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Gender and Teacher-Student Classroom Interaction: An Ethnographic
Study in a Secondary School in Greece.

by

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ABSTRACT

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GENDER AND TEACHER-STUDENT CLASSROOM INTERACTION: AN
ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN GREECE

by Maria Tsouroufli

This study explores classroom teacher-student interaction in a secondary, urban, working-class school in Greece and throws light on the connections between teachers' behaviour and their ideas about gender.

It is a qualitative ethnographic study. For the collection of data the following methods were used: oral history interviews, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and documents. Five teachers participated in this study, four female and only one male. They taught different subjects: modern Greek, physics, religious education, English and mathematics. They were all observed teaching one group (B3) which consisted of twenty-two students, eleven female and eleven male.

Although the sample was small and there were many variations, the findings of this study suggest that overall teachers behaved differently towards girls and boys.

Teachers' general lack of awareness or low level of awareness of gender as an organising and categorising factor in students' behaviour and generally in schooling as well as the teachers' tacit assumptions about gender influenced the way that teachers related to girls and boys in the classroom.

Other issues such as the lack of teachers' training on equal opportunities, the low status of the school, and the principal's lack of involvement in the promotion of gender equality in the school might have had an impact on teacher-student interaction.

Further research on these issues and on a wider scale is advocated.

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To my beloved teachers,

Penelope and Nikos

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Chapter 1
Overview and rationale for the study

Introduction

Chapter 1 discusses the subject and the purpose of the study: exploring teacher-student interaction in a secondary school in Greece. This introductory chapter provides the research questions and the relevant context. This context includes information about the rights of women in Greece and their representation in different sectors, information about the history of female education in Greece and the representation of female students and teachers at different levels of education nowadays. The issue of indirect sexism in the Greek educational system is discussed in this chapter as well as the importance of gender in schools and society. Although there has been some progress and change of the women's position in Greek society, inequality still exists on many levels, and the Greek educational system remains a patriarchal institution. The chapter ends with my feminist perspective and its inspiration and importance for this study.

The subject of the study: Gender and Teacher-Student Interaction

This study aims to explore and to throw light on the teachers' behaviour towards female and male students. For that purpose it includes extensive information about the respondents' teaching practices and also information about the teachers' perceptions of gender and their life experiences. The reason for that is to attempt to explore the links, if any, between teachers' behaviour in the class and their ideas related to gender as far as that is possible in this study. The study was carried out in an urban secondary school and the focus is on five teachers: four female and one male.

The approach I followed was qualitative ethnographic, and includes the use of the following research methods: oral history interviews, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews (conversations), questionnaires and documents. The study was completed over three months in a Greek secondary school in a large city. The school was based in a working class area but the teachers who participated in the study did not live in that area. The teachers taught different subjects: modern Greek, physics, religious education, English and mathematics (the male teacher). One class (B3) which all the selected teachers taught, was chosen, where forty-six hours of observation, in total, took place.

My background

My personal experience as a working-class girl, an undergraduate in a School of Primary Education, a teacher and above all as female in a traditional society, constituted my subjectivity and influenced my trajectory in life and in research. I can still recall sexist incidents from my childhood either at school or at home which at that moment made me angry but later on motivated me to see the world critically, to find explanations for what was happening around me and to try to contribute to change either with my work or my actions in my personal life. But, although I had always considered myself a feminist, committed to the equality of the sexes, as a primary Greek teacher and a teacher of English I was often in the awkward predicament of not being able to translate equality into practice. This research project started from a deep need to broaden my knowledge and understanding on gender equality in education and

society, to reflect and improve my teaching practices, to understand myself as a woman and last but not least from an ambition to make a small contribution to the struggle for the establishment of gender equality. I was also encouraged to do this study by the surprising increase of interest by the Ministry of Education and the Secretariat of the Equality of the Sexes in inequality issues and particularly in the importance of the role of the teachers in the establishment of equality in schools and society (Arseni, 1995). The teachers' potential contribution to the procedure of gender reform in education had been neglected for a long time in Greece, and so had the in-service education of teachers, though they are both very important (Kogidou, 1995).

The purpose of the study

The subject of gender inequality has only recently started to attract attention in Greece. Dimitra Kogidou (1995) mentions that the existence of researchers and networks who deal with the equality of the sexes in education is limited. It is worth mentioning that at the moment there is only one division of studies called 'Social Sex and Education' dealing with non-sexist education and is affiliated to the University of Salonica (Tsiakalos, 1995). Studies about teachers' stereotypes and their sex-role ideology in England and other European countries have been extremely rich in information, and worked as a guide for my own study. The review of the literature helped me to form my initial research questions and the methodology. My aim was to study some teachers in depth and detail and in their context in order to become familiar with their everyday practices and routine. I was also interested in gathering information about their lives, their personalities, their relationship with the children, and the school where they worked, in order to learn about their views about the sexes and their students and how, if at all, they expressed them in their interactions with their students. I did not wish only to describe but also to analyse and suggest possible explanations for the teachers' behaviour, taking into account the patriarchal Greek society, the Greek educational system and the lived experiences of the subjects involved in the study. The reader should have in mind however that the main focus of this research is the teachers' behaviour in the classroom.

The research questions

The research questions may be summarised as follows:

- What are the teachers' perceptions of gender?
- Are the teachers conscious of indirect sexism in the Greek educational system?
- Are teachers interested or involved in the promotion of equality in their school?
- Do teachers treat girls and boys differently in the classrooms?
- Does there seem to be any connection between the teachers' perceptions of gender and their attitudes in the classroom?
- Are there any other factors which influence teachers' behaviour in the class (e.g., organisation of the school, or the sex ratio?)

The rationale for these questions will become clearer later on.

The context

Before I proceed to theoretical issues and the review of the literature, some contextual information on the current situation in Greece would seem desirable. The following section therefore provides information about the legal provisions related to gender equality and women's rights in Greece.

Constitutional provisions

The Greek constitution of 1975 established equality between women and men in the country. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of article 4 of the constitution of 1975 state that a)Greek men and Greek women are equal and b)Greek men and Greek women have equal rights and obligations. The constitution also includes specific provisions about employment, education, health and protection.

Employment According to Article 22 'employment is a right and is under the protection of the state...' 'All employees with no relation to their sex have the right to equal pay.' (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996, p.26)

Education According to Article 16, 'all Greeks have the right of free education...' without any discrimination. (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996, p.26)

Health According to Article 21, paragraph 3 'the state takes action to protect the elderly, the young, the disabled and the poor without any discrimination.' (ibid.)

Law protection According to Article 20 of the constitution men and women in Greece are treated equally when they go to court. (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996)

On the 2nd of March 1982 the Convention for the Eradication of all kinds of Discrimination against women (CEDAW) was signed by Greece in the United Nations. One of the obligations that Greece has as a result of this Convention is every four years to submit a National Report to the Secretariat of the United Nations responsible for the eradication of any form of discrimination against women, providing information about the changes concerning the position and the rights of women in Greece. According to Article 28 paragraph 1 of the constitution of 1975, international law and the international conventions after their ratification by the Parliament are considered to be Greek legislation.

During the period 1981-1986 laws which aimed at the eradication of discrimination against women were passed. Regulations about the family were modernised and adapted to the general concept of the equality of the sexes by Act 129/83. The concept of the patriarchal family was abolished. The institution of dowry was abolished.

Women have to maintain their maiden name after getting married. The bride and the groom have the right to choose their children's surname (before getting married). It can be either the man's or the woman's surname. The following were also established: Upbringing and the education of children should be free of sex discrimination. Both the husband and the wife have the right to claim any property obtained after marriage.

Children of unmarried parents have exactly the same rights with those of married couples (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996).

As far as employment is concerned according to the law 1320/83 there should be no sex discrimination in the appointment of men and women in public administration.

According to the Urban Code (Article 288) employers are obliged to treat equally all the employees. By law 1082/80 it is prohibited to sack a pregnant woman. The General Secretariat for Gender Equality which was established in 1985 by virtue of law 1558/85, is the official state agency responsible for promoting the issue of equality between the two sexes in Greece. The work of the General Secretariat for Equality includes (RCEO, 1998):

- promotion and implementation of legal and effective protection of gender equality,
- recommendation of the necessary measures to be taken by the state (ministries, local government, social institutions) for that same purpose,
- direct co-operation with all ministries in order to revise the institutional context and include the principles of equality in new legislation,
- planning and recommendations for inclusion in the government's development programme of activities aimed at ensuring women's participation in the country's development process,
- information of the public in order to overcome biases and anachronistic social attitudes and increase awareness on equality issues.

During the period 1986-1994 the Parliament voted Acts concerning equality of the sexes, the working conditions and social security. Some of those most worth mentioning are the establishment of part-time work, the support given to those who have family responsibilities and work in either the private or the public sector, the protection of health and safety of those who work in the public or the private sector and the legalisation of abortion (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996).

Very important for the equality of the sexes were also the following:

1. The Research Centre for Equal Opportunities (RCEO) was founded.

2. Many after-school clubs were created.
3. Seminars and conferences about the equality of the sexes were organised and non-governmental organisations which work for the equality of the sexes were founded. (e.g. Greek Union of Women)
4. Centres for abused women were founded in Athens and Piraeus.
5. The second (1986-1990) and third (1990-1994) action programmes against unemployment of women of the European Community was enforced. A lot of adult education programmes were organised in order to provide women with better qualifications (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996).

One of the main priorities of the General Secretariat of Equality during the period 1994-1997 was to work for a reduction of unemployment among women and for a broadening of their job opportunities beyond women's traditional professional choices. The change of ideas about the roles of the sexes at work, in the family, in the educational system and generally in Greek society was one of the main aims of the Secretariat.

The representation of women in different sectors

The population

The census in 1991 showed that more than half (51 per cent) were women. The number of children born per family on average fell from 2.23 in 1980 to 1.39 in 1992. Some of the reasons are probably the inadequate support for working women, unemployment and the cost of raising children. There was an increase in the number of women who have one child (41 per cent to 45 per cent during the years 1980-92) or two children (31 per cent to 37 percent). During the same period there was a decrease in the number of women who have three children (from 14 per cent to 12 per cent) or four or more (from 13 per cent to 5 per cent) (National Report of Greece, 1996).

Women, Unemployment and Female Earnings

In 1993, 37.3 per cent of the working force were women but 58.7 of the unemployed are women. During the period 1985-1993 the following changes can be observed concerning female employment:

1. There was an increase in the unemployment of women.
2. There was an increase in the participation of women in most jobs (more female scientists but not in high posts like managers or administrators). In 1992 women constituted a third of working people. However the percentage of women in different categories varied considerably. For instance, the percentage of women in the following categories was as shown: office workers 51.7 per cent, scientists 44.3 per cent, people working in public services 43.9 per cent, sales people and merchants 37.3 per cent, and the employers in higher administrative jobs only 12.1 per cent.
3. There was an increase of the educational qualification of working women. It seems that the more educational qualifications women have the more they participate in the working force (compared with men). In 1993, 42.6 per cent of working women and 45.8 per cent of working men had received only Primary Education. In the same year 14.8 per cent of working women and 11.5 per cent of working men were University graduates. Among unemployed women 12.1 per cent were University graduates, compared with 9.3 per cent of unemployed men were University graduates. Most unemployed people had received only Primary and Secondary Education (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996).

Discrimination

According to the National Report (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996) the average earnings of women were lower than that of men in 1981 and 1993. In 1993 the difference was between 20.6 per cent to 28.5 per cent, whereas in 1981 the difference in the earnings of men and women was higher (30.3-42.8 per cent). Research has shown that the estimated degree of discrimination is high in the Greek labour market. A very large portion of the differences in male and female earnings is not due to personal abilities and potential (Kanellopoulos, 1980, 1983; Psacharopoulos, 1983). A

national survey carried out in 1987 was used to examine the differences in the earnings of male and female engineers in Greece (the percentage of female engineers is very high) and to compare the findings of an earlier survey (1977). The results indicate that most of the difference in the earnings may be due to discrimination and not to characteristics such as education or experience (Patrinos, 1995).

Women and politics

In Greece elections take place every four years. Women obtained the right to vote and to be elected in 1952. But it was only after the abolition of the dictatorship in 1974 that women have started to be politically active. The percentage of women involved in politics is still very low. The participation of women in the Government during the period 1986-1994 did not reach more than 12 per cent. Women hold posts mainly in the Ministry of Education, Health, Culture and Employment. Some though could be found in the Ministry of External Affairs, Justice and the Ministry of Industry. The percentage of female General Secretaries during the years 1993-1996 was 12 per cent. Between 1985 and 1994, the percentage of women in the Greek Parliament reached between only 4.3 per cent and 6.7 per cent. In the June 1994 elections the percentage of female MPs reached 16 per cent. Women are also underrepresented in the political parties especially in the highest posts. (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996).

The position of women in Greek society

According to Maria Eliou (1995) equality should be accomplished on three different levels. First legally, women should have equal rights with men. Second in the economic, public and social sector they should be equally represented and third the people's ideas about the role of women and men in society should promote the general concept of equality. Otherwise it cannot be argued that equality has been really achieved. Equality of the sexes cannot be achieved only by law; a holistic approach is needed (Lindroos, 1995). Legislative provisions which allow women access to education or other sectors of public life are not enough by themselves for equality.

Since people and specifically teachers in this case, are not passive computerised beings we cannot argue that changes in the laws guarantee changes in the people's ideas and everyday practices (Priegert-Coulter, 1995).

Although positive changes have occurred as far as Greek laws about equality are concerned, women's participation in many sectors is low and the traditional ideas about the roles of women and men in the family, in education and at work still exist (Eliou, 1995).

Women and education in Greece

Introduction

Until the constitution of 1975 access to education was not a right that was given to women. There was a struggle in Greece before women obtained the right to be educated in public institutions. Moreover it took years until women managed to participate in some professions which were thought to be typically male, and men in some others which were thought to be typically female (e.g. nursery teacher).

Education has always been important for the emancipation and independence of women (Lambraki-Paganou, 1995). Today the educational system does not officially discriminate against women and girls. The legislative provisions mentioned above, show that the equality of the sexes in education is now supported and protected legally. But the statistical information about men and women in several posts in education, about females' and males' achievement in different fields, information about the stereotypes in the books used and the hidden curriculum provide us with a picture which is far from the equality of the sexes. Gender stereotypes are reproduced in the family and at school and they influence girls' choices and their advancement in some fields (Arseni, 1995). In Greek society there are different sex-roles and expectations for the sexes which influence their attitudes towards different jobs (Aristidimou-Iakovidou, 1995). For instance women are expected to be good mothers and housewives (Grodum, 1995). Being a very successful professional is not the ideal image that Greek society has about women (Kassotakis, 1995).

Eliou (1995) believes that there is still a lot to be done towards real equality of the sexes. Research on equality issues in education and teachers' awareness of the subject could make important contributions towards fair education for both sexes (Arseni, 1995). But the question is, can the educational system which usually functions as a reproductive machine contribute to the eradication of sexism (Tsiakalos, 1995)? Before this issue is discussed, information is provided about women and education.

The history of female education in Greece

The attitudes that society has had about women and men has influenced the ideas concerning the education of girls and boys and the relative legislative provisions. For three centuries (1500-1800) there were no important changes against the differentiation in the education of the sexes. The main goal was to develop the qualities which were thought to pre-exist by nature in the sexes. As a result the exclusion of women from the mainstream education was considered right. Women were marginalised, they were seen and treated as inferior human beings. Their participation in education was the first step towards the change of their lives and the beliefs society holds about them (Lambraki-Paganou, 1995).

In 1834 primary education became compulsory in Greece. This change created a huge need for teachers. Another reason for the huge need for teachers was the belief that girls and boys should be taught separately. From 1830-1880 the teaching profession was the most appropriate occupation for unmarried women. Primary education was seen as the continuation of the family and women were thought to have all the necessary qualities for teaching at this level (nurturing, caring, patient). In any case female teachers managed to have good jobs and to be financially independent (although they were paid less than their male colleagues) (Ziogou, 1995). Of course marriage, family responsibilities and work were not a very appropriate combination.

Headmistresses who were not married were considered to be a failure. It is worth mentioning also that girls were not allowed to study at mainstream education (Greek schools and Gymnasia) after completing Primary education and therefore to continue at the universities. They were allowed to enrol in the Parthenagogia which offered a

‘proper female’ education (playing the piano, sewing). Female teachers were graduates of these schools (Ziogou, 1995).

During the period 1880-1930 changes came about. The existence of many female teachers was perceived as some kind of threat. Female education was seen as an ethical and social threat and as a danger (Lambraki-Paganou, 1995). At the same time women started to demand access to secondary and higher education. The first women’s associations/unions were founded and female teachers demanded equal pay. Although co-education was prohibited by law some women managed to study in public secondary schools (society was tolerant of co-education due to the lack of schools), and from 1890 the first female students enrolled at the university (Ziogou, 1995).

The current situation

Equality in education was established by the Constitution of 1975 as already indicated. Additionally Article 10 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) that Greece signed in 1982 protects and promotes equality of the sexes in education. According to the Article the member-countries of the United Nations should take all the necessary measures to eradicate discrimination against women so that women can have equal rights with men in education. The following should be provided for women:

1. The same opportunities for career guidance, studies and degrees or certificates in every educational institution both in rural and urban areas and at every level (primary, secondary, etc.) and kind (technical, comprehensive) of education.
2. The right to attend the same courses or programmes with men, the right to be taught by staff which hold the same qualifications and to be taught in places of the same quality standards.
3. Any stereotyped ideas about the roles of men and women in education should be eradicated, by changing the books and the curriculum and by adapting them to the needs of both sexes.

4. The same opportunities in obtaining scholarships or any kind of funding for studies.
5. The same opportunities in attending courses in adult and continuing education so that the difference or imbalance between the qualification of men and women can be tackled (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996).

Before I proceed to the participation of women at all levels of education at present, it is necessary to provide a picture of the structure of the Greek educational system.

Nowadays almost all schools are co-educational (Kontogiannopoulou- Polydorides, 1991). Although education is provided free by the state, 5 per cent of the pupils attend private schools. The main sectors of the system are:

1. Pre-school education: from three and a half years old to five and a half years old. It is voluntary.
2. Primary education: from five and a half or six years. It lasts for six years and is compulsory. Greek language, mathematics, environmental studies, art and physical education are taught all by one teacher. In grades three to six, religious studies, geography, civic education, physics, and cultural studies are included in the curriculum. The introduction of foreign language (English) started in 1987 in 124 primary schools.
3. Lower Secondary education (gymnasia) : from eleven and a half or twelve years lasting for three years and it is compulsory. The curriculum includes Greek language and literature, ancient Greek and literature, mathematics , art, domestic science, history, physical education, music and a foreign language. Biology is taught in the first year, geography in the second and physics and chemistry in the second and third years. In the third year there are two additional subjects civic education and careers guidance. Computer studies, technical education and a second foreign language are also part of the curriculum now.
4. Upper Secondary education: This lasts for three years and is not compulsory. Transfer from lower Secondary level to upper Secondary level is not the result of examinations or particular requirements except for the completion of studies in gymnasias. There are different upper Secondary schools called 'Lycea' but of the same status.

In the general Lycea the curriculum includes Greek language and literature, mathematics and Classical Greek literature, physics, chemistry, a foreign language, social sciences (history, psychology and religious education) and physical education. Apart from informal evaluation, students have to take annual written examinations. In the third grade of the general Lyceum there are some compulsory subjects: Greek language, a foreign language , Social Sciences and physical education, but students must also choose one of the four tracks. The first track includes mathematics, physics, chemistry; the second physics, chemistry and biology; the third ancient Greek, history and Latin; and the fourth mathematics, history and sociology. Writing an essay for the annual national examinations is also a requirement of each track. Each track enables students to take the annual national examinations for entry in different areas of higher education. Students from the first track can apply for the following areas: mathematics, sciences, engineering, agricultural sciences and education. Students from the second track can apply for biology, chemistry, medical and veterinary studies and education. Students from the third track can apply for literature, modern languages, political science and education. Students from the fourth track can apply for sociology, economics, political science and education.

Comprehensive Lycea (Eniea Polykladica Lycea, EPL) combine general education and vocational training. Graduates from these schools can also apply and take the exams for higher education. The Technical-Vocational Lycea (Technica Epagelmatika Lycea, TEL) offer more emphasis on specialised vocational training. Graduates from these schools can continue to Higher Technical and Vocational Institutions but not to Universities. There are also Technical Schools which offer technical education lasting two years, rather than three but they are of lower status.

5. Higher Education consists of Universities or Highest Vocational Institutions (Anotata Ekipedetika Idrimata, AEI) and Technical and Vocational Institutions (Technica Epagelmatika Idrimata, TEI). Studies at universities last for four years in most faculties and at the Higher Institutions they last for three and a half years. University education departments were created in 1985 and specialist colleges of

Agriculture and Industry, with university status, were integrated into universities in 1989. (Kontogiannopoupou- Polydorides, 1991).

The present study took place in 1998 when the educational system described above was still in force. However in that year the Minister of Education informed the public about radical changes in the system such as the abolition of tracks in the last year of Upper Secondary level and the abolition of annual national examinations for entry in Higher Education (effective from the year 2000).

The representation of the sexes at all levels of education (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996)

In Nursery Education there are no important differences in the participation of girls and boys. The situation is the same as far as Primary and Lower Secondary Education is concerned. However, notable differences occur at the Upper Secondary level (Lyceum). Most female students study in the general and comprehensive lycea and are substantially underrepresented in the Technical-Vocational Lycea and in the Technical Schools (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996) .

As far as Higher Education (Universities and Technical institutions) is concerned the participation of women is large and has increased since 1985. However women still prefer the Faculties of Humanities and Education whereas men prefer science, technology and health. There are also more women in Universities (Anotata Ekedeftika Idrimata, AEI) than in Higher Technical and Vocational Institutions (Technica Epagelmatika Idrimata, TEI). This differentiation reflects the sex-role ideology of the Greek society (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996) and not different achievement patterns for girls and boys. Women can do really well in fields dominated by men. Data from 1981-1982 show that slightly more women who decided to participate in the entrance examination for the science track did better than men with 33.5 per cent ranking as either both very good or excellent compared with 31 per cent of men. First year results show that women performed slightly better at the University level in Engineering (see Kontogiannopoupou-Polydorides, 1991, pp. 104-5).

In Primary Education the percentage of female and male teachers was about the same during the years 1985-86 and 1989-90. For the same period at the lower Secondary level (high schools) the percentage of female teachers was higher than that of male teachers. No data are available for the distribution of teachers in different subjects during this period. In the upper Secondary level the percentage of female teachers is lower compared with that of male teachers. The difference appears in all types of Lycea but especially in the comprehensive, technical Lycea and technical schools. Among University lecturers women are underrepresented (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996).

Conclusions

The Greek educational system is characterised by a massive increase in female enrolment since the 1970s and by inequality in subject choice at University level which is slowly diminishing (OECD, 1986). However, some writers argue that there has been no progress and even if there has been some, it did not have a serious impact on the status of women in society (Eliou, 1988). According to Kontogianopoulou (1991) our fight should focus on the improvement of the status of women in society and not on demanding equal treatment in education. The same writer also argues that the increase in female participation in education is more related to other factors than to educational reforms and policies. First, the issue of equal opportunities for the sexes in education had been introduced by organisations, such as UNESCO and by educational theorists. Second, Greece had to prepare for entry into the European Community (1981) and the adoption of the 1975 Directive on the Equality of Treatment between male and female workers. An equal employment legislation was created and the Council and the Secretariat for Women's Equality were set up in 1982 and 1985 as a direct need to comply with EEC policies. Then some changes occurred in the educational system which aimed at providing girls with more opportunities for further educational careers. The elite boys' schools were abolished, and co-education was imposed.

Indirect sexism

In the previous sections attention was drawn to the legal rights of women and their status in the Greek society. It seems that women are not disadvantaged in law but nevertheless remain disadvantaged as far as the structures are concerned. I should acknowledge however that some good initiatives have been taken towards the equality of the sexes. Unfortunately little attention has been given to those practices which disadvantage girls and women or men and boys in a subtle and sometimes unofficial way. Gaine (1989) in 'Getting Equal Opportunities and keeping them' distinguishes between institutional and structural racism. He uses institutional racism to refer to those practices and procedures which work subtly in a way that exclude minorities. Similarly everyday practices in school could disadvantage girls and women. For instance although girls are not officially prohibited to take part in basketball or football games, I have never come across any Greek physical education teachers who would set up a female football or basketball team. Perhaps teachers do not have an intention to exclude girls and deprive them of opportunities but still with their practices they disadvantage them. Of course, actions, policies and practices can disadvantage not only girls but boys as well.

In any case sexism is built on perceived differences between females and males. There are of course some biological differences between women and men but they are often constructed or used in such a way as to provide an unfair basis or excuse for different treatment of the sexes and for different arrangements in the social and political arena so that one sex becomes or is maintained as more powerful than the other.

Unfortunately the fact that institutional sexism and racism are subtle and covert, makes their questioning and obliteration a very difficult project (Ayim and Houston, 1996). Usually the actions and practices that lead to institutional racism and sexism become routinised events, natural, unchallenged features of everyday life.

In this concept of sexism the consequences of actions are central. The result is the key issue in this concept although in many cases sexism is defined according to the content of actions or even the intentions of those involved in a practice. To recognise the consequences of actions is not always a straightforward procedure but it helps in the eradication of sexism. To know the intentions of individuals is difficult and not always

effective since the outcome of some actions can still cause discrimination even when there was no intention for that. To judge behaviour on the basis of content can be problematic. For instance if Faculties in which Greek women are underrepresented engaged in a policy which increased the number of female student entries in order to create an equilibrium, although their policy could be described sexist in its content, it could result to equal participation of female and male students in traditionally male dominated Faculties (Ayim and Houston, 1996).

The hidden curriculum

One important way of conceptualising indirect sexism in schools is through the 'hidden curriculum'. With the term 'hidden curriculum' I refer to 'those aspects in schools that are unintentional or unofficial or undeclared consequences of the way in which teachers organise and execute teaching and learning' (Davies and Meighan, 1975, p. 171) or in more general terms to 'those unstated norms, values and beliefs embedded in and transmitted to students through underlying rules that structure the routines and social relationships in school and classroom (Giroux, 1983, p.47).

For instance the content of books related to sex-roles can influence the students' ideas about what is appropriate for a woman and a man (Flerx et al., 1976). Maragoudaki (1995) came to the conclusion after her research in nursery schools in Ioannina that the books that teachers read to children are full of the traditional sex-role stereotypes (e.g. the father is the breadwinner, the mother is the housewife). The context of the books used in Primary Education in Greece were not strongly criticised as Deligianni-Kouimtzi (1995) mentions until 1978 when Fragoudaki referred to 'propaganda in favour of sex inequality' (p.24). Eliou (1985) argues that the new books used after the reforms of the new government (1981) were much better but there is still a lot to be done towards equality and destereotyping.

Also teachers' ideas and their practices can give messages which do not contribute to gender equality. In the European Conference which took place in Athens in April 1994, Kalomiris (1995) referred to more teachers' lack of awareness of the fact that the differences between girls and boys are not simply innate but rather the result of

social factors. In the same conference Tzikas (1995) highlighted the fact that most teachers especially in primary education come from middle-class families and the education they received was very 'patriarchal and authoritative' (p. 73). Unfortunately teachers have been given insufficient support and few opportunities to reflect on these ideas to challenge inequality in the classroom (Kalomiris, 1995).

Although many authors have not specifically focused on gender, they have stressed the reproductive role of the hidden curriculum and education, leaving in some cases room for resistance. Bowles and Gintis (1976) developed the correspondence principle, the ideas that schools reproduce the ideology of capitalism by their authoritative, hierarchical structure which encourages competition and the pursuit of credentials. Although they point out that gender, class and race are significant factors in the process of reproduction, they seem to have neglected the agency of those involved in the educational system. The historical and socio-economical context of education is important but actors such as students and teachers must have some choice or capability of transformative action (Helsby, 1999).

Apple focused on the official curriculum and the teachers and texts. He argues (1990) that the knowledge that the schools provide is more accessible to some groups, which results in inequality in education and later in society. Lynch (1989) criticised him for not offering a satisfactory explanation about the relationship between the reproduction in education and the social reproduction. In 'Teachers and Texts' (1988) although Apple acknowledges the fact that teachers can be of different class, race and gender and that they are not passive, he argues that even when they resist they have very little chance of challenging effectively the dominant ideology.

Willis (1977) in 'Learning to Labour' referred to the constraining role of structures and also turned attention to the cultural production in schools, to the construction of subjectivities and identities. But his notion of resistance as a male working-class response is rather restricted since it appears to be the only form of culture produced by working class boys and second there is no guarantee that cultural reproduction will necessarily lead to social reproduction. Not all working-class children have become working class adults (Lynch, 1989).

Bourdieu (1977) referred to the different cultural capital of children and its importance for their positioning in privileged or unprivileged places in schools and in society. The idea that all schools are somehow involved in the reproduction of inequalities, leaves really no space for human agency and treats all schools and all those involved in education as passive humans with very similar characteristics (Lynch, 1989).

Arnot (1983) focuses on gender and she argues that gender relations are not reproduced through structural forces imposed on women. She refers to reproduction through 'unconscious internalising' (p. 34). That means that messages about femininity and masculinity if not understood critically and judged critically are internalised and contribute to the formation of an identity that sees the world as natural and does not challenge it. There is room for agency.

Giroux (1983) sees teachers as potential contributors to change. He wonders if there is no chance for change what is really the worth and purpose of research and education. Perhaps schools are not the best places for radical changes (Delamont, 1983) but institutions like people and society must evolve in order to survive (Garforth, 1985).

The main issue in this structure-agency debate is how these forces are viewed and how resistance can be a really creative, powerful aspect of human life. Eduards (1994) argues that humans have agency and that they can influence events in different ways, depending on the context in which they act. School life is a set of processes in which a number of people interact among themselves. In the specific context of schools students and teachers do not simply learn 'fixed roles and a set of rules for behaviour' (Dubisch, 1986, p. 27). Culture and structure do not simply throw themselves on individuals as oppressive forces (Crosz, 1999; Shilling, 1992). In schools individuals from different backgrounds and different experiences actively engage in the production and reproduction of practices (Giddens, 1981). According to the structuration theory humans use the rules and resources of society in order to accomplish interaction. In this process they are able to monitor their activities and to reflect on them (Shilling, 1991). Although their activities are influenced by structure they are not determined by structure and they are subject to change. An individual might choose to act differently, not necessarily out of a great purpose but perhaps after personal understanding.

Gender and schools

Gender is different from sex. It refers to what is seen as the appropriate personal qualities and characteristics for males and females; it is socially constructed, whereas sex refers to the biological differences of males and females. Gender is not imposed on people. Women and men do gender in every interaction and in different socio-political contexts and historical circumstances (West and Zimmerman, 1991). What is appropriate and expected from a girl in England may be completely different from what is expected from a girl in Greece (Garrett, 1987).

At school gender is used as a means of organising life and categorising people. There is a 'gender regime' at schools as Kessler et al. (1985, p.42) describe it. There are different experiences for boys and girls, different things are allowed and expected for and from both female and male students and female and male teachers (Acker, 1988, 1990). One example is the rating of some subjects as more feminine or masculine by both students and teachers. In a study reported by Haste (1981) 13-14 old students rated typing, English and French as most feminine. Similar results were reported by Freedman (1989) who found that A level students rated engineering, physics, chemistry and mathematics as masculine and English, biology, French and sociology as feminine (in Lightbody et al., 1996). Teachers also think that some subjects like woodwork are more appropriate for boys and some others are more appropriate for girls (Gillborn, 1990; Lightbody, 1994).

Although historical changes and social circumstances influence ideas about gender, gender regimes still function in schools and they reflect the ideas of society. For instance, in her study in an independent single sex school for girls in Canada, Heyward Candance (1995) found that although there was progress in the way the school was organised and in the way girls behaved compared with fifteen years ago, there were still stereotypical ideas about gender as far as sexuality, sports, extra-curricular activities and funding are concerned. In their study in government secondary schools in Western Australia Blook and Browne (1996) found after analysing interviews given by 27 female teachers that stereotyped ideas and expectations about the role of the sexes were among negative factors in promotion decisions.

Although schools are places where femininity and masculinity are constructed, femininity and masculinity are not unitary categories. There are many masculinities and femininities which are shaped around historical and social circumstances and particular values of different schools or groups (Martino, 1995; Connell, 1995). In her ethnographic study in a working class primary school in the north-east of England, Christine Skelton (1996) found that through various discourses the school assisted in the construction of an aggressive authoritative masculinity. This form of masculinity was in accordance with the culture of the community in which the school operated and it was certainly not the same form of masculinity that would be welcomed in a high class school in England or in another country.

In settings of interaction individuals organise their activities drawing on the dominant discourses, the ideas about how females and males should behave. In this process humans are not passive. There is no pre-existing subject on which the concept of femininity or masculinity is enforced and which always enacts a fixed universal role (Jones, 1997). Subjects use common perceptions and practices about gender in order to communicate with others and to make sense of the world. By doing that they create their own subjectivity and identity (Skeggs, 1997). One should not perceive this process simply as a form of constraint, individuals have the power to resist (Jackson and Salisbury, 1996). Women and men are powerful actors who can resist dominant discourses and create new meanings. In her research with 100 children, 9-11 years old, in five primary schools in Cornwall Ella Westland (1993) found that girls were 'resisting readers' (p. 237). Through group discussions, drawings and story writing children were asked to comment on traditional fairy tales. Results showed that girls enjoyed the stories but they were also able to criticise them change them or reverse them. Boys on the other hand seemed more attached to the traditional gender stereotyped images of the stories, perhaps they felt that traditional roles were more valued and enjoyable for them.

Moreover individuals through their experiences and constructions of gender create culture and they can get pleasure and satisfaction (Crowley and Himmelweit, 1992). The constructs about femininity and masculinity pervade every interaction and through

repetitive practices they seem to be natural, unchangeable features of the world (Davies, 1997; Dubisch, 1986).

Seeing women and men as actors, power as 'productive' and 'as something which circulates' according to Foucault (Usher and Richards, 1994, p. 89) and gender as an interactional accomplishment, allows room for change and innovation in education, bearing always in mind that the issue of equality is not a trivial, straightforward procedure, but demands changes not only in structures but also in personal identities and subjectivities. In order to accomplish personal change, an individual needs reflection and understanding of her/his actions. In the next section I turn to feminism since it is a theory and practice which asserts the rights of women and provides a variety of ways for challenging inequality.

My feminist perspective

All the different feminist perspectives acknowledge that women are subordinated but they provide different explanations for it and propose different ways for fighting sexism and inequality (Measors and Sikes, 1992; Hartnett and Naish, 1986; Lerner, 1986). Liberal feminism focused on the individual (Middleton, 1987) and aimed at removing the barriers in education and society which exclude women from social and political life. Equality in laws and equal opportunities in education and society have been important issues for liberal feminists. In education they focused on the eradication of sexism, on stereotypes and the underachievement of girls. The problem with this perspective is, first, it overemphasises the capacity of individuals to change even when procedures and circumstances remain oppressive. Second it does not take into account the differences among women (Weiner, 1994). Not all women share the same class, race and economic situation and therefore not all women access opportunities in the same way.

Socialist and Marxist feminists focused on the goal of economic independence of women and saw capitalism as the source of women's oppression (Barrett, 1987). Researchers of this perspective focused on how schooling reproduces unequal gender relations. Although the economic independence of women is important I do not see it

as a solution to the problem of inequality. The problem with this perspective is that it overemphasises the role of structure over that of agency and also that it neglects the cultural and ideological production and reproduction in which individuals take part in every day life (Weiner, 1994).

Radical feminists see patriarchy as the source of women's oppression (Firestone, 1979). They see all men as oppressors and women as deprived in all aspects of life (Gunew, 1991). Radical feminists contributed a lot towards the equality of the sexes by drawing attention to the construction and dissemination of female knowledge, and by focusing on female experience and also on issues such as rape, sexual harassment and male violence. Their notion of patriarchy however, was absolute and neglected issues of ethnicity, race and historical change (Walby, 1990). Black feminists and lesbian feminists pointed out that the experiences of middle-class heterosexual women should not be applied to all women (Weiner, 1994; Clarke 1997).

Post-modern feminists and post-structural feminists have also offered useful insights into feminism by turning attention to issues such as truth, knowledge and power (Griffiths, 1995). In postmodernism there are two useful points for feminism. There is the rejection of the notion of the rational, free individual who aims at progress and emancipation (Hekman, 1990). For this notion of the rational subject seems like a myth to me since it does not take into account the context in which an individual acts and the limitations across time and space. Second there is the rejection of absolute truths (Appignanesi and Garrat, 1995). Rejecting absolute truths does not mean avoiding to make any accountable claims, but acknowledging the limitations of all theories, including feminist theories, and their perspectival knowledge and also the differences between people and groups of people (Middleton, 1995). Rejection in this context allows us to think that all feminists theories have something to offer, but they are not God-given answers which can their own, on its own, bring gender equality (Phillips, 1992; Bryson, 1992).

