their spare times; they play computer games. They don't do anything else. Since they are playing computer games, starting from this point of view we asked ourselves if we can enable them to gain these four skills while playing computer games.

We got support from Google and Facebook and started Project HOPE. It has four dimensions. One of them teaches them Turkish while playing games. The second is coding but as you well know in Turkey that it is a Turkish website. The third one is managerial skills. This is very crucial. Now, two people may have same intelligence levels as you know, teachers even know this better. However, people with same intelligence levels do not have same academic performances. Why? And we call that difference managerial skills and this is a teachable skill. In other words, you may teach people to be more planned, to focus on more carefully some problems and not to focus on others. And you may achieve this with a computer game. At least we achieved this. And the last one is hope. Does anyone know Minecraft? That the kids are playing? Now the good side of this Minecraft game is, this game is doing what we do with widely known Lego's in an electronic environment. And you can establish a new world there. We asked from these children to fictionalize a house, the house in their dreams within Minecraft. The village in their dreams.

Yes, we asked them to imagine a house and they are building houses, neighborhoods, schools, cities, a country etc. So, in a sense, we asked from children to present and fictionalize their utopias. And we did all of these in 40 hours and a month. They come two hours every day, meaning 20 days or 4 weeks. Where did we do it? We did it in Urfa with the contribution of Urfa Municipality.

The previous research, I mean I've been doing researches for more than 20 years, I've published more than 100 articles. I haven't got as much positive data in any of them as I have in Project HOPE. I am telling you this scientifically, statistically. I haven't found such a high effect size in any of the researches. We are managing this from a successful laboratory in New York. A single person who speaks Arabic manages 40 people. We can reach out to 900 people per year with a laptop. Why? Technology. If we tried to do it by finding a psychologist and reaching out to them one by one, we could not neither give them hope, nor teach them coding or Turkish.

Now, my second dream. This first dream is a dream that came true. When I first tell it two years ago, there were people who said, "Can this be possible? Can you teach it with a computer game?" But we did it. Now, I hope you will say that my second dream is impossible.

Each year 1.2 million children are born in Turkey. 200.000 of these children are born in the fields or gardens. 1 million children are born at the hospitals. I want to give a book set to every child born at the hospital. Each and every one of them. There will be six books in this set, semi-annual, second semi-annual, third semi-annual and so on. Why do I do this? Now, look my friends. 90% of the brain development ends at the end of the third year. If you have a child, make all the investment you will to your child in these first three years. As you know,

there is an economist named Jim Heckman. Jim Heckman won a Nobel Prize in economy. And at the University of Chicago they asked Jim this question; “I have 1 dollar. If I want to get the highest return, where shall I make an investment in child development?” And he says, “There a single place you should invest in. 0-6 years.” You put one and get seven back. University, high school, business high school, these are all meaningless. I am a professor at university. It would be late, too late. Now, I searched what children need here, in this period where the children are developing most rapidly. It is a classic research; the book will be published in Turkish soon. It is a research called “30 Million Word Gap”. “30 Million Word Gap”. 30 million words. Has anyone heard about it before?

Now. Can you give me 2 more minutes? I am telling you my dreams. I’ve achieved to finish in time at TEDx but couldn’t do it here. Now my friends, hundreds of families were monitored for 36 months by National Science Foundation America during the research. A camera was set in each household. The families were monitored for an hour chosen randomly. Starting from the day the child was born. Hundreds of families. And here is the conclusion; there are three groups of families. For one group, there are 45 million-word exchange between the parents and the child in total at the end of 36 months. They say words such as road, car, baby, song or whatever. 45 million words. The second group of families the number is 30 million words, of course the same word may be repeated again and again. For the third group of families, the number is 15 million words, in total. Therefore, the gap between this group here and that group is 30 million words. These 30 million words gap my friends, becomes the gap of their success at school, and this parallel gap does not close even if they go the best schools. The main success gap in education is originated from here. 30 Million Word Gap. The problem is that, everyone in this room today is in this group here. They are university graduates, they have bookshelves at their houses, they have time to talk, to chat with their children. The main success gap in education is originated from here. 30 Million Word Gap. The problem is that, everyone in this room today is in this group here. They are university graduates, they have bookshelves at their houses, they have time to talk, to chat with their children. But this group, may not even know how to read and write. Maybe there are no books at their houses. Or maybe they do not have time.

Now, what shall be done? I published a hashtag (#RunPlayTravel), last year I started a campaign, wrote articles so on. Run, Play, Travel. This is the greatest investment you may make in your children. I’ve worked in social media, wrote some pieces but it didn’t work. For that reason, I’ve developed this project. I’ve worked in social media, wrote some pieces but it didn’t work. What should the decision maker do? I’ve explained this for years. For years I’ve said these; invest in pre-school education. Remember, I’ve made such a campaign, too and wrote many articles. Instead of opening a university in every city, open a pre-school education institution in every neighborhood. It didn’t happen. AÇEV’s (Mother Child Education Foundation) study is a quite crucial one. I’ve contributed to that study, too. What do we do with our children at home? For 0-36 months, 63% only watches television with their children. The most awful thing ever, the biggest mistake that can be made. Only 23% reads book to the children. And this 23%, I mean that is you and you are all here. 23% are the educated people etc. But 80% does not read to the child. Why not? In 53% of the households, in more than half of the households in Turkey, there are 25 or less books. There are no books. You can guess what those 25 books are. They are religious books, test books, school books. There are no children’s books.

Now, I will summarize my second dream: We prepared six books, they are finished. One of the writers of these books is sitting just there, blonde, white. Can you stand up Ms. Derya,

please? Derya Şirin, my sister. Thank you. Derya, me and another friend of ours we wrote these six books. We found funding. It is a project approximately amounted to 20 million liras, we convinced everyone. Hopefully, on Mother's Day we will set off for this dream of ours and we will be needing all of your support during that process. Finally, maybe I shall not talk about this now and mention it on the panel?

This is my third dream. Now, this dream of mine is completely a dream. Now my friends, I knew about this as an educator but when Obama came to power, when he became the president, and when he started a summer holiday campaign with his wife, at least all the parents in America heard about this. It is based on a very basic data. This again is about children coming from poor, low-income and uneducated families versus children coming from wealthy families, of course. This is what I am troubled about, you know, 80% of Turkish population is among that lower group. A population that does not read book, that are uneducated. Now, here is the thing. When they start school, the gap between these two groups is so small and it can be closed. They start going to school and the gap is narrowed for the first graders. Then the summer vacation comes and what does this child do? He/she goes to the museum, reads books, attends to courses, has an interest in sports or art. He/she closes the book and never opens it again for three months. All the teachers know this, for example, when these children started as second graders, there are some children who forget how to read and write. Completely idle three months. You know what happens? This gap widens, as you can see the school do its duty, the teachers do their duty and that gap closes. And then when the summer vacation comes, that gap widens again. Since it is widening more each year, when they became fourth graders, the gap becomes so wide that it can't be closed anymore.