Therefore it is important that the laws of a country protect and promote equality and that women are represented equally with men in the social, economical and political life. It is equally important to acknowledge the power of discourses. These are not just ideas about the world but are also practices which pervade every aspect of life and

constitute subjects and identities in a way that the female-male dichotomy becomes an absolute truth (Paechter and Weiner, 1996; Foucault, 1980). It is also necessary to view women as actors who actively engage in the production and reproduction of gender relations and have the power to challenge discourses, to resist dominant ideas and practices and to bring change. Finally, it is important to remember that gender and equality should concern both women and men and that sexism and inequality can be detrimental not only for women but also for men.

Conclusions

It seems that in Greece women and girls are not discriminated against in laws and official procedures but the issue of indirect discrimination and the importance of the hidden curriculum in the production and reproduction of gender relations have been neglected. Research in this area has been extremely limited in Greece and moreover there is a lack of specific educational provisions or guidelines to prevent discriminative behaviour in the classroom (Kogidou, 1995). Taking into account that gender is something that both women and men construct in different settings of interaction, such as education, I decided to do my research in a classroom in a secondary school, so as to see how teachers and students interact and construct gender in their everyday life. My positioning in a discourse that sees power in both structures and individuals and acknowledges the differences between people, as well as my feminist perspective which values change not only at the macro but also at the micro level of society led me to study people in a natural setting and get an insight into their lives. In this study I explore teacher-student interaction but also teachers' perceptions about gender, having in mind that the context can have different effects on different people and also that different experiences constitute different subjectivities and can lead to different behaviour. One should not expect that all Greek women are powerless and that all Greek men are sexist. A context influences women and men, low, middle and upper class people, as well as black, white, British or Greek people, but it does not define them (Osler, 1997).

This research attempts to contribute to the formation of critical awareness by providing an ethnographic account of gender and classroom interaction which can help teachers understand their classroom practices and reflect on them. Unless we learn more about teachers' actions, the reasons and the consequences of these actions and unless we gain the participation of committed educationalists in gender reform, equality will remain a myth (Quicke, 1991; Rudduck, 1994).

‘As teachers we need to reach into our histories and attempt to understand how issues of class, culture, gender and race have left their imprint on how we act.’ (Giroux, 1983, p. 241)

Chapter 2

Teachers' ideas on gender and their classroom practices

A review of relevant studies

Introduction

After the overview of the research problem and the rationale for this study I turn to research on gender and teacher-student interaction. Since there is almost no Greek empirical research on the matter I focused mainly on English studies, which inspired and guided my research project. This chapter discusses the different perceptions and expectations that teachers have of their female and male students and the role of factors, such as socialisation, age, sex, status and social class on the formation of teachers' ideas. This chapter also provides examples of differential treatment of girls and boys in the classroom, reasons for it and its effect on students' academic and emotional development. Lastly attention is given to teachers' resistance to anti-sexist initiatives and to possible reasons for that.

Teachers' perceptions and expectations

At school expectations as well as attitudes play an important role in the teacher student interaction. By teachers' expectations we mean 'any inferences that teachers make about their students' future behaviour and abilities' (Good and Brophy, 2000, p. 74). Sometimes these judgements are based on some evidence like pupils' records (grades, family background) or they are based on general preconceptions. In everyday life we very often make judgements about other peoples' personality, behaviour and abilities but if these judgements are based on preconceptions and narrowly define our interactions with people then there is doubt that we can treat others objectively and fairly.

In school the problem starts when the teachers' expectation is so rigid and inflexible that it does not change even when the evidence suggests that it should or when the ambiguity of a situation is routinely interpreted with the framework of an overgeneralisation such as a popular myth (Figueroa, 1991). The teachers' expectations might result in a certain reaction, a certain attitude towards a student, in accordance with those expectations. Expectations and attitudes are interrelated. If a teacher for instance believes that a child is incapable of learning maths she or he might not show the necessary enthusiasm or attention to the child so that it manages to overcome any difficulties. The child may feel the teacher's unwillingness to offer support or help and either consciously or unconsciously may try to show behaviour which fits the teacher's expectation. Then the teacher will use this behaviour as evidence for her/his original judgement. The teachers' expectation functions in this case as the 'self-fulfilling prophecy' (Brophy and Good, 1974, p.35). The idea was introduced by Merton (1949).

Younger et al., (1999) in their study in eight different size schools, in different places, in England, provided evidence through interviews about the teachers' different perceptions of girls and boys. Teachers saw girls as being more responsible with their work, better organised and more independent than boys and boys as being more interested in their image among their schoolmates.

Altani (1992) found evidence in a survey in primary schools in Greece that both female and male teachers expected boys to be more aggressive, to cause more disruption in the classroom and to interrupt more than girls, but they expected girls to be more obedient, patient and polite than boys. More male than female teachers expected boys to be more aggressive than girls. Perhaps the female respondents had accepted boys' behaviour as a natural phenomenon in a male dominated culture whereas the male respondents were more sensitive about boys' aggression and might have seen it as a threat to their authority in the classroom (Altani, 1992).

Pat Sikes (1993) argues that teachers and even student teachers have different perceptions of girls and boys and different expectations of them. An investigation involving 155 first year students on a Bachelor with qualified teacher status (BAQTS) course found that over 25 per cent of them expected boys but not girls to be reckless, cheeky, brave and noisy and girls but not boys to be tidy, clean, quiet, sensible, obedient and well-behaved (Sikes, 1991 as cited in Sikes 1993).

Sometimes teachers of both sexes expect female students to follow the traditional path (mother-housewife) and they believe that education for girls is not as important as it is for boys, because women usually do not have careers, only some kind of employment between school and marriage (Sutherland, 1981; Spender, 1989).

The teachers of A level classes that Stanworth (1983) interviewed in the Humanities Department of a College of Education expected boys, even the ones with low academic ability, to take up responsible jobs in the future. As far as girls are concerned, including the girls who were academically competent, teachers expected that they would get married and that they would not get high status jobs.

Reasons for teachers' stereotypical ideas

Skelton (1989) argues that the teachers have stereotypical ideas as a result of their own socialisation. Their family, their educational experience and the media played an important role on the formation of teachers' ideology. Teachers are a product of this society. Expecting them to enter a class without any ideology about gender, race, etc.

is completely unrealistic. Delamont (1991) argues that teachers are likely to hold stereotypical ideas about women and men as a result of their family background (cited in Sikes, 1993).

A lot of other factors can influence teachers' beliefs about gender and their attitudes at school, such as age, sex, subject taught, their status in the institution and class origin. According to the findings of a survey conducted by Kelly et. al. (1985) in 900 secondary schools throughout England and Wales, younger teachers were more open-minded than older ones, women teachers were more sensitive to the equality of the sexes than men, London teachers were more feminist than others, those involved in the 'Girls into Science and Technology' (GIST) project were more in favour of the equality of the sexes than others and science and craft teachers were more traditional than arts teachers.

Pratt (1985) also found that teachers' ideas about sex equality varied according to subject taught. The results of a survey of attitudes of 850 teachers conducted in 50 secondary schools in England and Wales show that the teachers of English and social studies (the latter mostly men) were the most in favour of Equal Opportunities whereas teachers of maths, physical science and technical crafts (all mainly male) and languages were the least in favour.

Gender has a huge influence in many areas in education (Equal Opportunities Commission, E.O.C. , 1989) but unfortunately it is only younger teachers who are more positive towards reforms about gender (Ball, 1987). This could be due to the influence of feminist ideas and the women's movement, although it is true that not many teachers are sympathetic to feminism and those who are, are usually young in age and of lower status (Cunnison, 1985). Older teachers on the other hand probably have not received that influence and if they are in higher positions they feel that their interests will be at risk if they support and implement anti-sexist initiatives (Riddell, 1988). However, it is important to acknowledge that age is a complex issue and it is clearly not the only factor that is related to teachers' attitudes towards reforms. Indeed other things such as teaching experience, or in-service education might influence

teachers' ideas. It is also worth noting that the studies mentioned above were carried out over a decade ago.

Delamont (1980) argues that teachers, especially men from a lower class background, have the conventional ideas about gender. Middle-class women who usually do not have high career aspirations are not willing to try to challenge the existing sex-stereotypes.

Discrimination in the classroom

Research provides a lot of evidence about the differential treatment of girls and boys of different age and in different schools. Whatever the reasons for teachers' holding sex-stereotypes or whatever the factors which influence these stereotypes, teachers express their ideas in their practice, as Lafrance (1991) argues based on a lot of research undertaken in North America, whether they are conscious or unconscious of them. The same idea is supported by Robinson (1992). In her study in high schools and colleges in Tasmania in 1989, which involved teachers of both sexes and obtained qualitative data from interviews, questionnaires and classroom observations, the researcher concluded that the teachers' stereotyped ideas about femininity and masculinity were evident in their teaching style and in their approaches to discipline issues. For instance aggressive behaviour and disobedience from boys was treated as natural by teachers and was thought to be more manageable. On the contrary it was expected as natural for girls to be quiet and therefore 'good' even when that meant that they could get away with not working, just by being quiet. Problematic behaviour shown by girls came as a shock for teachers who seemed puzzled and unable to handle it. Girls whose behaviour did not fit the norm were condemned unfairly and they usually developed a bad reputation especially if something about their appearance or their sexuality could be added to the list.

Gender differences in teacher-student interaction begin very early. Cherry (1975) found that teachers had more verbal interaction with four-year-old boys than with four-year-old girls. After analysing tapes of sixteen hours of spontaneous speech between four female pre- school teachers and thirty-eight children in two classroom situations she

came to the conclusion that teachers initiated more verbal interactions with boys than with girls. Morgan and Dunn (1990) after spending one month in each of four different schools in an urban centre in Northern Ireland, found that teachers interact more with boys than with girls in nursery and infant schools. Simpson and Erikson, (1983) observed sixteen female first grade teachers, eight black and eight white, in an urban elementary school. The results of their study show that boys received more praise and criticism than girls either by verbal comments or non-verbal contact such as nods and eye gaze.

Lindroos (1995) after observing an experienced female teacher in a Finnish lesson with eleven year old students (16 girls and 14 boys) found that the teacher's style was not the same with girls and boys. During the lesson the students who were divided into groups (five groups, 3 of girls and 2 of boys) had to continue a drawing that the teacher had given them and to tell a story about it. First the drawings that the teacher gave them were gendered and second the teacher herself was very different in the way she presented and finished the stories to the groups of girls and to the groups of boys. When the girls finished the teacher asked for another version but not when the boys finished their stories. She also interrupted girls and boys for completely different reasons. When she interrupted boys she used to ask them questions and seemed to be interested and curious or very supportive. The teacher neglected girls who overall spoke less than boys and were interrupted more by both the teacher and the boys in the class. Although the sample in this study is small and the analysis does not provide explanations for the teachers' behaviour it is nevertheless an interesting example of differential treatment of girls and boys.

In the study mentioned earlier, Altani (1992) found in observations of teacher-student interaction in four primary classes in Greece, that boys received a lot more reprimand especially for their misbehaviour and more praise in three out of the four classes. In another study (Merrett and Wheldall, 1992), observations of thirty-two primary teachers and thirty-eight secondary teachers provided evidence that showed that there were no important differences in the amount of positive and negative evaluations that girls and boys received for both their performance and their behaviour by their primary teachers. But boys received more positive evaluations for their performance and also

more negative comments for both their performance and their behaviour by their secondary teachers.

Among other differences in teacher-student interaction, differences in the amount of reprimand that girls and boys received, were also reported by Kelly (1986). After reviewing and combining data from more than 80 studies on teacher-student interaction, he reported the following findings: Girls on average participated in 44 per cent of the interactions although they were as willing as boys to answer questions. Male teachers gave less attention to girls than did female teachers. Girls got less criticism, but also less instruction, especially the oldest ones and especially in mathematics, but generally subject differences were minor. Boys got more academic and behavioural criticism.

In another study (Grima and Smith, 1993) carried out in four classes in two intermediate schools in New Zealand, data analysis of the twenty observations showed that the two female teachers of home economics who participated in the study directed more questions at boys, chose more boys than girls to answer questions, called on more male students and called more male students by their names. The differences were statistically significant in the number of reprimands and in the amount of help that the teachers gave to boys. From the interviews that both teachers and students gave, it came out that although the teachers were aware of the bigger share of time that was dedicated to boys, most of the students were not aware of that.

Stanworth (1983) argues that observations in A level classes in the Humanities Department of a college of further education have shown that boys receive most of the teachers' attention and time. This refers to teachers of both sexes, although male teachers are more likely to behave in this way. It is twice as likely for a boy than for a girl to receive the teachers' attention and concern if the teacher is a woman, but it is ten times more likely if the teacher is a man. But in another study, in a comprehensive multicultural school (Mifsud, 1996), the analysis of the data did not suggest that the six male respondents treated sex groups in a significantly different way. This was a quantitative study which recorded only dyadic specific teacher-student interactions and did not provide a more holistic approach of the classroom interaction.

Based on observations of four primary schools and interviews of female and male teachers, Clarricoates (1987) argues that boys get more of the teachers' attention because they misbehave quite often and they are more difficult to control. But even when boys do not misbehave, teachers reprimand and praise them more often than girls (Golombok and Fivush, 1994). It seems that one of the reasons that teachers offer more attention to boys is that they find boys more interesting and more important to teach. The teachers that Clarricoates (1987) interviewed thought that girls' interests were not as exciting as boys. Because girls were quiet and followed the rules they enjoyed a smaller share of teachers' attention and admiration compared to boys. In a way girls were being punished for something they learnt to do as part of their sex-role behaviour. Because the teachers in this study thought that boys had qualities like logic and creativity, they thought that boys had more potential to learn, that they were more intelligent than girls, and therefore they pushed boys more and offered them more help when they had problems with their work. When boys do not perform well their failure is more often attributed to lack of motivation rather to lack of ability. Whereas in the girls' case it is more often attributed to lack of ability rather than lack of motivation. Even when girls do better their success is attributed to other factors like the girls' tendency to please their teacher and comply with the rules (Safilios-Rothschild, 1986).

Teachers react immediately when boys misbehave, but not when girls misbehave. When boys misbehave they get the following labels: boisterous, tough, aggressive, but when girls misbehave they are called fussy, bitchy or silly (Clarricoates, 1987). Browne and France (1985), after monitoring their own speech and that of their colleagues in multilingual nurseries in Inner and East London, found that girls and boys are labelled differently by their teachers for exactly the same behaviour. When a girl is crying she is thought to be sensitive, but when a boy is crying in the nursery school he is called wet, softie or cry-baby. For a girl to organise things and to take initiative means that she is bossy, whereas for a boy it means that he has got leadership abilities.

Although the studies mentioned above provide evidence for the differential treatment of girls and boys, we should not necessarily expect girls to be left behind as far as performance and career are concerned. It is very important to remember that girls are not passive in the classroom and also although a lot of research has shown that boys

interact more with their teachers, we should examine whether some patterns of interaction are positive for students' attitudes towards learning and for their performance and achievement. The findings of the study by Younger et al., (1999) support the idea that boys interact more with their teachers, but they also provide evidence that girls ask more academic questions and more explanations related to their work. Perhaps this behaviour can have a positive effect on girls' learning whereas the boys' hesitation to ask academic and work related questions can be detrimental for their learning.

Nowadays girls perform better in all areas of the curriculum at the age of seven (Equal Opportunities Commission, 1998). Arnot et al., (1996) report that nowadays after years of gender reform, girls perform better in English in Key Stages 1 and 2 of the curriculum. Also over the period 1984-94, in Great Britain, female students have increased their performance in GCSE exams in all subjects and they get very high marks. Girls perform better in most subjects at GCSE/SCE Standard Grade (Equal Opportunities Commission 1996; Equal Opportunities Commission, 1998).

Although women perform as well as men in most subjects at A-level, they still prefer different subjects. Women dominate the Arts and men dominate the Sciences except for Biology. As far as mathematics is concerned, after 1994 girls have performed better than boys in GCSE examination, but males still outnumber females in GCE 'A' level and in higher education with the exception of mathematics teacher education (Walkerdine, 1998). Although the percentage of women in higher education has increased since 1975, more women are found in the Faculties of Humanities and in Education and more men are found in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology. There are also differences in the plans that women and men have after graduation. More women than men are likely to become teachers and more men than women with degrees in Science and Engineering and Technology are likely to follow management (Equal Opportunities Commission, 1998).

In Greece there are fewer women than men in Higher Technical and Vocational Institutions (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996). Also although female and male students are still found in different numbers across different Faculties, there were

slightly more female entries in University for the year 1990-91 (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996). So although both in Great Britain and in Greece the performance and representation of women in many areas has increased, women and men still make different choices perhaps because of traditional ideas about the sexes and their occupation. However it is important to remember that there are not differences only between girls and boys but also among girls or boys of different social class, race and ethnicity (Lingard and Douglas, 1999). Also the increase in women's performance and the general increase of women's qualifications must be seen as a complex phenomenon attributed to many factors such as historical and economic changes, feminist ideas, gender reforms and the struggle of many women to improve their position (Arnot et al., 1999). Moreover the improvement of female performance in many areas does not translate to equality of the sexes in education and society. There is still a lot of work to be done on the stereotyped perceptions of students, the traditional ideas of girls and boys about femininity and masculinity, the gender construction and power relations in schools, the careers of girls and boys and the consequences of all these for the status of men and women in society (Lingard and Douglas, 1999).

The effect of teachers' perceptions and expectations

There might be some connection between teachers' expectations and students' performance (Brophy and Good, 1974), or between teachers' expectations and levels of students' confidence. Teachers' perceptions and expectations may influence teachers' behaviour, and teachers' behaviour may influence students' behaviour and achievement. But this is not a simple linear process. Students' perceptions of teachers expectations can influence students' behaviour and achievement and all these can reinforce or change students' expectations and behaviour (Qing Li, 1999).

In a famous study (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968) evidence was produced that indicated that teachers' expectations about students' progress can influence students' performance. Rosenthal and Jacobson told the teachers of an elementary school in an urban lower-class community in the USA that based on a test they had identified the 'bloomers' (those who would do well) in their classrooms. Although the children were not really the bloomers, at the end of the year the subjects did much better than their

classmates in a general abilities test and they were described by their teachers as more likely to achieve. This is of course an old study which used only quantitative data and did not provide any information about the teachers' behaviour in the classroom and about the students' perceptions of the teachers' expectations. Also this study is not related to gender but still it does raise an issue about the effect that different teacher expectations of girls and boys might have on teachers' attitude towards children and on the students' performance. This is not to say that teachers' expectations have the same effect on all students from different backgrounds and in different schools, nor that performance is simply defined by expectations.

What teachers think and expect of their students plays an important role in the current and future aspirations and the performance of girls and boys at school (Safilios-Rothschild, 1986). In a study in four mixed comprehensive schools in Barnsley, Leeds, Rotherham and Wakefield (Trafford and Clark, 1995) teachers' perceptions, teacher-student interaction and relationship and teacher personality were identified among other factors as very influential for the performance of students in modern languages. The project was funded by the Department of Education and Employment and aimed at giving explanations for the outperformance by girls in GCSE examinations. Interviews were carried out with both teachers and students in all the schools. Robinson Kerr (1992) argues that teachers' perceptions of the appropriate behaviour of their female students has an impact on these students' motivation and their self-esteem.

Girls are more likely than boys to attribute their failures to ability and less likely to attribute their successes to ability compared with boys (Light and Dweck, 1987; Molnar and Weisz, 1981). In pre-school years and early school years girls have less confidence than boys and this is observed even when girls perform as well as boys or even better than them. As a result of their lack of confidence girls will not easily choose tasks which are difficult or more challenging.

Teachers' stereotypes can cause problems to children whose behaviour is not according to the norm (Stanworth, 1983). A teacher who tells a young boy that 'boys do not cry' and a young girl that 'girls should not be bossy', by expressing her/his

prejudice puts pressure to the child to behave according to what she/he thinks is appropriate to the child's sex.

Demanding from girls to conform with their gender role can result in limiting their potential. In adolescence some girls face a dilemma. In a survey in fourteen schools in England and Wales, the analysis of the data suggested that some girls have to choose between being socially accepted as women or achieving very highly (Whitehead, 1994). Some girls may choose sex-stereotyped subjects (e.g. domestic science) in order to perform well and be in accordance with their feminine role. But when girls are trained in a non-traditional way it is more likely that they will develop a higher need for achievement (Carr and Mednick, 1988). Doyle (1989) argues that boys do not have to face that kind of conflict because achievement at school and in a profession later is not only socially accepted but usually demanded from boys and men because it is seen as a positive masculine quality.

This is not to say that all boys, no matter their background and their personalities, or their school culture and their teachers' ideology, will become high achievers. In his ethnographic study in an English comprehensive school in Midlands, Mac an Ghaill (1994, p.52) identified four different types of masculinity: 'the Macho-Lads', 'the Academic Achievers', 'the New Enterprisers' and 'the new middle-class Real Englishmen'. 'The Macho-Lads' showed that they were tough and in conflict with the authority of the school, 'the Academic Achievers' studied hard in order to perform well, the 'New Enterprisers' placed emphasis on developing technological skills and on planning their careers carefully, whereas the 'New middle-class Real Enterprisers' had a sense of superiority over their teachers and schoolmates and rejected the school's work.

Saunders (1979) argues that teachers' ideas about gender prevent them from taking action in changing their students' stereotyped behaviour which was formed by other agents of socialisation e.g. home. If teachers believe that women's prime role is to raise children and men's to find good jobs to support their families then teachers are likely to encourage children to these directions and prepare them for these roles. In another study (Evetts, 1993) after analysing data from career stories in engineering given by 15

women (26-44 years of age) the researcher found that, as far as the educational experiences of those women are concerned, although there were a few teachers who encouraged girls to follow traditionally masculine subjects or careers such as engineering in general terms the stereotypes about what is appropriate work for a woman and a man influenced the advise students got from school (advisers, teachers, head teachers). Most of these women had neglected the school's advice but it is worth mentioning that almost all the women in the sample were high achievers at school.

In physical education teachers' ideas about femininity and masculinity influence the choice of activities they give to girls and boys (Scranton, 1992; Scranton, 1995). Girls have to move and act like ladies whereas boys are encouraged to develop stereotypically masculine characteristics such as aggression and toughness. Any sign of feminine behaviour from boys is taken as very negative and detrimental for their image (Day, 1988).

A study carried out among Canadian secondary teachers showed that they used their sex stereotyped behaviour (female-passive, male-active) as the norm and that they felt that they should not change their students' stereotyped behaviour so they treated them according to the traditional ideas (Ricks and Pyke, 1973 quoted by Saunders, 1979, p.116). If teachers' do not challenge both their stereotypes and their students' stereotypes and they take some qualities or characteristics of their students for granted then with their actions they can make these differences bigger (Stanworth, 1983).

Factors affecting teachers' behaviour

Some support the ideas that stereotyped perceptions about gender are not the only reason for the differential treatment of boys and girls at school (Safilios-Rothschild, 1979b). Sometimes teachers behave differently towards students because the behaviour of their students encourages them to do so. After observing seventy science lessons Rydell-Altermatt et al. (1998) found that in three out of the six classrooms they observed, the greater frequency of teacher calling on boys was related to the boys higher volunteering rate. Perhaps if teachers had done something in order to encourage girls to volunteer more they could have increased girls' participation.

Teachers' differential treatment can also be related to the structure of the class or of the stereotyped label of the subject being taught. A teacher may lower her/his expectations of female students in a class with only one or two women or in an engineering class.

Differences can also occur between different schools. After her observations in different kinds of schools, Clarricoates (1987) came to the conclusion that in the urban traditional working-class area it was appropriate for girls to be active but teachers in middle class schools did not think the same. They expected and demanded from middle class girls to behave like ladies.

Teachers' resistance

The literature provides evidence not only of the influence of teachers' gender preconceptions on different expectations and different treatment of girls and boys but also on teachers' resistance to reforms. The term, teachers' resistance, is used here to refer to any sort of attitude or action taken by teachers, either intentional or unintentional, which perpetuates the prejudiced ideas about femininity and masculinity in the face of attempts to change them, instead of challenging them and which does absolutely nothing for the promotion of the equality of the sexes at schools and in society.

Although teachers should work for the development of all their children no matter their colour, sex, or race, teachers do not change their stereotyped attitudes easily and usually they resist anti-sexist initiatives (Acker, 1988; Acker, 1994). The feminist teachers that Joyce (1987) interviewed, four infant, three junior, three secondary and one lecturer in a College of Education in Inner London, argued based on their experiences at schools that teachers are not positive towards gender reforms. Change of attitudes and expectations is a difficult process and usually people do not wish to go through all the anxiety that it causes. In the teachers' case it would also mean that they have to come to terms with the fact that their practices have proved to be wrong (Brophy and Good, 1974).

Even for teachers who are committed to the equality of the sexes, taking action against sexism is a very difficult and frustrating process. The five first year teachers, from different schools in Ontario in Canada, who participated in group discussions (Priegert-Coulter, 1995) seemed to be in a very difficult position. The analysis of their experiences showed that the women, who had identified themselves as feminists at the beginning of the project, were aware of the sexism that their male colleagues had expressed and also of the power gender relations in their classrooms, but they felt that it was very difficult to do something practical in order to fight and eradicate sexism in their schools. They also felt that their training in tackling sexism was very limited.

It would seem that many teachers resist anti-sexist initiatives because they think that there is not a problem of sex inequality in education. Skelton (1985) in her ethnographic study discovered that gender was not an issue for primary student teachers. Researchers of 'Girls into Science and Technology' project (GIST) found that for teachers who taught science, equality of the sexes was not an educational problem (Whyte, 1986). In an ethnographic study in a college of higher education (Maguire, 1993), for eight out of the ten female teachers who were interviewed gender was not an issue in their working lives although the female teachers in the college were more experienced and qualified and had taken up posts with more responsibilities and more teaching. There was a sense of silence and resistance regarding the issue of gender and the existence of power relations. Recognising gender inequality and male power in professional and educational settings can be very disappointing especially if one's knowledge and resources in relation to the eradication of sexism are limited.

Other teachers acknowledge the fact that girls and boys make different choices but they consider that this is either because of biological differences or parental influence, and they think that there is very little the school can do about it (Riddell, 1988; Altani, 1992). Even if the school could do a lot about it they thought that it would be unethical to intervene and change different behaviour or choices shown by male and female students (Pratt, 1985).

Some teachers believe that they teach personalities and that issues like gender or race and colour do not interfere with their teaching practices. They also believe that the school should be neutral and should not introduce concepts of sexism to young innocent children not only because they are not very comprehensible for children but also because they are not very pleasant subjects (Riddell, 1988). Some other teachers take the students' behaviour as natural and part of everyday routine, so instead of trying to challenge gender differences they learn to accept them (Jackson and Salisbury, 1996).

Teachers often resist interventions which aim at gender reform not only because they do not comply with their ideology but also for more practical reasons. Taking into account the cost, the time and the problems that can be caused in the classroom teachers wonder about the use and the worth of the innovation. Their work is also very demanding and it seems very difficult for them to find time to engage in activities of that kind. Additionally teachers very rarely read academic writing or get involved in the dissemination of new ideas and so they do not get informed about the changes that are possible in the field of education and their importance (Acker, 1988; Acker, 1994).

By referring to teachers' resistance I am not implying that all teachers are negative towards gender reforms or that they are incapable of changing their ideas and their practices. In her study, Scraton, (1992, 1995) observed cases of another type of resistance from both teachers and students. Some physical education teachers and students did not accept the stereotypical notions of femininity and throughout the lessons of physical education they tried to reconstruct gender.

Although teachers have the potential to challenge dominant ideologies, we should acknowledge that this is difficult when there is a lack of opportunities for serious reflection and critical evaluation (Pigiaki, 1999) or when there is a lack of resources and training for tackling sexism and racism not only for teachers but even for student teachers (Renter, 1989). Moreover innovations and policies decided by some at the top of the educational system do not guarantee change in teachers' beliefs and classroom practices (Acker, 1999). Reform can become a reality only when teachers and teaching

change and for that to happen, we need to learn more about teachers' practices and teachers' lives (Goodson, 1992).

Conclusions

This review suggests that teachers' beliefs and their practices in the classroom may be different as far as girls and boys are concerned and that this can have differential consequences for girls' and boys' learning. It must be recognised, of course, that the findings of the studies discussed do not necessarily apply to Greece today. Some of these studies were carried out years ago and only one of them was carried out in Greece. Nevertheless, they do raise questions and provide pointers.

Classroom teacher-student interaction is a broad, complicated issue. This review suggests that differences in the treatment of girls and boys by their teachers can be quantitative or qualitative and can occur in many different settings, in different places and in different schools and at different levels of education. The reasons for the different patterns of gender and teacher-student interaction across different schools might involve a variety of reasons such as: teachers' perceptions of their students' abilities, learning and behaviour; teacher and student culture, background and experiences; and particular circumstances in a classroom or a school. Moreover, since social situations and human relationships are complex, ideas and patterns of teacher-student interaction and their different consequences can vary and change across time and space. But change in education involves a range of people whose ideas, lives and needs are different. If successful innovations and reforms is the aim, we need to explore both teachers' and students' realities in order to understand their actions and their choices. To provide evidence for differences in teacher-student interaction is important, but to explore them under the prism of a micro-school culture and in the context of a particular society and to try to give explanations for these differences is the next step towards change.

Hence, in my study I decided to focus on teachers' ideas about gender and their classroom practices. I chose to do an ethnographic study in a secondary school in order to get a more holistic picture of teachers' lives in the school and teacher-student

interaction in the classroom. Although my sample is small, it consists of teachers of different ages, experience, sex and subject taught. My aim was to see if and how differential treatment of girls and boys occurs in a Greek classroom, to find out if Greek teachers are involved in the promotion of equality and to explore possible explanations for the teachers' behaviour by looking not only at their ideas about gender, but also at their life experiences and the gender construction in the particular working-class school where my research was carried out. The following chapter discusses the research methodology.

Chapter 3

The research methodology

Introduction

This chapter deals with methodological issues. The focus of this study was initially broad, as it is usually the case with ethnographic qualitative approaches, and it was progressively developed in the field. The purpose of the study is to describe and understand the participants' behaviour and their ideas about gender. My aim is not to test a hypothesis or to prove a theory. This chapter explains why my research is ethnographic, critical, and feminist and it also deals with issues of what is traditionally referred to as validity and reliability. In addition, it provides information about the context of the study: the school, the teachers and the students to some extent. It refers to actions and choices that I made in the field such as entry procedures, selection of informants, relationships, obligations and participation in the setting. It also includes the methodological tools I used (oral history interviews, observations, interviews, questionnaires, and documents) and the approach to qualitative data analysis and discusses relevant underlying issues.

Ethnography

Since my study was ethnographic in nature, it is appropriate to discuss ethnography briefly. Ethnography derived from anthropology and in a broad sense, is the study of and participation in lives of a particular group of people in a natural setting over an extensive period of time. 'Ethnography is a product - the story about a group of people and also a process - the method of inquiry' (Le Compte and Preisley, 1993, p. 1). The aim in ethnography is understanding of human behaviour.

Ethnography has been used in many disciplines such as sociology, psychology and education and there have been variations in the ways the term ethnography has been used or in the ways ethnography has been done, depending on the focus or the methods used in ethnographic research. However, doing ethnographic research is not simply using qualitative methods or interacting with people, but also learning a culture, the people's perspectives, understanding them and constructing knowledge with them in a non-exploitative way (Hammersley, and Atkinson, 1995).

Ethnography has been enriched and influenced by different perspectives such as feminism or postmodernism (Le Compte and Preisley, 1993). The way ethnography is conducted is influenced by the researcher's theoretical stance and her/his background and interests. My teaching experience and my feminist consciousness influenced my research at every stage as I will discuss later on.

Critical ethnography

Critical ethnographers try to be free of their own assumptions, to understand the culture of a group from the subjects' perspective and go beyond what things seem to be (Thomas, 1993). For instance behaviour which seems discriminatory and sexist at first might be explained in many ways which at least at the beginning of an inquiry are not obvious. Individuals create their own rules, languages and sign systems for communicating in a setting, and these are not always clear to outsiders. We must also take into account oppression and power. Language, learned culture, unprivileged position in the school can certainly make it difficult for some people to express what

they really think and easier for the researchers to distort what the respondents really believe (Carspencken, 1996).

Critical ethnographers are interested in concepts like social structure, human agency, culture and reproduction. They are also interested in social injustice and inequalities and work for change in society (Thomas, 1993; Carspencken, 1996). Sex inequality in Greece, gender discrimination and particularly the traditional sex-role ideology which contributes but also reflects the disadvantaged position of women in Greece is my concern and the focus of this study. My aspiration for this study is to raise the awareness on this matter and to contribute to the explanation and solution of the problem, and to the emancipation of women and men from restraints (Lather, 1991).

Advantages and disadvantages of Qualitative-Ethnographic research

In the field usually researchers form relationships with the participants and try to be friendly and empathetic with them and not to treat them as objects under investigation. But forming relationships, getting close to people, and sharing personal things exposes the participants. It is the researcher's task and obligation to respect and protect those whose lives she/he shared and not to exploit the participants, from the beginning of the field work until the final written product (Stacey, 1988).

Since human behaviour is complex and reality is constructed, ethnographers try to see the phenomena under study critically and from different perspectives and they try to reflect on their actions in the field. Instead of viewing the self as a source of contamination for 'objective' research, ethnographers try to recognise the presence of their identity and the impact of their ideas and experiences in every phase of the research (Stanley and Wise, 1993).

Ethnographic research enables researchers to obtain lively and detailed accounts of events and experiences (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Ethnography can also provide unique information about cultures and areas of interest that have been neglected. Qualitative, ethnographic approaches are more appropriate for some studies than quantitative (Borg and Gall, 1983). A survey research on teachers' attitudes would

have provided data about a larger population but it would not have allowed me to get to know and understand those who participated in my study. Also a quantitative research approach would not have given me the opportunity to explore and explain the issue of teacher-student interaction from different angles and by listening to different voices. What I would have gained in breadth, I would have lost in depth. Moreover when I started this research I had a variety of broad interests: teachers' sex stereotypes, life in the classroom, teacher-student relationship and life in the school. I did not have or wished to have a hypothesis to test. Instead I was interested in giving a holistic picture of the way humans create life in a social context and give meaning to it (Eisner, 1993).

One of the disadvantages of ethnographic research is that it requires time and money. The researcher might need to complete many hours of observation during an extensive period of time (months or even years). This makes the field-work as well as interpretation of the extensive detailed information that is thereby collected an exhausting and difficult procedure. Thus the researcher must always make choices, constantly deciding what to count as data and what to leave out. The researcher must also be very observant and capable of approaching people successfully.

Confirmability, credibility, dependability and transferability

In positivist but also in naturalistic inquiry researchers have accounted for the validity and reliability of their findings. In positivist inquiry the aim has been the discovery of 'true' findings which are always testable and explained in a causal way, able to be replicated and consistent across time and place. This aim is based on a perspective which sees truth as monolithic and existent somewhere out of us and knowledge as free of values and ideas (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Robinson, 1994).

However, I believe that this perspective is not compatible with naturalistic inquiry in which the aim is to be part of situations and peoples' lives and study them holistically in order to arrive at conclusions which are not laws but partial and perspectival knowledge created by both the researcher and the participants. This does not mean that they are of no value or that they have not derived from valid data.

In this study I have used the terms confirmability, credibility, dependability and transferability (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Hammersley, 1992; Charles, 1998; Eisenhart and Howe, 1992) instead of objectivity, internal validity, reliability and external validity. However, I do not claim that all qualitative researchers who use the terms of validity and reliability approach these issues in a traditional, conventional way. Credibility refers to the extent that this research has produced a plausible picture of the phenomenon under study and the extent that explanations are supported by the information given. Dependability refers to the consistency of this research over time and researchers. Transferability refers to the extent that my findings can be applied or fit in similar contexts, and to the larger importance that they might have (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

I started this research with the aim of describing a situation at a particular school and explaining social relations. At no time I had the purpose to discover a universal law (Schwandt, 1994; Stanley and Wise, 1993). I was interested in interpreting a micro-world of which I was part for some time. My research has limitations, in the sense that it is the product of an investigation at a particular location and at a particular time (Williams, 1993; Wheatley, 1994; Bhavnani, 1993) and also the product of my relationships and choices in the field. Consequently, I do not claim that my findings are God-given universal truths but credible findings always open to criticism (Weiner, 1994).

Also like all human beings I have a background, professional and personal experiences and values which orientated this research and influenced its process (see chapter 1 and also feminist research in this chapter) (Stanley and Wise, 1990; Usher, 1996; Skeggs, 1995; Lather, 1991). But throughout the research process I reflected on my actions and emotions. I kept a diary and I thought of my actions and choices carefully (see appendix 2) (Altheide and Johnson, 1998).

In order to have more valid insights into the lives of those researched, I spent a lot of time in the field. Over a period of three months trust and familiarity were built up and I had the opportunity not only to become accepted by the participants and learn about them, but I also had the time to accept them as different human beings and learn from

them. I completed over two hundred and fifty hours of observation in the school and I got rich and extensive data. Extracts from situations in the classroom are given throughout the presentation of the observations I had with the teachers and provide a very descriptive picture of teacher-student interaction (Holloway, 1989). Data from the interviews are also provided. All this information should enable the reader to judge whether my findings are supported by the evidence provided (Hammersley, 1992; Hammersley, 1990).

In my study I have also looked for alternative explanation and supporting or conflicting evidence by combining data from different sources (Woods, 1985). After completing the observations I asked the students of B3 to fill in a questionnaire in order to see how they perceived their teachers' behaviour towards girls and boys and to explore whether there were similarities or differences between the findings of the observations and the findings of the questionnaire.

In December 1998 I provided the school with a draft of a mini-thesis in relation to the field work, which consisted of three chapters: the overview and rationale for my study, a literature review of relevant studies and the research methodology. Except for the principal no one else in the school seemed interested to read my draft. In December 1999, I gave a draft of my thesis to the modern Greek teacher, the principal and her husband (English teacher and principal of another school) in order to get comments about my claims (Clarke, 1999). I was really worried about the comments that the respondents would make and I wondered how they would feel after reading things about themselves and their practices in the school. Fortunately they did not feel that anything should be omitted. The modern Greek teacher said that there was a lot of detail in my work but she thought that at the end of my thesis I should provide more ideas and practical solutions for the promotion of equality in schools. The principal and her husband were very happy with my work. I also asked the physics teacher to read the draft. Although she was very willing to help the fact that she did not know any English made her participation impossible. The other teachers who had participated in the study were not longer working in the school and I had lost contact with them, except for the religious education teacher, but the fact that she lived far away from the

school and also my area and the fact that she had many responsibilities discouraged me from asking for her help.

In my thesis I provided extensive information about my decisions and the procedures I followed. Other researchers could, based on the information I have given, follow my steps and arrive at similar conclusions. Of course this is a qualitative study which involved people, relationships and situations that might change over time and therefore it cannot be replicated in the same way that many quantitative studies have been replicated.

The findings of this study cannot be generalised in the sense that many quantitative researchers have generalised their findings, but still they can offer theoretical insights to other researchers or educationalists or those involved in research about gender and teacher-student interaction, feminism and equality (Schofield, 1993) . The transferability of the findings depends on the similarities between my research and those involved in it and other schools or teachers. Although people and situations are unique, nevertheless teachers, researchers and policy makers can reflect on this study and make use of the findings of this research in their settings and practices.

Feminist research

The conceptualisation of this study, its purpose, my epistemological stance (Usher, 1996) and the researcher-researched relationship (Stanley and Wise, 1990), can provide an explanation for defining my research as feminist (see also chapter 1, pp. 23-25). I do not however claim that my perspective has been adopted only by feminists, because there have been researchers who are not feminists but still they have similar orientation. Besides feminism should not be seen as a set of rules that a researcher must follow, but as a perspective which can be adopted in different disciplines.

My interests, as a feminist and a teacher, and also my personal experiences orientated me towards research on gender and teacher-student interaction. Also this research started from a need to bring change in my life and the lives of other women and to contribute to the promotion of gender equality (Weiner, 1994; Armstead, 1995).

Although in my study I did not aim at raising the consciousness of the participants or changing directly their lives or practices, I hope that the knowledge that was produced by me and the participants will have some form of transformative power in the educational field (Maynard and Purvis, 1994). Of course, this cannot happen immediately and my contribution to the promotion of equality as a single PhD student is necessarily limited.

Although there was only one male respondent, the maths teacher, my research is not only about women, as is usually the case in feminist research (Reinharz, 1992; Scott, 1985). My research is about both women and men, girls and boys, it is about gender and based on the notion of gender as an organising and categorising factor, present in every social interaction (Cook and Fonow, 1990; Usher, 1996). Gender is not only the focus of this research but also a factor that influenced my relationships in the field (Lather, 1988). I related differently to the female respondents and to the male teacher. I felt more comfortable with the female respondents and more on equal terms with them. Sometimes I felt that for the maths teacher I was just a young girl who was so indebted to him. I felt he had so much power and that he was so confident with everything (diary, April 1998). On the other hand I did not have the same relationship with all the female respondents. The principal was already my friend, the physics teacher was a woman I respected but we were different in many respects, the modern Greek teacher was a woman I felt close to and I had lots in common with, the religious education teacher was a person that I liked and the English language teacher was a woman to whom I could not relate at all (diary, May 1998). Now I am still in touch with the principal, the modern Greek teacher, the physics teacher and the religious education teacher.

Like other feminists (Usher, 1996) but also other researchers who have not identified themselves as feminists, I rejected the traditional ideas about objectivity, truth and neutrality and the notion that knowledge is the product of the scientific work of a researcher, free of values and emotions. In my research, knowledge was the product of a collaboration between me and the research participants. It was the result of particular relationships and interactions. In this process, there was a sharing of feelings and experiences and an exchange of ideas about a variety of issues such as, education,

family and relationships. But no matter the co-operation between me and the respondents and their access to the findings, the final written product of this research is my creation and my responsibility (Stacey, 1988).

I did however, make every effort to treat the respondents as respectfully as possible and not to exploit them (Reinharz, 1992). I was not distant but instead I was friendly and cared about them. I listened to them and I offered them attention and support when needed. The teachers felt the need to speak to someone, not only during the interviews but also during the breaks or when they were correcting homework in the staff-room. The presence of a friendly young stranger who could share some of the load of their hectic life, was therapeutic. I also shared personal things with some of the teachers: the modern Greek teacher, the physics teacher and the religious education teacher. With these people I went out some times or even visited them in their homes. The closer I got to these people, the more guilty I felt some times, because I knew that I was in the school in order to get data, that I had intruded on the respondents' lives and that one day I would leave (diary, March, 1998) (Stacey, 1988). I also felt very uncomfortable when I was writing this thesis because it involves people for whom I care and to whom I have an obligation. That had consequences. For instance I did not include in my analysis a part of the interview I had with the principal, because it referred to very private things. But similar problems and choices are evident in most ethnographic research done by researchers with a strong feminist consciousness or by non-feminist researchers who are sensitive and respect the participants' lives (Wheatley, 1994).

Although as a feminist I believe that women are in a disadvantaged position in my society and that we must find ways to empower them and to fight sexism and inequality, in my research I did not treat all women as powerless (Williams, 1993), or the same and I did not view all women as committed feminists and all men as sexist. I have mentioned before that all the women who participated in my research were different, and they had different kinds of power in their personal and professional lives. Moreover I did not feel as the powerful researcher who interacted with powerless respondents. At different times, power shifted in my relationships in the school. For instance I felt very powerless when the modern Greek teacher told me about her

experience as a female child growing up in a patriarchal family (Cotterill, 1994). I was empathetic and I also revealed similar experiences from my life, but still there was nothing I could do to change her past or my past. Another occasion on which I felt powerless was in the interviews I had with the maths teacher (male). I felt that he was very careful with what he was saying, that he was not as friendly as the female respondents and most important that he controlled our conversation (diary, March and May 1998) (Scheurich, 1997).

An ethnographic study in a Greek Secondary school

My aim was to select some teachers and observe them in a natural setting, the school where they worked and to see how individuals constructed life in the institution (Burgess, 1984). Teachers' behaviour in the class and teacher-student interaction were not my only interests in this study. My aim was also to analyse and combine the data I obtained from different sources in order to try and see whether there were any connections between the teachers' ideas, their attitudes in the class and their lives.

In order to find connections and relations I had to go through description and understanding of the social world that the researched and the researcher constructed in everyday interaction (Cohen and Manion, 1994). First of all it was the description of the ideas of the teachers, of the way they thought and of their actions in the school. For this purpose the research techniques of oral history interviews, observations, interviews, questionnaires and documents were useful but not the only source of evidence. I also tried to record as much as possible in my diary. Everyday contact with teachers and students in the institution, life in different settings (the staff-room, the principal's office, the classroom), events (national celebrations, cultural activities, religious activities) regular activities, (recess, assembly), the climate in the school, cliques and relationships and interactions of teachers with colleagues and students were all important for this study (Anderson, 1990).

Before entering the field I had already planned a general, flexible framework for my study which was altered and adjusted according to the opportunities and limitations of

school life and everyday reality. One of my aims, not to say my ambition, was to work with two schools and co-operate with eight teachers of different age (younger-older), sex (female-male), and speciality (mathematics-language teachers) in order to discover if these characteristics are likely to affect patterns of behaviour. For practical reasons (time to commute from one school to the other, money, and of course availability of participants) my initial plan of inquiry was changed in order to meet the needs and the objectives of this study which emerged in the field.

Eventually I focused on one lower secondary school (gymnasium) based in a poor working class area. The school was characterised as working class school by the principal as well as the teachers (diary, March 1998). The school consisted of only 165 pupils, 78 were female and 87 male. Their age varied from 12 to 15 years of age. The only criterion for their acceptance in that particular school was their place of domicile. There were three classes in the first year, three in the second and two in the third year. The total of teachers was twenty, fifteen were female, one of whom was the principal and five were male. Five teachers were specialised in literature, two each in maths and English, one each in French, geology, physics, art, technology, computer studies, music, physical education, domestic science, religious education and career guidance (the principal). All the teachers, except for the religious education teacher lived relatively close to the school. There were lessons in the morning (from 8.10 a.m. to 13.45 p.m.) and then the next week there were lessons in the afternoon (from 14.00 p.m. to 19.30 p.m.), so that the building could be available to another school as well which alternated its times with this school. The study took place in the third term of the academic year (March-May 1998) (the others terms are September-November and December-February). (There was an Easter school recess during the field work from 13th April till 26th April). The study was supposed to start in the first week of March but actually due to bureaucratic matters (application for entry permission) it started one week later (9th March 1998) and finished on the 30th May, which was also the end of the academic year for Secondary schools in Greece. The annual written examinations in gymnasias started on the 1st of June and lasted for two weeks.

Five teachers took part in the study, four female and one male. They taught different subjects; physics, modern Greek, religious education, English and mathematics. Their

age varied from thirty to forty years. Their help and support have been unique and invaluable. They provided me with extensive and useful data, gathered from oral histories, observations and interviews. They all taught the same group (B3) in the second year which was very convenient for me, because I could observe them in the same class and become familiar with it. The group of students (B3) which participated in the study consisted of 22 children, 11 girls and 11 boys. Most of the children were 14 years old (questionnaire B). The principal and the teachers informed me that the group did not seem to differ in any significant way from the other groups in that year. It was a mixed ability group like most of the groups in Greek schools (diary, March 1998).

Entry

In order to do research in Greek schools I needed permission from the Ministry of Education. This is a very bureaucratic, time-consuming procedure. I had to apply to the Ministry which then passed the documents to the Pedagogical Institute which among other things (approving text books for schools, suggesting innovations and changes) deals with research issues. I needed to state clearly my research topic, to include a substantial literature review and to explain the methodology I was going to use. I also had to include references, a curriculum vitae, and also a certificate about the status of my course. For this research, I also needed to have the approval of my Greek supervisor, appointed by the State Scholarship Foundation.

Permission to do research does not guarantee entry to the school. It was very clearly stated and emphasised in the document that I received from the Ministry of Education that the participation of the respondents is voluntary, that the researcher should first contact the principal for access to the school. Moreover the researcher should try her best to avoid causing any problems to the school. Another requirement is that the findings of the research project become known to the Ministry and to the Pedagogical Institute. The organisation which funds my studies, the State Scholarship Foundation (SSF) sets similar requirements.

It was my long term personal relationship with the principal of the school (my secondary teacher and friend) that helped me with entry and selection procedures in the school. Without her help and support this study would not have been completed, or to be more precise, it would never even have started. I had no other connections or links with secondary schools so doing research at this particular school at she worked was actually my only option.

Having the principal's approval and permission does not guarantee the teachers' participation in the research. The principal had informed me about the climate of the school, the problems that existed, the changes that occurred since she had been appointed to the principal's position, (the beginning of the academic year in which I did my research), and made some suggestions about approaching the teachers who would be more willing to co-operate. This information did not work as a basis for prejudices but as a vivid picture of the culture and the environment I was going to deal with: a picture that did not narrow my horizons in the field and was seen from a critical perspective. The principal's aim was to help me adjust to the school and find my way for doing ethnography as well as possible. As she revealed at the end of my stay at the school, she was extremely worried for the success of my study, but to her surprise I managed to gain everybody's acceptance or at least tolerance at the school. Two weeks before the end of the study, in the principal's office, the religious education teacher said:

We all like her (the researcher) and why shouldn't we? She always smiles, she is pleasant, young and extrovert. If she was irksome we wouldn't like her.

In the principal's office the computer studies teacher said:

Maria has become part of the school. We are used to her now and we shall miss her when she goes back to England.

The principal introduced me to the teachers as an old student of hers who is currently doing post-graduate studies in England after being awarded a scholarship from the State Scholarship Foundation and who wanted to do research in that school. Trust was

not gained automatically after that; on the contrary a lot of issues were raised. People at the school were suspicious of my relationship with the principal and of my presence in the school. It was only natural for them to think that I could act as a spy on behalf of the principal. People from different cliques saw me differently. Reactions and feelings were different for those who were fond of the principal, for those who preferred the previous principal and for those who were neutral. My attitude was neutral as well. As a committed researcher I did not wish to become part of any divisions or conflict and I did not wish to reject anybody. On the other hand as a human being it was obvious especially towards the end of the study that I had my preferences for some people and that I had formed closer relationships with some teachers in the school. It was natural and expected from the respondents to feel uncomfortable because of the presence of a stranger, an outsider whose work and purposes could not be comprehended at least at the beginning of the study, because I would not talk about them explicitly and also because nobody at the school was familiar with qualitative-ethnographic research or had experienced ever before the presence of a researcher who stayed at the school for months.

The principal had informal discussions with some teachers from B3, the maths teacher (male), the physics teacher and the Greek language teacher (both female) about me (not about the study although she was aware of my topic and my objectives); but of course she could not force anybody to co-operate. These three teachers accepted to participate in my research because, as the principal said and as I realised myself later on, they were committed educators who were open to innovations and changes.

Nevertheless they had their reservations and worries. It was only the maths teacher, the only male teacher, who seemed to be very comfortable with the matter. Perhaps he felt very confident about his work, or perhaps the fact that he had been teaching at the school for many years made him feel very comfortable with everything and everybody. Perhaps it was his character or perhaps he never saw me, a young female student, as a threat.

The first two weeks (9th to 20th March) were spent on establishing relations, gaining access and piloting some of my research techniques. I approached myself the teachers mentioned above plus two other teachers, also from B3: the religious education

teacher and one of the English language teachers (both female) and they both agreed to take part in my project. There were only five male teachers in the school, one of them took part in the pilot study (the technology teacher), one had no interest in research (the second maths teacher) and another was completely against the idea (a language teacher). He said to me during the first week 'instead of doing research you should go and teach first and get some experience.' The last one, the physical education teacher, was much more approachable but his teaching hours were not at all convenient for me.

I wanted to include in my study teachers who taught different subjects and both female and male teachers in order to discover differences which could possibly relate to these factors. It was also easier for me to work with teachers who taught the same group and for more than one hour per week (music teachers, computer science, domestic science, technology and careers guidance teachers, teach each group only one hour per week) in order to know better both the teachers and the group. Also it would have been impossible because of the time-table of the school to observe five teachers in different classes. It is true though that I chose those people with whom I felt more comfortable and felt that I had more in common with.

Having the teachers' consent did not mean access to everything in the school. I had to negotiate access to every interaction (Burgess, 1984), with the teachers and, it was not until the last month of the study that I stopped fearing that teachers would refuse access to some activities. But fortunately my discretion was seen as a very positive quality. The teachers I worked with when they were asked at the end of the project, said that I never disturbed them, I caused no trouble, I was always polite and respectful and they felt very comfortable working with me. The religious education teacher said: 'many times I feel so comfortable that I forget you are in the class.' The physics teachers said one day in the principal's office: 'She sits at the back, you hear nothing, you see nothing, such a discreet presence.'

My identity (sex, age, status)

Apart from my discretion I believe that there were also other factors that helped me become acceptable by teachers and students at the school. Being a woman who was

doing research on gender made it easier for female teachers to feel more comfortable, trust me and share more personal things and talk about their experiences as women. As far as the male teacher is concerned, I believe that the fact that he had been teaching at the school for fifteen years made him feel very confident and comfortable with almost everything new, unexpected or unpredictable that was happening in the school.

Being a young researcher who desperately needed data for her PhD thesis was much more appealing and less threatening than being an established researcher who works for a famous research institute. The fact that I had no direct involvement with the educational system in Greece and no authority or high status made the teachers feel secure because my research project would have no consequences for their careers. If I had been an inspector for instance, working for the Ministry of Education they would have felt very threatened.

Also the fact that I was not an expert in maths, literature, religious studies, physics or English and I was not interested in the teachers' theoretical knowledge was an advantage. At the end of the study the English teacher said: 'Why not feel comfortable, you didn't care about the lesson and you are not an inspector.'

From the students' point of view I was a threat, at least at the beginning. They were very curious to find out what it was exactly that I was researching and why I kept notes of everything. They used to ask me: 'Are you going to tell the principal what we have been doing in the class?' But my presence did not seem to influence their behaviour in the class, they misbehaved, swore with no fear of any consequences. In time they got used to my presence and a lot of the students in the group I was observing invited me to observe more lessons. Again the fact that I was young made them feel more comfortable. They soon perceived me as a student and a lot of them spoke to me in a very informal, friendly way. They also liked the fact that I was doing research at their school, that they had attracted my attention. The school was labelled as one of low status and children seemed to be aware of that. One student said to me once: 'Why have you chosen this school? We are the stupid children.' Another one

said while he was laughing: 'What, research in this school! You could have gone to a better place.'

Ethical Issues

Although the respondents knew that I was doing research they did not know in what I was particularly interested. When I approached the teachers and negotiated access I told them that I was interested in teacher-student relationship and the importance of gender for this relationship. I was not very specific about my research project but I did that taking into account that my research topic was sensitive (Lee, 1993).

Gender equality and women's issues are taboo subjects for many people in Greece and those women interested and involved in these areas are seen as problematic and perhaps unsuccessful in their personal lives. I have always felt in my culture that exposing yourself as a feminist, or discussing issues of discrimination or gender equality can only cause trouble. While I was in the field I never labelled myself as a feminist, I never referred to concepts such as stereotypes or prejudices and I never encouraged discussions about sex inequality or took part in any arguments concerning the superiority of one sex over the other. This does not mean that I tried to lie, to deceive people by pretending to be a conventional traditional woman. All I wanted was to remain neutral and not to influence the subjects and the construction of data unduly. So I thought that I should approach the subject in a more discreet, subtle way. If people were asked directly about their ideas about gender and equality there would be a danger of them giving untrue answers and if they knew that I was doing feminist research they might not even have accepted to participate. Perhaps they would have tried intentionally or unintentionally to give me another picture of their self just to please me or to protect themselves. It would have been very embarrassing and even threatening for them to expose themselves to a stranger and talk about their attitudes and beliefs. But it would also have been threatening and frightening for me to expose myself and to be judged in a negative way or to have to face some people's disapproval and perhaps rejection. Such a situation could have had an impact on my emotional state, on my relationships in the field and consequently on my research project. So, by not being explicit about my feminist identity I think I protected myself, I managed to

preserve a balance in the field and to do good research. Not being explicit and lying are two completely different things. In no case did I lie about my ideas and my actions in the field or did I pretend to be different from the person I am. Also in no case did I do anything without the respondents' consent.

Before I left the field during the last interactions I had with the teachers I realised that they had a much clearer idea about my personality, the focus of my research and much more confidence to talk about it. The situation had changed, trust was established and I could talk in a more explicit way about my study. After I interviewed the Greek language teacher in May when many hours of observations had been completed I told her that I considered myself a feminist and that I felt uncomfortable admitting it because I had experienced women's and men's surprise or insulting attitudes many times in Greece. I was very happy to find out that she had had similar experiences.

At the beginning of my field work not only I avoided being specific about my research topic but I also avoided giving details about methodological issues because I realised that if I had done otherwise I could have had problems. When I approached the language teacher and the physics teacher in order to negotiate access I thoroughly explained to them the methodological procedures. Both of them were scared. The language teacher was not pleased at all. She said that she would let me observe her class two or three times but she then had to decide about offering more hours. 'I'll think about it. Let's see how the children will react and if your presence influences their participation I'm afraid you'll have to stop.' Later she proved to be one of the most co-operative persons in the school. She often said: 'You are coming today, eh? I'm waiting for you.' When the physics teacher found out that I needed at least ten hours of observations she was shocked. 'Ten hours!' she said, but she agreed because she felt it was her duty to help young people to do research and succeed in their careers. All the teachers felt that it was their duty to help young people (diary, March 1998). After these incidents with the modern Greek teacher and the physics teacher, I approached the other teachers in a more informal why and I negotiated access as the situation emerged. I was more vague with methodological issues. I told them that for my research purposes I would need and I would be very obliged if they could give me some general information about their lives, some observations of lessons and an

interview. I never mentioned that I intended to stay in the school until the end of the academic year.

Fortunately it was only the computer science teacher who used to ask me when I was going to finish my research. During the first two weeks she kept on saying: 'What still here?' Maybe she was annoyed by my presence. She also used to ask me a lot of questions about the focus of the research and sometimes I was really struggling to give sufficient explanations but without revealing too much. The maths teacher said lots of times: 'maybe I could be of more assistance if I knew exactly what you want to find out.' But even I myself was not aware of what I would find until the very end of my ethnographic study. The physics teacher was also very persistent to learn more about my research. But her experience in quantitative research made her realise that it would probably be better if she did not know too much. The Greek language teacher did not ask very deep questions about the project not because she was not interested but because as a more introvert person she did not wish to express her anxiety and worries. The religious education teacher and the foreign language teacher seemed more relaxed and less curious about the focus of my research.

Although the teachers were not informed about all the methodological details of my research, they were informed about my identity, my background and my studies when I first met them, even those who were not the focus of my research. I assured them that their identity would not be revealed and although it was not explicitly said there was a mutual understanding between the respondents and myself that some things are not to be recorded or published. I explained to the teachers that the data will be used for my PhD thesis and I assured them that they would have access to the findings before the examination of the thesis, (possibly some time at the end of 1999) not only for their protection but also because their comments would help me construct more valid interpretations. I also made it very clear that although their participation was crucial for me it would be useless and unethical if it was not voluntary.

Participant observation

My role in the field was that of a semi-participant observer. I have used this term here because I believe that at different times I took up different roles in the school which do not match the role of participant or non-participant observer. Besides these two terms apply to extreme situations and I believe that living in a school as a researcher is not straightforward act but a constant challenge of shifting relations, power and roles (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). There are cases, however when researchers need to go native in a culture, but in my case that was not necessary and it would have been impossible and unethical to do so. On the other hand being a complete non-participant observer is impossible if the researcher believes that 'we cannot study the social world without being part of it' (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, p. 249).

During my field work I tried to become part of the school life and approach people in a friendly way (Reinharz, 1992). My interactions with people were not formal and cold. I tried to relate to people and to listen to them, learn from them and about them in order to understand them. I also did voluntary work in the school. I looked after a group when a teacher was absent and I had plenty of conversations with students in the careers guidance group with or without the teacher's presence. I helped teachers fill in students' records and reports. I informed children about changes in the time table and events that were to take place in the school or in other settings. I also attended social events that the school organised such as a theatre play and an exhibition, or even an excursion to the countryside. But I did not attend the meeting that the teachers and the principal had in order to discuss the students' performance and behaviour and other issues in May. When that meeting took place the principal very discreetly told me: 'It won't take long Maria.' Although I would never have attended the meeting without asking for permission to do so, I realised that participation in the meeting was out of the question. I could never have become a teacher or a student and experience life in the way they experienced it in the school but I was interested in everything that was happening in the school and always willing to offer help and support. I did not behave like that out of obligation to the teachers or the students or in order to gain something. All my actions were genuine and derived from a need to be a useful member of the

school in which I was going to share with the research participants three months of my life and perhaps some more time later in the future.

Pilot study

The purpose of the pilot study was to test how efficient and well designed the research methods were (Vamvoukas, 1993). The pilot study was carried out during the third week of March. Two teachers participated in the pilot study, the technology teacher and the computer science teacher, they were aware of the purpose of the pilot study which was completed in a week. The technology teacher was the only one who did not hesitate to allow me to record the interviews.

All the research techniques that I used in the main study were piloted first. I started with the oral history interviews. Neither of the teachers seemed to have any problems with the questions they were asked. They said that the questions were coherent and they also enjoyed talking about their experiences. As a result of the pilot study, two questions were added to the main oral history interviews; one about the participation of the subjects in a research project and the other one about the level of education of the respondents' parents.

I observed each of these teachers twice in two different groups of the first year. The computer science teacher was observed in groups A3 and A2 on the same day. Both the groups consisted of nine children. In group A3 there were 6 girls and 3 boys and in group A2 there were 5 girls and 4 boys. The technology teacher was observed in the same groups A2 and A3. Both the teachers taught only half of the groups each time. The other half of the groups attended a language lesson.

What I realised during the observations was that having no rigid categories and observation schedule was not a disadvantage. Every class and every lesson was unique. Flexibility and adaptability were very important during the field work. After the observations I interviewed both the teachers. I did not, as a result, make any important alterations to the questions I used for the main interviews.

Important changes were made in the questionnaire I used with B3. The questionnaire was piloted three times with three different groups. First in the first year, it was completed by the students in groups A2 and A3 and later in May by the students in group C1. The questionnaire included questions about the students' background and about the children's ideas about sex equality and their teachers' behaviour. The children seemed to have no problems with the general questions about their background but they certainly had difficulties with the questions related to discrimination and sex equality. They found it hard to grasp the concept of these questions and they could not answer them unless they were explained to them. So the questions were rephrased in a simpler way more appropriate to their knowledge level.

Oral history interviews

Biographies, autobiographies, life histories, oral histories, they all provide the researcher with unique information about a person's personal life experience (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989). They also provide insights into an individual's identity, her/his life as lived and experienced in a society and as expressed through her/his language during the interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer (Antikainen et al., 1996).

The purpose of using biographical method as a research tool is to explore, through the analysis of individual lives, the relationship between social forces and personal character (Erben, 1996, p.159).

I chose to use oral history interviews in order to gather general information about the teachers such as place of birth, marital status, their studies and working experience and also extensive information about the way they were brought up, their educational and professional choices and experiences, their relationships with their parents, brothers or sisters, partners or children (if there were any) and their dreams and ambitions, and to focus on the effect of gender on all these matters. I was interested in understanding the respondents' experiences and explaining their impact on the teachers' gender identities and ideology. I decided to use oral instead of written accounts of the respondents' experiences because I was scared that teachers would not find the time or the mood to write about personal things, and also because I thought that by interviewing the

subjects, I could obtain more spontaneous and less reflective descriptions of their lives (Manen, 1990).

Oral history interviews were the first research method I used. They were all completed by the beginning of the third week of the study. They were the beginning of a relation between me and the teacher (Humphries, 1984). At this stage I did not want to go deeper into my findings, I only wanted to know the people I was going to work with and give them the opportunity to feel more comfortable with me and my research before the observations started.

For these interviews I prepared a list of questions which related to different themes described above (see appendix 1). I used these questions in my interactions with the teachers but not always in the same order. I did not even articulate the questions in the same way and I always allowed respondents to refer to things that were not asked but that I considered to be useful. All the oral history interviews were conducted in a friendly and empathetic way.

Before the interactions with the teachers I guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity and informed them that they could refuse to answer any questions for any personal reasons and that I would be obliged if they could offer me their comments on the questions I used at the end of our discussions (Seidman, 1998).

Most of these discussions took place in the staff room except the one with the physics teacher which took place in the principal's office and the one with the principal which took place at her house in December 1998. The information I obtained was not tape-recorded except from the interview I had with the principal. All the teachers said that they would feel very embarrassed if somebody recorded personal information about their lives (Pigiaki, 1987). However, I did take notes during these oral history interviews. Of course I could not write down everything they said no matter how much time they allowed for taking notes. My notes included main ideas which gave me the opportunity to construct a record with insertions on which the subjects could comment and correct later. At home I used to add to these notes and to write up a record.

It was not possible to check what the respondents told me using other sources of evidence. But I could be very careful in case I heard or saw something in the school which contrasted with what they had already told me. For instance the English teacher had mentioned in the interview that she shared responsibilities with her husband, but one day at the staff-room she was complaining to a friend of hers that she was fed up with housework and the fact that she did everything herself.

Observations

In total I completed forty-six hours of classroom observations: seven with the modern Greek teacher, ten with the physics teacher, ten with the religious teacher, nine with the foreign language teacher, English teacher and ten with the maths teacher. I would have reached twelve with each teacher but unfortunately unexpected events (events at the school, teachers' strike, teachers' responsibilities) prevented me from achieving my initial aim.

The observations were the most difficult part or stage of my research. I would mention tolerance and acceptance by the respondents as one of the biggest problems or challenges of this research technique (Cohen, 1976). Personally I was constantly worried that at some point the teachers would ask me to stop observing their lessons. Before I entered the class I always used to ask if I was allowed to be in the setting. Fortunately nobody seemed to be annoyed by my presence in the classroom or showed any discomfort and nobody refused to allow access. It was only the foreign language teacher who told me once: 'Don't come today. I'm very tired.' She also said once: 'Do you want to observe the lesson? What, again?' I said that I did not wish to cause any trouble and that it would be best to leave but she said: 'No, no you can stay.'

The observations lasted for six weeks from the end of March until May. I arranged to observe for two hours every teacher in the same group (B3) each for two hours each week : on Monday religious education and maths; on Tuesday physics and English; on Wednesday English, religious education and modern Greek; on Thursday physics, maths and modern Greek and, on Friday only maths. This programme was subjected to changes many times. Life at the school was very unpredictable. For instance, on one

occasion, I did not observe a language lesson that I had planned to because I was unable to concentrate on my work after a terrible accident that happened to a girl in the school.

Observations can provide very detailed information about behaviour that could not become known to the observer otherwise (Foster, 1996; Borg and Gall, 1983). In order to find out if teachers discriminated against girls or boys I had to observe them in a natural environment, the classroom. They could provide me with biased accounts if I simply had asked them about their attitudes towards girls and boys.

I preferred unstructured to structured observations (see appendix 2) because I wanted to capture the totality of classroom life and to record behaviour in its context, not only instances of particular behaviour at particular moments (Delamont and Hamilton, 1976; Punch, 1998). When I entered the field I did not have an observation schedule as I wanted to be more flexible and able to adjust to the situation that would emerge in the class. Nevertheless the review of the literature had given me some ideas about what behaviour to focus on during the observations. It had drawn my attention to the following questions; how often did the teachers ask girls and boys questions; who did the teachers relate to more, girls or boys and why; did the teachers give more instruction or attention to boys or girls, more help or explanations; did they reprimand and praise boys or girls more and for what reasons, their ability; their performance, their intelligence or obedience?

The use of a tape-recorder in the classroom was out of the question. In my field notes I tried to include as much information as possible but it was impossible to include everything. I also included information about the context, the classroom, the way students were sitting and the content of the lesson.

I used to sit at the back and keep notes in a very discreet way. When I arrived home I used to add to these notes, and I constructed a record. During the lesson I never talked to the children and I also tried to look at the teachers in a very discrete way. The fact that neither the teachers nor the students knew exactly what I was looking for reduced the danger of observing behaviour which was not natural (Borg and Gall, 1983).

Nevertheless my presence in the classroom had some effect on teachers' behaviour. Most of the children revealed during informal conversations that the teachers had been much more polite since I started observing the class.

Interviews

At the end of May when a large amount of data from the observations had already been collected I started interviewing teachers. The interviews took place in the staff room or in the chemistry laboratory (March-May 1998) and in the principal's house (December 1998). The only interview that was tape-recorded was the one I had with the principal, not because she felt more comfortable than the other teachers but probably because she could not say no to me, whom she had known for more than fifteen years. When the interviews took place the respondents felt much more comfortable than during the oral history interviews and did not hesitate to provide information even for very sensitive issues.

I chose semi-structured interviews because they allow more flexibility and they are more likely than structured interviews to lead to concepts and data that the researcher and the informants had not initially thought of. They also give the opportunity to the subjects to discuss some issues in depth (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989). The questions (see appendix) I used in these interviews were open and gave freedom to the respondents to express themselves. They were asked in different order according to the situation. Sometimes some questions were omitted because the respondents had already illuminated a subject, and others were used which emerged from the conversation. Rapport, intimacy, self-disclosure and the attitude of a good listener were qualities that characterised the interviews (Rubin and Rubin, 1995; Cotterill, 1992).

The list of questions used concerned the teachers' leisure activities and interests, their relationships with colleagues at that school and in others where they used to work, their contemporary and previous experience as female or male teachers in the institution and their perceptions of girls' and boys' (the ones in group B3 and in other groups which they taught in the past) abilities, performance, personalities, potential,

and behaviour. Teachers were asked to comment on gender differences and to share their thoughts about the role that education can have in tackling them. Some questions referred to the teachers' knowledge about the equal opportunities policy, about equality issues or discrimination in education and generally in the Greek society. The purpose of the interviews was to enlighten the researcher on the teachers' ideas about gender and to explore findings which derived from the observations.

Questionnaires

Two questionnaires were used in my research. Late in May a questionnaire (questionnaire A, see appendix 1) was distributed to all the students in the school. This questionnaire was not distributed by the researcher due to lack of time, but by some of the teachers. The teachers were chosen randomly and they had no objections to offer their help. This questionnaire included questions about the students' background (age, place of birth, parents' occupation, status and level of education) (see appendix). The purpose of using this questionnaire was to provide general information about the students and the school and to support and validate the teachers' and the principal's views about the status of the school.

Questionnaire B (see appendix 1) was given to the students of B3, in May after all the observations had been completed. The questionnaire was preferred to the interview first because there was not enough time to conduct interviews with twenty one children and second the questionnaire protected their anonymity (Vamvoukas, 1993). The purpose of using a questionnaire was to validate or even contradict the data that were produced from the observations and the interviews. If the students thought that there is not a problem of discrimination in the class then I had to investigate, as far as this is possible of course, whether that was really the case based on what I observed in the class or whether the students have this perception due to their own stereotyped ideas and the circumstances they are brought up in, or for other reasons.

The questionnaire contained questions that could provide data both about teachers' behaviour in the class and students' lives. Information about the students' age, sex and

their parents' occupation and educational qualifications were also contained in the questionnaire.

I wanted to avoid using language or concepts that the students would not be able to comprehend and to make sure that the questionnaires would provide me with data that I was interested in. For that purpose the questionnaire was tested three times before it was finally distributed to group B3 (Berdie and Anderson, 1974). It was tested both with children of younger and of older age. The final questionnaire managed to reach a high response rate and to provide interesting data. Piloting the questionnaire can prevent misunderstandings, but the researcher can have no guarantees that the respondents will give honest answers and that the interpretations will be precise (Berdie and Anderson, 1974).

The B3 children had forty-five minutes to complete the questionnaires. The physics teacher who also taught chemistry in B3 postponed the lesson the day I handed in the questionnaires. The physics teacher stayed in the classroom and I explained in a more explicit way the focus of my research and emphasised the importance of their co-operation as well as the fact that participation was not compulsory and I assured them about confidentiality and an anonymity. Some of the students needed explanations of some of the questions. I provided them but carefully in order to avoid suggesting any answers to the questions.

Documents

Most of the documents used in this study concern the organisation and functioning of the school. Documents concerning the time-table of the school, the number of teachers working in the school and the subjects they taught were important for understanding the context of the research. Documents concerning a range of activities that took place inside the school and in different settings during the period March-May 1998 were also collected. These are a programme of a theatre play in which the children were acting, programme and invitations of exhibitions that were organised in the school, a questionnaire that was used for a survey that the students in group B3 carried out with their maths teacher as an extra curricular activity and photographs of the teachers and

of B3 in the school before the end of the academic year. Text books were also used and some subject handbooks. These were very helpful for the observations I did in group B3. They also offered insights for asking teachers additional questions in the interviews that were carried out after the observations. I also collected a document about a seminar which was organised for teachers concerning the equality of the sexes in education.

Storing the data

I kept a diary during the field work. It includes information about things that happened everyday such as ordinary events (teachers' meetings, celebrations, exhibitions, religious and cultural activities), unexpected events such as an accident or a problem and the reactions of the teachers and the way they handled it (Burgess, 1984). The diary also includes information about teachers' informal conversations among themselves or with me in the staff room, in the principal's office and outside the school, in excursions and celebrations and informal conversations between me and the children. Apart from the events and situations in the field, it also contains my personal reflection upon them and some personal insights for handling methodological problems. All this information is written in chronological order (Foster, 1996).

Information from the pilot study, data from the oral history interviews, observations, interviews, questionnaires and information from documents about the time table of the school, the number of teachers teaching in the school and about the curriculum for all the years in gymnasium were kept separately.

Analysing the data

The first stage was the analysis of the documents. Most of the documents (textbooks, time-table) were used throughout the research process. At this stage I was interested in the following things: the activities that were organised in the school, who organised them (female or male teachers) and who participated (female or male students) in these activities. Also I was interested in finding whether the activities organised by the

Ministry of Education and aimed at the promotion of equality were accessible by the staff in the school.