Now, I want to close this gap. I'm sorry. I believe this is a gap that can be closed. There are examples about this. When Obama and Michelle Obama started this campaign in America, I think that they succeeded. Particularly in certain regions. What did I do? First, I wrote the articles for Hürriyet etc., I explained it on televisions, probably you've heard. There are things that should be done, there are six things that should be done. 1) holiday sets. In America, in England, in Europe, when you go to a bookstore after April, you see a special section there. Mr. Mustafa, you know about this, go to Barnes and Noble after April, you see a special section is opened. And that section is for summer sets. You know what you do if your child goes on a vacation on summer? I have two sons and I live in America. In April, we go to a bookstore and buy these sets. We make summer plans. What is more, there are summer schools, sports activities, artistic activities, tours so on and so forth. Now look, this, this, this, this, and this. I cannot intervene in these. However, I am obsessed with these summer sets. I ask myself whether we can prepare and distribute these summer sets. About three years ago, I gathered the summer sets and I visited all the publishing houses, bookstores in Turkey, we examined and analyzed them one by one with one of my assistants. These summer sets are awful. They consist only of tests. In other words, they are no different than school. And the common goal of all of them is to push the child further from the school. We threw them into the garbage. I organized a team consisting of five people. We wrote these summer sets. I found a foundation. We distributed 30 thousand tests. And then we deliver them to a bookstore. And they determined the price as 30 or 40 liras. The sets were all sold but who bought them were the people consisting of this 20%. People who really do not need them bought the sets. Because they were expensive. We said that let us decrease the prices. I found a foundation in America. I got them all translated to Arabic. I worked with Syrian teachers. While we were distributing 10.000 of these sets in Gaziantep, we had the coup. And they asked, "What is in these sets?" and so on. Anyway, the project was prolonged but we distributed 10.000 sets. Now, we have Arabic versions of these sets. We also have Turkish

versions but as I said before they are expensive because of the printing material. Now, there are 3,6 million students in Turkey. Today, at 3 p.m. we will be having a meeting with a market. I am also looking for other places. In other words, there are 3,6 million children, but we wrote these sets individually for every class, I mean there is a set for first graders, a set for second graders and so on. Şirin, that's why I cannot come to your program any more, I am dealing with these. These summer sets. I don't know why. I found myself in the middle of this. Now, we have four books and we will be delivering them free of charge. Hopefully this summer or the next summer, these sets will be at the hands of the children in the villages, in the fields and meadows, this is all project-based. There is not a single test among the materials that we prepared. Not a single test. It is all about learning by doing. I think we can talk about this in detail later. Thank you. I know I past my time.

And one last thing. I know the circumstances are hard. I know you all have your excuses not to take the road. Rumi has a gorgeous saying; "You take the road, then you will see the road." Remember Atatürk. Remember Mustafa Kemal. Remember the year 1919. And take the road. Thank you.

**Şirin Payzın:** Thank you a lot Professor Şirin. It was really impressive. As he mentioned, we will be talking about the details in a bit during our panel. Meanwhile, when you mention about these subjects such as summer schools, sports activities, children who read books and who cannot have summer vacations. And you said that the gap widens between these children and who does not open the covers of their books. We have another problem in Turkey. Seasonal worker children. Most of them are going to pick cotton or harvest. Let alone attending any activities, they cannot even attend the school in time for the new semester. Maybe we also will talk about that, too. This issue of seasonal worker children is a big wound of Turkey. Let me just make a note of that as a journalist. Maybe we will go into details about this topic.

Our second speaker is Paul Collard. He is both the founder and the director of Creativity, Culture and Education Foundation in England. This foundation creates different education models by using art and culture. However, there is a different situation in Turkey. Here generally the government determines the suggestions of non-governmental organizations or unions concerning education. However, the situation in England is this; Paul Collard's foundation determined what the English government is doing. In fact, the governments came to the foundation and said, "From now on you will be in charge of coordination and the schools will apply your models." This is the difference. In fact, the voice of the civil society determined the voice of the governments and politics. As I said before, they are using art, technology and culture. And don't get me wrong, it is not only England, this model is practiced in Pakistan, Thailand, Chile and Australia. In a bit, he will tell us how to look differently at education in the 21st century. Mr. Collard, the floor is yours.

**Paul Collard:** Thank you very much indeed.

**Şirin Payzın:** I'll leave the floor to you.

**Paul Collard:** So, I've learned one important lesson this morning, which is never to try to speak after Professor Şirin. Because he already said everything. So, this is very difficult. What I'm going to do is talk a bit about my international perspective.

As said in the introduction, we work in lots of countries around the world and we work all over Europe in the work that we do. I'm going to look at some of the data that comes from

there and reflect on what I see is the way forward it'd be for you to decide how relevant this might be for Turkey.

So, few years ago, I was visiting a school in England, which was in our program. And when I finished looking at the project work that they have done, they said to me, "Oh, there is this 16-year-old boy and he's making a short film about your program," which was called Creative Partnerships. "And he'd like to interview you." So, I went to the head teacher's office, and the boy was there and he had a video camera and he asked me some questions and I answered and left. And I thought no more about it. But about four weeks later, I got a DVD in the post. When I played it, what was on it?

## **FILM**

Hmm my name is Paul Collard. National Director of Creative Partnerships. At its heart, Creative Partnerships is about making education a better experience for young people. And making sure that they leave school with a set of skills that's going to set them up properly to be a success in the 21st century. Ultimately if Creative Partnerships will have long term impact, then it is going to be an impact on teachers because we can't forever be in school doing that. What we have to do is to be able to work with teachers and bring around changes in what they do. If you get the right creative process going and you step on the outside and you watch those people, the people are at the most alive when they are doing that thing, completely focused, engaged in this different place. And it's that look of absolute rapt fascination that you get across people's faces that makes it worthwhile, you think. That's "absolutely living actually".

## **END OF FILM...**

**Paul Collard:** A few weeks after getting that DVD, I was meeting with the directors of some of the big advertising agencies in the UK. And advertising is a very big sector of our economy now. And it creates lots of jobs, they're really well-paid jobs. And everybody wants to work in advertising. But it's very difficult. It's difficult for young people from poorer backgrounds in particular to get these jobs. Now this boy came from a poorer background. And I showed these directors the video. And they wanted the boy's telephone number. Because they wanted to bring him up immediately and offer him a job. Because they could see that by the end of the week, they could put his talents in front of the clients and going "We could do this for you" and they would love it. But what was interesting to me is that there was never going to be an advert for that job. They didn't know they wanted that until they saw it. And this is a really big problem for young people coming out in jobs today.