The second stage was the analysis of the observations. I read the notes from the observations many times and I decided to start from the verbal participation (though there were few cases of non-verbal participation) of girls and boys in the lesson. I counted the times that individual girls and boys contributed to the lesson and then I categorised girls' and boys' talk by looking for common points or differences in the content of the students' talk. For instance some of the students' talk was related to knowledge acquired in the previous lesson. I labelled 'previous' the phrases related to the previous lesson. Then sub-categories emerged (Anderson, 1990; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). For instance, some of the students' talk was about essays or questions that they had for homework. Other phrases were answers to the teachers' questions. Then I compared my findings about girls' and boys' talk. What were the differences in similarities in the quantity and quality of girls' and boys' talk? Then I focused on the actions of the teachers. First I wanted to see how many interactions the teacher initiated with girls and boys and what kind of interactions they were. Again I not only counted the interactions initiated with girls and boys but I also categorised them: sometimes the teacher initiated interactions in order to help the students with some answers or other tasks whereas some other times she/he wanted to check whether a student had studied the previous lesson and she/he asked a question. Also the data showed the teacher would initiate interactions in different ways: by calling on a student with her/his first name or his surname, or just by looking at her/him. Then I was also interested in finding out who the teacher had the interactions with. I had not recorded the names of all the students, but I was able to record some, which provided useful insights not only about the sex of the students but also about their performance. My next step was to find explanations for the differences in the participation of girls and boys. What were the connections between the participation of the students and the quality or the quantity of interactions that the teacher initiated or with other aspects of the teachers' behaviour in the classroom? Then I went through each observation again and looked for alternative explanations or themes that were overlooked or for striking, unique events. For instance I realised that in many cases in the lessons of the physics teacher boys were not being reprimanded for not doing their work. I compared the findings of

each observation in order to reach conclusions for the behaviour of each teacher in the classroom and then I compared the different patterns of behaviour of all the teachers.

The third stage was the analysis of the semi-structured interviews. I went through every question of the interviews and compared the answers of all the teachers and the principal in order to find similarities and differences. For instance when asked about the things that respondents would change in their lives if they were men (all the female respondents) or female (the male teacher), all of them, except for the physics teacher (female) and the maths teacher (male), said that they would change a variety of things. My next step was to look into the details they gave and try to categorise their ideas. Some of the comments they made referred to changes in their professional life, others to their personal life. Some of the things they mentioned were related to past events and some others to present or future events. I used codes to distinguish between the different ideas. For instance 'job' for professional life and 'personal' for personal life. Then sub-categories emerged. For instance personal life included relationships with their partner and also relationships with other people. Then I paid attention to the feelings reflected in the respondents' accounts. Some respondents expressed disappointment, others felt happy with their lives. I thought that later on in my analysis I should look into the personal information that the respondents had given in the oral-history interviews and I should look for connections between their ideas and feelings and personal details about their upbringing or their past experiences.

The fourth stage was the analysis of the oral history interviews. Again I followed the same approach I had with the semi-structured interviews. I went through every question of the oral history interviews and compared the answers of all the teachers and the principal in order to find similarities and differences. For instance when asked about their job the respondents expressed different feelings: some were happy and some were not (Miles and Huberman, 1994). I wrote comments next to the answer of each teacher and after comparing the answers, categories emerged. The answers of the respondents were based on different issues: money, social status, relationship with the children and freedom at work.

The fifth stage was to combine the findings from the oral history interviews with the findings from the semi-structured interviews and the findings from the observations. At this stage I wanted to see how behaviour in the classroom related to the teachers' ideas and the teachers' life experiences. For instance the physics teachers, although she had mentioned that schools should work towards gender equality, she related very differently with girls and boys in the classroom. I looked again in her life-story in order to see how central gender was in her experiences. After going through the data for every teacher and the principal, I compared the patterns that emerged for each of the respondents.

The sixth stage was the analysis of the questionnaires that the students of B3 had completed. I read the questionnaires many times and each time I wrote thoughts and comments next to the children's answers. Then I went through the answers to each question separately. But before I did that I separated the questionnaires given to girls from the ones given to boys. I looked for common themes in the girls' answers and then in the boys answers' and then I compared the two. For instance, I realised that most girls had chosen professions that were stereotypically feminine and boys professions that were stereotypically masculine. Sometimes I compared and related the answer of a student with her/his answers to other questions in order to find connections and understand the child better. For example, some children mentioned that their parents offered equally important things in the family. I checked whether the mothers of these children had a paid job or not. At the end I also related the findings of the questionnaire with the findings from the observations. How did the students view the behaviour of their teachers towards girls and boys in the classroom? Do their perceptions contradict or support the findings of the observations?

The seventh stage was the analysis of the questionnaires that were completed by all the students in the school. At this stage things were easier because the questionnaires consisted of different themes. For instance, in order to find how many children were in the school and how many were girls and boys, I counted the students' answers. As far as the students' parents level of education is concerned, again I counted how many parents had finished primary school, gymnasium, Lyceum, higher education and University. As far as the professions of the students' parents are concerned, I counted

the answers again and also categorised them into broad categories, according with the similarities that appeared. For instance most of the students' parents were housewives. For the fathers of the students I focused on the relation of their job to technical or intellectual skills, since that was the common aspect in most answers.

The eighth stage was to go back and revise all the data gathered from different sources, observations, interviews, oral history interviews, data from the interactions in the staff room and from different activities and events, in order to check whether there were any contradictions between what the respondents had told me. For instance the information that the English teacher provided about the way she shared responsibilities with her husband was not consistent. I thought that perhaps she wanted to make a good impression by saying to me that her husband helped her with housework. Or perhaps she did not want to admit even to herself that the situation at home was not very good. Also going through the data again offered new insights. For instance I realised that although there was an unequal division of labour in the school or differences in the professional choices of girls and boys, none of the respondents had referred to these things as issues of subtle discrimination. Perhaps the research participants were not aware of these differences, or perhaps they saw them as natural.

The ninth and last stage was the presentation of my findings to three people. Two of them had participated in my research, the modern Greek teacher and the principal and the third person was the principal's husband whose opinion and experience as a teacher of English and principal of another secondary school, I have always valued. In the following chapters information is given first about the school and the students of B3, then about the teachers, their lives and their ideas about gender and finally about teacher-student classroom interaction in B3.

Reflections on the methodology of this study

Although the research techniques described above provided rich data and the participants were very helpful, the study could have been improved in many ways. First, the life in the school was very hectic and unpredictable. Teachers were very busy

and I had to make sure that I was not causing them any problems with my research. Sometimes changes in appointments had to be made because teachers had other engagements. Also lessons were cancelled or postponed and this resulted in fewer observations than I had planned at the beginning. So some days I stayed in the school without doing any work related with my research whereas some other days I was overloaded with different tasks.

It would have been very convenient if at least some observations or interviews had been recorded. Taking notes was a very exhausting and time consuming task. Also it was impossible to record everything. On the other hand I am positive that the use of any equipment would have caused disruption in the classroom and a great discomfort to the teachers, who were completely against the idea. Eventually the fact that observations and interviews were not being recorded worked as an advantage. The teachers and the children felt more comfortable and had a more natural and friendly attitude towards me.

Participating in the everyday life of the school, not on the same terms with others (I was neither a teacher nor a student), starting as a stranger who becomes a more friendly person for the subjects, learning the language and the habits of the subjects of the research and obtaining the subjects' accounts of their experiences and meanings was a prerequisite for understanding and interpreting but also a very difficult and challenging procedure (Burgess, 1984). The fact that I am Greek and familiar with education and teaching in Greece was important but it did not automatically make me an insider. Also the fact that I was not an experienced researcher and that this ethnographic work was actually my first practical encounter with qualitative research made me feel shy, uncomfortable and insecure many times. But even if I had been experienced, this project would still have been difficult, because ethnography is always unpredictable and cannot be learned from any textbooks. The researcher's choices in the field and her ability to form good relationships and be at the school without causing disruption define the outcome and the success of the study (Ball, 1993).

Staying in the school for three months as a semi-participant observer resulted in becoming to some extent emotionally involved with people and situations in the

institution. This does not mean that I forgot the objectives of my research and that I lost the ability to approach people and phenomena critically. But it certainly made me extremely careful with the way I write about the school and the participants so that not only anonymity and confidentiality can be preserved but also so that I can be sure that in no way have I betrayed the people, whose lives I shared for some time, and to whom I will always feel obliged.

The analysis of the data was probably the most difficult stage of this research. I collected extensive data from different sources which I analysed over a period of eight months. Analysing my data and trying to combine information about people and situations in order to write conclusions about them was a very difficult process. This was partly because of the complexity of the issues and the qualitative nature of the data. But added to this was the fact that the field-work was all done in Greece with all the interviews, observations and questionnaires in Greek. I had to translate all the information into English and carry out the analysis and write the report in English.

Chapter 4

The school and the students of B3

Introduction

This chapter provides information about the social and economic background of the students of the school where the research was carried out. It discusses the extra-curricular activities in which the students engaged over the three months of my field work. It also provides information about the students of B3, the group which was chosen for all the observations of the five teachers that participated in my project. The information about the students of B3 concern the students' parents educational background and their occupation, students' obligations in the family, students' leisure abilities and students' professional aspirations and finally their perceptions about their parents and their teachers.

A working-class school

The school where my project was carried out was a relatively small working class school with one hundred and sixty-five students: seventy-eight female and eighty-seven male. In a total of three hundred and thirty parents, almost one third of the students' parents had attended only primary education. One fourth of the students' parents had received lower secondary education and one third had graduated from Lycea.

Extremely few parents had attended higher education institutions. Only thirty-three of the students' parents had graduated from Universities. There were no important educational differences between the mothers and the fathers of the students. More than half of the students' mothers did not have a paid job and the majority of the students' mothers and fathers were in technical professions or professions which did not require high educational qualifications.

The majority of girls in the school, with very few exceptions chose stereotypically feminine professions such as teaching, hairdressing, beautician or childminder. The majority of boys with fewer exceptions compared to girls, chose stereotypically masculine jobs such as policeman, car mechanic, computer scientist and doctor.

Extra-curricular activities

During the three months of my project no activities related to gender issues or the equality of the sexes were organised by any of the teachers or the principal of the school. Three cultural events were organised during my project at the school. First a comedy play was acted by the children, then a big school celebration and a book exhibition. The play title was 'Our father the war' and it conveyed anti-war and anti-imperialistic messages. The third event, the school festivity consisted of many activities which were all related to the sea and it took place in late May. Extracts related to different themes such as ecology, theology, mythology, the evolution of ships, history, folklore studies and literature were read. These were all organised by female teachers (three literature teachers and the physics teacher) except for the teaching of traditional dances which were presented at some point of the school celebration and were taught by the technology teacher (male). The comedy play and

the book exhibition were also organised by two female teachers. Before my arrival at the school the setting up of a basketball team, which was trained by the physical education teacher (male), took place. A very impressive photograph in the principal's office revealed the success of the team in local games.

The participation of female students in the events described above was a lot higher than the participation of male students. In the play fourteen girls and four boys took part. Some girls performed male roles, perhaps because boys were not willing to participate. The dancing group consisted of eight girls and one boy. All the extracts (poems, narratives) in the school festivity were read by female students whereas five male students were responsible for the technical part of the celebration (sound, vision and the programme which outlined the different events of the celebration).

Throughout the whole academic year two gender related activities were organised by the Ministry of Education. The first one was a three day in-service conference about equality issues in education. Sixty (out of the 268 who had taken part in a similar programme in 1995-96) teachers would be selected for that conference on the basis of a questionnaire which was send to all nursery, primary and secondary schools of Greece. The other one was about an exhibition called 'The other half of Science'. It consisted of fifteen paintings of female figures which contributed to the history of science and were forgotten or marginalised. The Institute of Adult Education was interested in three enthusiastic teachers who would like to help with organising the exhibition in the schools of the country. In the first case none of the teachers in the school had a chance to attend the conference because they had not attended the previous one and in the second case the competition was so high that again the teachers of the school had very little chance to be selected.

The next sections provide information about the students of B3: their background, their obligations and leisure activities, their professional aspirations and their perceptions of their parents and their teachers.

The students' parents: Their educational qualifications and their occupation

The parents of the B3 students did not have high educational qualifications. Only two had received higher education and only three were University graduates (see table 1). More fathers than mothers had continued their studies to higher education or Universities.

Table 1: Students' Parents Educational Level

	primary school	gymnasium	Lyceum	Higher education	University
parents	13	13	12	2	3
female	7	8	6		1
male	6	5	6	2	2

Turning to parents' occupation, the majority (sixteen out of the twenty-two) of the students' mothers were housewives. Three of the women who had a paid job were working with their husbands in the family business. The jobs varied that the fathers of both girls and boys did, but generally they were of a technical nature. For instance: owner of a coffee shop, electrician, car mechanic, mechanic in ships, train mechanic, carpenter.

Students' obligations and responsibilities

Both girls and boys mentioned having more than one responsibility in their family. Girls mentioned more responsibilities than boys. For girls, domestic duties, studying and showing respect to their parents were the most common responsibilities. For boys the most common obligations were: studying and then doing housework and respecting their parents. Very few students mentioned being obedient or choosing good friends or being a good child among their obligations to their parents (see table 2). The strongest difference between girls and boys appears in the domestic duties they had.

Table 2 : Girls and Boys obligations and responsibilities

obligation	domestic work	studying	respect	good child	obedience	good friends
girls	8	7	6	2	1	2
boys	4	6	4	3	2	1

Leisure activities

Again both girls and boys mentioned more than one leisure activity and girls mentioned more leisure activities than boys. For girls first preference was music and for boys sports. More girls than boys preferred going to the cinema or reading books. More girls than boys went out for walks and more girls watched television in their leisure time. But more boys played with electronic games. The sports that boys did were also different than the ones that the girls preferred. Girls preferred doing gymnastics and volley and above all preferred basketball. Perhaps basketball was so popular because the team of the school (which consisted only of boys) had won the cup in local games (see table 3).

Table 3: Girls and Boys Leisure Activities

activities	music	reading	sports	cinema	TV	walks	games	phone
girls	9	6	4	3	5	5	1	4
boys	5	2	7	1	3	3	4	0

Both girls and boys preferred activities that do not cost much. Perhaps the fact that the students came from working-class families was related to the choice of their leisure activities. It is also interesting that there was generally a lack of cultural or artistic activities such as going to the theatre or to an exhibition, or taking painting or singing lessons.

Educational and professional aspirations

The girls' choices were very different from the boys' choices as well as their reasons for these choices. Examples of the girls' choices are given below.

'I would like to become a veterinary', 'a childminder', 'an army officer', 'a nursery teacher', 'a midwifery nurse', and 'a teacher of literature'.

Examples of the boys answers are given below.

'A hairdresser', 'a priest', 'a cook', 'electrician', 'computer scientist', 'mechanic for cars' 'I want to print labels or patterns on clothes'.

All the professions that the girls chose require studies at higher education or at the University. In order to enter the University or Institutions of Higher Education, students need to take exams, to study hard and also to dedicate time and money. Girls seem to have high aspirations and they wanted to continue their studies. The fact that they come from working class families, which certainly are not rich, does not seem to be an obstacle for these girls. Perhaps education is the ticket for a better life for these girls. Of course at this stage we cannot possibly know if the girls will fulfil their dreams or they will change orientation for personal, family or social reasons. None of the girls chose a technical profession.

What is interesting though is that the professions that some of the girls chose, such as nursery or literature teacher, require studies in faculties that the majority of women prefer and therefore these professions are mainly done by women. But girls also chose professions and therefore faculties such as Medicine and Veterinary Science in which they were underrepresented (General Secretariat of Equality, 1996). Most of the professions chosen by the girls are stereotypically female: teacher, nurse, fashion designer. Some, such as marketing and army officer are stereotypically male. (In 1994 there were only six women in the School for Army officers, source: Ministry of self-defence, 1994, in the National Report of the General Secretarial of Equality, 1996) In general all the professions chosen by the girls are more or less thought to be appropriate for women. None of the girls has chosen something extremely different such as a physicist, a mathematician or a lorry driver. Also, almost all the professions mentioned by girls are related to offering services.

The professions that boys chose require training or higher education (cook, hairdresser, electrician and mechanic) but only one requires continuation of studies at the University (computer scientist) and could be considered of high status in the Greek society. We should not forget though that these boys do not come from wealthy families and perhaps making fairly good money and as quickly as possible is a very important thing. Also perhaps the boys are not as good students as the girls and they think that it would be very difficult for them to continue more demanding studies. The fact that entry at the University and intellectual related professions are very much valued by the Greek society even when the stipend is not that high, does not seem to influence these boys.

Except for the profession of the priest all the rest are technically related jobs (electrician, mechanics) or they require some sort of skill (hairdresser, cook). Additionally they are stereotypically male except for the job of the hairdresser which I would consider stereotypically female. It is worth mentioning also that some boys chose to follow the profession of their father. For instance the electrician and the boy who wanted to print labels and patterns on clothes. This was not the case for the girls. Besides only two of the mothers of the girls worked outside the home. Also compared with the professions that the girls chose, none of the professions of the boys, except for that of the priest, are related with offering services.

Girls chose the professions mentioned earlier either because they liked them or because they felt that through these jobs they could help other people and contribute to society generally. Only one girl mentioned money as a reason for her choice. Examples follow.

I would like to become a teacher because I love children.

I would like to become a doctor because I like looking after people who are sick and I want to go to Africa and help people by giving them food.

I would like to become a heart surgeon. I want to help people.

I want to do marketing, because I could get lots of money and also I find the idea of being a businesswoman very appealing.

There was one girl who gave another reason for her choice.

I like it because the teachers of literature talk to us more about the problems of everyday life.

All the teachers of literature in the school were female. As far as the reasons that the boys gave we can identify the influence of a person in the family of the child, likes, the contribution to society and money. Examples follow.

I want to become a cook because my grandfather influenced me on this decision.

I want to become a car mechanic because I like cars.

I would like to become a priest because I want to be close to God and to people.

In the future I would like to become a mechanic because this job has a lot of money.

I would like to become an electrician because it's got lots of money and it's also easy to get your certificate.

This boy was not a good student. In his questionnaire he mentioned that he had to study because his parents asked him to do so but he did not like it at all. Also his spelling was not good at all and his vocabulary poor for his age.

The reasons the girls gave about their choices are different compared to those of boys. None of the girls mentioned that they were influenced or inspired by a person in their family. None of the boys mentioned that their were influenced by any people, other than someone in their own family.

Students perceptions of their parents

The majority of girls believed that their parents offered equally important things in the family. They gave various reasons for their answers and they all justified their answers. The following examples refer to girls whose fathers had a paid job and whose mothers were housewives. All the girls mentioned that their mothers did something different from their fathers but they all valued their mothers' work in the house as much as they valued their fathers' work outside the house.

I believe that both of them offer equally important things because my father works outside the house and my mother works inside. I believe that they both get tired.

I think that they offer equally. My mother does everything in the house and my father brings the money, but I think that that's the same.

I think that my parents do exactly the same job. Okay my father works from morning till late in the evening but my mother offers a lot. She doesn't work outside the house but she works inside. She has to look after two children, me and my brother and she also has to do all the housework, to cook, to hover and so many other jobs.

I believe that they both contribute. Although my father is risking his life (her father works on a ship) and I should say that he offers more, no, because my mother is raising me and she has to do the housework as well. So I think that's the same.

My parents offer equally. My mother takes care of everything in the house and my father offers by taking care of the financial matters. They both offer me what I need and I want.

The following examples refer to girls whose mothers had a job outside the house, one worked with her husband (they had a coffee shop) and the other one had a small business (shop which sold athletic shoes).

My father and my mother offer equal things because they both work and my father and my mother help in the house.

My parents offer equal but different things in my family. My mother tells the personnel what to do and my father does external jobs (deals with paper, banks).

In the first case probably because both the parents worked, they shared housework. But the student did not mention what exactly the father did and how often. In the second example, the girl did not mention housework and the upbringing of children at all. What is really interesting is that although the father had a job as an electrician he was also responsible for tasks in his wife's shop. Only three girls supported the view that their mothers offered more.

Mother offers more because she will advise you when you need her and whatever you need she will always stand by you.

My mother, I believe offers more in our family because there are more jobs to be done in the house.

I believe that my mother offers more because she's the one who makes sure that we are looked after, that we have our food every afternoon, because with her we spend most of the day and she is the one who shows us her love more. I'm not saying that my father doesn't offer. He works in order to bring money at home so we can have a good life.

In the first case perhaps the girl felt like that because her mother spent more time at home (she was a housewife) than her father or perhaps her parents had stereotypically different roles and responsibilities, meaning the mother was the emotional part of the couple and the husband the provider. In any case the student mentioned the relationship and not the load of responsibilities as a defining factor for her parents' contribution in the family. The second girl's mother was also a housewife. The student thought that housework is a very heavy job probably because she did housework herself. The third girl gave two reasons for her view: the emotional relationship she has with her mother and the load of responsibilities that a mother and a housewife has. It is very clear though that a traditional pattern is noticed once again in which the female is the emotional, domestic part and the male seems to be mainly, not to say only, the provider.

The majority of boys believed that their parents contributed equally to their family. Four boys mentioned that their mothers had different responsibilities from their fathers but they valued all of these responsibilities.

My parents offer the equal rights (he obviously used the wrong word here but nevertheless his answer made sense in the end) *at home. My father works so that we can be economically independent and my mother is responsible for my food and for many more.*

I believe that both my parents offer equally in my family because my father works so that we can live normally and my mother looks after us and the house.

I think that they offer equally. Everybody in my family has his own job, e.g. my mother works: she looks after the house. My brother only works. My sister goes to work as well and my youngest sister goes to school.

My mother and my father offer equally in the family, that means that they can both offer me food, clothes, love and affection.

The third boy did not mention his father at all. Perhaps because he did not use to see his father much, his father worked on a ship. The last boy was the only student who described his father as affectionate and caring. Three of the boys who believed that their parents offered equally important things, had mothers who had a job other than being a housewife. All of these boys said that their parents shared everything.

Examples are given below:

They offer equally because they both work, they come home together, they both bring money at home and they share the housework.

I believe that they offer equal things because they try equally. They both do what they can in order to help.

I believe that they offer equally important things because they share the jobs.

They offer equally but Sometimes my mother offers more because she does the ironing and the cleaning. But my father does the shopping and he generally helps.

Only three boys believed that their fathers offered more than their mothers. Examples are given below:

No, my father offers more because he works and my mother does the house work.

I believe that my mother doesn't offer as much as my father because she deals with the house and my father works in the ship and brings the money.

My father offers more because he understands me better.

The first two boys do not seem to value housework. The judgement of the third boy is based on the personal relationship he had with his father.

The evidence suggests that both the families of the girls and the boys were traditional and also that girls viewed their families differently. Although the difference was very small, more girls (eight) than boys (seven) thought that their parents offered equally important things in the family. Three girls believed that their mothers offered more than their fathers and three boys thought that their fathers offered more than their mothers. None of the girls thought that their fathers offered more and none of the boys thought that their mothers offered more than their fathers. Girls and boys who believed that both their parents contributed equally to the family, valued domestic work as much as they valued paid work. But girls seemed to know very well what housework and the upbringing of children meant and they were very descriptive and analytical in their answers. Perhaps that is related to the fact that more girls than boys had to do housework. Additionally girls perceived housework as a job, whereas boys distinguished between paid work and housework. In the boys' answers we can find phrases such as 'my mother looks after the house' or 'takes care of the house' whereas girls wrote: 'my mother works at home', or 'works inside the house'.

Students' perceptions of their teachers

Both girls and boys of B3 described more than one teachers as their favourite ones, but in total girls mentioned more teachers than boys. The students of B3 mentioned four out of the five teachers that I observed: the maths teacher, the modern Greek teacher, the religious teacher education and the physics teacher. None of them was mentioned as the least favourite teacher. The English language teacher was not mentioned at all. Other teachers who did not participate in the research project were mentioned by both girls and boys as favourite teachers such as, the French, the music, and the physical education teacher.

The majority of girls mentioned the maths teacher (male) as their most favourite teacher. Second in the preferences of girls came the teacher of modern Greek (female). She was mentioned by five girls. Third in the preferences of girls was the teacher of physical education (male). The teacher of physics (female) was mentioned by only one girl (see table 4).

Table 4: Girls and Boys Favourite Teachers

teachers	maths teacher M	modern Greek teacher F	PE teacher M	Religious education teacher F	French teacher F	physics teacher F	technology teacher M
number of girls	7	5	3	2	2	1	0
number of boys	4	4	5	0	0	0	1

(F stands for female and M for male)

The maths teacher was preferred by girls because according to them, he was a nice person with whom they had a good relationship and his lessons were very good and coherent. Examples are given below:

He treats us very well and he is very polite.

He is good with us and he accepts what we believe.

He is polite and fun.

His lesson is good and he also knows what a child needs and he gives it.

He is nice and he explains the lesson very well.

He is a nice person.

He is polite and he loves us and he explains maths very well.

As far as the modern Greek teacher is concerned, her personality, the good teacher-student relationship and good teaching were given as reasons for the girls' choices. Examples follow.

She tell us jokes and she explains the lessons very well.

She 's polite and she knows what a child wants and she gives it.

She listens to our views and we have very interesting conversations.

She makes jokes and we communicate.

Her lessons are pleasant.

The physical education teacher was chosen because of his personality, because of the relationship he had with the students and also because children liked physical education. Examples are given below.

He makes jokes.

He doesn't shout at us and we have fun with him.

He is our friend and he is doing PE.

About the religious teacher girls wrote:

She's young, she has conversations with us and I like her as a person.

She does a good lesson, she's polite and she does not discriminate.

Although this girl referred to discrimination when asked about the teachers' attitude in the classroom she mentioned that all teachers treated the students in the same way.

About the French teacher, girls said :

She's nice and polite and her lesson is pleasant.

She's polite and she doesn't discriminate.

The physics teacher was chosen because she was polite and she explained the lessons very well. For boys the most popular teacher was the physical education teacher. He was mentioned by five boys. Second in the preferences of boys were two teachers the maths teacher and the modern Greek teacher. Only one boy mentioned the technology teacher (see table 4). The physical education teacher was preferred because of his personality, because he had a very close, caring and emotional relationship with the children and because his lesson was enjoyable.

He makes jokes, we have fun with him and we have a nice lesson.

He is our friend, and when he talks to us he doesn't beat about the bush.

He treats us very well and he looks after us.

We have fun with him.

Three of the boys who preferred the physical education teacher played sports such as football, basketball and volleyball in their free time. The rest did not do any sports in their free time. The maths teacher was mainly preferred because of the quality of his lessons.

He co-operates and he's very good in his lesson.

He explains the lesson very well.

He's good and he's trying to teach us something.

The modern Greek teacher was preferred because of her personality and the relationship she had with the students.

She is intelligent and she makes jokes.

She comes closer.

She's got a special relationship with the children and she is not strict in a way that make teenagers to react.

We talk about some things with her.

When asked about their least favourite teacher, both girls and boys gave only one preference. All the girls of the group mentioned the home economics teacher (female). The reasons they gave for their answers referred to the teacher's attitude, the teacher-student relationship, and to the quality of her lesson.

She shouts a lot and for no reason. (mentioned by nine girls)

She doesn't do a good lesson and she doesn't treat us very well, this is why children don't pay attention to the lesson.

Six boys mentioned the home economics teacher as their least favourite teacher. Four boys mentioned the music teacher and one the literature teacher (both female). The reasons the boys gave for not liking the home economics teacher were all related to her

attitude in the class and the relationship she had with the children or perhaps it is best to say the absence of a relationship. Examples follow.

She's so strict, she's got no sense of humour and she makes a fuss about everything.

She's got problems and she takes it out on children even when they do nothing wrong.

She's so cold.

She shouts.

She doesn't like us.

The least popular teacher in group B3 was female, the home economics teacher. Both girls and boys mentioned only female teacher as their least favourite teachers. Girls' and boys' perceptions of their teachers seem to be a bit different in respect to their favourite teachers. The most popular teacher in group B3 was a male teacher, the maths teacher, who was also the girls' most favourite teacher. The boys' most favourite teacher was also a man, the physical education teacher. The only female teacher who was mentioned by boys was the modern Greek teacher whereas girls mentioned a total of five female teachers. None of the girls and only one boy referred to intelligence as a reason for choosing the modern Greek teacher as their favourite teacher. None of the boys mentioned that the lessons of the modern Greek teacher were good. For the male students who chose the maths teacher (male) as their favourite teacher coherent and effective teaching was a very important reason but it was not for the male students who chose the teacher of modern Greek (female) as their favourite teacher. Only one boy mentioned having a close relationship as a reason for choosing the maths teacher whereas girls apart from viewing him as a good teacher they also perceived him as a very warm and caring person who really loved his students. This does not mean that boys thought that they could not have a close relationship with a male teacher, because boys stressed the relationship they had with the physical education teacher who was male. But it suggests that boys might have not realised that discussing and having a conversation was a very good way of teaching and analysing Greek literature or perhaps a good personality and the ability to form close relationships was something that they expected from female teachers but not necessarily from male teachers. Also, taking into account the girls' higher educational and professional aspirations and the boys' preference for a male teacher whose subject

(physical education) did not involve studying, there might be some connection between the students' performance and their choice of a favourite teacher.

Equality in the classroom?

When asked about their teachers' behaviour towards girls and boys half of the girls believed that there were differences in the way teachers behaved but they also believed that they were not gender related differences. Instead they thought that they were related to the personality of the teacher, the behaviour and the performance of the students.

I think that the good teachers love us all and they approve of all of us.

Yes, I believe that the treat all of us in the same way. If somebody does not behave then it's natural to treat him differently. But if you behave then the teachers will treat you as it's appropriate.

It depends on our performance. They treat good students very well, they treat a modest student well and they try to make a bad student to get interested.

Yes, I believe that the teachers discriminate between good and bad students, this is the only problem that I have with the teachers.

Yes, I believe that they behave in the same way, with the exception of one or two teachers who discriminate between good and bad students.

The other half of the girls believed that there was not a problem at all and that the teachers treated them all in the same way.

No, there is no difference in the teachers, they treat us all in the same way.

The teachers do not distinguish between children of different sex. They love us all and they treat both sexes in the same way.

No, the teachers treat all the children in the same way. It doesn't make a difference whether you are a girl or a boy.

I have noticed that teachers treat their students in the same way, no matter their sex. They don't discriminate.

No, I don't think that there is any difference in the teachers' attitude to boys and girls. They treat everybody in the same way.

It is interesting that none of the girls explained or gave examples of the teachers' behaviour. Half of the boys felt that the teachers treated students differently, but only two boys thought that teachers were actually discriminating on the basis of sex. The rest attributed differential treatment to students' performance or to personal feelings.

Usually teachers treat boys and girls in the same way, but sometimes just a little bit different with girls, a little bit, because they are more sensitive.

No, they don't treat us in the same way, because to girls they don't shout as much as they shout to boys. More easily they expel boys than girls.

It has nothing to do with sex but with good and bad students because when we are noisy the teachers will shout only to the bad students.

Teachers do not pay attention to sex but to being a good or a bad student. They treat good students better whereas they don't care very much for the bad ones.

I believe that they treat better the students that they like more.

The other half of the boys mentioned that they had not noticed any form of discrimination.

Teachers treat all the students in the same way and I don't think that they prefer some children and not some others.

I think that at least the teachers who teach my group treat boys and girls equally.

I think that they treat the sexes in the same way because I think that there is equality.

Yes, nobody has shown that they have a problem with any of the sexes.

Yes, they don't have a special love to any of the sexes. They treat all of us in the same way. E. g. they tell boys and girls off.

The last reply was from the only boy and also the only student who tried to be more specific and tried to explain in what way the teachers' attitude is the same towards girls and boys. The answers of one female and one male student were not included because they were not coherent. Half of the students had not noticed any kind of discrimination

in the classroom. The same number of girls and boys thought that differential treatment was not occurring in their group. More girls than boys mentioned other kinds of discrimination but none of the girls mentioned gender discrimination.

Conclusions

The answers of the students of B3 suggest that equality was established in their class. But there is evidence that the children were not able to explain their answers. They could not give examples of the teachers' equal treatment and some students did not seem to be clear about the concept of equal treatment. Although gender was not an issue for the majority of the students, for very many students there were other forms of discrimination related to the students' behaviour or performance or the teachers' attitudes to individual students.

There were some differences in the way girls and boys perceived their parents but both girls and boys, with very few exceptions, valued the contribution of both their mother and their father to the family. The students came from working class families in most of which the mother was a housewife and the responsibilities were divided in a traditional way. The parents' educational qualifications were not high.

There were some differences in the way girls and boys spent their leisure time. More girls than boys preferred activities which are usually seen as feminine (listening to music, reading books and talking on the phone with friends) whereas more boys than girls preferred activities which are usually described as masculine (sports and mainly basketball, and electronic games). Differences were also noticed in the responsibilities and obligations that girls and boys had in their families. Girls had more responsibilities than boys and also for girls there was a stronger emphasis especially on domestic work, but also on respect and performance as compared with boys. The students' professional choices and the reasons for them were different between girls and boys and they were stereotypically feminine or masculine. Differences in educational and professional aspirations did not appear only in the students of B3 but also in the students of the school as a whole.

None of the teachers took any initiative to organise activities or events that could raise consciousness about the equality of the sexes in education and society or about power relations in the school. When the principal was asked about the lack of interest in the issue she replied: 'Perhaps my colleagues thought that it was not necessary to do something about gender.' (interview, December, 1998). Perhaps the teachers thought that there was no need for any anti-sexist initiatives, perhaps they felt that there was no problem to be tackled. There might also be some relation between the status of the school and the attitudes of the teachers. Most of the teachers did not really feel well about teaching in a working-class school, because of the low intellectual level and performance of students and the problems of disobedience that most of the teachers faced. Perhaps change and especially gender reform was not the first priority in that school. Additionally the educational authorities and the Ministry of Education did not do much to help the teachers, they offered virtually no support or guidance about the issue of gender equality. Perhaps the Ministry was convinced that no action was necessary since legally, equality of the sexes has been established.

Chapter 5

Teachers' lives, gender and education

Introduction

This chapter gives a portrait about each teacher and about the principal. First I start with the modern Greek teacher, then the physics teacher followed by the religious education teacher, the maths teacher and last the principal. The portrait of each respondent contains information about their parents and their upbringing, their current lives; their likes, their relationships with their partners and their children. This chapter also contains information about the respondents' careers and future plans and about their perceptions of their students and of equality in education and society.

The modern Greek teacher

The modern Greek teacher was brought up in a small, closed community which influenced her parents' ideas about honour and the role of women. She came from a traditional rural family. Both her parents had attended only primary education and had taken up responsibilities in a very traditional way. Her mother had always been a housewife due to the restriction of her father.

My father was a civil engineer and my mother was a housewife. She was not allowed to work in case a man made a pass at her. (The modern Greek teacher looked disappointed and critical.)

The parents of the modern Greek teacher were very conservative and set many restrictions on their daughter's life because of their stereotyped ideas about gender and the demands of the traditional small community in which they lived. As a result, the modern Greek teacher felt very oppressed.

My parents were conservative. They didn't let me go out after nine o'clock. I wanted to play with boys and they wouldn't let me. We had big arguments for that. I never did any housework when I was a child or later as a teenager and that was a big problem. I wasn't the kind of girl that they wanted. My father wanted a male child. When I was born he didn't want to see me the first two days. I'm sure that if I was a boy my parents would treat me in a much better way.

I felt very oppressed as a child because I was a girl. I used to study a lot to get away from everything and everybody. I felt asphyxiated. I don't feel like that with my partner now.

Although the parents of the modern Greek teacher were traditional in many ways and tried to impose things on their daughter, they encouraged and supported her in her studies and later in her career.

Later when the modern Greek teacher was an undergraduate she experienced sex discrimination and felt once again bitter and angry for the unequal treatment of women and the power that men exercised in many settings. But the modern Greek teacher seemed to be a fighter who not only perceived these things but also reacted.

They underestimated women and there was a lot of sexual harassment. Some old ones were really perverts. Some had sexual relationships with women. And those stupid women... they were happy because they were having sex with a Professor! A Professor had a relationship with a female student. She was eighteen. He married her and then he had affairs with other women. She wrote a book with him and he made her a Lecturer at the University. Later when I was working in the Ministry of Education I had a very bad experience. I was being sexually harassed by someone. One day I slammed the door and left. I wasn't sacked. Then after four months' time I was transferred to another quiet department of the Ministry of Education.

No matter her dynamic personality and her resistance against male domination, the modern Greek teacher felt that her life would have been much easier if she had been a man.

Well, if I were a man I would use another vocabulary at work. A vocabulary that is more appropriate for a man than for a woman. Now I control myself because I'm a short-tempered person and sometimes I'm that close to talking in another way but I restrain myself. As far as my life is concerned, if I were a man my relationship with my parents would be different. I wouldn't feel guilty for many things. Men don't care about lots of things. I would have been raised differently. I wouldn't be so emotional and my parents wouldn't have taken so many liberties.

When I met the modern Greek teacher she was in her mid thirties, married and on good terms with her husband with whom she shared responsibilities, and she felt free.

We both contribute to everything, fifty-fifty. Every weekend we clean the house together. My husband works long hours, so when he comes home at 10.00 p.m. I

cannot ask him to cook. I do all the repairs in the house, I love it. I also deal with the financial matters.

She did not have any children but her free time was limited due to her responsibilities. She liked reading and listening to music and she would like to do more things in her leisure time such as going to the gym or writing a book about the school, but she thought that the time for that had not yet come.

The modern Greek teacher was an experienced teacher, who had been teaching for ten years. Although she had become a teacher out of love for children, she revealed that she was not satisfied with her job any more for various reasons. However, she did not wish to leave education but she expressed the wish to do something else as well, work in the radio business, as she used to in the past.

People say that we have a great time, that we do nothing and that we have long vacations. Now the money, I don't mind the money. You can never get enough for such a job. Besides you don't become a teacher for the money. What I see as a thorn is the social status of the job. I also don't like working in Lower Secondary level. I used to work with older students in a small town for three years. I was very close to the students. Before I left the school they used to send me letters or ring me and they asked me to stay at the school. There was a lot of pressure to stay at that school. Now I don't like the fact that children don't want to learn.

The modern Greek teacher did not have any close relationships in the school where the research was carried out. It was her second year there. Before her marriage she was less distant and very close with her male colleagues in the previous school where she worked, in the province.

She also said that she had faced problems with her female colleagues in the past and that she had come across only two very good principals, one male in a previous school where she worked and one female; the principal of the school where she was teaching at that moment. All the principals she had worked with in the past were male.

My friends were mainly male. In that school there was something like a conflict with the female teachers because of my relationship with the students. I was friendly and relaxed with them and the female teachers thought that was not appropriate for a teacher. Anyway I cannot say that the sex of a person was important in my relationships. What was really important was the character and the likes and dislikes of an individual.

The modern Greek teacher was asked to comment on the abilities and characteristics of the female and male students of B3 and also to refer to previous experiences as a teacher. The modern Greek teacher referred to Thanasis, a male student, as the most intelligent student of the group. She mentioned some other students as very good and she referred to two boys as the most naughty children in B3.

He's got the best vocabulary. He's very logical and he understands what I ask him. He also has a very interesting personality.

Elena and Evangelia (both female) are good students. They do their homework, they answer my questions and they have potential but, I don't know, there is something missing. The same applies to Petros (male). He always does his homework. But I don't know these three lack of something.

Dimitris and Michalis (both male) are the naughtiest.

The modern Greek teacher did not believe that there were any differences in intelligence between girls and boys and she mentioned that in her classes results about the performance of boys varied.

I believe that intelligence is something that you build and I don't believe that boys are smarter than girls. Boys have learned to attract attention.

However she believed that boys were more noisy in her classes because of the way they had been socialised in their families and generally in society.

Boys are noisier than girls. Girls are quiet and more polite. This has to do with the way they are brought up. I mean boys learn to do whatever they like in their families whereas girls learn to try. They have a fear and they try to work with a system. Boys learn to be rebels.

Although the modern Greek teacher had not received any training, did not have any research experience in gender equality and she was not aware of the equal opportunities policy, nevertheless, she felt that it was her obligation to do something about the sex differences which she considered to be socially constructed and to influence the actions of girls and boys in the classroom. With her actions she had tried in the past to contribute in fighting sex inequality.

When I was teaching in the Upper Secondary level I was trying through the reading of different texts to show to my students that the superiority of the male is something that doesn't really exist. Sometimes there was conflict and arguments. Sometimes they would understand my opposition to some things or they would realise my irony.

The modern Greek teacher viewed education as a more egalitarian place, where sex discrimination was not striking. But she was not very optimistic about equality in Greek society.

Things in education are not bad for women compared with other places, it's a better place to work. I've never felt hostility from any men in the schools where I worked and my colleagues have not discriminated against me. What I have noticed is that in the texts that are used for the subject of modern Greek the female presence is not very common or intense. I mean okay there are some women who are heroes, but that's it, nothing else.

Equality exists only on paper. It's also a matter of individual struggle. My generation was educated and understood some things. Nowadays women are not educated, but they react, they demand, but I think that most of them will eventually submit.

The physics teacher

The physics teacher grew up in a closed traditional community which had an impact on her parents' ideas and on the lives of everyone in her family which she described as middle-class. Both her parents had completed secondary education.

My father had a small factory and my mother was a housewife.

Although the physics teacher described her parents as conservative she did not mentioned feeling really oppressed, perhaps because in those days young people had other priorities and they compromised more easily than young people nowadays.

My parents were conservative with a slightly open mind but because of the environment they had to be introvert, to keep themselves to themselves. It was a very closed community (the Greek community in Istanbul).

Well my parents were not particularly oppressive with me. Personally I've never caused a problem. Besides I have always been responsible. Also the circumstances were different. I mean that young people had accepted some things and they used to repeat them. There weren't any bars.... Personally I didn't feel a gap of generations. Besides our parents were interested in other things those days, you know religion, ethnicity... They didn't want us to marry a Turk...

The physics teachers revealed that she had never been a victim of discrimination and that being a woman had never been problematic in her life, not only in her personal but also in her professional life.

In my life I've never had an experience that made me feel oppression or any injustice because of my sex, not even in my job. Maybe because I was very dynamic I could convince easily with what I was doing. I don't know. But I've heard incidents that happened to other people.

No, personally I don't think that my life would be different if I were a man. Listen, for me it wasn't gender that prevented me from doing some things, it was my family. I don't know maybe if I was married I would work less and I would do some other things. But no, I don't think so. I'm a person who has always worked a lot.

The physics teacher was in her early forties when I started my research at the school. She was single and had no children, but when asked about responsibilities she referred to previous relationships.

I have always been a person who gives everything.

The physics teacher was currently living with her old parents and she had many responsibilities such as housework. In her free time she liked going to the cinema or the theatre and visiting some very close friends or walking by the beach. She would like to have more free time in order to go to exhibitions, or to travel abroad and perhaps do a postgraduate course. Years ago, she had started a Masters which unfortunately she had to quit because of the load of her obligations in her family.

The physics teacher was an experienced teacher who had been teaching in secondary schools for ten years. She was very happy with her job which she had selected for emotional reasons and she did not have other plans for the future except perhaps for postgraduate studies at some point.

The money is good. If it was a little bit more I wouldn't mind. I am not a person who loves money. If I wanted more money I would have stayed in the company where I used to work. I was a manager when I quit. My salary was double, maybe more, than what I get now.

I decided to become a teacher after working ten years in a company which was doing research in the market. It was in 1988. It was my school that influenced me. I was taught to love literature and Greece. From my experience in my school I learned to appreciate the teaching profession. Teachers were models for me. I also wanted to touch the souls. I have communication with the children and I find that fulfilling. I am

strict when I have to, but when it's necessary I shall be lenient. I don't try to force children to learn physics, if they don't want to, only basic things.

The physics teacher had been teaching in the school where my research was carried out for six years and she was very close to the current principal (female) due to their common intellectual interests. It was the only female principal she had ever worked with. In the past she was very close to some of her male colleagues and she felt that the sex of an individual did not have an impact on personal or professional relationships. She never had problems in her work with male or female colleagues but she referred to the previous principal (male) of the school as 'a special case'.

We had a lot of scientific and artistic interests in common. The two male friends of mine were both physicists. It was an intellectual and emotional relationship. With the principal now it's poetry.

The principal we had last year was a special case. But generally I couldn't say that there is something bad that comes out of someone's sex and doesn't let me work perfectly well with both men and women. For me it's the personality that it's important.

When asked to comment on the performance and the behaviour of the students in group B3 the physics teacher mentioned Thanasis (male) as the best student of the group.

He's (Thanasis) got a very strong mind and his judgement is very good. The way he thinks is correct, he's got the ability to analyse and he seems to understand the concepts of physics very easily.

The physics teacher also referred to some students who were good and very responsible but not exceptionally good as Thanasis was. She also mentioned some children who could have been better students if they had studied harder.

Thanasis, Leuteris (both male), Maria, Ilyriana, Evangelia ,and Eleni, (all four female) are always very responsible with their duties and their essays. Maria and Ilyriana are also the ones who are trying very hard to improve. Ilyriana and Maria (these students had emigrated from another country) are trying very hard but you know the language is an obstacle.

Dimitris (male), Spyros (male), Eleni (female) and Apostolos (male) are intelligent children. They have abilities, they have potential but they are not trying enough. They understand concepts of physics and chemistry faster and easier. But Dimitris and Spyros don't study as much as they should, sometimes they do and sometimes they don't, their performance goes up and down.

According to the physics teacher group B3 was in general terms, an obedient, well behaved group. The physics teacher mentioned Petros (male) as an exceptionally polite student. This boy was different from many of his macho classmates. The physics teacher identified two male students as naughty, but she did not seem to have serious problems with them.

Listen, as you have realised after the observations I don't have a problem of disobedience with the children. Okay, we have Dimitris who makes jokes sometimes but it's nice we have a nice time. Then we have Leuteris with his stupid smile but that's not serious.

As far as the female and male students of the physics teacher in her previous classes were concerned, their intelligence, performance and behaviour in the classroom varied. The physics teacher believed that family and society have an impact on children's behaviour.

I've seen lots of different cases in my life. I had boys who were more intelligent and sometimes I had girls in my classes who were more intelligent. The same applies to obedience and performance.

The genes are not gendered. What is really important is the environment, what the child is taught at home. I mean if the parents are educated then the child develops interests about lots of things. Anyway if there are any differences between the sexes the teachers should talk to girls and they should also do something about stereotypes.

The physics teacher had never received any training about equal opportunities and she did not have any experience in research or in-service education about gender equality. Although she said she did not have any direct experience of sexism, she speculated that no doubt it did exist.

Well about the physics textbooks I should say that the themes they've got can be more easily approached by boys, for instance some experiments. As far as my colleagues are concerned I've never noticed anything sexist in their behaviour. But of course some people like Leandros (a male teacher) who can realise nothing they will probably express their stereotypes in the classroom not necessarily intentionally. He might say a sexist stupid joke for instance.

There have been some changes but there are still prejudices which work subconsciously and sometimes people express them. The way people think has not changed and unfortunately the way people think is expressed in education, in the family and at work.

The religious education teacher

The religious education teacher had spent a very short part of her life abroad and most of her life in a large town near the capital of Greece. Both her parents had attended only primary schools. She came from a working-class family. Her father was a worker and her mother was a housewife for most of her life. The religious education teacher was brought up in a nice caring family which loved her and supported her throughout her life.

My father was driving a crane and my mother was working in a factory when we were in Germany. But when we came back to Greece, my mother stayed at home.

This teacher's parents were not very open-minded but they did not set strict restrictions in their children's lives and the religious education teacher felt happy and satisfied with the way her parents have treated as a child and later as an adult.

I wouldn't call my parents modern. There is a gap of generations. My father is sixty years old. We cannot possibly think in the same way. But I would call my parents talkative.

Well, I didn't use to go out a lot, only on Saturdays from nine to seven, I used to go to parties and not every week. But that was because of the circumstances of that period. I mean young people didn't use to go out very often and even when they did they used to do other things. It's not as it is now. People go to bars every night now. I could never say that my parents oppressed me or have treated me unfairly. They have never tried to oppress me or impose things to me..

My brother would take my father's car, go to the bar and he will come home very late. I couldn't imagine that, when I was at his age. But again it's because of the age difference. I would say that my parents supported me more than him because I had some problems. If my brother was in my position they would have told him that he should be independent. I did not feel oppressed or that I have been treated unfairly by my parents. On the contrary, I would say.



Although the religious education teacher did not experience differential treatment by her parents, she had experienced sex discrimination when she was an undergraduate.

When I was at the University the Professors were all male. There was discrimination against women. There was this idea, you know... that women are bad and devilish... I remember once when we were having oral exams, the Professors asked the priests only two questions whereas they asked the women a lot of questions. Maybe this happened out of respect for the priests, or shame. But generally they treated males in a better way. The male students got higher grades and were also chosen as assistants by the Professors.

She also believed that the traditional ideas about the roles of the sexes still set restrictions to women and define the obligations and responsibilities that men and women are expected to take up in Greek society. For these reasons she thought that her life would be easier if she was a man.

Generally I feel that because of the ideas that people have about men and women I couldn't do some things. For instance a woman in Greece may not go and sit on her own in a bar.

In my job it wouldn't make a difference at all. In my personal life I would definitely love to be a man. They always have less responsibilities. It is always the woman who takes up the load of the responsibilities because of social reasons. It shouldn't be like that.

The religious education teacher was in her early thirties and single. When asked about her previous relationship she replied that sharing only financial responsibilities with her ex-husband was not the main problem for her.

Financially it was fifty-fifty, the rest was all left to me, but I had more important problems with my marriage, I wasn't happy.

The religious education teacher had a young son whom she was raising by herself and with whom she spent a lot of time.

My son is three years old. We do all sorts of different things together. We go to friendly houses, to the cinema, we even go to tavernas (Greek restaurants) together the two of us.

The religious education teacher had many responsibilities and limited free time. She usually felt so tired that the only thing she could do was to watch television late in the evening. She would like to be able to go to the cinema and the theatre and she would also like to learn a foreign language at some point.

The religious education teacher was the least experienced teacher compared with the other respondents. She had been teaching for seven years in various schools. She had become a teacher out of the love for children and she felt happy with her job.

I was seventeen when I decided to become a teacher. It was a very mature decision. I didn't want to become a religious education teacher, it wasn't my first choice but I wanted to become a teacher because I love children.

This job is very fulfilling for me, because of the children. When I come here I forget my own problems. It helps me. Maybe it functions as psychoanalysis for me. I have never heard anything bad about my profession. I don't have a problem with what I'm doing. Maybe some people say things about teachers but I've never heard anything.

The religious education teacher did not have very close relationships with any of her colleagues because she lived far away from the school. It was her first year in the school where I did this research. She mentioned feeling more at ease with her female colleagues and thought that it was easier to have a more personal relationship with a woman but she also said that friendship depends on the personality of the people.

Generally I think is important to be with people who have the same situation in their families. I mean if one has a family, one can't go out. Of course it's easier to approach women and share a more personal thing with a woman. But also a good friendship depends on the personality not on the sex of your friend. With my colleagues we talk about the school, our children and the students.

The religious teacher felt that overall she had worked very well with both her female and male colleagues. She had worked with an equal number of female and male principals. She mentioned that she had a problem only with one principal (male) in the past but she did not want to be specific.

But I think the fact that he was a man was not relevant. Listen, in education the sex of the teacher is not important. It makes no difference.

When asked to comment about the abilities and behaviour of her students in B3, like the modern Greek teacher, the physics teacher and the maths teacher, she described Thanasis (male) as a very good, intelligent student but she also mentioned other students as good. She was also the only teacher who referred to so many female students as good students.

The best students in B3 are Evangelia (female), Petros (male), Thanasis (male), Elena (female), Eleni (female), Ilyriana (female), Tonia (female) and Dimitris (male). They are very interested in my subject, they ask a lot of interesting questions and they participate in the conversations I have with the group.

She did not mention any students as intelligent who have potential but did not try to improve their performance. She also felt that group B3 was not a disobedient group.

I don't have a problem with B class. Okay there are some students who chat. Michalis (male) for instance, he is very hyperactive but if I shout at him he is going to stop.

When asked to comment on the abilities of girls and boys, based on her teaching experience the religious education teacher said that the performance and behaviour of

girls and boys varied in the classes she taught every year. She did not believe that there are any innate differences between girls and boys.

I could never say that boys are more intelligent than girls. It is believed that boys are more intelligent than girls but this is not true. It has to do with how they express things. Usually boys talk more and they show their presence but you can't say that they are more intelligent.

The religious education teacher did not feel that differences between the sexes were important or that they could have any important consequences and she felt that it was not her responsibility or capability to take action against them. The religious education teacher had received no training in equal opportunities and like all the other teachers she was not experienced in research or in-service education about gender or other issues.

Researcher: What could you do about the sex differences?

Religious education teacher: What can I do about them? (with surprise)

The religious education teacher felt that gender was not an issue in education and that sex discrimination could not really reach schools. But she believed that things were not that good for women in other areas and that there was still a lot to be done before sex equality was a reality in Greek society.

I don't believe that there is any sort of discrimination in the Greek Educational system. The only thing I can say is that sometimes there might be discrimination in a personal level. You know, it's a matter of who you like most sometimes.

Theoretically equality has been achieved, practically no. The problem is the ideas, the beliefs that show that a man should have more rights than a woman. Greek men are afraid of dynamic women. Greek men are anachronistic and they like to patronise women. At work there are places where men are preferred because women are thought of as 'passive staff', you know because of pregnancy. But in education there isn't a problem.

The English teacher

The English teacher was brought up in the capital of Greece. Both her parents had completed secondary education. Her family was traditional. Her father was the main provider and her mother dealt with the house and the upbringing of the children.

My father was doing printing work and my mother was mainly a housewife. But sometimes she worked with my father or she did all sorts of different things in order to contribute to the family's budget. She occasionally worked. Nothing special.

He wasn't an affectionate, tender father. He would take us out and he would play with us when he was at home but we would never talk to him about our personal lives. He worked a lot. For some time he was doing two jobs.

The English teacher's parents were open-minded and they had never tried to restrain or influence her in her choices either as a child or later as an adult.

My parents were tolerant and very modern. They never tried to oppress me as a child or later in my life. I used to go out a lot. I used to return home at 1.00 a.m. I had lots of male friends.

Although the English teacher did not feel oppressed by her parents, she admitted noticing differential treatment of her brother who was preferred because of his sex.

They have always treated him differently. He was very spoiled, not only because he was younger than me but definitely because he was a boy, he was special. He has always done what he wanted. They have never told him off. When he was in Germany he was working but my parents used to send him money, they help him even now. They wouldn't do the same for me now.

The English teacher also felt that she had also been treated unfairly in her previous job because she was a woman and later by her previous principal.

At work I feel I have been treated unfairly. Before I became a teacher I used to work as a secretary and my boss used to shout at me all the time. I'm sure that if I had been a man he wouldn't have shouted at me. He wouldn't dare. Then the previous principal. He was terrible with women. He used to make jokes about sex.

She thought that her life would have been much better in many ways if she had been a man.

Well, men are calmer and cool. If I were a man my life would be easier. I wouldn't be so stressed. First of all my life in my family would be different. Now I have to be a good housewife, to look after the house, the children and to be good in my job. We try to be good at everything nowadays. I am very worried even about my looks. I try to loose some weight. If I were a man I would be interested in money. My husband deals with the financial matters. But it's okay, in a couple one does some things and the other does some others. And then professionally things would be different. Maybe my pupils would respect me more. I probably wouldn't have problems. I could control my groups. Perhaps my colleagues would treat me differently.

Nevertheless, the English teacher felt that she was treated fairly in her own family. I heard her once saying that she was tired because she always did housework by herself (diary, 1998). Perhaps she thought that her husband was not supposed to do housework or maybe he was so busy with his work that the load of responsibilities was left to the English teacher.

I don't have a problem in my family now. We share responsibilities with my husband now. He deals with the financial matters because I cannot deal with that sort of thing.

The English teacher was in her early thirties and she had two children with whom she spent a lot of time.

My son is seven years old and my daughter five. I read stories to them, we play games, tennis or basketball and with my daughter we also play with dolls.

Perhaps the English teacher found playing with dolls inappropriate for boys or maybe her son did not like playing with dolls. Although the English teacher had many responsibilities, she managed to find time to do many things that she found interesting. In her leisure time she read poetry or English. She also liked knitting and embroidery, gardening and selling cosmetics. She was the only female teacher who mentioned these likes. In the future the English teacher would like to do a Masters degree or something with fashion or decoration and even to have a second job at some point.

The English language teacher was an experienced teacher. She had been teaching for fourteen years in private and public schools. She had become a teacher because she liked English and she was happy with her job as a teacher although there were negative things about her profession.

Researcher: Are you happy with your job now?

English teacher: Well, as far as the money is concerned, yes, so and so. The social status of teaching has been undermined. But I like this job. I like coming to the school. I feel I give something. I also like being with my colleagues and talking about things. I can also teach my subject the way I want.

The English teacher had been teaching in the school where I carried out my research project for three years. She was closer to some female colleagues mainly because she felt that personal relationships with men can be threatened by men's potential sexual interest and that might create problems in her relationship with her husband.

I don't have a problem with men but with women we have more things in common. The sex of an individual is not really important but with women we talk about our children, about recipes and the students. Also I live closer to some female teachers

and sometimes we have coffee together. Well, I have a male friend but he is homosexual. He rings me very often. With men, well, you understand, it's more difficult. Today the maths teacher gave me a lift. There were other women in his car and he is an old man. I wouldn't have gone if he was a younger one. If I said to my husband that I was going to have a coffee with a man he would tear me to pieces! Okay, sometimes I go out with friends but I don't stay in the bar all night and I don't really like going out and leaving my husband alone with the children.

The comments of the English teacher about group B3 were different than from these of the other teacher. This teacher taught half of group B3 as the other half was of lower level in English. The English teacher described almost all boys in group B3 as intelligent and two of the girls as good students who could improve their performance.

Boys are the best in the group except for Kostas (male) who is repeating the class. Tonia (female) is good, she could be better though. Elena (female), so and so. She doesn't try as much as she should.

The English teacher said that all the female students in her group were quiet and she also thought that very quiet girls should be rewarded for that. She also thought that all the boys in B3 were noisy and rude.

Margarita and Katerina do not talk at all, they do not participate in the lesson. But they are so quiet girls, that I feel sorry for them. Eh... what am I going to do? I'm going to help them, give them better marks so that they can continue to the next year. (In Greek Secondary schools, students who do not perform well have to repeat the year.)

The English teacher believed that differences between girls and boys are innate but she also thought that society could have an impact on behaviour.

When a boy has a strong, intelligent mind he is really intelligent. I've come across girls who are intelligent but it's not the same. Girls try harder, they study hard, they try to improve.

The reason for the differences is the genes and the upbringing at home. Children learn different things at home.

The English teacher had not received any training about gender and equality but she was aware of the equal opportunities policy. She did not see anything effective about it and she thought that as a teacher she could not do much in order to change the behaviour of teachers or in order to improve their abilities.

Researcher: Have you ever heard anything about the equal opportunities policy?

T: You mean that story about offering the same textbooks, buildings and teaching to all students? These things are utopia for Greece. Is the school of this area the same with a school in Psihico (a posh area)? Children come to this school with a low intellectual level. What can I do about their social and economical background and about the sex roles that they have learned at home?

Nevertheless, the English teacher believed that sex discrimination and inequality did not exist in education but she believed that there were many things to be accomplished so that Greek society could be a really equal place for women.

I don't think that there is sex discrimination in education. Maybe sometimes some colleagues like girls more, or boys.

Equality of the sexes has been achieved only in education. In education there isn't a problem. At work there are some women who have achieved things but that's because they demanded equality.

The maths teacher

The maths teacher, the only male teacher in this study, was brought up in a large city. Both his parents had attended secondary education and although his mother wanted to continue her studies she did not do so due to her husband's objection. The maths teacher did not comment on that. Perhaps he thought that that was what usually happened in those years.

My father was a mechanic on a ship and my mother was a housewife. My mother wanted to go to college and become a primary teacher but she had already married my father and he didn't let her go.

The maths teacher felt satisfied with the way his parents had treated him, whom he described as modern and open-minded. He focused on his experience as a student during the years of the dictatorship in Greece when young people were interested in politics and not sex equality and also on his experience as a soldier serving his country. Generally he did not perceive gender as an important factor in an individual's life, he felt happy with his life as a man

My parents never prohibited anything. Okay, I wasn't the kind of person who would ever cause problems. I never got drunk or came home late. I would never have a fight. I had no restriction because I never did anything out of the limits. I did what I had to do. I've never felt oppressed from my parents or later in my own family. Listen the load, the responsibilities that each individual takes up depends on what kind of personality the individual has, what kind of person he is. I felt that I was treated unfairly later when I had to do my service. I believe that both sexes have an obligation to our country to join the army. I don't understand why only men should go through this ordeal. It is an excuse to say that women don't join the army because they have children and they suffer when they give birth. Men suffer as well when their wives are pregnant. Besides women are stronger than men biologically, they can endure the army. So they should be positioned in the first front. In the school female teachers should work an extra hour. It wouldn't do them any harm. I'm joking. (He was laughing.)

Unlike some of his female colleagues, the maths teacher did not wish to change anything in his life and he referred to biological differences between females and males.

T: Both the sexes have negative and positive aspects. Neither a man's nor a woman's life is wonderful. Some things like giving birth are given by nature. I don't think I feel jealous for some things that women do.

Researcher: Well, I'm not interested in what you call natural things like pregnancy but in things that have been constructed by our society such as roles for the sexes that are socially constructed and which might impose things to men and women or prevent them from doing things.

T: I'm not sure I follow you. (He is thinking about it for a while.) Probably you are talking about the environment in which children grow up. Of course it's important. There are children who have an intellectual level because their parents like reading. I don't suppose you are talking about something else.

The maths teacher was forty years old, married with two children. His wife was also a secondary teacher and they shared all the responsibilities, according to him. He mentioned not having enough time to do sports.

We share everything: housework, the upbringing of the children and we both contribute financially. It also depends on who is available.

I have a son who's eight and a daughter who's eighteen years old. Sometimes we play on the computer and we go to the cinema or somewhere else. My son is very good at maths, physics and chemistry. My daughter is very good at communication. She could do something with tourism or work in an office.

According to the maths teacher it seems that his very young son is good in traditionally 'masculine' subjects and his adult daughter is good in a traditionally 'feminine' area, and she could therefore have a future career in an area related to her skills.

The maths teacher was a very experienced teacher. He had been teaching for sixteen years. He had not become a teacher out of love and admiration of the teaching

profession. Although he liked certain things in this job, he was not satisfied with the money or the status of teaching and at some point he would like to do a Masters in physics which was his favourite subject.

When we were at the University we used to make fun of the students who wanted to become teachers. But I got married and I had responsibilities. I needed to make money fast.

The money, the money is not enough for what I want to do. Greek people do not appreciate this job. I remember when I was at the University we used to make fun of those students who wanted to become teachers. People believe that we do nothing, that there are too many public holidays for teachers. What I do like is that I don't really have a boss in my job. Okay there is the principal but I decide what will happen with my groups. I don't regret being a teacher. I always feel young. I like this job because it's reviving. I deal with young people and this makes me young. If I had to work in a care home for old people I wouldn't feel very nice.

His relationships with his colleagues had always been excellent with both female and male teachers but he did not mention having any close relationships in the research school where he had been working for fifteen years. Unlike some of the female teachers he said that he had been on very good terms with everyone in the research school (diary, April 1998).

When asked to mention some of the best students in B3, he referred to Thanasis, like all the other teachers, but he also mentioned some other students as intelligent and very good students and then he referred to some other students who were trying hard, and to others who had potential but did not try to improve their performance. He did not refer to any students as exceptionally noisy but he characterised the whole group as restless.

Very good students are Thanasis (male), Evangelia (female), Tonia (female), Kostas and Apostolos (both male). These are also the most intelligent students in the group. They perceive things easier and faster than others and they communicate better than

others. I base this judgement on the way they answer questions in maths and on their overall presence in the classroom.

Ilyriana (female) is trying very hard to improve but you know there is a language problem. Petros (male) also tries very hard but it's his character, he is a very introvert child. Tonia (female), Apostolos and Kostas (both male) have a lot of potential but they don't try as hard as they should. They could be much better students but they don't work in an organised way, especially Tonia who is very intelligent.

The comments of the maths teacher about Tonia and Petros are really very interesting. Tonia, unlike her female schoolmates, was a very energetic, loud and talkative girl who attracted attention (observations, April 1998). The maths teacher emphasised the fact that she was very intelligent and then he referred to being introvert as a negative thing for the performance of Petros, who was a very quiet well-behaved boy and not really the macho type like many of his male classmates (diary, April 1998).

Throughout his teaching career, the maths teacher had noticed some differences between girls and boys. He ascribed some of these differences to application and some to 'nature'.

In my subject it's usually girls who perform a little bit better than boys. But this doesn't mean that they are more intelligent, that they have a different brain. I've met girls who were very intelligent and boys who were very intelligent. Boys usually neglect their work whereas girls study harder. This is why they perform better.

Girls from their nature are more quiet and polite than boys.

Boys usually cause more problems in the classroom. Girls are more mature. It's their nature. They grow faster than boys. Also I've noticed that when the teachers need to do something important they ask girls to help them, because they are more responsible.

The maths teacher did not think that schools were discriminatory but he believed that in a way teachers treated girls differently because they trusted them more than boys.

Maths teacher: What I have noticed is teachers trust girls more as far as responsibilities are concerned. For instance, in most classes it's girls who have to report who is absent in the group.

Researcher: But, I thought that that was a duty that is assigned to the best student of the group.

Maths teacher: Yes. (He did not seem to like my comment.)

It is an established practice in Greek schools to assign to the student who performed best the previous year, the task to report who is absent in a group. One would expect that an experienced teacher like the maths teacher would have noticed that.

The maths teacher was the only respondent who believed that equality was established in Greece, although he knew that in some jobs women were underrepresented.

There have been big changes during the last years. Twenty years ago women couldn't join the army. Now they can. Maybe there are some professions in which women have been left behind. For instance we don't have many female politicians, but we do have some. In education there isn't a problem. It's out of the question. In the family, yes equality exists. When a man works they both share responsibilities. And the way people think has changed. I think that equality has been achieved completely. Besides you can see that from the laws we have. There is no problem.

The principal

The principal grew up in a middle-class family in a large city near the capital of Greece. Her father was a University graduate whereas her mother had finished only primary school and had always been a housewife.

My father was an inspector in the customs office and my mother never worked. First she did not have the formal qualifications and second it was not common for women in those years to have a job.

As a child I felt closer to my father. He was more affectionate. My mother was more distant.

The principal felt very oppressed by her strict, old fashioned parents but her unfair treatment was not related to her sex, according to her.

My parents were very conservative and this applies to political and gender issues and to the upbringing of the children.

Personally I had no freedom. There was no dialogue and the environment in which I grew up, was very unfair. My oppression was the result of the circumstances, it had nothing to do with gender. My parents gave all their love to the first child. There was also this idea that the wishes of the first child should be satisfied whereas the second child should retreat. I don't know why. But there was this idea that the first child should be privileged.

The principal felt that gender was not important in her life although she mentioned having experienced differential treatment of women and men when she was an undergraduate and she also mentioned that society had different expectations and roles for women when she was young.

Researcher: How were women treated by the Professors when you were a student?

Principal: With the exception of one who was problematic by nature.... Anyway men are all the same in all the different periods, when they find a woman that they like they will approach her, no matter if she is one of their students or colleagues or whatever. I did not notice any differential treatment towards women. I could not say that male students were privileged but women because of their sex could have received favours if they had accepted indecent proposals by their Professors. I had that kind of experience, I mean I could have become at least a Professor if I had said yes to some people. So in that sense, there was different treatment.

I got married after graduating from University. I couldn't continue my studies. Girls do that now but at that time it was not very common. I was married and I had to have a child and in those days women had to choose and I had to make my choice. I said that yourself comes second, third... and I tried to fill the gap with other things.

The principal felt happy with her life but she mentioned that in a way her life would have been better, if she had been a man.

If I were a man, perhaps I would be surrounded by purer people. I believe that men are more pure. It's a fact. My experience has taught me that women are more opportunistic, they look after their interests and they hate more than men. Men among themselves and among women are not mean. Women are competitive even among themselves. Men are more honest.

The principal felt happy in her own family and she had no complaints from the husband or her relationship with her daughter with whom she was very close and spent a lot of time.

I'm happy to say that I got married to a person who's very open minded and never had any problems with the opposite sex.

We both contribute to everything but in a different way.

We do anything together (with her daughter), funny or serious, we talk, we watch the telly, we go for a walk, we go to the cinema, to the theatre, anything. (Her daughter is in her early twenties.)

The principal did not have much free time but she managed to do some reading or to write poetry in her leisure time. She had many unfulfilled dreams and many interests in her life.

I would like to have studied not because I want to have a collection of titles. I'd like to study for the knowledge. I'd like to study even now, for the knowledge. I don't like those in-service education programmes, they are ridiculous. I would like to become an artist, a musician, an actor, a painter, a dancer or a famous writer. I would also like to travel around the world if I had the money.

The principal was over forty and she was the most experienced teacher compared with the other teachers. She had been teaching for twenty-seven years and she had always valued the teaching profession even though she was aware of many disadvantages of the job. Becoming a teacher was one of the most important things in her life.

Since I remember myself I wanted to become a teacher. I couldn't have done anything else. I could never see myself in a different position. Even when I got older and I thought of doing something else. I thought that it would not be fulfilling for me to do something else. I think that being a teacher is something sacred.

Researcher: Are you happy with your job now?

The principal: As far as money is concerned no, not at all, because what the teacher offers can never be paid. I believe that if you decide to become a teacher you have to know that you will never get a lot of money. In some jobs you have to forget the money. I am not happy with the job anymore. What can I say, that I am happy with what I should give? I do give but not as much as I should, especially as a principal, I do more office work than intellectual work. The intellectual level of the children becomes lower and lower, so most of us think that to study something more is not necessary. If the audience you refer to, has high demands, then you study harder. If

you have to teach children in the third year of secondary school how to distinguish between a vowel and a consonant, then some people say why study more. Personally I have compromised. What am I going to do, talk about philosophy with children who cannot spell properly? No. With all these things how can I be happy with my job? I don't want to blame the children, but the children I come across now do not seem to have an interest in knowledge. Personally I see myself more as a social worker than a teacher. I don't have a problem with the position I've got, I mean socially. I feel I contribute to society with what I'm doing and I'm happy with what I have done as a teacher.

In her school the principal felt close to the physics teacher and she believed that relationships are based on mutual emotions and deep common interests that bring people together and that the sex of an individual was not an issue for her. But she felt that it was for men. The principal believed that women and men are different in the way they think, feel and behave and that they are judged differently in society.

It would be easy for me to form a relationship with a male colleague. I don't have that sort of prejudice but I think that men do. They can't see a woman as a friend, they also see her as a woman, and that contaminates the relationship even if the man does not express it, it is still there, it exists. But I think that women can kiss and hug a man as if he were her brother, but I don't think that men can do that.

Look women are harder than men, we are the ones who are conscious of what we are doing, we are tougher, more straight and honest and cunning, so we are more peculiar. Very rarely I believe that a woman in the principal's post is liked by her colleagues. Men use lots of things, their machismo, they sack, they don't care about lots of things. All these things can cause extreme situations or usually they attract men and women. Women are difficult people no matter how you think about it. I think I've said this to you before, I believe that men are all the same category, all on the same ship. They have that male instinct. Females are two categories: 'Women females and women personalities'. What is dominant for the first ones is the female sex which has a lot of negative things. In women personalities there are other things which can be more common with the ones that men have and this is why a 'woman personality'

will often be in conflict with men whereas the 'women females' are those who control men. Now as far as the position of the principal is concerned things are complicated. You have to be a strong personality and be a sort of everything, but above all you have to be a personality.

There seems to be some inconsistency in the principal's comments (see page 127).

Perhaps the principal in the first case she referred to personal relationships whereas in the second case she referred to professional relationships.

The principal's perceptions about female and male students were very different from those of the other respondents.

Girls were always more intelligent and better students than the boys in my classes. They worked in a more organised way than the boys and they tried harder. They also had more interesting personalities. The boys were always softer. Girls were more disobedient and ruder, they would usually answer back.

The principal saw these differences between girls and boys as mainly innate. During the interview she highlighted many times 'the different male and female instincts', 'differences between the male and the female soul', 'the female sex is different, there are some different characteristics which can be developed', 'the way two children of different sex grow up in their family is important, yes, but heredity also helps', 'society plays an important reason in the differences between males and females, but there are also biological reasons.' The principal also ascribed certain qualities to females and others to males: 'women are tricky and cunning', 'men have that male instinct, they see women like a prey and will always go after them', 'no matter what society does the female soul exists of different elements', 'sex is very important for a man but not for a woman', 'women are different, you can see it from the way we love', 'males are the energetic, aggressive sex'.

Although the principal had taken part in a careers education seminar which was related to the equality of the sexes, she said had never heard anything about equal

opportunities. Also she did not believe that schools were gendered places. She thought that equality did not really exist in Greek society.

Equality has not been accomplished, not at all, not only at work, but even in the way people think.

However, the principal believed that women could really change the world if they chose to.

Women are smarter and more active than men. It's because women don't have financial power in their hands that they don't try to reach high positions. If women fought for that, they would banish them. I can guarantee that. All the important posts would be occupied by women. It's just that women don't care. Don't judge from yourself, Maria.

Conclusions

None of the respondents came from upper class rich families and their parents did not possess high educational qualifications, except for the principal's father. They were all raised in patriarchal traditional families in which the upbringing of the children was mainly a woman's responsibility and the financial responsibilities a man's job.

Though the parents of the respondents were not modern or very open-minded, except for the parents of the English teacher, it was only the modern Greek teacher and the principal who felt oppressed. Gender as a reason of oppression in their parents' families was mentioned only by the modern Greek teacher. All the female respondents except for the physics teacher had experienced unequal, differential treatment because of their sex, either from their parents or later at the University or at work. The only male respondent, the maths teacher, felt that he was treated unfairly once but he generally thought that responsibilities and obligations were not related to gender and he felt happy with his life as a man. All the female respondents except for the physics teacher admitted that their lives would be better if they were men, for reasons such as responsibilities, pressure by society and personal relationships.