Our government in the UK has these statistics, I don't know where they got it from, 60% of the jobs kids in school today will do have not yet been invented. Now, I don't know if it's 60% but we know it's true. Because even if it's in a traditional job like Ms. Sabancı was saying in tire making, what skills you need in tire making in 30 years ago is fundamentally different from the skills that you need in tire making today. And that process of constant invention is a big challenge.

Education systems around the world have been built on the idea that you would go to school and learn the things you will need to do in order to do the jobs you did afterwards. But if nobody knows what the jobs are, what is it that you teach in school? And that becomes an obsession with traditional subjects in the hope that somehow that may be what may be useful.

But in fact, what the world is looking forward today is not job seekers but job creators. Young people coming out of education need to invent the jobs that they do.

These are some statistics from McKinsey's, who is a big international consultancy who were asked to do a survey across Europe on youth and employment. So, it's a very big survey. They surveyed 25 thousand businesses. And what they found from them is that a third of employers feel that their business is suffering because they cannot find the skills they want in the workers. The quarter of employers have empty jobs as a consequence. So, across Europe, we have millions of unemployed young people and we have millions of empty jobs. There is a massive systemic failure putting those together. And when you ask our employers what are the skills they can't find, it works out like this; These are sectors of the economy primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy. And these are the skills they can't find.

Now, some people worry about language and math skills but the percentages are very small in those areas. But the politicians on the whole became obsessed with those as being a problem. But it's the ones further down, which is work ethic, problem solving, team working, creativity that employers say they find the biggest difficulty in terms of finding the skills.

Now, one of the pieces of work that our foundation has done is a big literature review on creativity. And we have studied creativity. We have read all the books on creativity. And creativity is a big industry now, there are professors of creativity all over the world and they all write books. And creativity is a big industry now, there are professors of creativity all over the world and they all write books. And what the books all have in common is they are all impossible to understand. So, we decided that there was no way we were going to develop creativity in school, if teachers felt they needed a PhD to understand what anyone was talking about. And we came up with these definitions of creativity called the "creative habits of mind".

And they look like this. There are five habits. Inquisitive, Persistent, Imaginative, Disciplined and Collaborative. Now what's important to say and in connection with Professor Şirin's presentation, is that in the literature, there is a difference between big C creativity and little c creativity. Big C creativity is about geniuses. How do you get Einstein and so forth? Little c creativity is about the creativity everybody needs to get through life today. And these are the skills that we focus on developing in young people in school. Now, some of them, leap out of people always associate imagination with creativity, but they often go, "Well, why persistence?" And the answer to that is if you are the kind of person who has lots of ideas but gives up easily and none of them happen, then in fact, that's not being creative. Being creative is to be able to have an idea and make it happen. That was the key as Professor Şirin said to Kemal Atatürk. He had great ideas but he knew how to make them happen. When things went wrong he stuck with it till he got there. This combination of skills that we use to define creativity.

When you then go back to this. Then actually this is what businesses are talking about. Work ethic is discipline and persistence. Team work is collaboration. Creativity and problem solving are imagination and curiosity. This is what the employment sector says they can't find in young people. This comes from Davos, the World Economic Forum. In 2010, they predicted what was going to be the 10 most important skills in 2015 and creativity was at number 10. In 2015, they predicted which were going to be the top 20 skills in 2020 and creativity is now number 3. The sad thing that McKinsey concluded is when they asked people whether they thought they were education was preparing young people for

employment 75% of education providers said, “Yes, I think that’s true.” But actually only 35% of young people and only 30% of employers thought that was true. And they thought in McKinsey about education and employment living in parallel universes which simply do not connect. And our work has been about how do you bring those things together.

I just want to talk very briefly about PISA as Professor Şirin has already raised it. So, PISA is a test 15 and 16-year-old all over the world take in math, science and literacy. But PISA also asks people how interested you are in the subject and also how good you think you are in the subject. Because the predictor of whether you will go on and study it is actually how good you are and you think you are, how interested is not what your test score is. Einstein was a classic example. Einstein was a very poor student. He got a very low-quality university degree. He couldn’t get a job in university when he graduated because his degree was so poor. But he got a job as a secretary and he wrote the theory of relativity in the evenings. He was so confident and he was so interested, he kept going.

Now, when you look at the PISA scores and you put together interest and scores by country, it looks like this; What you have here, these dots are the countries, along here you have the scores that people get. And we all know Finnish students always come at the top of PISA championships. But up here is how interested they are. And what you find out is that whilst the Finnish students get the highest scores, they are the least interested in science in the world. And the reason we want people to do well in science is because we want a scientist. But if the way we teach them good test scores but no interest, none of them become scientists. This is looking at this question of how good you think you are, the self-concept paradox. Here you got Japanese, Korean teachers and so forth you got very high scores. But they all think that they are very bad at the subject. They think they are bad at the subject because of the way that they are taught. They are taught in a way which makes them dependent on the teachers. They don’t think I did well in the exam, they think my parents and my teachers forced me to do well in the exams. That’s not about me and believing that I’m any good at this. This is looking at PISA math scores and entrepreneurship. And you have up here countries like Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Finland. They have fantastic math scores but the entrepreneurship skills of the young people are very poor. If you visit those countries, and you talk to them, this is a fundamental concern. Singapore is really concerned about this. Because their economy is faltering. Because their education system, which gets the best scores in the world, is not producing young people with the capacity to invent those jobs in the future.

How do you do that in the classroom? This is a much longer lecture than I have time for. But we have this concept of the high functioning classroom. The low functioning classroom is a more traditional style of education. High functioning classroom is what we argue for more of. Now, I’m not saying this is bad. There are times you just need to sit and listen to your teacher. This is a low functioning moment, right at the moment. You are all listening and I’m talking and so forth. And sometimes it is just necessary. But if that’s all you get, it’s a big problem. And down this side, you have a style of education which the teacher set challenges, they don’t give answers. It’s a very social way of working. Emotion is acknowledged. Your own stories and questions shape the education. And we call it high functioning because our argument is when you are physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually involved and engaged in the classroom, then you are most presence in the classroom. You have a 100% of the young person with you. And when you have 100% of the child, then they learn. Because you have a 100% of the child. So, how do you design a learning environment in the classroom that allows that to happen? So, a quick example. We worked in thousands of schools so we have tens of thousands of projects. So, I’ve just picked one for you. It’s from Lithuania, and

it's an example of the high functioning classroom. This is looking at how this is integrated in learning.

So, schools, when we work with schools defined the issue that they want us to deal with. They don't say, "Come and make us more creative." They go, "We are having problems in year 7 we're teaching the children to read." And that was what was happening in this class. So the way we worked is that we said the reason these children aren't learning to read is because they're not listening. What they are doing in this photograph is the first day of the project. They are just lying on the floor, listening to their school and working out the sounds they can hear. They then go out about town. And what they're doing is that they have little notebooks and they listen to all the sounds that they can hear. Then they use letters to invent words, which allows them to reproduce that sound. Here, they are doing it in a subway. Here, they are doing it indoor market. What you can see is the intense concentration on the children's faces. But what they're doing, I remember this from, when I was at school is they are actually doing the most boring thing, they are just writing their letters. But it suddenly become really interesting and challenging and engaging.