All of the respondents were married except for the physics teacher and the religious education teacher who was divorced. The partners of the teachers were all doing paid work and the responsibilities were equally divided among them and the teachers, according to the respondents. All the respondents except for the modern Greek teacher and the physics teacher had children to whom they dedicated a lot of their time. All the respondents mentioned having to cope with many responsibilities which did not allow them to dedicate time and energy in fulfilling their dreams. Only the principal mentioned gender as an obstacle in her professional plans and dreams in her life. It appears that the female respondents had wider interests, likes and unfulfilled dreams compared with the sole male teacher who participated in the study, the maths teacher.

All the respondents were experienced teachers between thirty and late forties. They were not experienced though in conducting research themselves or in participating in research projects. All of the respondents, except for the maths and the English teacher,

had chosen to become teachers out of the love for children. Except for the physics and the religious teacher they all felt disappointed with their jobs for different reasons.

Money was a problem for the maths teacher, for the principal the low intellectual level of the children and for the English and the modern Greek teacher the social status of the teaching profession in Greece. The modern Greek teacher, the physics teacher, the religious education teacher and the principal saw the relationship they had with their students as the most important aspect of their job. The English language teacher and the maths teacher liked their working environment and the freedom they had in their job. Although all the respondents wanted to do something different at some point of their lives, none of them was planning to leave education.

All the female respondents referred to common interests as a reason for forming closer relationships with colleagues. Although they all said that the sex of a person is not important, the modern Greek teacher related more with males, whereas the English, the religious teacher and the principal found it easier to form deeper relationships with women than with men. The physics teacher said that she related equally with males and females. The maths teacher was very vague and did not mention any preference for any sex.

When the respondents were asked about their relationship with previous principals the maths teacher again mentioned that he had no problems with any of the people he had worked with. All the female teachers said again that the sex of the individual did not make a difference. However, the problems mentioned by all of them were caused by male principals in the past. Perhaps overall the principals they had all worked with were mainly male. The modern Greek teacher mentioned having problems with her female colleagues in the past.

As far as the students in B3 are concerned some interesting differences came out in what the teachers and the principal said about girls and boys. All the teachers, except for the religious education teacher, the student or students they mentioned as very intelligent were mainly male. The modern Greek teacher, the physics teacher and the maths teacher mentioned both female and male students as hardworking. The physics teacher mentioned mainly male students as intelligent children who did not try hard

whereas the maths teacher mentioned both female and male students as intelligent students who did not try enough. The physics and the maths teacher mentioned Petros as the one of the most polite students in B3. All the female teachers described some male students as naughty and noisy, while the maths teacher described the whole group as 'restless'.

As far as their previous experiences are concerned the modern Greek, the physics and the religious education teacher said that differences in intelligence, performance, and behaviour varied in their classes. The principal found girls more intelligent, whereas the English teacher found boys to be more intelligent. The principal also found girls more hard working, better students and more interesting to teach. All the teachers except for the principal described boys as noisier and ruder and the maths teacher and the principal believed that girls performed better than boys in their subject. The modern Greek and the physics teacher, who thought that the sex differences are a result of different socialisation, believed that action should be taken about this problem.

None of the respondents except for the principal, had received any education or training about gender equality or discrimination in education and society. They all thought that in education there was not really a problem of inequality. All the female respondents believed though that there was still a lot to be done for the establishment of equality in the Greek society.

Chapter 6

Teachers and students in the classroom

Introduction

This chapter describes and analyses the lessons I observed with the five teachers. First I present the lessons of the modern Greek teacher, then follows the physics teacher, then the religious education teacher, the English language teacher, and last the maths teacher. I must admit that this order, which was also used in the previous chapter (Teachers' lives, gender and education) was to a great extent spontaneous, and it reflects the familiarity I had with the teachers and the relationship I had formed with each one of them.

For every teacher general information is given about the subject she/he taught, the place where the observations took place and about the relationship between each teacher and her/his students. Then every lesson is set out separately in chronological order. I observed seven lessons with the modern Greek teacher, ten with the physics teacher, ten with the religious education teacher, nine with the English teacher and nine with the maths teacher, the only male teacher that took part in my study.

It is desirable to mention and explain the categories or themes that emerged from the observations and that are discussed in every lesson. First for every lesson I provide information about the concepts on which the teachers and the students worked as well as information about the way the lesson was presented. In most of the lessons there was usually homework to be checked and then the teacher would proceed to the presentation of the new unit. Homework could be writing an essay in the case of the modern Greek lessons. In the case of the physics teacher it could be answering questions in writing, solving problems or preparing experiments for the physics lessons. In religious education the students were not assigned to do any writing at home but like in all the other lessons the students had to study the concepts that had been discussed and explained in class. In the English lessons students had to do language exercises at home and to study vocabulary. In the maths lessons that I observed the students were not assigned any written work and they did most of the work during class.

After the contextual information in every lesson I give information about the participation of girls and boys. Participation refers to the contributions that girls and boys made in every lesson. In most cases these were verbal contributions but there were cases of non-verbal contributions such as performing an experiment in a physics lesson. The students' contributions were things such as presenting their homework, or performing tasks such as preparing and presenting experiments in physics lessons, translating sentences from the Bible in the religious education lesson or expressing ideas about issues and drawing shapes, and solving exercises in the maths lessons. Also students contributed by answering questions, and asking questions about concepts which were not clear to the students or asking questions and making comments which were not necessarily directed to the content of the lesson. For instance in many of the English lessons some students, mainly male, would sometimes ask permission to use the toilet or would ask irrelevant questions just to annoy the English teacher. Things were different with the other teachers. For instance in the modern Greek lessons most students would normally ask questions in order to understand a concept or discuss their ideas with the teacher. Because some students in all the lessons and especially in the religious education and English lessons, called out answers or their ideas about some issues, it was unavoidable to miss some of the contributions of girls and boys.

In the lessons that follow I provide information about the participation of girls and boys as groups. However in some cases information about individual students is given. When the names of individual students are provided there is always indication of the student's sex. In every lesson I give examples of the students' contributions by using transcript of teacher-student talk, which give a flavour of the situation in the classroom. All such verbal data is written in italics so that the reader can easily distinguish between the data and the themes that are discussed by me. Also F stands for female, M for male and T stands for teacher.

After the participation of students I proceed to the teachers' actions. First I give information about the number of times that questions or tasks were assigned to girls and boys. There were cases in which the teacher directed the same question to a student twice in order to give her/him another chance or cases in which the question was rephrased so that it was easier for the student to answer. In very few cases the

teachers would ask some students to perform tasks which were not related to the content of the lesson or they asked some students to perform tasks which did not involve verbal interaction. For instance the maths teacher asked a female student to clean the board. The physics teacher asked a male student to give her his hand in order to show how heat is transferred from one body to another.

The teachers directed questions or assigned tasks to students by looking at them, by addressing them with their first name or by addressing them with their surname. It was only the physics teacher, the religious education teacher, and the English teacher to a larger extent, who used the students surnames. In every lesson I give information about the number of times girls and boys were called on by their first name and also examples of the questions that the teachers directed to students either by looking at them or by addressing them with their first name or their surname.

Next in every lesson I refer to the reprimand and praise comments that the teachers directed at girls and boys and I give information not only about the number of times that girls and boys were praised and reprimanded but also about the reasons that girls and boys were reprimanded. For instance some students were reprimanded for not doing their homework and their work during class. Girls and boys were also reprimanded for daydreaming, or chatting, or laughing or for being rude.

In this study praise is defined as the positive evaluations that teachers directed at students. For instance: 'Bravo' or two words 'Very good' or a whole sentence which implied that the student was doing well and the teacher was happy with the performance or the work of the student. For instance: 'I really like your attitude' (towards an issue) said the modern Greek teacher to a female student because she liked the way she expressed her ideas about corporal punishment in schools.

Reprimand is defined as the negative evaluations directed at students and that was done in many different ways. Sometimes the teachers would use just the students names and shout at them or talk in a very strict and sharp manner. Sometimes the teachers would use a sentence which implied that they were unhappy about what the student had said or had done during the lesson. In this case it was not only the words

of the teachers that were taken into account but also the expression on the faces of the teachers, the tone of their voice and their attitude. In all the lessons examples of reprimand and praise comments are provided, as well as my comments inside parentheses to make it clearer to the reader why some phrases were defined as reprimand or praise.

At the end of every lesson I briefly refer to the main points and sometimes I discuss important actions of the teachers that occurred during the lesson and that might indicate different attitudes to girls and boys. For each teacher there are conclusions coming out from all the lessons I observed and also at the end of this chapter there are conclusions about all the observations.

The modern Greek teacher

Contextual information

The textbook on Greek writers, that was provided to the students and the teacher free by the Ministry of Education was divided into different thematic units. There were texts, novels or poems related to a different theme such as the 'Sea', 'School and Life', 'The City and the Village', '1940', 'The Occupation', 'Love', 'Religious Life', 'Asia Minor', 'The Sadness of Immigration', 'Problems of Contemporary Life', 'Before the Big Revolution', and 'The Old Life'.

According to the curriculum (Ministry of Education and Religions, 1997-98) the teachers were completely free to choose according to their likes which of these texts to teach, but they were expected to teach texts from every thematic unit. The teachers did not have to follow the sequence of the thematic units. In every lesson the teacher should write on the board the name of the writer and the title of the text and anything else she/he considers important. There were induction notes before every text which the students should read in order to acquaint themselves with the context, but the purpose was not the provision of extended biographical profiles. Then either the teacher or the students should read the passage during the class and then the analysis should take place. There were questions at the end of each text which should be answered, but others could be asked as well. The focus of the lesson should be on the comprehension of the text and not on grammar. There were also pictures in some of the texts which should be observed by the students (Ministry of Education and Religions, 1997-98).

All of my classroom observations, with the modern Greek teacher took place in B3's own classroom. B3 used one of the rooms on the second floor (there were three floors in the school building). It was an old room not very warm and not very well-lit. The decoration was definitely not brilliant. There were only two posters on the walls. The desks of the children were organised in rows one behind the other, all facing the teacher's desk and the board. Children changed seats at every lesson. Most of the students sat next to a classmate of the same sex although they were not prohibited from doing otherwise. There were very few students who sometimes sat next to a classmate of the opposite sex.

The teacher of modern Greek hardly ever used her desk or sat on her chair. She was always walking around the classroom, she was close to the students for most of the time. The teacher was very active and I was never bored during her lessons. The group was full of life and seemed to be on very good terms with their teacher. They were very relaxed and comfortable with her and they respected her. When I was alone with the students of B3 in the classroom or elsewhere, they never made any negative comments about their teacher and they never said anything insulting, or humiliating about her teaching methods or her personality. The atmosphere in the classroom was good and I enjoyed being there (diary, April 1998). Even when the teacher reprimanded students for their answers or for their behaviour with a language which was not formal but even slang sometimes, I would say that, the children were not offended at all. There was a close relationship between teacher and students and a mutual understanding, a kind of secret agreement which was not accessible to an outsider at least at the very beginning (diary, April 1998).

Lesson1

This lesson was a continuation of the previous one, which I had not observed. The students and the teacher had already read a text and they had divided it into different units according to its content. The text was an extract from a novel of a famous Greek writer: G. Theotokas: "A nation 'newpoor'". The novel's title was 'Leonis, and it was a descriptive account of the childhood of the boy and his friends during a very restless period of the first world war, in Instabul. In this city there were many Greeks at that period and it was also the place where the writer was born. The young boy's friend, Menos was very passionate about his country (Greece) and the war, and he was politically influenced by his father who was against the Germans and the Turks. Leonis' grandfather was also very patriotic and he felt really disappointed with the situation. The discussion in the classroom was focused on the following incidents: Menos' objection to admiring the foreign troops who were parading in the city and to learning Turkish at school, and thus his punishment by his teacher.

When the teacher came into the classroom she mentioned nothing about me, my presence in the classroom. The students had already met me before because I had observed other subjects such as physics, maths, English and religious education. The students used to ask what other subjects I was going to observe and they used to say 'Are you going to be here the next hour? Please come.' (diary, April 1998).

Overall in this lesson girls contributed thirty times and boys twenty-nine times. Neither the girls nor the boys seemed bored and they were in the mood for conversation. They seemed to behave very naturally without being scared of the teacher or shy. Probably there was some connection between the teacher's personality and the students' attitude and generally the good climate that dominated most of the lessons of modern Greek. Two girls and no boys contributed by reading the essays they had written at home. Girls contributed to the discussion which followed twenty-six times, either by answering the modern Greek teachers' questions or by expressing their ideas. Boys' contributions to the analysis of the text were twenty-two. Examples of the girls' and boys' talk are given below.

T: There was an incident in the school in which Menos was involved. This gives us the opportunity to describe him.

M: Yes, he refuses to write something on the board.

T: Why?

F: His father had told him not to learn Turkish.

T: Generally, he was influenced by whom?

F: By his father.

T: What does his attitude show?

F: That there was a problem with the Turks.

Some students asked for explanations and instructions. In total four boys and two girls asked the teacher for explanations. One boy, Michalis, asked for instructions four times. The modern Greek teacher was very helpful with both girls and boys. Some examples are given below.

T: Can you give me the names of the protagonist's friends?

M: You mean Leonis' friends?

T: Yes.

M: Madam, can you repeat the emotions Leonis felt when the foreign troops were parading in front of him in the city? (The boy is taking notes and he had not managed to write everything down. The teacher repeats the emotions.)

M: I don't understand how a student could have accepted to be physically punished by his teacher? (The teacher reminds this boy that the event took place years ago when schools and the way teachers and students thought were completely different.)

F: Is this (a word in the text) a place?

T: Yes.

F: How could the children in the text have been so passive at school? (The teacher referred again to the fact that those times were completely different.)

In this lesson the modern Greek teacher called on three female students by looking at them. She did not direct any questions to any male students and she did not address any students by their first or even last names for them to answer questions or perform other tasks.

The teacher on two occasions asked girls to explain their answers. The modern Greek teacher gave them a second chance. This did not occur with any of the boys. Examples are given below.

T: What did Menos' father mean by justice?

F: Democracy.

T: What do you mean by that? (The modern Greek teacher asks the same girl)

F: Freedom, that Menos father wanted to be able to say what he believed.

T: How did the protagonist feel when he was watching the foreign troops parading in the city?

F: He remembered our emperors.

T: So how did he feel? (She asks the same girl.)

F: Perhaps he felt hatred?

T: No, not exactly.

T: What is the meaning of 'nouveau-rich'? (She asks another girl.)

The teacher reprimanded only one girl for a wrong answer she gave. The girl said that the protagonist in the novel admired the foreign emperors whereas the correct answer was that he admired the Greek ones. The teacher's manner was not insulting but the 'No, no, my girl!' phrase that the teacher used was certainly an expression of disappointment, slight anger and reprimand.

The modern Greek teacher reprimanded boys seven times (one boy, Michalis, was reprimanded four times) for not paying attention, for not being quiet, for their answers or ideas and even for their questions. Examples follow.

T: Come on now, stop it Dimitris! (He was drawing the portrait of one of his schoolmates.)

T: Stop it you two! (These two boys were laughing.)

T: Don't say stupid things.

The last reprimand was directed at Michalis. He had said that beating was created in paradise, a Greek proverb, which means that beating children can help them become

better. The same boy was also reprimanded for constantly asking explanations and instructions until the teacher lost her patience.

Michalis: What are we going to write madam? (The student is taking notes.)

T: That the boy was influenced by the war.

Michalis : Are we supposed to take notes?

T: Yes.

Michalis: So what shall we write then?

T: For God sake Michalis! (She is shouting at him.)

Later he was reprimanded because he was laughing and he was really annoying. Even one of the female students told him to stop, and then the teacher said: ‘Whenever we have a lesson you are going to sit at the last desk.

The teacher praised two girls. The first girl was praised for her homework, a very small essay which was read in the classroom and was very well written, and the second girl for expressing her opposition to physical punishment in schools.

Tonia: What, if I am right can the teacher beat me? No.

T: Good, I like your attitude, Tonia.

She praised none of the male students for their answers. It is worth mentioning here that when a boy answered a difficult question the teacher only replied by saying, ‘Correct’. The question was about the meaning of the concept ‘nouveau rich’, and about how the protagonist perceived that concept when he was watching the foreign emperors parading in the city. Before the boy gave the correct answer two girls had given wrong answers and the teacher had said ‘No’ to both of them meaning that their answer was not the one that the teacher expected.

In this lesson there were no important differences in the participation of girls and boys. However, the modern Greek teacher directed questions only to girls. Also she reprimanded more boys than girls and more times, whereas she praised only girls.

Lesson 2

The teacher was supposed to teach modern Greek and then history but since some lessons of modern Greek had been cancelled, she thought it was best to teach modern Greek for a two hour-teaching period and therefore complete the analysis of the text. The text that the group worked on was titled 'Farewell' and it was written by a female writer. It belonged to the thematic group 'City-Village'. The novel's hero was an old proud man, Antonis, who lived in Mani, a very traditional, peculiar place. People in this place are thought to be very reserved, rough, proud, touchy and very conservative. His son and his grandchildren lived in the capital, in Athens which Antonis hated. His family visited him at last in the village and the protagonist was really excited.

Grandfather was very fond of his grandson but not of his granddaughters and his daughter-in-law. He could not stand being away from his grandson so he took the painful decision to move to Athens. Before he left his village he got some mourners to come and put on a symbolical ceremony as though he had died. The novel contained strong examples of differential treatment of boys and girls. It was especially chosen by the teacher of modern Greek who intended to give me an idea of what the students believed about the sexes and their roles in society. She knew that my research topic was about gender and she was very willing to help. It was entirely her idea to choose this particular text and I have to admit that through the analysis of the text I became aware of some of the students' sex stereotypes and prejudices.

The teacher started the lesson with the homework that the students had from the previous lesson, 'A nation newpoor'. The students had to answer in writing one question. There were also other questions at the end of the text that the students should be able to answer orally. The teacher checked who had written the answer. She walked towards the desks of the students and looked at their copybooks. She wrote down the names of those students who had not done her/his homework. Five out of eleven boys had done their homework. The teacher shouted at them. Two girls had not done their homework. Then the teacher proceeded to the next unit. The new text was read by the students and comprehension questions and opinions about the extract were asked by the teacher. The analysis of the text was not completed within the single period and it was continued the next hour instead of the teaching of history.

Overall, the participation of girls and boys in this lesson was almost equal. Girls contributed twenty-two times and boys twenty-four times. Some students contributed more than once. Evangelia (female), who happened to be an excellent student contributed three times, Ilyriana (female) four times (she read her essay, she answered one question, and she asked the meaning of two words) and Dimitris (male) contributed four times (he read the introductory text, he answered one question and he asked the meaning of two words).

As far as homework is concerned, five girls read their small essays and two answered some of the questions at the end of the text. None of the boys read their essays but three answered questions from the textbook. One boy and two girls read the main long text, loud and clear for the teacher and the rest of the group. Two girls and two boys asked the meaning of some words from the text.

The most marked difference in the participation of girls and boys in this lesson was related to the number of comprehension questions that the students answered in this lesson, or the times that they expressed their ideas about issues arising from the text. Girls answered only eight comprehension questions whereas boys answered sixteen. Examples are given below.

T: Where is the situation taking place?

M: In Mani.

T: What kind of place is Mani?

M: It's mountainous area.

T: Yes. What happens there as far as customs and habits are concerned?

F: They never change.

T: Where do they change?

F: Where there are many people.

T: Where else?

M: Where there is a lot of tourism.

In total the modern Greek teacher directed questions and assigned tasks seven times to girls and once to one boy. First she asked three girls to read their homework. Then she

directed four comprehension questions at three girls and one at a boy, but none of these students replied. In total, the teacher addressed by their first name three girls and only one boy for them to answer questions. The modern Greek teacher called on the rest of the students by looking at them. Examples follow..

T: Margarita, what kind of preparations does grandfather do for the event? (the girl does not reply)

T: Eudokia, will you tell us? (The teacher rephrases the question in order to make it simpler but the girl does not reply again. In the meantime Michalis is looking at the girl and he is making funny faces.)

T: Stop doing silly things and turn around you!

T: Alexandra? (She does not reply either.)

T: I am asking you simple things! (The teacher, who is disappointed at this point, directs her comment at all three girls who did not reply to the same question.)

The girls that were asked these questions by the teacher, were not very active and talkative in any subject and also they did not perform very well in many subjects (diary, May 1998). In this lesson these girls had not participated at all until the time that the teacher directed questions to them.

The teacher was willing to help both girls and boys. But when a female student asked the teacher for the meaning of the word the teacher told the girl to divide the word in two in order to find out what it meant. So the teacher allowed her to work independently and she also showed her trust. I must admit though that this girl (Evagelia) was an excellent student in all the subjects that I observed. The teacher explained the word 'za' (it means animals) to a male student. Although it was easy to guess the meaning, the teacher did not motivate the boy to try to find the answer himself. On the other hand, the teacher was very helpful with Eudokia (see above), she explained the question to her in a very simple way. This did not happen with any of the male students but nor with any of the other female students.

In total the teacher reprimanded girls three times and boys five times. Girls were reprimanded for not giving answers and boys were reprimanded for not doing their

homework, not being careful and for being naughty during the lesson. Examples are given below.

M: Madam, we (he and the boys sitting next to him) forgot to do our homework.

T: At your age, you are not supposed to forget! (She is angry.)

Giorgos (male): Madam, what is the meaning of the word: 'diafentevo'?

T: It's in the footnotes. Defend. You are not being careful at all!

T: You (a boy, Apostolis) you are chatting with Giorgos! (The teacher is cross.)

The teacher praised only one male student, Leuteris, in this lesson.

T: What do you want? (The boy raises his hand in order to get permission to speak)

M: I'd like to say something about this question. We can see that there is a contradiction. The nation was rich at some point and now it is poor.

T: Very good.

In this lesson girls participated more in the first part of the lesson, which involved homework and boys answered more comprehension questions. The modern Greek teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to girls. She also reprimanded boys more than girls.

Lesson 3

After the break the teacher and the students continued the analysis-discussion of the text. In this lesson the participation of girls was very low compared to the participation of boys. In total girls contributed only seven times whereas boys contributed eighteen times. The students answered the teacher's comprehension questions and they also expressed their ideas about issues that emerged from the text. The modern Greek teacher did not direct any questions to any individual students in this lesson. This was probably due to the teacher's intention to present a lesson-conversation than a conventional lesson. She let the children free to express their views and I suppose she did not wish to judge what they believed, even when she did not agree. She also did not want to monopolise the lesson by focusing on her ideas or on lecturing the students

on the equality of the sexes. She did try though to lead and direct the discussion and to attract the students' attention on some issues. Examples are given below.

T: Why doesn't grandfather underestimates his grandson?

M: Because as his heir he will have his name and surname and he won't spend the family's fortune.

T: Is it only grandfather who believes that?

M: No, it's a more general belief.

T: Tell me what you think about the things that grandfather says?

F: People believed that women were inferior to men because they didn't have a job.

M: Well, some women are better than men and some men are better than women.

M: Some years ago there was a problem but now no, perhaps only in the villages.

F: In the old times people used to perceive women as very sensitive and they thought that they were crying and moaning all the time.

M: Things were very bad for women before Christianity.

T: So do you think that things became better for women with Christianity?

M: Christ was in favour of the equality of the sexes.

F: Yes, Christ taught equality and he also had female students.

T: How is the female presented in the New Testimony?

M: As a mother figure.

M: Madam, I think that women lie and cheat.

M: I think that men are superior to women and besides the Bible says that women should be afraid of men. And why aren't women allowed in a part of the Church (he means the Greek church)?

T: Let's talk about things in Greece nowadays. Have men got more power than women? If so why, can't we change things?

In this lesson boys were very active and impatient. Perhaps the teacher should or could have interfered and should have insisted on asking the girls' opinions or on pushing them to participate. The teacher interfered only when someone was disturbing the group or she/he was not paying attention to the discussion. The teacher's reprimands were directed only at two boys and they were both related to misbehaviour.

T: Michalis, stop it! (He was constantly interrupting her and some of his classmates, he was chatting and generally he was very annoying.)

T: Dimitris, please! (The teacher raises her voice. Dimitris was not paying attention, he was looking for a pen by the window.)

For the last ten minutes of the lesson the teacher did not interfere at all and I have to admit that it was very difficult for me to keep notes of everything because some of the students were having a very passionate, loud argument about gender and the equality of the sexes. The discussion focused on the relationships between girls and boys in school. Three girls were saying that although the boys were very judgmental of some girls who wear sexy clothes and are really attractive but brainless, they preferred going out with these girls. One boy made a distinction between 'good and bad girls'. According to him the first ones would be preferred for a more serious permanent relationship and the others for temporary relationships.

Based on the discussion that the students had with their teacher and among themselves, there was only one boy who really believed that men should have more rights than women but none of the students (at least from the ones who participated in the lesson) seemed to believe that there is serious problem of gender inequality nowadays.

Examples are given below.

M: Some people do not want to give power to women.

Giorgos (male): Men are stronger than women, so as a result they are superior.

Tonia (female): I think that men can do some things and women can do some others.

This doesn't mean that one sex is superior to the other. Men and women have the same value.

Giorgos: There are some things that only men can do... (He is laughing.)

Lesson 4

In this lesson the text 'Farewell' was analysed further. The lesson started with the homework of the students. The students had to answer one comprehension question, in writing. Then the teacher asked questions about the content of the text.

In this lesson the participation of boys was higher than the participation of girls. Boys contributed twenty-seven times and girls contributed nineteen times. Three girls and only one boy read the essay that they had for homework. One boy asked the meaning of a word and another one asked the teacher if he should look in the text for the answer of a question. Girls' contributions to the discussion about the text, were sixteen and boys' twenty-four. The teacher was helpful with both girls and boys. Examples of the girls' and boys' talk are given below.

T: What kind of relationship is formed between the old man and his grandson?

F: A very loving relationship.

M: A relationship of mutual understanding.

T: Anything else?

M: They understand each other.

M: They deeply communicate with each other.

Boys participated more in the discussion. The teacher directed questions to girls four times and to boys twice. She addressed three girls and two boys by their first name for them to answer questions. One girl, Antonia, was addressed by her first name twice. Examples are given below.

T: Elena, (female) would you like to say something else on that? (The teacher refers to the question that the students had for homework.)

Elena: She read her answer.

T (later the teacher said): Help us now Thanasis (male).

Thanasis was a brilliant student and a very well behaved child with excellent manners. The teacher had asked the students to describe the relationship that had been developed between the old man and his grandson. Some girls and boys gave their answers which were more or less correct but probably the teacher expected something else which had not been mentioned up to that point. So she chose one of the best students with the expectation that he would perform the task effectively. The teacher obviously trusted this student and believed in him. The boy gave a very good answer.

He said that the relationship between the old man and his grandson was characterised by excessive worship.

T: When the grandfather sees his grandfather like dead what does he ask him, Ilyriana (female)?

Ilyriana: 'Are you dead grandfather?'

T: Antonia (female) tell us what happens on the day that women 'cry' (say sad songs) for a dead person? (Antonia does not answer.)

T: Antonia where do the women go? It's there, on the same page. (Finally the teacher answers the question herself.)

T: What are those songs about, the ones that women sing when someone dies in the village, Dimitris (male)?

Dimitris: Madam, I cannot answer that. (The teacher does not help him and the question is answered by a female student.)

F: They are about the life of the dead person.

The teacher did not offer any help to Dimitris whereas she did offer help to Antonia. In total more boys than girls were reprimanded. Seven boys were reprimanded eleven times. The teacher of modern Greek reprimanded two boys in a funny but also a bit ironic way, for not doing their homework. 'I think spring has influenced you, ...' She also reprimanded one boy (Michalis) for his homework by saying: 'your answer was very short' which was true. The teacher reprimanded the same boy three more times.

T: Is there any phrase in the text which shows that grandfather wants the boy to stay there, whereas his son thinks differently?

Michalis: Grandfather was spoiling his grandson.

T: (in a strict sharp manner) I asked something else.

T: Does grandfather want to leave his son?

Michalis: If grandfather died the boy would inherit him.

T: This has nothing to do with what I said! (The modern Greek teacher is cross.)

T: Can you find traditional ideas or habits in Mani?

Michalis: A preference for male children.

T: When you don't chat you are very fast.

The last comment can be taken as reprimand because the teacher implied that Michalis usually chatted and did not pay attention but it can also be categorised as praise because the teacher told the boy that he was fast, meaning that he was able to answer questions as long as he tried and he was careful. The teacher reprimanded some other boys for not being quiet or for not paying attention. Examples follow.

T: Kostas, please if you don't want to participate, at least don't chat.

T: Come and sit in the front! (This boy was very restless and he was chatting with his classmates. The teacher is angry and she wants him to sit on his own in the front where she could see and control him better.)

T: Stavros, why are you looking at Michalis and aren't you trying to find the answer?

(The modern Greek teacher is cross again.)

T: Dimitris, are you doing gymnastics? (He is stretching his arms and back.)

T: Apostolis! (He is chatting. The teacher shouts at him.)

The teacher did not reprimand any female students. The girls were not noisy and there were not doing silly things but there were some girls (Antonia and Elena) who did not answer questions either because they did not know the answers or because they were bored or because their attention was attracted by something else or because they did not feel confident enough, but they were not reprimanded. Dimitris was also not reprimanded for not answering a question.

In this lesson, boys participated more than girls no matter the teacher's effort encourage some girls who had been silent during the lesson. Boys were more noisy than girls and they provoked the teacher's attention. Girls were not reprimanded at all and none of the students were praised.

Lesson 5

The text 'Vacations' was an extract from a novel called 'Contre-Temps' which means unexpected event, but it is also a term in music. The protagonist was Kyveli, a girl

from a wealthy family who lived in Athens. The girl went through the time before 1940 without even imagining the difficult moments she was going to experience during the Second World War. The extract which the students read and analysed was about the vacations of the little girl in the countryside with her grandmother. The girl became familiar with a completely different way of living which she found very exciting and enjoyable compared to the life in Athens, far away from nature. After reading the text the students expressed their views about it. The text contained very lyric descriptive accounts. The children were not familiar with that kind of writing and generally they did not like and appreciate the text. Then the teacher asked the students to express their ideas and preferences about life in big cities and particularly Athens and life in villages and generally in the province, which consists not only of small villages but also of small towns and even bigger cities, but not as big as Athens. Girls seemed to prefer the province whereas boys the city.

In this lesson girls contributed nineteen times and boys contributed fifteen times. Two girls (Tonia and Antonia) and three boys (Thanasis and Leuteris, the third boy's name was not recorded) read one of their short essays. The students had to answer in writing two comprehension questions. Two boys and one girl had not done their homework but the teacher did not reprimand them. Then the teacher proceeded to the new text. The teacher asked two girls to read the text, one read the introductory note and half of the main text and the second girl read the other half. All the other contributions of girls and boys were related to the teacher's questions or the students' ideas about the text and about life in the city or in the province. Examples of the girls' and boys' talk are given below.

T: Why don't you like that kind of description and lyricism?

Thanasis (male): Because we are not familiar with these things.

T: What language do you think would be more appropriate for you?

F: It's extremely romantic.

M: A more simple language.

Thanasis: We preferred the previous novel.

Tonia (female): I don't like the fact that everybody finds Athens terrible.

There were girls and boys who contributed more than once or twice either because they were very good students or because they were very talkative and expressive. For instance Thanasis made five contributions to the lesson. Tonia spoke four times, Elena (female) three times, Antonia and Eleni (both female) spoke each twice. Evangelia (female), Stavros and Petros (both male) also spoke each twice.

In this lesson the teacher asked four girls and four boys to contribute to the lesson by reading their homework, answering questions or expressing their views. Two of these girls (Elena and Margarita) and three of these boys (Thanasis, Spyros and Petros) were addressed by their first names. Some examples are given below.

T: What are grandfather's feelings? (The modern Greek teacher looks at Antonia and expects an answer. This question and the next one were given to students for homework.)

Antonia: Pride and admiration.

T: Correct. Thanasis say something additional.

Thanasis: And worship.

T: Nice, good. What was the other question about, Margarita? A, yes, have you found any traditional habits or customs in Mani?

Margarita: No.

T: I want Leuteris to tell us.

Leuteris: The sad songs for the dead people and a strong preference for males.

Thanasis: I didn't like the text Madame.

T: Why didn't you like the text?

T: What do you think of your life in Athens? Would you like to go to live in a village, Petros (male)?

Petros: No, there is nothing there.

T: When you go to the countryside for holidays what is it that you like?

Petros: There is a lot of space and the air is very clear, the atmosphere.

Elena: I can't stand being away from my friends. Here I go out very often. Besides in the villages the ideas of the people are very different.

T: Tell us more about that.

The teacher reprimanded only one boy in this lesson and none of the girls. Leuteris was very noisy and the teacher said to him in a very strict, sharp way 'What do you want?' The teacher stopped and he did not cause any more trouble until the end of the lesson. The only praise that the teacher gave was directed at a male student, Thanasis.

Lesson 6

This lesson was focused again on the text 'Vacations'. The teacher and the students proceeded to further analysis of the text. The children had no homework so all the questions of the teacher were about the comprehension of the text. This lesson was done in May which is a hot month in Greece and also the last month for secondary schools. Usually at this time of the year the children are very restless and noisy and they find it very difficult to concentrate. B3 seemed to be very bored with everything and noisy. The children were not willing to participate and all the teachers found it very hard to attract their attention (diary, May 1998). The teacher of modern Greek had in a way become more strict in order to restrain the students and in the last two lessons I observed she initiated most of the interactions she had with her students. I suspect this happened first because she wanted to make some students who seemed lost or in another world to take part in the analysis of the text and second because she wanted to avoid problems which would possibly emerge if she had let the students talk freely. In the last two lessons I observed with the modern Greek teacher, very often she would either address the students by their first names or she just looked at them and expected an answer.

In this lesson six girls contributed twenty times and five boys contributed nineteen times each. Examples are given below.

T: In the province Kyveli meets some children. How does this happen? Spyros (male)?

Spyros: She was in the sea and the children were looking at her and they were jealous.

T: Antonia (female)?

Antonia: Some children approached her because they wanted to play with her.

T: Before she talked to her what was Kyvelis' attitude?

Antonia: She tried to ignore them.

T: How did the first approach occur Dimitris (male)?

Dimitris: One boy asked her if she wanted to play altogether with her rubber fish.

Some students contributed more than once or twice either because they were willing to answer or because the teacher asked them to do so. Thanasis (male), Dimitris (male) and Elena (female) made six contributions each, Evagelia (female) five, Maria, Antonia (both female), and Petros (male) three each, Ilyriana (female), Spyros and Michalis (both male) each two and Eudokia (female) made only one contribution to this lesson.

In total, in this lesson the teacher directed seventeen questions to seven girls and thirteen questions to seven boys. All the students who were asked to contribute to this lesson were addressed by their first name. Examples are given below.

T: In Athens the girl had different feelings when she was reading. What feelings did she have then and what feelings does she have now, Antonia?

Antonia: I don't know.

T: It's in the same page. Be careful, I am going to repeat...

Evagelia: She did not like to be interrupted from her reading when she was in the province. (It was exactly the other way round.)

T (in a strict manner): Be careful with what you say! (Finally Petros and Elena give correct answers.)

T: Kyveli meets some children in the province. How does this happen? (The teacher looks at Alexandra and expects an answer but Alexandra is daydreaming.) Alexandra?

T (in a sarcastic manner): We are on page 57. (The teacher waits for a while but Alexandra does not reply again.)

T: Giorgos, can you help us? (Giorgos does not reply.)

T: Why are you like that today, in your own world? (The teacher means not only Giorgos but also the whole group.)

In total, the teacher reprimanded three girls: Alexandra, Tonia, and Evagelia.

Alexandra was reprimanded for not being interested in the lesson, Tonia, because she tried to interfere when the teacher was reprimanding Apostolis, and this made the teacher really angry and Evagelia for giving a wrong answer. The teacher reprimanded four boys seven times for not being quiet or interested in the lesson. Examples are given below.

T: Come on now Giorgos, come down! (Giorgos had been very restless.)

T: Apostolis! (He was chatting. The teacher shouts at him.)

T: Dimitris, your hair is fine! Pay attention! (Dimitris was not paying attention and he was combing his hair.)

T: Comments are not necessary! (The modern Greek teacher said this to Michalis who laughed at one of his classmate's answer.)

A male student, Spyros, gave a wrong answer but he was not reprimanded.

Spyros: 'She would like so much to keep some drops from this valuable substance in a bottle for the ugly mornings in Athens where the hours would not sing any more!'
That phrase means that the girl would like to keep some drops of this substance in Athens because Athens will be empty.

T: No, it's not that.

Possibly the modern Greek teacher was more strict with the students who were good and made mistakes because they were not being careful. Perhaps, this is why she reprimanded Evagelia for her answer but not Spyros. Evagelia was a very good student and she could have found the answer if she had been careful.

The teacher praised only one girl and one boy for their answers. Examples are given below.

T: Even her clothes were watered by the same substance, by this happy morning light!

Comment on what is meant by the word substance. Thanasis (male)?

Thanasis: She refers to the substance that exists in nature, the clean air. It creates a different feeling something completely new.

T: Excellent!

T: What kind of relationship did the girl have with her books Elena (male)?

Elena: In Athens she enjoyed reading more than she enjoyed the world, more than reality.

T: Very good!

Praise or reprimand for good or bad answers was not a very common characteristic of the teacher's teaching style. She did give feedback when a student gave a wrong answer and the group should know that but usually when a child could not find a suitable answer the teacher would ask someone else or she would make the question clearer or she would give clarification or help. For instance:

Elena: We can understand from the text that Kyveli prefers the countryside to Athens.