And this my reference for today. In this town, there was a university. And the children were taken to the university to a Turkish lecture. None of the children had ever spoken Turkish before. None of the children were Turkish. But they had to sit for an hour and listen to the lecture in Turkish, writing down the sounds using letters. So, they can work out how that happened. And then they came back to the classroom and they have got their little notebooks and they are working together. To work out who had the best ideas and to make those ideas better. And then each table comes up with a sheet. This is the sheet from one of the tables. The word at the top is "statis" which is the Lithuanian word for station. And the first word underneath that is "cektikas" which is the word the children have invented for the sound of a train coming into the station. Cektikas cektikas cektikas. So, these are all on a metric word.

The teacher then takes the project further. They are given paintings to select. And they have to create a soundtrack for the painting, which captures the feeling. But only making sounds they can make with their mouths. And this is what it sounds like. So, what the children were trying to capture was the sound of the sea coming in and wind blowing. And this is what it sounds like. So, what the children were trying to capture was the sound of the sea coming in and wind blowing. So, what the children were trying to capture was the sound of the sea coming in and wind blowing. So that they create that. But what it's doing is making them practice their mouths, with their mouths, how sounds are made. So, it's connecting it back all the time with a basic literacy thing, that converting it into a creative process that they find really interesting. You can see how high functioning that was. They worked in groups. What they were making was highly visible and they had to share. It was very mobile, they walked all the way around town. Emotions and feelings were part of what they were talking about. And all those things made young people engage, wake up, be ready for learning. And you then get to the point where they engage.

And what has it got to do with creativity? Because, this being the definition of creativity, those activities create the space in which children are able to explore those aspects. So that's where they are disciplined because they are doing something which we call "crafting and improving". Taking ideas and making them better. One of the things you learn about ideas very quickly is that the best ideas in life very often started as a bad idea. That somebody turned it into a good idea. It wasn't a brand-new idea. If you see what I mean? And that's what they were doing there. Here, to sit, if you are Lithuanian, listening to a lecture in Turkish



for an hour, takes a lot of persistence. There, they are being inquisitive. There, they are being imaginative and so forth. So what you can see through all this is that you are not deviating from the curriculum. This is how you deliver the curriculum but you are delivering it in a way that makes it much more engaging and much more real for young people.

And I just will finish by supporting what Professor Şirin was saying. That development of these skills, creative skills is also very connected with executive functions of the brain. Executive functions being the basic learning skills. And there is a huge overlap between them. And as Professor Şirin was saying that these are most developed in young people from more affluent backgrounds. And young people coming into school from poorer backgrounds have these much less developed. This severely inhibits their learning. And the executive functions or creativity skills in this way are like the operating system of the brain. When you buy a computer, it comes with an operating system and you then put software on it, which makes it do fun things. But if the operating system doesn't work, the software doesn't work. The children are exactly the same. They arrive at school with or without developed executive functions. What schools do is try and load software. And if the executive functions aren't working the software doesn't work. What schools do is try and load more and more software without going back and focusing on, dealing with what's the problem. And the problem is in the executive functions. And this is very close with creativity. Therefore, our programs which we have seen, working in schools, in producing much more engaged, happy but successful pupils, particularly from poorer backgrounds. It is not because we are teaching math differently. It's because our programs impact directly on the executive functions of the brain, of the brains of the children. And builds their capacity to learn, which they apply to the subjects. So, it's this fusion between creativity and executive functions and the impact that has on building the capacity of pupils which make the difference.

And this is what employers are looking for. And if your education system does not turn round to address it, then your economy will falter. Last week I was in China, the Chinese now understand this. They don't want to be a low wage economy, making the things other people invent much more cheaply. They want the expensive jobs to come to them and they know they are going to have to change their education system. And I suspect the challenge is very similar in Turkey.

Thank you very much indeed.

**Şirin Payzın:** We'd like to thank Mr. Paul Collard very much. Thank you very much. Actually, I'm going to invite you to our panel. And also, Professor Şirin, too. Please come here to talk about the details. Welcome again.

Now, Mr. Selçuk wants to explain this part in Turkish. Therefore, we will be making the panel in two languages. In English and in Turkish. But as I said before, I don't want to ask many question, I'd rather you to ask the questions. I'm sure you are wondering many things concerning what they explained until now and beyond that.

I would like to start with you Paul. I just read a very interesting article in one of the newspapers. What you explain is for Britain but in Finland lately, they are abolishing the whole system, switching to what you just explained actually. There will be no math, no geography, no history classes. But only play, dreaming and special projects. Do you think it can work? Can we switch the whole system to what you explained?

**Paul Collard:** Yes, I think you can. It's not easy and it's not quick. But you can.

I think what you say about Finland is very important. Because Finland as a result of PISA has been used as an example of what we should aspire to for the last 15 years. For everyone except Finnish who thinks it's a disaster. And it's quite interesting that I was in Finland just a few weeks ago and I had a meeting with some of the leading educationalists. And we were talking about this. And I said, "What actually do you think the answer is? Why do you have such high PISA scores?" And he said, "The reason we have it is because we have very compliant children. We tell them to do well and they do well." And PISA league tables are actually a table of compliance. Singapore children, Chinese children, Korean children do what they are told. They want people who challenge, who change, who want to do things differently so on and so forth, who are always arguing and who are always debating. That's what drives economies forward. That's what changes society. Not compliance.

**Şirin Payzın:** Thank you. Same question to you Professor Selçuk. What happens if we have poor PISA results? I mean, yes, we are doing it, let's go on like this. Among the first 70.

**Selçuk Şirin:** We are the 50th among 70, yes.

**Şirin Payzın:** We are the 50th among 70, yes. According to all the researches of OECD, the number of children with regard to literacy is too low in our country among OECD countries.

**Selçuk Şirin:** When you look at OECD tables before, Chile, Mexico was listed below us, we took place either between or above them. Now, that has changed, I mean Chile.

Chile is flying at the moment. Because of pre-school education. Michelle Bachelet came up for reelection. Because there you run as a candidate once, then she came to New York, stayed there for 4 years, went back to Chile and ran as a candidate again. Her only priority is pre-school education. They started to get the results in the third, fourth year. Now you see that Chile is proceeding on all the tables.

What does PISA measures? What PISA measures is not memorization. I don't agree with him because PISA is also measuring the "creativity and problem solving" skills. When you look at there, in accordance with the gradation there, the gradation of science and mathematics and gradation of literacy does not change. What PISA measures say that these 15-year-old young people will enter the global economy. What this economy wants is analysis, synthesis and problem solving based on these. Now if we don't do these, since we have an education system that is based only on memorization, we do not have chance to compete in the current economy, we have zero chance.

Then what do you do? I'm sorry for the ones who listened to this before but for the ones who want to hear about the hazelnut story, I'm going to tell. I tell this hazelnut example everywhere because I believe it is nonsense to explain this new economy over technology in Turkey. I mean, you understand but beyond this room, I cannot do it. For that reason, now I'm explaining it on the basis of hazelnuts and tourism. Hazelnut is a very simple example, you know, we are the monopoly of hazelnut in the world. We produce the hazelnuts at the ratio of 75-80%. And each year, we celebrate it, record export in hazelnuts. How much do we export? 3 billion dollars. There is a company who buy the hazelnut from us as a monopoly. I searched, it is a company established in a village in Italy. They have 550 employees. Their annual return is 13 billion dollars. What are they doing with the hazelnuts so that the number increases to 13 billion? Now, what are they doing? I mean, they are adding the design, this is what he calls creativity. They are adding science; they turn this into a trademark.

We need to do these in order for us to go from here to there; it also goes for tourism. Look; regardless of everything, the number of tourists coming to İstanbul and the number of tourists coming to New York was the same last year. Despite everything. I examined the database of MasterCard, you may find the details in the book. The people coming to us are not poor. According to MasterCard data, the people coming to İstanbul and the people coming to New York have the same purchasing power. Then why people coming to İstanbul spend only one third of people coming to New York? Now, I brought 500 or maybe 1000 Americans to İstanbul until now. I used to give lectures here. In other words, I brought those NYU kids here and gave them lectures. There is no place here for them to spend money. Because we do not engage in tourism with high added value. I mean we take them to Topkapı and sell them döner there.

Go to Metropolitan Museum of Art, do you know that there are three separate stores inside Metropolitan, one for children, one for adults and one for furniture? There is no entrance fee for Metropolitan, but you can't make yourself leave the store? Each time we go there with my two sons, I spend at least 200 dollars. But there is no entrance fee. Now, Metropolitan is making money from the stores. This is such a simple example. If you go and leave New York without seeing the Broadway Show, it means that you haven't been to New York. If you do not eat at a restaurant in New York, I mean, there are some celebrity chefs there. Now, there is a pizza for 1 dollar and a pizza for 100 dollars in New York. I mean it is not about being cheap or expensive. Now, I'm wrapping up Ms. Şirin. Consequently, in order for us to go from here to there, I mean, if you rank 50th at PISA, then you pick hazelnuts.

**Şirin Payzın:** Nice. Well, where did you disagree?

**Selçuk Şirin:** I've just wanted to make sure that we are on the same page. I think you were saying that PISA does not measure creativity and it's not really a good indicator for this current upcoming economic revolution?

**Paul Collard:** Yes.

**Selçuk Şirin:** And I was telling in Turkish on your behind that I didn't agree with you. Because PISA has as you know has another test. It's called "problem solving and creativity". And if you look at that test, correlation is very high. Can PISA be better and more imaginative? Yes. But the compliance part, I don't agree with you on that at all. I don't think that that measures compliance. I think it measures creativity, measures your ability to analyze etc.

And here is the other thing, the context here. If the Turkish press was here, they are going to talk to you more, then it will justify the reasoning that we should not focus on these skills and go back to the memorization skills which is what's happening here. So, I think there is a context here.

**Şirin Payzın:** What would your answer be? Or your comment maybe.

**Paul Collard:** I'll comment. There are two comments but my belief is if you focus on developing creativity skills, you will get better scores. And we've got lots of evidence to show that.

**Selçuk Şirin:** Better scores at PISA.

**Paul Collard:** But the other thing just about PISA, I'm actually a consultant to OECD on measuring creativity. And they don't think that current tests measure creativity. They have announced that they will introduce a new measure in 2021 which we'll look at it for the first time. There is problem solving, I agree that there is problem solving. And they wanted to put more focus on that in terms. And there is also more of a tendency to show, to give young people unseen questions for that particular reason.

**Selçuk Şirin:** Open-ended questions?

**Paul Collard:** Open-ended questions. Open ended questions. But currently their view is that they haven't got the problem solving and creativity right as the measure. They are not really finding it. I think further on this conversation will be too technical so I'm pausing.

**Şirin Payzın:** You do agree actually about in order to create more economy and to be strong in economy, you really have to educate youngsters in a different way, right? And he gave this example of hazelnuts. You heard about it.

**Paul Collard:** Yes, I did.

**Şirin Payzın:** So, this brings us back to your example actually. Because in the future, in short future or in midterm, we want a generation who doesn't seek for a job but who creates jobs, right?

**Paul Collard:** Yes.

**Şirin Payzın:** Can you go into detail about your example or your expectations rather?

**Paul Collard:** The part of your presentation which I absolutely agreed on was this focus on language. Language in early years. Because it does seem and I know exactly the research you were showing there. The reason that young people from more affluent backgrounds arrive in school better learners and move faster is because of language. The richness of the language they've been exposed to in their early years. And yes, our work is about introducing art and cultural activities into the classroom. But our view now that the reason it has this powerful impact and most powerful on young people from poorer backgrounds is because it introduces a more complex language and a more complex set of activities into other classrooms.

So, I'll give you a simple example of an activity we would do with 9 or 10-year-old. They had a digital notepad. And they worked in small groups. And they had to make a one-minute advert on the digital notepad for their school aimed at parents. So, they had to work out why would parents think this is a good school? Which makes them think about learning? Turn that into ideas they can film. Divide up the roles because one of them was going to be the cameraman, one was going to be the presenter, one was going to be the interviewer and so on. And do all this in about an hour and a half. And the pressure on, you've got ideas and you've got to be curious, you've got ideas, you've got to negotiate the ideas. Because you can only come out with one idea for your one-minute thing. And the pressure on language when you watch them working in there, how much they're struggling to articulate themselves to win their ideas, to listen to other people's ideas so on and so forth. You are getting, you are giving them back that richness of language that younger people from richer backgrounds get naturally in their homes.

**Şirin Payzın:** Now, in order to use our time efficiently, I want to let the audience ask their questions. I assume we have microphones. Youngsters. I await your questions to these two

very important educators. What do you want to ask? How do you think the education system should be in 21st century? This is an opportunity. Anyone want to ask a question?

**Ms. Duygu:** My name is Duygu. I'm 28 years old and currently I started working for my grandparents' pharmaceutical company. And before that I was working for Coca-Cola here in Turkey. So, thank you for all the information you've given. I see that there are lots of data, there are many things to do, there are so many things that gave us, all of us goose bumps about Turkey. And from Mr. Collard we see that with a little step you can do a lot of things. So, what I want to ask is that if you could just, I'm new at the company, so if you can do something for education of Turkey from scratch, how would you start?