T: Yes, correct, but I want you to find specific examples. Evangelia?

In this lesson the participation of girls and boys was almost equal. The modern Greek teacher directed more questions to girls. She also addressed girls by their first name more times than boys in order to answer questions and she reprimanded boys more. She tried to make some students, especially the ones who were not good and would not normally take the initiative to speak but she was not always successful. It is worth mentioning that five girls and six boys did not contribute to this lesson at all.

Lesson 7

The teacher and the students worked on the following text 'When I was a teacher'.

The text was an extract from a letter which the writer sent to a friend of his in 1921. In that letter the author (Delmouzos, A. 1880-1956), who was a great educationalist, explained to his friend his reasons for studying literature and becoming a teacher. The extract belonged to the thematic unit 'School and life' and described the boring and very unpleasant life in the school where the author studied. The students were taught things that they did not understand at all and they were physically punished if they did not study or when they misbehaved.

The students had no homework so all the lesson was spent on a discussion about the content of the text. Two students, one female and one male, asked the teacher one question each. The teacher was very helpful with both of them. The rest of the students expressed their views about teachers' attitudes and their practices at the beginning of the century. Some students expressed their feelings about their school.

Six girls contributed a total of eighteen times and seven boys contributed a total of twenty-one times. Some girls and some boys contributed more than once. Evangelia (female) contributed six times. Elena (female), Thanasis and Petros (both male) contributed five times. Spyros (male) contributed four times. Apostolis and two students whose name was Dimitris (male) contributed twice. Tonia, Antonia and Eleni (all female) also contributed twice. Examples of the girls' and boys' contributions are given below.

T: Did something in the text impress you? (Nobody seems willing to give an answer.)

Have you been paying attention? (The teacher asks the whole group.)

Evagelia: The teacher's attitude towards the students.

T: Apostolis?

Apostolis: The same.

T: Are there any common things between the schools of those times and the schools nowadays Kostas (male)?

Kostas: No.

T: Tonia?

Tonia: No, because at those times the teachers used to beat the students. Now they don't and also the subjects at school aren't that complicated.

T: What was the students' experience in the school? What happened during the lesson, Petros?

Petros: The teacher used to sit at his desk and he used to call the children all sorts of names such as 'goat'.

All the students who were asked to contribute to the lesson were addressed by their first names. The teacher directed eleven questions to six female students and seven questions to four male students. Examples are given below.

T: When did the boy use to go to the countryside Eudokia (a female student)?

Eudokia: When the lessons at school were too boring for him.

T: How did the child feel in nature Spyros (male)?

Spyros: Very comfortable and free.

The teacher reprimanded none of the students for their answers, but she reprimanded one boy and one girl for misbehaving.

T: Close your mouth! (Spyros is yawning.)

T: Stop chewing a gum! (She says to a girl. The students are not supposed to eat, drink or chew gums during class.)

The teacher praised Thanasis for one of his answers.

T: Are the boy's interests related to the school at all Thanasis?

Thanasis: No, the boy used to cultivate things in his garden.

T: Very nice.

The teacher did not reprimand some students who gave wrong answers or answers not related to the teacher's question but she did give feedback to these students. Examples are given below.

T: Why did the teacher use nicknames?

Dimitris: Because the school was not in the city.

T: No, this has nothing to do with that.

T: Why couldn't the boy understand botany at school although he loved flowers?

Elena: Because he learned things by heart without really understanding them.

T: Something else.

Evagelia: He couldn't understand the language of the textbook.

In this lesson boys spoke more times than girls and more boys spoke than girls though the differences are very small. A total of nine students, five female and four male did

not participate at all. The teacher directed more questions to girls. An equal number of girls and boys were reprimanded but only one student (male) was praised.

Conclusions

In the seven lessons I observed with the modern Greek teacher, boys' overall participation was higher than the overall participation of girls. Girls contributed a total of one hundred and thirty-five times and boys a total of one hundred and fifty-three times. In three lessons (lesson one, five and six) girls contributed to the lesson more times than boys, though the differences are very small. In four out of the seven lessons (lesson two, lesson three, lesson four and lesson seven) that I observed with the teacher of modern Greek, boys contributed more than girls. In two of these lessons, the difference in the participation of girls and boys was strong: in lesson three, girls spoke seven times and boys seventeen and in lesson four, girls spoke nineteen times and boys twenty-seven. In all the lessons that boys participated more, the differences occurred in the discussion-analysis of the text. The names of all the students who contributed to the lessons were not recorded in the first six lessons. In the two last lessons two female students: Evagelia and Elena, and three male students: Thanasis, Petros and Dimitris were the most active students in the group. Evagelia, Elena and Thanasis contributed a total of eleven times each. Petros and Dimitris contributed a total of eight times each.

In total the teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to girls than to boys. She directed a total of forty-three questions or tasks to girls and twenty-seven to boys. In lesson three the teacher did not direct any questions to her students. In five out of the seven lessons that I observed (lesson one, two, four, six and seven) the teacher directed more questions to girls than boys although the differences in each lesson are small. There was no lesson during which the teacher directed more questions or assigned more tasks to boys.

The modern Greek teacher called on students either by looking at them or by addressing them with their first name. Overall girls were addressed by their first names more often than boys in order to answer questions and perform tasks. Girls were

addressed by their first name thirty-six times and boys twenty-six times. Evagelia was addressed by her first name a total of nine times, Elena eight times, Antonia five, Maria four, Eudokia three, Margarita, Alexandra and Ilyriana each twice, and Tonia only once (all female). Thanasis was addressed by this first name a total of eight times, Petros and Dimitris five times each, Spyros four, Michalis twice, and Giorgos and Apostolis once each (all male). Two female students (Eleni and Katerina) and three male students (Leuteris, Kostas and Dimitris) (they were two Dimitris in the group) were not addressed by their first name at all throughout the seven modern Greek lessons I observed.

Overall the modern Greek teacher directed more reprimand at boys for both their work and their behaviour. Girls were reprimanded a total of eight times mainly for giving wrong answers or not giving answers at all. Boys were reprimanded a total of thirty-two times, mainly for misbehaving (chatting, laughing, daydreaming). Girls were reprimanded only twice for misbehaving whereas boys were reprimanded twenty-three times for misbehaving. The names of most of the students who were reprimanded, were recorded. Alexandra was reprimanded twice for not giving answers. Margarita and Eudokia once each for not giving answers. Evagelia was reprimanded once for giving a wrong answer and Tonia once for misbehaving. From the boys: Michalis was reprimanded most, a total of ten times, Dimitris a total of four times, and Apostolis a total of five times.

Throughout the seven lessons the modern Greek teacher did not praise the students of B3 a lot. There are no important differences in the amount of praise that girls and boys received. In total girls were praised three times and boys four times. Most of the teacher's praise was directed at Thanasis (male). He was praised a total of three times.

So although the teacher tried to motivate girls and to make them participate, by directing questions to them, by asking them to read their homework and by asking them to express their views about some issues boys managed to participate more than girls in four out of the seven lessons and also to attract the teacher's attention. This could be related to the fact that boys reacted very fast to the questions of the teacher or the fact that some boys were very impatient to say what they believed and they

would not raise their hand or ask for permission to speak. The teacher did not stop or tell off the boys and the girls who called out answers, probably because she meant to have a free discussion with her students. Based on the names I recorded, the modern Greek teacher worked more with students who were good or at least they were not or too negative to participate in the lesson, but she also tried to give a chance to students who were not good and talkative, such as Alexandra. In addition to that, boys were more naughty than girls and by causing disruption they managed to attract the teacher's attention. Michalis, Dimitris, Apostolis, Giorgos (all male) were probably the most noisy students in the group. Girls were quieter than boys but there is no guarantee that they were more interested in the lesson or that they were always paying attention.

It is also worth discussing some other points which drew my attention during some lessons. In the first lesson the teacher did not praise a male student who answered a difficult question. The teacher did not use to praise students a lot, but one would expect that for such a question which had not been successfully answered by two female students, the boy would get praise. She also asked two girls to explain their answers and she motivated them to think more about their answers and talk more about them, which is something that did not ever occur with any male students. In the second lesson the teacher reprimanded the male students who had not done their homework by shouting at them but she did not reprimand the girls who admitted not having done their homework. In lesson four the teacher did not reprimand any female students though there were two girls, Antonia and Elena who did not answer the teacher's questions. Both of them were not bad students. In the same lesson a male student was also not reprimanded for not answering a question. In lesson five the teacher did not reprimand one female and one male student who had not done their homework. She also helped Antonia to answer a question but she did not help Dimitris who had problems with a question. In lesson six the teacher gave a second chance to two girls who had difficulties but not to a boy who could not answer the teacher's question. Perhaps the teacher had already lost her patience with the students who were incapable of concentrating because the end of the school year and the beginning of summer were approaching. These incidents suggest that the teacher was slightly more lenient with girls. Perhaps the teacher felt that she had to be stricter with the boys who

were less well behaved than the girls and who were noisier and seemed to concentrate less.

The physics teacher

Contextual information

The physics textbook was divided in thematic units. The textbook consisted of four different chapters: A: Mechanics of Solid bodies, B: Mechanics of Liquid Bodies, C: Heat and D: Optics. In total there were forty-seven units in the textbook which contained themes related to one of the general chapters mentioned earlier. Every unit contained pictures and instructions for performing experiments. At the end of every unit there were also comprehension questions or problems that the teacher could give to the students as homework. Physics teachers were supposed to teach the units in order but they were not specific instructions for teaching every unit (Ministry of Education and Religions, 1997-98.)

All the physics lessons took place in the chemistry laboratory which was on the ground floor of the school and was very well equipped. It consisted of a very big room with desks and appliances for experiments. There was also another room which contained substances for chemical experiments and teaching material for biology lessons. The physics teacher was responsible for the use and the safety of the laboratory.

The teacher had a desk in the front of the classroom which she hardly ever used because she used to walk in the class and move from the front to the back of the classroom. She also used to make use of many instruments, or appliances or to demonstrate experiments with the help of the students or to show transparencies in the projector.

The students sat in rows all facing the teacher's desk and the board. They changed seats in every lesson and usually sat next to a classmate of the same sex. They seemed to be on good terms with the physics teacher. In general, they were quiet and respectful. Also the students never expressed any negative comments or complaints about their teacher, during my presence in the classroom or during my interactions with the students in the courtyard, during the breaks or during other events (excursions, exhibitions, etc.).

Lesson 1

When I started observing physics lessons with group B3, the students were working on the second chapter of the textbook. The first lesson I observed was about Hydrostatic Pressure and manometers. The teacher had already taught this unit but she spent most of the time asking questions about that in order to check if the students had comprehended and if they had studied the important concepts of this unit. It was only at the end of the lesson that the teacher proceeded to the next unit: 'The Principle of Archimedes -Applications'.

The lesson can be divided into four sections: 1. the questions that the teacher asked in order to check if the students had comprehended the previous unit 2. the questions that were included in the textbook and that the children had for homework 3. The problems that were included at the end of the unit in the textbook and that the students had for homework and 4. Information about the next lesson: 'The Principal of Archimedes'.

In this lesson girls contributed a total of twenty-six times and boys a total of twenty-five times. Boys answered more of the questions of the physics teacher but only girls participated in solving the problems of the text book. There were no important differences in the number of the textbook questions that girls and boys answered or in the participation of girls and boys in the presentation of the new unit. Examples of the students' contributions are given below.

T: What is Hydrostatic Pressure?

F: Pressure which is produced by the weight of a liquid body.

T: Very good. How shall we write the formula?

M: $P_{hydrostatic} = B/P$.

T: What is this P?

F: It's the surface of the bottom.

T: I have a bowl of water and I want to sink something in the water.

M: Madam, it will come up.

T: I didn't manage to finish my sentence and ... (She smiles because she likes the fact that the boy said something which was correct.) *What will happen to the body?*

M: It will receive a force towards the surface.

M (the same boy): Buoyancy is a power towards the top.

T: Bravo!

In this lesson the students did not ask for instructions or explanations except for one girl who asked the teacher a question.

F: What will you try to sink in the water Madam? (The teacher is going to demonstrate an experiment.)

T: Well, not a stone.

The teacher helped a boy who had difficulties in answering a question from the textbook. No similar situation occurred with any of the girls. Girls did not seem to have any problems in answering questions or solving problems.

The teacher directed one question to a girl and seven questions to boys. Only one of the boys to whom the teacher directed questions, gave an answer, which was wrong. The rest did not answer at all, probably because they did not know the answers or perhaps because they were not confident. None of these boys were reprimanded for not giving answers.

The physics teacher called on students by looking at them. She addressed by his first name only one male student, Dimitris.

T: With what instruments do we measure the Pressure? (The teacher looks at a male student and expects an answer. The boy does not answer.)

T: You know it but you don't remember it now.

T: What can we understand from this experiment? (The teacher looks at another male student and expects an answer but the boy remained silent. Finally a female student answers the question.)

F: The Hydrostatic Pressure is proportional to the weight.

T: What else?

F: Density.

T: What can you observe Dimitris?

Dimitris: I don't know.

F: That when the density of the liquid is increased then the Hydrostatic Pressure is increased as well.

The physics teacher reprimanded girls twice and boys five times. She reprimanded one female and one male student for their behaviour during the lesson. She also reprimanded another female and three male students for not having done their homework and a male student for his work. Examples are given below.

T: Pay attention now! (The physics teacher shouts at a boy who was chatting. She is a bit angry.)

T: Why haven't you written? (She says to a girl in a sharp strict manner.)

T: You haven't spoken at all. You haven't written. Why my child? (She raises her voice when she speaks to this boy.)

T: You haven't done your homework. Why? (She is really cross when she is saying this to two boys.)

The teacher praised three girls four times, one for answering a question related to the previous lesson, one for answering correctly one of the questions of the textbook that the students had for homework and then for giving explanations for her answer and one for solving a problem that the students had for homework. Only one boy was praised for his contribution during the presentation of the new lesson.

In this lesson boys answered more of the teacher's questions about the previous lesson but girls answered more of the questions of the textbook and solved more problems. Not all the problems were solved though. In total girls and boys contributed nearly the same number of times. The teacher though directed more questions to male students. She also reprimanded boys more and praised girls more, but the differences are small. It is interesting though that the teacher did not reprimand five boys who did not answer

her questions whereas she reprimanded the only girl who admitted not having done her homework. Perhaps because it was the first lesson that I observed, the teacher felt uncomfortable to reprimand many of her students and perhaps she thought that she and her students should make a good impression.

Lesson 2

The second lesson was about the Principle of Archimedes. The teacher did not complete her presentation last time so she asked the students to read about the Principle of Archimedes at home. The teacher asked the students questions and demonstrated two experiments related to the Principal of Archimedes. The students spent a lot of time writing down important information shown in the transparencies that the teacher presented. After the presentation of the new unit the students answered the questions of the textbook orally.

As a result of these activities the students did not speak as much as in the previous lesson. Girls contributed to the lesson eleven times and boys seven times. Examples are given below.

T: Let's remember some things now. What is the course of buoyancy?

F: Ascending.

T: Very good. What is buoyancy?

M: A power with an ascending course which the liquids have on things that are sunk in them.

T: Very good. How do we measure buoyancy?

F: In Newton.

Girls answered questions seven times and they also asked the teacher questions three times. Boys answered questions four times and asked the teacher questions only once. Also two boys and one girl volunteered to help the teacher with the demonstration of the experiments. Examples are given below.

M: Is there buoyancy in the space?

T: Other laws apply there.

F: Things are different there?

T: Yes.

In this lesson the physics teacher did not call on any individual students either by looking at them or by addressing them by their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks. The physics teacher initiated one interaction with a boy, Dimitris, in order to ask him to sit closer to the board so that he could see better.

The teacher praised two girls and one boy for their answers. She reprimanded two boys one for his behaviour and the other one for his answer. The physics teacher did not reprimand any girls in this lesson. Examples are given below.

T: What's the matter Dimitris? Don't do that. You look fine. (He is doing something on his face, his spots.)

T: What do we call the power, which does not allow us to sink a body in the water?

M: Buoyancy.

T: Don't answer like that, with one word only. Tell us more. (In the end the teacher answers the question herself.) It's a vertical force with an ascending course.

In this lesson girls contributed more times than boys. There were no important differences in the amount of reprimand and praise that girls and boys received.

Lesson 3

The students had to study 'Buoyancy' and to answer ten questions and three problems from the text book. First the teacher asked the students questions in order to check if they had comprehended the concepts discussed in the previous lesson and then some students answered the questions and solved the problems that they had for homework. In this lesson the participation of girls is higher than the participation of boys. In total girls contributed twenty-one times and boys contributed thirteen times. Girls answered seven of the teacher's questions and boys nine. Some examples are given below.

T: How do we estimate buoyancy? (The teacher looks at a girl and expects an answer, but the girl does not respond.)

F (another girl): Newton.

T: Yes, but this is the unit.

F: Buoyancy is equal with the weight of the liquid.

T: Very close.

M: It is equal with the weight of the liquid which is displaced by a body.

T: Very, very good!

As far as the questions of the textbook are concerned girls contributed ten times and boys only three. Then two girls read the first two problems of the textbook and they also gave their solutions. Then a boy started reading the third problem but he did not have time to solve it because the bell rang.

The teacher directed questions to girls three times and to boys eight times. The physics teacher called on all the students by looking at them, except for a male student, Petros. Petros was the only student who was addressed by his first name in order to answer one of the teacher's question. Examples are given below.

T: What did you have to study for today Petros?

Petros: He does not answer.

Dimitris (male): Lesson 23: 'The Principle of Archimedes'.

T: What is buoyancy? (The teacher looks at Dimitris and expects an answer.)

Dimitris: Well, it's a force eh that ... (He has problems with the answer.)

T: He will tell us later.

T: Can you please answer the first question? (She asks a female student.)

F: Madam, I've left my copybook at home.

T: Do not do it again! (in a very strict manner)

F: What do we call the force that does not allow us to sink a ball in the water?

Buoyancy.

T: Very, very good! The second one, you. (The teacher asks a male student.)

M: I've left my copybook at home Madam.

T: Why?

What is interesting in this lesson is the teacher's reaction to the difficulty of Dimitris to answer her question. She did not reprimand him, she was patient with him and either she believed that he knew the answer and he could remember it later or she just let him get away with it. We must also pay attention to the higher number of questions which the physics teacher directed to boys and to the teacher's reaction to girls and boys who had not studied. In total boys were asked seven times to contribute to the lesson (to answer the teacher's or the textbook's questions), and they did not, either because they had not studied or because they had forgotten their exercise copybooks at home. The teacher did not reprimand any of these boys. She only asked one boy why he had forgotten his copybook at home. But the physics teacher reprimanded one out of the two girls who did not answer questions (see above). The teacher also reprimanded one boy and one girl for not paying attention and chatting. Examples are given below.

T: Are you painting Apostolis? (She says to a male student.)

T: Stop chatting! (She says to a female student.)

In this lesson girls were praised five times for their correct answers and boys six times. Although the physics teacher directed more questions to boys, girls contributed more times. Girls' higher participation in this lesson might be related to the fact that many of the boys to whom the physics teacher directed questions did not reply.

Lesson 4

The fourth lesson I observed was focused on the presentation of the subject: 'Flux of Liquids-Connected Vessels'. The students did not have any homework. This lesson can be divided in two sections, the first one is focused on the presentation of the new concepts and the second on checking the comprehension of these concepts by using the questions of the textbook. There are not important differences in the participation of girls and boys in this lesson. In total girls and boys contributed eight times each.

Examples are given below.

T: Which of the two Hydrostatic Pressures is higher? (The teacher shows two connected vessels to the children.)

F: In the first vessel the Pressure is higher.

T: Yes, why?

F (the same girl): Because the vessel contains more water.

In the first section of the lesson three girls contributed four times and three boys spoke three times. All of these students answered questions except for one girl who asked the teacher to tell her what was written on the transparency because she could not see very clearly and one boy who asked the teacher the following question:

M: Madam, what if the connected vessels had a different shape? (He means not like the ones that the teacher used for demonstration.)

T: Nothing would change.

In the second part of the lesson four girls answered four questions. The answer to the last question was not correct but the bell rang and the teacher did not have time to comment on the girl's mistake. Three boys answered four questions. The same boy, Dimitris answered two questions and another boy, Michalis, asked the teacher to explain a question from the textbook. The teacher very willingly repeated and explained the answer to this question. In this lesson the teacher directed only one question to a male student, Dimitris, whom she addressed by his first name.

In this lesson the teacher reprimanded boys three times. One boy was reprimanded for forgetting his copybook at home and two other boys for misbehaving. Examples are given below.

T: Don't forget your copybook again! (She says to a male student. The children did not have any homework for this lesson but they should always bring their copybooks to school.)

T: Be quiet!

M: Madam, I wasn't laughing. It was the boy who sits next to me.

T: You too, stop it at once.

The teacher praised girls for their answers twice. Examples are given below.

T: Now I am going to open the pivot and what will happen?

F: Both of the vessels will have the same amount of water.

T: Very good! The Hydrostatic Pressure is the same in the two vessels. Why?

T: The forces in drawing (a) should be?

F: Equal.

T: Very good!

In this lessons the participation of girls and boys was equal. Girls were not reprimanded and boys were not praised. Only one student (male) was asked to answer a questions. The rest of the students called out answers or volunteered.

Lesson 5

This lesson could be divided in two parts. In the first part of the lesson the teacher asked the students to answer her own questions, to answer the questions of the textbook and to solve the problems that they had for homework. The purpose of the teacher was to see how the students would perform and to check if they had comprehended the concepts presented in the previous lesson. The second part was focused on the presentation of the unit: 'Atmospheric Pressure'.

In total girls contributed sixteen times and boys contributed eleven times. Girls answered more of the teacher's questions and also more of the questions of the textbook. The problems that the students had for homework were solved by two girls. They were the only ones in group B3 who had found the solutions although the problems were not difficult. Probably because the end of the academic year was approaching and it was also spring time, most of the children did not feel like working. The teacher helped the first girl a little bit. I suppose it was a kind of reward because she had managed to solve the problem. The second girl worked very independently. Some examples of the students' contributions are given below.

T: What is flux?

F: It's the movement of a liquid towards a certain direction.

T: What should happen in order to have flux?

F: There should be a difference of pressure.

T: When does flux stop?

M: When the pressure in two vessels becomes the same.

T: Why?

M.(the same boy): When there isn't a difference between the pressures there is no force which pushed the liquid.

In the last part of the lesson, the presentation of the new unit, boys contributed a little bit more than girls and more than they contributed in the other parts of the lesson. Girls spoke three times and boys spoke five times. Examples of the students' contributions in the presentation of the new unit are given below.

T: Who talked about Atmospheric Pressure?

T: Who estimated the Atmospheric Pressure?

M: Toricelli!

T: Yes, very good!

This answer was related to knowledge which was not known to most of the children. It was not included in their homework and it was not mentioned before to the students. But the teacher was very enthusiastic when the boy gave her the correct answer. In total the teacher praised girls four times and boys twice. Girls were praised for giving correct answers either to the teacher's questions or to the questions of the textbook. One boy was praised for answering correctly one of the questions of the textbook and another for his contribution to the presentation of the new lesson.

The physics teacher reprimanded two boys for not paying attention, but she did it in such a way that it was obvious that she liked those boys a lot. The teacher had never reprimanded any female students in the same friendly and soft way. While Antonia (female) was writing on the board the solution of the problem the teacher said to a male student: 'Come one' with a smile on her face. The boy was chatting instead of

taking notes. The teacher gave him a very friendly tap on the shoulder. Then when the students were supposed to write down questions for homework one of the boys was not taking notes and the teacher said: 'Leuteris, your mind is not on physics.' (The teacher smiled at him.) The teacher did not reprimand three boys and one girl who had not done their homework.

Although the participation of girls was higher in this lesson the teacher directed more questions to boys than to girls. In total she directed two questions to girls and eight to boys. The teacher called on the students by looking at them except from one girl, Antonia, and two boys, Stavros and Dimitris, whom she addressed by their first name in order to answer questions. Examples are given below.

T: Dimitris, have you written down the questions?

Dimitris: Yes, all of them.

T: You, the next question. (She looks at a female student.)

T: We have to arrange two groups one of boys and one of girls. I'd like you to prepare some experiments at home.

M: That's very nice.

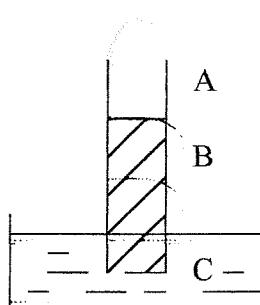
T: You like that, don't you? (She smiles at that boy.)

In this lesson girls made more contributions than boys. The physics teacher directed more questions at boys. Girls were not reprimanded at all in this lesson and boys were praised a little bit more than girls. Two things call for attention in this lesson, first the way the physics teacher reprimanded the male students and second the following incident at the end of the lesson. The physics teacher used a drawing on the board in order to make the concept of the Atmospheric Pressure clearer to her students. Then she asked the following questions.

T: Is there Pressure at points A and B in the tube? (The tube is full of mercury and the ball contains water.)

F: Yes.

T: What will happen at points A, B, C if we open a hole at point A?



At this point a female student started describing what would happen but she was interrupted by a male student who answered the question himself. The teacher did not interfere at all at this point. The teacher did not reprimand the boy and the girl lost her chance to contribute to the lesson. A similar incident did not occur in any of the previous lessons I observed with the physics teacher.

Lesson 6

This lesson was focused again on the Atmospheric Pressure. The teacher had appointed two teams (one consisted of two female students and the second one of two male students) and two individual girls for the presentation of four experiments altogether. Also the students answered the questions of the textbook and solved problems which they had for homework. A short part of the lesson was focused on a new unit: 'The qualities of the gases'.

In total girls' contributions were twenty and boys' contributions were fourteen. Girls answered nine of the teacher's questions and boys' answered seven. Examples are given below.

The female group presented the first experiment.

F: We put a cellophane on the opening of a funnel and then we suck the air from the funnel. (Another girl is demonstrating.)

T: What forces does the funnel receive?

F: The same inside and outside.

T: What happened when we sack the air?

F: We observe that the cellophane is hollowing.

Then the male team demonstrated the second experiment.

M: If we press an elastic cupping on a window then it looks as if the cupping is stuck on the window. If we try to pull it we realise that it is difficult to remove it. (Another boy is demonstrating.)

T: Why is the cupping stuck on the window?

M: Because of the Atmospheric Pressure.

Then four female and four male students answered the eight questions of the textbook and then Antonia (female) solved on the board the only problem that the students had for homework. In the presentation of the new subject: 'The qualities of the gases' girls made two contributions and boys one. Examples of the students' contributions are given below.

T: What are the common characteristics of gases and liquids?

F: They don't have shape.

T: Very good!

F: They cause buoyancy to the bodies that are in them.

M: How are the gases heated?

T: She started explaining but the bell rang.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks three times to girls and five times to boys. Girls and boys were addressed by their first name twice in order to answer questions. Examples are given below.

T: Why the force of the air does not distort the membrane when we don't sack the air from the funnel? (The teacher looks at a boy and she expects an answer. He does not answer.)

T: Elena (female), please bring that straw for the next experiment.

T: What have I told you to bring for this experiment? (She asks another girl.)

F: Nothing.

T: Can you two, (boys), bring a pump and a syringe next week?

Three boys did not manage to answer questions that were directed to them but they were not reprimanded. All the girls answered the teacher's questions but there was one girl who had not solved the problems that the students had for homework and one who had left her copybook at home. The teacher reacted in a very strict way to the second girl: 'You shouldn't forget at your age!' The teacher also reprimanded two boys.

Dimitris was reprimanded twice. Another boy was reprimanded for not paying attention to what his classmate was writing on the board (the solution of the problem).

Examples are given below.

T: Dimitris, this has been already mentioned. (He gave an answer which had already been mentioned by one of his classmates.) Please, you are very restless today!

T: Dimitris, do not disturb her! (He is annoying a female student who is sitting in front of him. The physics teacher shouts at him.)

The teacher's praise was directed at girls three times and at boys twice. Examples are given below.

T: Very well! I see that here we have talents. I should take you to the laboratory of the University! (The teacher's praise is directed at a girl who demonstrated an experiment.)

T: Antonia (female) has been working very hard, so for the third term I am going to give her a very good mark. (Antonia is solving a problem on the board.)

T: Where exactly shall we exercise force in order to remove the cupping from the window?

M: At the centre.

T: Very good!

In this lesson girls contributed more times. The differences in the number of questions or tasks that the physics teacher assigned to girls and boys and also in the amount of reprimand and praise she directed at girls and boys are small. More boys than girls were not reprimanded for not having done their homework or for not answering questions although the differences are not great again. Also the following incident that happened at the end of the lesson calls for attention. The teacher asked the students if they knew any different characteristics between gases and liquids. None of the students volunteered to answer the question except for a girl who raised her hand but the teacher did not give her permission to speak and she answered the question herself. I remember very well that the teacher noticed the girl. Perhaps she thought that the girl would not know the correct answer or she was running out of time and she preferred to get on with it.

Lesson 7

In this lesson the physics teacher asked the students questions about the characteristics of gases and liquids and she also asked some students to answer the questions of the textbook that the students had for homework. Then she presented a new unit: 'Molecular Forces'. The children were supposed to have some idea of this concept because the teacher had asked them to study the relevant unit at home.

In total girls contributed ten times and boys contributed fifteen times. Girls contributed by answering questions five times and boys ten times. Also one girl and one boy demonstrated the same experiment. Elena, demonstrated an experiment that the teacher had asked her to prepare at home. Thanasis was also asked to demonstrate the same experiment although there was nothing wrong with Elena's presentation. Perhaps the physics teacher wanted to make the students pay special attention to this experiment or perhaps she thought that Thanasis, who was the best student (interview, May 1998), could do better than Elena. Examples of the students' contributions are given below.

T: What are the common characteristics between gases and liquids?

F: Buoyancy.

M: They have no shape.

F: They exercise pressures on the walls of vessels.

T: The differences?

M: Liquids have no specific volume, gases don't.

During the presentation of the new unit boys answered two of the teacher's questions and they also asked the teacher two questions. Examples are given below.

T: What kind of forces have we got here? (The teacher shows some drops of water in her palm.)

M: Forces of connection.

T: What kind of forces have we got here? (The teacher shows a sheet of the textbook)

M: Forces of cohesion.

Girls answered no questions but three girls asked the teacher for explanations and one girl read the instructions of an experiment that was assigned for homework, to a team which consisted of two more girls and a boy. Although it should be expected from the students to have questions because the concepts had not been elaborated in the previous lesson the teacher, who in this lesson explained the concepts 'pulling and repulsive forces', found it peculiar that a student had not understood the difference between the two.

F: Madam, how are we going to distinguish between the pulling and the repulsive forces?

T: But the example was absolutely clear. (Then she explained the differences again.)

But the teacher was not disappointed when a male student asked her:

M: Madam, are these molecular forces?

T: Yes.

The teacher had already explained that. The teacher though never refused to explain something to any of her students. So later when a girl, who had to prepare an

experiment for next time said that she was not clear with what she had to do, the teacher explained it to her.

The physics teacher directed questions or assigned tasks to girls a total of five times and a total of three times to boys. For instance she asked four girls and one boy to prepare an experiment for the next lesson. She also tried to motivate a girl who had immigrated to Greece and had difficulties with the language: 'Please try to write. I am sure that you can!'. Only Thanasis was addressed by his first name in order to perform a task.

In total the teacher reprimanded girls once and boys seven times. She reprimanded Antonia (female), Dimitris and Michalis (both male) for not paying attention and also another boy who was chatting. She asked him to sit somewhere else. The same boy, Dimitris was reprimanded again later. But this time the physics teacher was very friendly with Dimitris and once again she showed that she really liked him: 'Dimitris wake up!' (she said in a very nice way and she also smiled at him). The teacher was also very nice to Spyros (male) who had forgotten to bring a pump which was necessary for an experiment.

T: Who said that he was going to bring a bicycle's pump?

T: (Spyros raises his hand but he does not have the pump with him.) Spyros, why have you forgotten it? I do appreciate your honesty but you should have made a note somewhere.

Three other boys were reprimanded for the way they worked during the lesson.

T: I don't like this. (She says to a boy, his diagram is not good.)

T: This is not what I did. (She says to another boy, his diagram is not good.)

T: Dimitris, you are not listening and you are making a great mistake! First we listen and then we write! (The teacher is angry and she turns off the projector.)

In this lesson girls contributed fewer times than boys. The physics teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys than girls, although the differences were very small. She reprimanded boys more times than girls. None of the students

were praised. The teacher seemed to be more friendly and lenient with boys. Also the following incident calls for attention. When the students began to take notes from the transparencies one boy raised his hand. The teacher did not neglect him and she asked him to wait until she finished with an experiment and the transparencies. Thinking of the incident in the previous lesson when the teacher completely neglected a girl who raised her hand in order to answer a question, I wonder whether the teacher's actions were intentional or unintentional.

Lesson 8

In this lesson the teacher started by quizzing the students about the previous lesson. The students had to study the qualities of the gases and also the molecular forces. For homework they also had to solve two problems and to prepare some experiments. One boy and three girls had to present two experiments related to the tension of the surface.

In this lesson girls contributed nineteen times and boys fifteen times. There were girls and boys who spoke more than once. For instance, Elena (female) contributed four times, she answered questions and she solved one of the problems on the board. Eleni (another girl) contributed twice, she answered one of the teacher's questions and she solved the second problem. Ilyriana answered two of the teacher's questions. Thanasis (male) spoke three times, he read the instructions of the experiments that Spyros (male) and three female students demonstrated and he also answered two of the teacher's questions. Leuteris and Dimitris (both male) also spoke twice.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls ten times and to boys nine times. The teacher addressed three girls (Elena, Eleni and Alexandra) by their first names in order to answer questions, and six boys (Kostas, Dimitris, Apostolis, Leuteris, Thanasis and Stavros) a total of nine times. Examples are given below.

T: Kostas, can you please tell us what the law of Boyle and Mariotte is about?

Kostas: Madam, I haven't studied.

T: Why would you prefer studying in the summer when the temperature is going to be forty degrees? (The teacher says that because if the boy's performance is very low he

will have to study in the summer and take the exams again in September in order to continue to the next year.)

T: You. (The teacher looks at a girl and expects an answer to the same question.)

F: When the temperature of a gas remains stable, then between the volume of the gas and the pressure, there is a relationship of inverse proportion.

T: Elena, what is the meaning of that?

Elena: It means that if the volume is decreased twice the pressure will be increased twice.

T: Eleni, if the volume is decreased by three times what will happen?

Eleni: The pressure will be increased three times.

In this lesson the teacher reprimanded one girl for not having studied and four boys. She reprimanded Kostas and Dimitris for not having done their homework, Leuteris for chatting and not paying attention during the lesson and Apostolis for not paying attention. Examples are given below.

T: Alexandra, forces of cohesion? (She does not answer.)

T: (in a strict and angry manner) You haven't studied! Why?

T: Dimitris, answer the first question of the textbook.

Dimitris: Madam, I forgot to note that we had homework.

T: Sometimes you are not careful! Why? Anyway, can you answer the question? (He does not answer the question.)

T: Leuteris, the only thing you know to do is to chat! (The teacher is really angry.)

T: What are the molecular forces Apostolis?

Apostolis: I don't remember.

T: Concentrate! (At this point the teacher gets really angry because Apostolis has not been paying attention and he seems to be in another world.)

The teacher did not reprimand two boys who had not done their homework, Leuteris and Petros. Leuteris was responsible student and Petros a very polite child according to the physics teacher (interview, May 1998). Perhaps the teacher thought that she had to be more lenient with him. She also did not reprimand Stavros and Apostolis for not

answering her questions (see below). Apostolis was an intelligent student who had a lot of potential but he did not try hard (interview, May 1998). One would expect that the physics teacher would demand more from him. The physics teacher did not reprimand Dimitris for not answering a question. It seems, based on all the physics lessons that I observed that the teacher was really fond of Dimitris.

The teacher praised the female team for the demonstration of an experiment and Eleni for solving the first problem. She also praised one boy for answering correctly one of the questions of the textbook.

Although the differences are not great, girls contributed more in this lesson and were praised more. Boys were reprimanded more than girls but perhaps not as much as they should, having in mind the number of boys who did not contribute to the lesson when asked to. Also boys were addressed by their first names more times than girls although the teacher directed almost the same number of questions to both girls and boys.

One incident at the end of the lesson calls for attention. The physics teacher asked the students to give examples of forces of cohesion. Two girls raised their hands. One would expect that the teacher would give them permission to speak. But the teacher said:

T: What, only two girls know this? What about the boys? Stavros? Apostolis?

Stavros and Apostolis did not answer and Elena and Thanasis gave two examples. In this lesson, although the teacher seemed to be more lenient with boys because she did not reprimand some boys for not giving answers or for not having done their homework, she also gave the impression that she was disappointed with their performance and that she expected more from them.

Lesson 9

In this lesson the physics teacher quizzed the students about the previous lesson, then she asked some students to answer three questions of the textbook that they had for homework and then she proceeded to the presentation of the new unit: 'Heat' which belonged to the third big chapter of the physics textbook: 'Heat and Temperature'.