So, what I want to ask is that if you could just, I'm new at the company, so if you can do something for education of Turkey from scratch, how would you start?

**Paul Collard:** That's a big question, isn't it? Okay. So, given the context that we are in, I would completely support what Ms. Sabancı was saying about their approach. Education is the big thing that the governments all over the world do. It's the biggest thing. Education is actually the second biggest economic activity in the world now after telecommunications. It's absolutely huge. And it is difficult to change. I think the private sector and foundations have a role to play in demonstrating the effectiveness of the alternative ways. So, when Ms. Sabancı was saying there are now Sabancı schools and in these schools, we model a different practice. Why? Because we want to show the impact of that practice on the young people. So that government goes, "Oh, that's really interesting. I think we might try that." Government and education is very very conservative everywhere around the world. It's like we don't want to take experiments, we don't want to change because it is the big thing that governments do. And therefore, they really don't like taking risks. How do we know this is going to work? I think there is a major role for private foundations like Sabancı to look at alternative ways of doing it and use those models to take back to government. And go, "Look we've demonstrated it works, it's not a risk for you anymore. Now do it."

**Şirin Payzın:** But one more question about this question. Actually, as you said, it takes time and it takes big amount of money for government to switch everything. And how did you, how were you able to convince British government to make something different. Because it's not very easy to convince politicians especially, to do something new, to experience something new. What's the key to convince them?

**Paul Collard:** It's a very good question. We are in a slightly strange position in England. Because the government came to us and said we would like to make young people more creative. This was the Blair government, creativity was the buzz word, everything was creative under the Blair government. So, they wanted creative industries, they wanted creative everything, they wanted creative children. And we said, "Oh, we'd love to make them creative. By the way, what's creativity?" And they said, "We've got no idea. You have to find that out." So, that's why we did all that research. We ran in England for eleven years. We are working in two and a half hours in schools every year. So, it's a very big program.

Then there was the financial crisis and a new government come in. And the new government is like new initiatives and they want their own plans. And there was a huge financial crisis and all our money was taken away. So, that arrived at a point when lots of other countries were coming to us and going, "But what you did was really interesting. Could you come and do it for us?" And then it is expanded and now we do it in a lot of other countries. We did big programs in Wales and Scotland and Ireland as well now. But the key was that you had a

practice you could show them and you could show them exactly how to do it in a fail-safe manner. Because governments hate risk. And so, it takes you back to the same thing. We had something we had done in English schools that we could show and they could look at all the data, they could look at all the researches, they could visit the schools. And then say, “Yes, we want that.”

**Şirin Payzın:** The same question goes to you, because I think the real power of the 21st century is going to be and is now civil society. The civil society will change the politics. Not the politicians will change the society or will shape the society hopefully. But how to convince them? Is it possible in Turkey? Do you see any room or possibility to make them try new styles or new approaches?

**Selçuk Şirin:** Now, this question was not for me but if you are curious about it, at the time Ms. Ümit, I mean like three years ago, we published a report for TÜSİAD (Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association). You can find it if you search Selçuk Şirin TÜSİAD Reform at Education online. I believe everyone can check it out, it is very easy to read, a report of 60 or 70 pages. Consequently, we had three very solid things but these are for decision makers. What is happening? From year 2013 to, what we are in 2017 now, right? I’ve dealt with this for four years Ms. Şirin. I talked to the decision makers, let’s do this, let’s do that, let’s make it this way. Commissions were established with different Ministers of Education. We made great progress concerning the pre-school education. During Ms. Nimet’s period, we divided the country into three, maybe some of you remember. We went to Niğde, UNICEF, UNESCO and so forth. I’ve tried all.

Turkey is changing very rapidly. Let me say because we are a very dynamic country. Because of that the minister was changed. And the new minister said, “Let’s not deal with this pre-school stuff but instead change the schooling age. The ratio will immediately increase to 100% Mr. Şirin.” And I said, “Goodbye,” and returned to Ankara. I worked for one year for that project. What happened? Suddenly the schooling age changed and so forth.

I am now trying to find out what can be done within the possibilities in Turkey. I have one suggestion that I make before the decision makers and everywhere. And that is; “Let’s at least make the reforms based on the data.” I mean, we have so many data at hand. It is you who pay the price of all the data we share. These data are gathered with your taxes. Ministry of Education gathers. Whenever you see education on OECD, this data is gathered by Ministry of Education, my friends. Our experts are working there. Each year, we pay 60.000 EUR just for one data. There are hundreds of such data. I say well, let’s use these. I don’t say anything else.

**Şirin Payzın:** Can I have another question? Yes, from the back. Let’s have your question. Again, the participant who is right in front of the camera.

**Ms. Gülce:** Hello, my name is Gülce. I study at Hacı Sabancı Anatolian High School. At the same time, I am the vice president of school climate project. This is my question. Creativity is being mentioned since the beginning of the seminar. However, we are all young people studying within a system where creativity is dulled. What is our responsibility in this? What we can do about this? To develop this system.

**Şirin Payzın:** I assume this question is for both of our educators.

**Paul Collard:** Take over the school.

**Selçuk Şirin:** Be careful.

**Paul Collard:** Okay. I think it's difficult. There are power dynamics going on in schools and I understand that. I think giving young people direct responsibility for designing and leading their own learning is a fundamental part of unlocking their creativity.

And I'll give you a simple example from a primary school. This is in England that we were working in. It was serving a very poor community. There were very disengaged and poor performing kids. And we said, we've got to turn these kids around. And the school had a budget to build a new classroom. And we said, "Give the money to the children." This is a primary school, years one to six. And the school said all right. So, the children got together and they thought about it.

And they decided that instead of building a classroom, they would buy a full-size passenger airplane. They have it delivered to the school and have it converted into a classroom. The year six, the oldest children because this was also a literacy project had to do the planning application. Because in England if you park a full-size airplane in your front yard, you need permission from the municipality. They had to fill in all the forms and go and talk to the planning office and say, "This is our new classroom." Next class down had to buy the airplane and they went on to eBay. And they found an airplane being sold on eBay for scrap. And they bought the airplane and had it delivered to the school. Year four had to do the interior design because it had just come with the rows of seats. They went on the internet and they found the details of an interior designer in Los Angeles who had designed the interior of the private jets of famous football player David Beckham. So, they e-mailed him and said, "We've just bought an airplane." Photograph attached. And that they are converting it into. He loved the project so much he flew over to England at his own expense and did all the designs for them. And the school became famous because it got a lot of media coverage. Because it's the school with the airplane parked on the front. And they have this wonderful classroom, which has been turned into an IT suit, it's what the children decided to use it for.

But I met the children. And what was really important for those children from these poor backgrounds was not that they had a great idea but they'd made it happen. The difference for their outlook for the rest of their lives that they knew that they had the capacity to have ideas and make them happen is the most important thing to teach a child. Because lots of children have ideas but to believe you can make it happen is what you need to do. We know that successful business people, 98% failures. But the 2% is so brilliant they do it. And they learn. They come through these. They make mistakes. Things don't go right and so forth. But you believe that you will be able to do that. And these children were absolutely transformed by the experience of doing that.

**Şirin Payzın:** Great example. What would you say?

**Selçuk Şirin:** I mean, when I say take the road, I think it is a very solid suggestion. I would say, take the road as soon as possible. I mean, whatever is in your mind. I also established an incubator and we started it last year. We try to discover, we discovered 30 candidates of entrepreneurs. Because the first year is over. These people do not speak English, they don't go to university and they come from the regions where the education, schools are considered the worst. For example, it was hard for them to pass the criteria if any of their parents were university graduates. Okay? Six months ago, we found 30 such people. We took them to New York bypassing all İstanbul, Turkey system. Broadway show, music, this and that, these were all included. But we also gave a mentor for each one of them. For a month, these kids stayed

at NYU. At the end of a month, by the way I say kids but they were all older than 18, they came back. 16% of these people established a company within six months and they engage in exportation now. Now, before six months or a year, if you ask these people, they would talk about the impossibilities etc. Now, impossibility is actually the mother of creativity. I mean, if Mustafa Kemal had possibilities, there would not be republic in Turkey.

**Şirin Payzın:** Let me ask a question then I will get back to you again. It'll be kind of a wide-ranging question but a recent research displayed something. Poverty becomes the fate of children after a time. Because, as you mentioned before, a poor family cannot buy books, provide high quality education, send their children to good schools. Or maybe they are poor and uneducated themselves and cannot create that ecosystem. And after that child goes to school, he/she goes back to poverty since he/she is not willing to continue his/her education. Therefore, it becomes a vicious cycle.

But on the other hand, while we were discussing the Sowing Season with Sabancı Foundation, there was an example that impressed me deeply. For example, when they asked the women, poor, uneducated women or even illiterate women what would they do if the project is developed and they earn money, the first thing they said was this; "I would spend it for my children's education." When you ask men they say, "I'd buy a car, I'd buy a house, I'd do that, I'd do this." But the women invest their money on their children's education. This is a very striking example.

Starting from this point of view, now how can we change this approach of the parents? I mean, how can we explain to the parents why playing is important for their children? Don't send them to school, make them play. Or make them watch a movie. Or open up a different window for them during the summer vacation. Can you answer this within the context of poverty, economy and education?

**Selçuk Şirin:** Now, to begin with the reason why education is provided by the government, by the social state is to close this gap anyway. When we go back to one, two or three generations back, everyone here is most probably the result of such education. Some call it republic acquisition, we are here because of that. In other words, there is one teacher, one mentor, I love this saying very much, we are here "for the sake of" them.

I am, too. Until I was 18, I studied in a village. I am from the most unsuccessful city of Turkey my friends. I mean, Ardahan is the last city on the list according to statistics, ÖSYM (Student Selection and Placement Center) exams. We had sixteen high schools in that city and Ardahan High School was the last one on the list. There were hundreds of graduates of that high school and I graduated by having to repeat the graduation exam. And I directly went to METU. Now, how did it happen? Now, there was a teacher there. And that is enough.

If that teacher said, "Well, there are impossibilities, nothing good will come out of this village," then I would not be here. We need to appreciate that opportunity, all of us. That light among the impossibilities. When you create a story within poverty... That's why I love those changemakers, I inspire from them.

**Şirin Payzın:** You skip something when you tell your story. I think you should add that METU situation.

**Selçuk Şirin:** When I was in third grade in middle school, my father brought a photograph home. I saw the METU graduates on that photograph. I saw something like that for the first



time, in red and black. And we put that photograph on the wall. Two of my siblings are here. I have four siblings and three have their doctorate degrees. They all come from that village. They studied in America or abroad. But there so many such stories. When I tell you this story, everyone tells similar stories. This is the story of Turkey. And this is how it should be. Now, I seem like a hope, dream monger but there is a reason for that. Our stories weakened. Our stories, our dreams became poorer. There is a scarcity, a scarcity of dreams and stories. And in a way, that is the reason why I come, I come to encourage. Or else what am I doing here? I came from there to here only for this reason.

Look, what I told before, I mean, if we can distribute books to one million children, this would be unique. No country has done this before. Hopefully, we will start on 10th of May. I mean, it is possible. You my friend, my sister. Take the road. Whatever it is on your mind, if it's not the first one, the second one, you'll succeed. After all, I strive in start-up world anyway, I run an incubator. All the successful entrepreneurs say, "Fail." The sooner you fail, it is better. By the way, I am an unsuccessful banker so that's why I am here.

**Şirin Payzın:** Well, let's continue. I saw another one who wanted to ask a question just a bit ago. I am quite satisfied with the performances of the youngsters today. I see a hand in front of the camera at the back. By the way, the high ratio of the females asking the questions.

**Participant:** Well, I'd like to ask a question in English, obviously. Well, as Paul Collard wonderfully remarked it actually more or less the private sector's responsibility to encourage the government to invest in innovative ways of educating children. But what would you do specifically, in case of Turkey where the government more or less works independently from public and the aimed audience in this case students. And where the private sector does not really, does simply hesitate to invest in educational or governmental things, governmental affairs because of reasons. How would you encourage both of those sides to work together? And especially the government to work together with the private sector in field of education. Thank you.

**Paul Collard:** So, I think I'd hate to give the Turkish government any advice because I'm sure they can work it out by themselves. But I think that, I was very interested by Professor Şirin talking about Chile. Because I think Chile, Turkey, China are at very similar moments in their developments. Where there is the possibility of an economic transformation from a developing nation economy into a developed nation economy. A developed nation economy needs different skills. I think this morning I was talking about what that connection is in order to emphasize. Now in some of the countries I mentioned, the success of the current politicians is largely based on the fact that the economy has boomed for a number of years. There are people out there who go, "Well, I think the government was responsible for this." My argument would be that if you want another 13 years in power, by that time your economy has stalled if you are not doing something about changing the skills base and you will not be reelected. And that is the key argument I think around the changing education is that, in this context.

**Selçuk Şirin:** Can the ones who listened to this Finland story from me before raise their hands? Ah, not that much. I always assume that I repeat myself and everyone always watches when I'm talking. One person watched it, that's nice. This is the reason why I didn't talk about Michelle Bachelet, I'd like to tell that if possible.

**Selçuk Şirin:** Finland has similar macro indicators to Turkey on year 1970. Within the context of per capita income, rural-urban distribution and natural resources. There was no

petrol etc. Do not confuse Finland with Norway. Finland was a country like that. In 1970's they say, "What are we going to do? With only fishing, our destination is obvious." There are so many peasants, the world is going somewhere else. And then, they invested in R&D, research and development. When we come to 1980's, these R&D practices carried them to somewhere but not enough. That was not enough. At the beginning of 1990's, a peasant became a prime minister called Esco, I brought him to Turkey, he gave a speech at TÜSİAD. This Esco guy is a peasant. For the first time a peasant was elected. And then there was a big crisis. The biggest economic crisis of Finland's history. While the budgets of all the ministries were reduced by 50%, he doubled the budget of ministry of national education. This happened in year 1992 or 1993. And he said, "You will thank me 5-10 years later." He lost the election, just like you said. Esco lost the election, now he is the second man in Nokia. He lost the election but; you know what everyone said until 2000's? Every country came forward and said that their education was great. There was not a measure, this is the reason why I attach importance to PISA. Without PISA, we would not be discussing about education in Turkey this much because now we have an international indicator at hand. What happened? At the beginning of 2000's PISA started to measure and all of a sudden it turned up that Esco was right. This is a process started in 1970 and continued with Esco. What is the result? The result is that the per capita income of a typical Finnish person at the moment is four times more than ours. This is the story of Finland.

As you know my friends, Michelle is daughter of one of the generals imprisoned together with when Allende was taken down in Chile. Michelle Bachelet has two children. None of them has a father. And Chile is the most religious country in the world. Divorce was forbidden in Chile when Michelle Bachelet was first elected. Abortion was forbidden. Michelle Bachelet said, "I had an abortion," because she was in exile in Paris, France. Remember, her father was a general, I mean Allende was a communist, left-winger, whatever you say, she was a woman, she had two illegitimate children and she said she had abortion. Such a person has no chance of being a president in the most religious country in the world on paper. Michelle Bachelet came to Chile and at first she became minister of defense. And then she ran for presidency but she told a story there. She had a new dream. She said, "We don't need to live like this." And won the election with a record level of votes. She carried Chile to a certain level economically but there is a term limit these, meaning a president may be elected only for once. And then she came and became the head of UN Women in New York as you know. In four years, she improved that institution. Then she went to Chile once again to Chile and reelected. Now she is the president there and as I said before, her priority is pre-school education at the moment. Her priority is children whose ages are between 0-6. You may find the story and the details both in the book and on Google. You may find all the data.

**Şirin Payzın:** I will call upon the gentleman to speak because I made a promise but you actually have 60 second. I would like you to ask your question clearly please.

**Talat Günday:** As a child of a family coming from Rize, I studied at Gazi University. I had education in a multicultural society. Finland model is a model that we all attach much importance to. However, we are living in a multicultural society. I believe that the programs of the ones who do hoe on the fields and the ones produce theories at their desks should coincide with each other by taking the regional and local features of this society. I would appreciate if you share your opinions about this.

**Selçuk Şirin:** Thank you. Now, when I first visited Finland as a person from Kars, I was shocked, it was all covered in ice. I mean, our Kars is a heaven when compared with Finland.

Finland is actually covered in ice and when you ask us who are from Kars, from the east why we left our land, we thought that it is because of snow. Because we think technology and civilization would not be there. Finland achieved this therefore my curiosity about Finland comes from there.

However, I believe that Finland example is exaggerated and misidentified. You know what Finland model is? Learning by doing. They found a sexy name for this, “maker movement” but it is actually learning by doing. The person who developed learning by doing is a young professor graduated from Columbia University in 1920. There is a man named John Dewey in America. He wrote articles concerning learning by doing, he is a young professor in at Columbia. Nobody listened to him. Atatürk took him, brought him to Turkey. In 1928, you may go check it out, there is this report in Turkish in the Turkish Grand National Assembly archive. Find it on Google. He made a suggestion. He said, “You are a scattered, as you describe, a different country. You need to learn by doing educational model to develop.” Village Institutes and other projects were originated from there.

And what Finland is doing at the moment is learning by doing. In other words, we are not talking about something rambling. Learning by doing. Let’s learn by doing.

**Şirin Payzın:** I know that we are running out of time but I just want to give a chance also to this question because I think it’s important. Since your method or what you have created is also applied in Pakistan, Pakistan is of course not the same example but it’s pretty much the same. Cultural differences, various religious approaches and different languages, local languages, how to deal with that? How to cope with that actually to come up with an integrated new method or system?

**Paul Collard:** The way that we are working in Pakistan, we are working in the city of Lahore. And we are working with a private foundation called “The Care Foundation” whose chair and founder is a very brilliant business woman, Seema Aziz. Who has a huge retail empire all over not just Pakistan but all over the Middle East. And her model for changing education there is that she takes over failing government schools. So, when the government, and there are lots of them in Lahore, and the government says, “Okay, here you have the school. We will still pay whatever we were paying for the salaries so on and so forth.” And she takes over them.

And then we partner with her on the teacher training. Because the key to bringing around this change in the classroom is to change the way the teachers teach. That’s the key. So, we are providing that service. She now has 890 schools in Pakistan, in Lahore. And these are big schools, these are big schools with a 1000 to 15.000 people in it. We’ve so far because it’s gradual rolling out of the different of this new way of teaching, are working in 95 of those schools. But the intention is to get to the whole 890. And it’s very very powerful. And the head teachers in particular are amazed.

Now, one of the things which is probably different from here, because I don’t know, is that most teachers in Pakistan have had no teacher training at all. And many of them only graduated only from secondary school and then they applied for the job and became a teacher. In a way when we are supplying teacher training to them, this is the first training that they ever had. They are amazed by it because they had no way of thinking that this is what learning was about in terms of those processes. And it’s very powerful.

But to me the key thing is that in a lot of different countries you find different curriculum, you find different ways of teaching. Learning is the same everywhere. Learning is that basic magical thing that human beings have learned how to do. And having able to thus almost destroyed the planet but that's beside the point. It's that what we can do that nobody else can do is learn. And that is such a fundamental force that once you get teachers to focus on learning and making the children learn which is what our approach is really about, it's transformational. Even more transformational in those systems that it is. Sometimes here in an English school you've been thinking about these in decades and going, "Oh, we already do that", you know etc. etc. So, you know, it's incredibly powerful. So, I would imagine that maybe not so much in İstanbul and Ankara. But if these approaches were put into the schools out into the more rural areas, it would be really dramatic.

**Şirin Payzın:** Well, we can keep going on another two hours maybe because this subject is very deep. I would like to thank all of our participants. Education is really the common problem of all of us. Maybe it is the most common problem and education is the most basic, the most fundamental human right. Therefore, I would like to thank our two speakers very much. They brought different perspectives. I'm sure you have many more questions but maybe we need to talk about this in many other platforms. I'm sure you have many more questions but maybe we need to talk about this in many other platforms.

Professor Selçuk Şirin, we thank you very much. Paul Collard, thank you so much for your wonderful contribution. We thank you very much for coming here. Curiosity. Imagination. Discovery. Especially the young ones, you may start today. I'm so glad that you came, thank you. I hope to see you next year.