Girls contributed sixteen times and boys contributed fifteen times. In this lesson the teacher directed eight questions to five girls (Evagelia, Alexandra, Elena, Maria, and Antonia) and eight questions to six boys (Leuteris, Michalis, Thanasis, Dimitris, one with George, Petros and Spyros).

T: What are the capillary phenomena? Who's going to tell us?

Leuteris (He raises his hand.); *We can observe them in tubes.*

T: Tell us more about that.

T: Petros, read the next question please.

T: Thanasis, which are the correct answers here?

The physics teacher addressed three girls (Elena twice, Maria twice and Antonia once) and four boys (Michalis, Thanasis, Dimitris, and Spyros) by their first names in order to answer questions or perform tasks. Examples are given below.

T: I need another student to read the temperature in the second vessel. Come here

Elena.

T: Antonia, are there any more correct answers for question 4?

In total two girls and three boys did not answer the teacher's questions. None of these students were reprimanded by the teacher. The teacher reprimanded two girls (Antonia and Alexandra) for chatting. She reprimanded three boys (Michalis, Stavros, Dimitris) for chatting and two for not paying attention (Spyros and Giorgos). The teacher praised girls and boys for their answers three times each.

In this lesson no important differences occurred in the participation of girls and boys or in the number of questions or tasks that were assigned to girls and boys. Also there were not important differences in the number of times that girls and boys were praised and reprimanded. However, two boys were praised for their answers to easy questions (see below). Perhaps the physics teacher was trying to encourage or motivate these boys or perhaps she was fond of them, especially of Dimitris who seemed to be the teacher's favourite student.

T: I take some water from the tap.

Dimitris: Hot water?

T: Of course not. What does the temperature show?

Dimitris: Whether the body is cold or hot.

T: Very Good. Now Spyros can you come here please? Read the temperature here.

Spyros: 20.

T: Very good.

Also the physics teacher seemed to be very friendly and enthusiastic with Petros.

Towards the end of the lesson, the teacher wanted to show how heat is transferred, so she took Petros' hand, she greeted the student and then she said: 'Thank God for having Petros in the group.'

Lesson 10

In this lesson the teacher focused on quizzing the students in order to check if they had studied and comprehended the previous lesson and then she proceeded to the presentation of the next chapter: 'Dilation'.

In total girls contributed ten times whereas boys spoke thirteen. Some students contributed twice For instance, Spyros, Alexandra and Apostolis. Tonia spoke three times. In the first part of the lesson girls answered two of the teacher's questions and boys answered four. As far as the questions of the textbook are concerned girls answered six and boys answered only two questions.

Only two girls participated in the second part of the lesson, the presentation of the new unit. One of them demonstrated an experiment to the group and the other one answered one of the questions of the textbook. Boys performed more tasks than girls. One boy read an experiment in the textbook, two completed the missing sentences in the experiment, two answered the teacher's questions and two answered two from the questions in the textbook.

In total the teacher directed six questions at girls and eleven at boys. She addressed three girls (Antonia, Tonia and Alexandra) and two boys (Apostolis and Leuteris) by their first names. She also addressed one male student by his surname. The teacher called on the rest of the students by looking at them. Examples are given below.

T: What is 'Temperature' ? (The teacher calls her out by her surname. She does not answer.)

T: We've mentioned that. What is your temperature?

T: Apostolis?

T: Heat? (She looks at a boy and she expects an answer.)

M: Heat is...

T: a type of energy... (She helps him.)

M: which is transferred from a warmer to a colder body when they come in contact..

T: Antonia, how can we estimate the temperature of a body?

Antonia: With thermometers.

T: Now, let's go to the questions. Let's start with Dimitris.

Dimitris: Madam, I don't know which questions we had for homework because I was absent in the previous lesson.

T: Why didn't you ask someone? You were not interested, bad boy! (The teacher smiles at him.)

T: You? (She addresses him by his surname.)

M: I haven't done them.

T: A bad mark. (She means she will give him a bad report. But she smiles at the boy.)

Apostolis?

Apostolis: I haven't written the answers, but I know them.

T: Tell us.

The teacher was not very hard on the male students who had not done their homework or who did not answer her questions. The teacher reprimanded those boys but she was not very strict. Actually she gave the impression that she was dealing with children who she could forgive for negligence. Even her expression on her face was different. When she reprimanded Tonia (a female student) she was not angry but she was

definitely very serious, whereas when she reprimanded the boys she was more sympathetic towards them.

T: Tonia, the next question.

Tonia: I haven't done them.

T: Why do you disappoint me?

In total the teacher reprimanded girls twice and boys three times. All these students were reprimanded for their homework and for not studying enough. The teacher praised one girl and two boys for their answers.

T: Apostolis? What does temperature show?

Apostolis: Temperature tell us how warm or cold a body is.

T: Very, very good.

M: We could say that the temperature of my body is very high because the room is very hot and so heat is transferred.

T: Very good.

In this lesson the participation of boys was a little bit higher than the participation of girls. The teacher directed more questions to boys than to girls. There were not important differences in the number of times that girls and boys were reprimanded or praised. But the teacher seemed to be friendlier and more helpful and lenient with some male students, Apostolis and Dimitris. These two boys were described by the physics teacher as intelligent students who did not try enough (interview, May 1998). The physics teacher did not behave similarly to any girls in all the physics lessons I observed.

Conclusions

The overall participation of girls in the physics lessons was higher than the participation of boys. In the ten lessons I observed girls contributed a total of one hundred and fifty-seven times and boys one hundred and twenty-eight times. Only in two lessons (seven and ten) boys participated a little bit more than girls. Only in one lesson (four) girls and boys contributed equally. In the rest of the lessons (one, two,

three, five, six, eight) girls spoke more than boys but the differences in each lesson are small. In these lessons the participation of girls was higher in the part of the lesson which involved the teacher's questions on the previous lesson and the questions and problems of the textbook that the students had for homework whereas the participation of boys was a little bit higher in the presentation of the new unit, except for lesson six. In the lesson that girls and boys contributed equally there was no homework to be checked by the teacher. In lesson seven, boys contributed more in order to answer questions related to the previous lesson but they contributed equally with girls in the presentation of the new unit. In lesson ten girls answered more questions related to their homework but boys participated more in the presentation of the new unit. The differences though are small.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks a total of thirty-nine times to girls and a total of sixty-one times to boys. The physics teacher in seven out of the ten lessons I observed, directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys. In two lessons (seven and eight) the physics teacher directed more questions to girls than to boys but the differences are small. In lesson nine the teacher directed the same number of questions and tasks to both girls and boys.

Perhaps the physics teacher directed overall more questions and assigned more tasks to boys because she thought that she should motivate boys more than girls. Boys did not seem to be very responsible with their work and perhaps the physics teacher wanted to push them in order to perform better. Evidence suggests that girls were more responsible with their homework. In lessons one, three, eight, nine and ten there were more boys than girls who had not done their homework or more boys than girls who did not answer questions. Of course the teacher did not ask all the girls or the boys of the group so a total of girls and boys who had not studied is not available.

Overall, the physics teacher addressed boys by their first name in order to answer questions and perform tasks more times than girls. Girls were addressed by their first name a total of fifteen times and boys twenty-five times. From the girls, Antonia was called on by her first name a total of five times, Elena a total of four times, and Alexandra and Maria each twice, Eleni and Tonia each were called on by their first

names once. From the boys, Dimitris, was called on by his first name a total of ten times. Thanasis, Leuteris, and Stavros a total of three times, Apostolis twice, and Michalis, Petros, Kostas and Spyros were each called on by their first name only once. There were five female students (Margarita, Katerina, Eudokia, Ilyriana and Evangelia) and only two male students (Giorgos, Dimitris) who were never addressed by their first names in order to answer a question or perform a task

The teacher reprimanded boys more than girls for both their work and their behaviour. The teacher reprimanded girls a total of twelve times and boys a total of thirty-four times. She reprimanded boys more than girls in all the lessons except for lesson three. The differences in each lesson are not big though. In total the physics teacher reprimanded girls six times and boys twenty-one times, for things such as chatting, laughing or not paying attention. She reprimanded girls a total of six times and boys a total of thirteen times for not having done their homework or for not giving answers. In lessons seven, eight, nine and ten most of the names of the students who were reprimanded, were recorded. Antonia and Alexandra (both female), Michalis, Spyros, Apostolis and Giorgos (all male) were reprimanded twice each and Dimitris (male) a total of six times. It is the same Dimitris to whom the teacher directed most of her questions.

Girls and boys received almost the same amount of praise. Girls received a total of twenty-five praise comments and boys a total of twenty-four. Girls and boys were praised for the correct answers to the teacher's questions or the questions of the textbook, the problems and for the experiments that they presented. Two boys but none of the girls were praised for their contributions to the presentation of the new unit. Two boys, Spyros and Dimitris, in lesson nine, were praised for their answers to very easy questions.

Other incidents during the lessons I observed with the physics teacher provide evidence for differential treatment of girls and boys by the physics teacher. One important issue is the fact that in some lessons the teacher did not reprimand some boys who had not done their homework or who could not answer questions. In total girls were not reprimanded twice for not contributing and boys were not reprimanded sixteen times.

In the first lesson, six boys to whom the teacher directed questions or tasks did not reply and they were not reprimanded, whereas the only girl who admitted not having done her homework was reprimanded. In lesson five the teacher did not reprimand three boys and one girl who had not done their homework. In lesson six the teacher did not reprimand three boys who did not answer her questions but she reprimanded one of the two girls who did not contribute to the lesson. In lesson eight the teacher did not reprimand two boys who had not done their homework and two other who did not answer questions, but she did reprimand the only girl who did not answer one of the questions of the teacher.

Apart from that in some cases when the teacher reprimanded some boys she was very friendly and lenient with them. In lesson five the teacher with a smile one her face, gave a friendly tap to one boy who instead of taking notes was chatting and then later with a smile on her face again, she reprimanded another boy who was daydreaming. In lesson seven the teacher was very nice to Dimitris and Spyros (both male). She reprimanded the first one, who was daydreaming with a smile on her face and the second one in a very mild way. In lesson ten she also reprimanded two boys, Dimitris and Leuteris in a very friendly, not really strict way. Similar incidents did not occur with any female students in any of the ten lessons I observed with the physics teacher. The teacher was also very friendly with Dimitris and Petros. The teacher directed many questions or tasks to Dimitris throughout the ten lessons I observed, she gave attention to him and sometimes when he had not studied, the teacher was lenient with him.

The teacher was not lenient when the students were misbehaving but in lesson five she did not reprimand a male student who interrupted his female schoolmate while she was answering a question. Instead she let the boy finish the answer. Although the teacher was always very willing to explain concepts to the students and answer any questions, in one occasion, in lesson seven, when a girl said that she had not understand the differences between pulling and repulsive forces, she gave the impression that the girl should not have had any problems but she did not react in the same way when later a boy was not very clear about the concept of the molecular forces which the teacher had just explained. Three more incidents call for attention. In lesson six the teacher neglected a girl who raised her hand in order to answer a question, whereas in lesson

seven she noticed a male student who raised his hand and she very kindly asked him to wait until she finished with an experiment. Last the teacher seemed disappointed when in lesson eight only two girls and no boys volunteered to answer one question. It might be that the teacher expected more from boys, but in general she was more lenient and friendly with boys than with girls.

The religious education teacher

Contextual information

The religious education textbook for the second year contained historical material, about persons and events (Jesus, his life and his students.) It consisted of forty-eight units. Every unit consisted of the following: title, introduction, text, hermeneutics, questions for analysis, additional material such as illustration and a small synopsis. The title connected the lesson with the previous lessons and it informed the students about the subject of the unit, e.g. 'John, the last prophet and forerunner of Jesus. The text was taken from the New Testimony and it was translated in modern Greek (it was suggested though that the teacher asked the students to bring the Bible with them so that they could read the original text as well.) The hermeneutics gave information about the time that Jesus lived, or explanations of words, phrases or of pictures. The questions aimed at motivating the students emotionally and intellectually. The students were usually asked to find the basic events and persons of the text, to relate things to previous lessons, to understand deeper meanings and to connect what they read with their everyday life. A discussion should start between the students and the teacher should encourage the students to participate. The instructions that the Ministry of Education provided suggested some ways of checking orally if the students studied at home, such as asking the students the questions of the book or asking the students to narrate the text or writing an essay at home (Ministry of Education and Religions, 1997-97).

The religious education lessons took place in B3's classroom. Most of the time the religious education teacher sat at her desk and she did not move inside the classroom unlike the modern Greek teacher and the physics teacher. The students sat in rows all facing the teacher and the board. The students changed sits in almost every lesson and they usually sat next to a classmate of the same sex.

The religious education teacher was generally a calm person who seemed to put up with noisy students. In her lessons students were more noisy than they were in the modern Greek and physics lessons and they used to call out answers many times and to speak all the same time which made observing and taking notes a very difficult job. The students were never rude to this teacher and they never expressed any negative

comments about her during class or during the interactions I had with the students throughout my field work (diary, May 1998).

Lesson 1

The teacher started the lesson by asking the students questions in order to check if they had studied the previous unit: 'The people who will consist the new world'. Then the teacher proceeded to the next unit: 'If the rich are left out of the new world it is because of their self-sufficiency and self-complacency'. The presentation of the new lesson started by reading and translating extracts from the Holy Bible. Then the teacher asked the students comprehension questions.

Girls contributed only eleven times whereas boys contributed thirty times. Obviously most of the boys contributed more than once. Boys contributed more by answering the questions of the teacher about the previous lesson but they contributed a lot more than girls in the presentation of the new unit. Girls contributed mainly by answering the teacher' questions. Boys contributed by answering questions, by reading extracts from the Bible, by asking the teacher questions or instructions and by translating parts in the Bible. Girls did not ask questions and they did not translate any parts of the extract from the Bible. Boys were not asked to translate. Instead they called out their answers, like they did in most cases in this lesson and in most of the religious education lessons. This is probably why boys contributions were more than the contributions of girls in this lesson. Below are some examples of the students' contributions.

T: What did we talk about in the previous lesson, Apostolis (male)?

M: About 'makarismous'.

T: What is the meaning of that? (The teacher asks the same boy.)

M: I don't know.

T: Apostolis, what are the 'makarismoi' about? ('Makarismoi' are phrases which start with the word 'makarioi' which in Greek means happy. In this unit there was a reference to a text from Mathew which defines who is happy according to Jesus.)

Apostolis: I don't know.

T: (The teacher looks at a female student now and expects an answer.)

F: Happy are the people who are members of the kingdom of God.

F: The poor and the people who have been through a lot.

M: Wasn't Lazarus rich?

T: Now unit 29. 'If the rich are left out of the new world is because of the self-sufficiency and self-complacency'. Write on top of the title the following: 'Jesus did not do a theoretical analysis, he did not condemn wealth and he was not a social reformer'.

M: What is the meaning of that? (The teacher did not answer this question. She came to that later on.)

M: Hang on a minute. I didn't manage to write all of it.

T: He said though that there is a danger in being rich. Let's read, Matthew 19, 16-26.

The teacher reads and translates from the Bible. When she finishes she asks questions.

T: What does Jesus mean when he says that those who are well fed now, will starve in the future?

M: That those people will not be saved.

T: Rich people who do not give, deny God! Read the last paragraph page 103 from the textbook. (The teacher asks a female student to read and when the student finishes, the teacher asks a question.)

T: What does every individual should do in order to discover the kingdom of God: To give everything he owns?

M: No, not necessarily.

T: Who was saved in the end?

M: The man who gave all his belongings to the poor.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls three times and to boys seven times. The teacher called on most of these students by looking at them. She addressed only one girl (Maria) and one boy (Apostolis) by their first name in order to direct questions or assign tasks to them. Some examples are given below.

T: 'It's easier for a camel to go through the hole of the needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God!' Why did Jesus say that, Maria? (She does not answer and then the teacher asks another girl who does not answer as well.)

As far as reprimand and praise are concerned the teacher did not praise any of the students but she reprimanded one girl and three boys for misbehaving. Examples follow.

T: Rich people who do not give, deny God! Read the last paragraph , page 103 from the textbook. (The teacher says to a female student but the girl is laughing.)

T: What is going on? Is Apostolis tickling you? (The teacher is angry.)

T (she says to a boy): Get rid of the gum! You are chewing as if you were a goat. If you were more discreet I wouldn't mind!

T (to another male student now): Stop it! (The teacher is angry because the boy was chatting.) Do you know what we are talking about?

M: Yes, about the poor.

T: What poor? (The teacher is angry.) The people who are poor intellectually.

T: Dimitris (male) close your book! (The teacher reprimands Dimitris because while she is reading from the Bible he is reading the translation in the textbook, whereas the students are expected to try to understand the original text without help.)

In this lesson boys contributed a lot more than girls. The religious education teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys. No differences occurred in the number of times that girls and boys were addressed by the religious education teacher in order to answer questions or perform tasks. Very small differences occurred in the number of times that girls and boys were reprimanded.

Lesson 2

The teacher started the lesson by asking questions in order to check if the students had studied the content of the previous lesson. Then the teacher proceeded to the new unit: 'Everything for the arrival of the new world' which was about a lifestyle appropriate for Christianity. Issues such as charity, fasting and prayer were raised. The teacher read from the Bible the relevant texts and then she asked the students questions about these issues.

Girls contributed only six times and boys twenty-nine times. The big differences occurred in the presentation of the new unit during which girls made five contributions and boys twenty-four. Boys again called out answers whereas girls seemed more reluctant to speak. Girls' and boys' talk was related to the teacher's questions but there were also occasions on which boys asked questions (four times) or made some comments (again four times). Some examples of the students' contributions are given below.

T: In the previous lesson Jesus mentioned a danger in being rich? What was it?

M: That some rich people might become so attached to their wealth that they won't be capable of giving anything.

T: Who's going to tell us the story of the young man who wanted to meet Jesus?

F: She narrates the story of the young man.

T: Why did Jesus say that it is easier for a camel to go through the hole of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God?

F: Because some rich people find it very difficult to give, they think that their wealth is the most important thing in life.

Thanasis (male): Madam, ΙΘ, what number is that?

T: I've told you (she means the whole group) thousands of times. It's number 19. (She reads from the Bible and when she finishes she asks) What do we mean by saying that the kingdom of God will become a reality, will be accomplished?

M: I don't understand.

M: Neither do I. What do you mean? (The teacher gives no explanations. The teacher referred to this question later on.)

M (another boy): Madam, are we allowed to drink alcohol when we fast? Jesus drank wine. (The teacher did not answer this question. The students used to ask many questions, one after the other. Sometimes the religious education teacher did not manage to answer all of the students' questions.)

Petros (male): He is trying to say something but he is being interrupted by another boy.

T: Do not interrupt Petros.

Petros: Madam, I've never fasted in my life. If you swear there is no point in fasting.

T: Well it's true that fasting is not enough. We should be careful with other things as well. Why do you think that we should confess?

The teacher directed one question to one male student. He was the only student who was addressed by his first name in order to answer a question.

T: What is the meaning of the phrase 'not to know your left what the right hand does'?

F: To keep a low profile. Not to show off when you do something good.

T: What do you think Giorgos? What is meant here in the Bible?

Giorgos: That people shouldn't use prayer for showing off.

As far as reprimand and praise are concerned the teacher did not praise any of the students again but she reprimanded three boys. Examples are given below.

T: Dimitris, close your book! (Dimitris is looking at his textbook but the teacher wants the students to guess the meaning and to read it in modern Greek, as it is written in the textbook.)

T: Michalis, you are chatting. You are at the first desk. Do you think I can't hear you?

Michalis: Okay, madam. (He is ashamed.)

In this lesson boys participated a lot more and they were also reprimanded more. The higher participation of boys seems to be related to the boys' high rate of calling out answers and also to the very limited number of questions or tasks that the religious education assigned to students. Perhaps if the teacher had interfered and if she had tried to control the boys, girls might have participated more. The teacher did not use to interfere even when boys stole turns as the following example suggests.

T: What kind of treasures should people try to find? Treasures that exist in heaven and not on earth. Such as?

At this point a girl raises her hand in order to get permission to answer the question. A boy speaks without asking for permission and the teacher says nothing at all. The girl says nothing at all as well.

M: We shouldn't try to save money but instead we should try to show love.

But the teacher interfered when a male student interrupted another male student, Petros.

Lesson 3

The teacher asked the students to copy a prayer from the board, in order to learn it during the Easter vacations. Before the teacher commented on the meaning of the prayer she asked the students to answer questions based on concepts and ideas that were discussed in the previous lesson.

Girls contributed only six times and boys spoke twenty times. Girls made one contribution to the first part of the lesson and boys eight. The big differences occurred in the presentation of the new unit. Examples of the students contributions are given below.

T: What did Jesus say about charity? How shall we do it?

F: We shouldn't show off.

T: 'Our father', (this is how a prayer starts and it is also the name of the prayer in Greek) what other name do we use for this prayer?

M: Sunday prayer.

Girls and boys did not answer only the teacher's questions but they also asked for explanations or permission to perform tasks or made some comments. Tonia for instance wanted to write the prayer on the board and then three girls and one boy asked the teacher to read some parts of the translation of the prayer, because they could not make them out. Examples are given below.

M: Sorry madam, what is that over there? (He cannot make out a word and the teacher helps him.)

M: DEUTE PANTES. Is that what you have written there?

T: Yes.

M: Madam, are you going to check if we have learned the prayer? (The teacher does not reply. Perhaps she thought that she should not answer this question.)

T: Have you written it? (She asks the whole group.)

M: Madam, what about the translation?

T: She dictates the translation.

M: Madam, I've got a picture related to that (he means the world of the dead).

F: Madam, can you repeat the last phrase?

T: She repeats the last phrase and then she continues.

F: Can you repeat madam?

T: She repeats.

M: Okay, madam, we know it. It's so easy to translate it.

M: What time does the service start on Good Friday?

M: Madam, he (one of this classmates) is not writing what you are saying.

M: No, madam, I am writing everything.

The teacher did not reply to any of the boys who made the last four comments.

Although the teacher was helpful with boys and girls when they needed help or explanations as one can notice from the examples above, she did not answer questions which were not related to this lesson and she did not engage in silly arguments which would be a waste of time.

The teacher directed no questions and assigned no tasks to girls but she directed four questions to boys. She addressed three boys, Spyros and Leuteris and Apostolis, by their first name in order to answer questions and she also called on another boy, Dimitris by looking at him. Only Dimitris replied to the teacher's question. Examples are given below.

T: What about fasting? Spyros? (He does not answer.) Leuteris? (He does not answer either.)

M: We should be modest and not to show off. We should be discreet.

T: What about praying?

M: When we are praying we come closer to God.

T: T (Apostolis surname), tell us about praying. (The boy does not answer, the teacher looks at Dimitris and expects an answer)

Dimitris: When we pray we communicate with God, we thank him and we also ask things from him.

As far as reprimand and praise are concerned the teacher praised only one boy and she reprimanded one boy, for laughing and not paying attention. Examples are given below.

T: 'Our father, who you are in the skies'. What do you understand by that?

M: That the kingdom of God is not on earth.

T: Is this related to any of the allegories we have learned?

F: The one about Zacheus?

T: No, not that one.

M: He gives the correct answer.

T: Yes, good, very good, correct.

T: T (Apostolis surname), why are you laughing? (The teacher is angry.) I don't suppose you've studied all these (the content of the previous lesson) (the teacher is being ironic).

In this lesson boys contributed a lot more than girls. The teacher directed questions only to boys. There are no important differences in the number of reprimand and praise comments that the teacher directed to girls and boys.

Lesson 4

In this lesson the teacher and the students worked on the 'The Sunday prayer'. The teacher had started reading the prayer in the previous lesson but she run out of time. After reading and translating the prayer the teacher asked the students questions about the comprehension of the prayer. Then she read an extract from Lucas in the New Testimony and she asked questions related to the story of a rich man. Then she

proceeded to another extract from Matthew, she asked questions about it and before the end of the lesson she asked a male student to read two texts from the textbook related to the themes that were discussed in this lesson.

Girls contributed ten times and boys contributed twelve times. Girls answered questions five times whereas boys answered questions eight times. Some examples are given below.

T: You should know the prayer by heart and you should also know how to translate it.

Now let's go to page 106. (The teacher reads the Sunday prayer which she did not manage to complete in the previous lesson.) What does 'father' mean here?

F: God is our father and all people are our brothers.

T: 'The one in the skies'. Does this phrase show where God is?

F: No, the purpose here is that the glory of God is shown.

T: Do all people accept God as a God nowadays?

M: No, there are atheists and blasphemers.

T: Tell me with this prayer do we ask only for bread and generally for material things?

F: No, we also ask for spiritual things as well.

T: What will God do on the Judgement Day?

F: He will judge us for our actions. If we have been fair, nice and honest.

Except for answering questions, girls and boys contributed by asking questions or commenting on several issues that were arisen during the lesson.

M: Madam, during the Holy Communion do all people use the same spoon?

T: Yes. It is very important to believe in this service, you need to have faith in God.

By taking part in the Holy Communion you eat the body and drink the blood of Jesus

M (the same boy): Well if an old lady is before me I am not going to take part in the Holy Communion.

T: Well, I cannot convince you. What can I say?

F: Madam, I wouldn't take part either if an old woman tried first.

M: Madam, what does 'EN OYRANO' mean?

T: The angels.

F: Madam, do priests take part in the Holy Communion like we do?

T: Yes, of course they do. Let's read from Matthew now.

M: Madam, does the gospel start with the phrase: 'At that time Jesus'?

T: No.

In this lesson the teacher was helpful with both girls and boys and she showed interest in all the questions and ideas of the students. More examples are given below.

T: What is Jesus saying here?

M: That we shouldn't worry about material things.

F: I am always very fussy with what to wear.

F (the same girl, Tonia): What are you saying madam? That we should be poor?

T: No, but we should not be interested only in obtaining more and more material things.

F (the same girl, Tonia): Do you think that we shouldn't judge people from what they wear?

T: What I'm saying is that we shouldn't be superficial.

The teacher assigned a task to one a male student whom she addressed by his first name.

T: Let's read now the texts on page 112 in your textbook. Dimitris, read please!

As far as praise and reprimand are concerned the teacher praised none of the students in this lesson but she reprimanded two male students for misbehaving. One of them was making funny faces and the other one was chatting.

There are no important differences in the number of times that girls and boys contributed to this lesson or in the number of tasks that the religious education teacher assigned to girls and boys.

Lesson 5

The teacher started the lesson by asking questions in order to check if the students had studied the previous lesson. Then she read from the New Testimony the story of the rich man and the poor Lazarus and then she discussed with the students the meaning of this story.

Girls contributed nine times (Tonia contributed five times and Evangelia twice) and boys contributed twelve times (Dimitris spoke three times and Thanasis spoke twice). Girls made four contributions during the first part of the lesson and boys eight. Girls and boys answered questions, asked questions and they also contributed to the translation of an extract from the Bible. Four girls (from the ones that the teacher asked) and five boys had not studied but they were not reprimanded. Some examples of the students' contributions are given below.

Tonia: Are you saying that the rich man's situation would have been different, if he had helped the poor man?

(The teacher talks about life after death and the final Judgement. She is trying to explain these concepts to Tonia.)

Tonia: But madam, I don't think I can understand why this difference exists. Rich people and poor people.

Tonia: What are the words of the prophets?

T: There are laws about how we should live our lives.

In total the teacher directed questions to girls five times and to boys six times. The religious education teacher asked these questions during the first part of the lesson in order to check if the students had studied the previous unit. The teacher addressed by their first name only two girls (Evangelia and Tonia), in order to answer questions. She called on the rest of the students by looking at them. Examples are given below.

T: Who's going to tell us the story of the rich man? P? (Giorgos' surname)

(He does not answer. The teacher asks two other boys who do not answer either.)

T: You haven't studied, have you? (She says this to the two boys but also to the whole group) What about you (another boy)?

T: Okay! (The teacher says that with disappointment because the student did not answer her question.)

M: Madam, why are you asking only the boys? Do you have anything against us?

A boy narrates the story.

T: Tonia?

Tonia: Madam, I haven't studied but I've learned the prayer.

The teacher asks three girls if they know the story. They haven't studied.

T: Evangelia 'if we observe the birds in the sky and the flower what can we understand?'

Evangelia: That God is taking care of them and that we shouldn't worry about everyday things that are not important.

The teacher praised none of the students and she reprimanded only one boy.

T: What is your problem? You were laughing all the time when your schoolmate was telling the story. You are more fool than I thought!

M: Madam, the others were laughing at me!

In this lesson boys contributed more times than girls, although the differences in this lesson were not as strong as they were in the previous religious education lessons.

There were no important differences in the number of questions directed at girls and boys in this lesson.

Lesson 6

The teacher and the students revised units 20-34 of the textbook. The teacher asked questions and so did the students. They also expressed their ideas about issues such as charity and life after death.

Girls' contributions to the lesson were nine and boys' contributions were fifteen. Some examples are given below.

T: What do we call the stories that Jesus said in order to show something?

F: Allegories.

T: What does Jesus want to show us with this story?

M: That we should love the people who are close to us.

T: What do you mean, our neighbours?

M: (the same boy) No, not just them, everybody.

The teacher directed five questions to boys and none with girls. She addressed boys a total of three times (Stavros, Spyros and Petros) by their first names in order to answer questions. Examples are given below.

T: Does anybody remember the story of the nice man from Samaria? Stavros?

(He does not answer.) *What about you?* (She asks another boy who does not answer either.) *Spyros?* (He does not answer.) *Petros?*

The teacher helped Petros who was trying to narrate the story of a good man from Samaria and he was stuck at some point.

The teacher reprimanded three boys for misbehaving. Examples are given below.

T: Why are you laughing?

T: Stavros you are not paying attention. You know nothing about these things and still you are not paying any attention to the revision. What are you going to do at the end of the academic year?

T: Dimitris, stop it! You are very annoying. Let me speak. I'm going to say how many chapters you will have to revise. And for God sake, we have interrupted Petros three times. He is trying to say something.

The teacher praised one girl for her answer but she did not praise any boys.

T: What did Jesus ask after narrating his story?

Elena: He asked who of those three men in the story deserved the love of the man who had been injured and abandoned by robbers.

T: Bravo!

In this lesson boys participated more than girls. The teacher directed questions only to boys. She did not reprimand any girls and she did not praise any boys.

Lesson 7

In this lesson the students asked questions concerning the administration of the Orthodox Church and then the teacher proceeded to a new unit: 'Jesus does miracles, he fights spiritual forces which are against God'. The teacher asked questions about the miracles that Jesus did. Then the teacher read a relevant extract from the Bible. The students contributed to the translation of the text and they also asked questions about possessed people and Satan.

Four girls (Tonia, Ilyriana, Evagelia and Elena) contributed five times and five boys (Thanasis, Dimitris, another Dimitris, Apostolis and Michalis) contributed thirteen times. Some examples of girls' and boys' contributions are given below.

T: Why did Jesus do miracles?

M: Because he wanted to show his love.

M: He wanted to show that faith in God, can save people.

F: In order to show that he was powerful and the only real God. He wanted to prove that, to the Jewish who believed in many Gods.

T: No, the Jewish did not believe in many Gods.

Tonia: Madam, was Jesus the Messiah?

T: Yes. But Jewish people never believed he was. They are still expecting him.

During the lesson the teacher answered some of the students' questions. Some examples follow.

M: What are the 'KLHRIKOI'?

T: The priests. Although there is an archbishop and bishops, in the Greek Orthodox church we are all equal.

M: Madam, the Vatican is a state, isn't it?

T: Yes.

Tonia: Madam, what lesson are we talking about?

The teacher did not answer this question. Perhaps she thought that the student ought to have known the unit they were discussing about. Later, after the teacher had read an extract from the New Testimony some students asked questions but the teacher answered only one of them. A description of the situation follows.

M: Madam, are there people who are possessed?

M: Is Satan afraid of God?

M: Madam, is Satan sent to people by God?

T: No.

These students spoke one after the other without giving any time to the teacher to think or answer. The teacher was actually bombarded by questions from which she managed to answer only the last one. The teacher though did not reprimand the students for not asking for permission to speak. She did not even interfere when some of the students, female and male, who were all at the same time translating phrases from the Bible in modern Greek. During this lesson there were also students who were chatting but the teacher did not reprimand them. The teacher did not praise any of the students but she reprimanded one girl and one boy for misbehaving. She also reprimanded another boy for the question he asked. Examples are given below.

M: Madam, is the archbishop the leader of the state?

T: What are you saying? You are going to drive me mad. He is not, but he is honoured as if he was.

T: Thanasis! (He was chatting.)

T: Tonia, please! (She was laughing and she was annoying Apostolis.)

In this lesson boys contributed more times than girls and also more boys than girls spoke. The teacher did not direct any questions or tasks to her students. She reprimanded one girl and two boys and she did not praise any students.

Lesson 8

More than half of the lesson was dedicated to a discussion about magic, spirits, Satan, and about people who can tell the future. The discussion was based on the story of the possessed man which was also discussed in the previous lesson. The religious education teacher asked questions and then the students asked their own questions about the issue in which they seemed to be very interested. The other half of the lesson was dedicated to the new unit: 'Jesus frees people from diseases'. The teacher read the relevant extract from the Bible and then the teacher and the students commented on the miracle of the paralysed man and they also discussed the connections between mental and physical disease.

Five girls and five boys contributed ten times each. Tonia contributed five times, Evagelia and Elena each twice and Maria only once. Dimitris contributed four times, Thanasis three times, Michalis twice, and Apostolis contributed only once.

Again the teacher directed no questions and assigned no tasks to her students. The teacher did not motivate the students who were silent but she was very willing to answer the questions of the students who showed interest in the subject. Examples of the students' contributions are given below.

T: Who's going to tell us the story of the possessed man?

F: (She volunteers by raising her hand.) He was a man who lived on his own and no one could approach him because he was possessed. Jesus went close to him and the possessed man asked him what he wanted from him.

T: Why did he say that?

F: (the same girl) Because he was possessed. (The girl continues to narrate the story.) Dimitris (male): God is stronger than Satan. (Dimitris interrupted his schoolmate but neither the teacher nor the girl complained. When Dimitris finished the girl continued with the story.)

The teacher did not interfere in order to reprimand Dimitris who interrupted his schoolmate Evagelia while she was narrating the story of the possessed man who was cured by Jesus. This does not necessarily mean that the teacher had a preference for

the male student or that she intentionally discriminated against the female student. I would say that it was the teacher's general attitude not to interfere when the students spoke without permission. During an informal discussion we had (diary, March 1998) she told me that very few students in B3 were interested in religious education so she had no choice but to work only with them or she sometimes had to answer questions herself because the students were not willing to participate. Some of the questions that the students asked follow.

Elena (female) : Madam, if God is stronger than Satan, how come and there are so many groups of people who worship Satan?

Dimitris: Why would some people like to use magic in order to hurt other people?

T: Because they have a sick mind and a sick soul. You should never get involved with these people. Even with those people who tell your fortune, who say that they can read the cards or the stars.

Dimitris: Why doesn't the church do something about all these things?

The teacher did not answer Elena's and one of Dimitris' question. These were the only questions that the teacher did not answer in this lesson. The teacher did not praise any students but she reprimanded three boys for misbehaving. Spyros and Kostas had been chatting and they had been making noise for quite some time. After Dimitris' question the teacher stared at these two boys for some time. She was very angry. The boys stopped and the whole group was very quiet at least temporarily. The teacher also reprimanded Michalis who was daydreaming.

In this lesson girls and boys participated was equal. The teacher did not direct any questions to her students and she did not praise any students. She reprimanded only boys.

Lesson 9

Before this lesson students and teachers had spent almost two hours in church.

Sometimes when there was a special occasion such as before Christmas or Easter the teachers went to church with their students. Preparations and arrangements were

usually made in advance by the principal and the priest of the church which was near the school. When the students returned from the church which was just opposite the school the teacher commented on the service and she explained some things about the ceremony and the procedures. Then the teacher proceeded to a revision which she had started in lesson seven.

In this lesson three girls contributed seven times (Elena spoke four times, Tonia twice, and Ilyriana once) and three boys contributed seven times (Thanasis spoke three times, Dimitris twice and Michalis twice). Most of these students had made many contributions in previous lessons. Some examples of the girls' and boys' contributions are given below.

T: Satan is fighting against good and he prevents us from going to church. Who does Satan disturb?

Michalis: The good Christians.

T: Last time we talked about the paralysed man who was cured. Who's going to tell us the story?

Elena: (Elena was the only student during the whole lesson who raised her hand and asked for permission to answer a question, all the rest of the students spoke without permission.) She told the story.

T: Why did Jesus say to the paralysed man that his sins were forgiven?

Ilyriana: Because Jesus can cure our souls.

T: Is there any connection between physical illness and a ruined soul?

Thanasis: These two are related.

T: We should avoid arguments or having any hard feelings.

Tonia: Madam, sometimes I have arguments with my brother.

The teacher directed questions at male students three times. These students were addressed by their first names.

T: Apostolis, did you understand what was going on when the priest made that wish?

(Apostolis does not answer the question and the teacher explains the symbolic importance of the procedure herself.)

T: Thanasis, do you remember what Jesus said to the Phariseics? (She is talking about the story of the paralysed man who was cured by Jesus.)

Thanasis: Yes. 'Would it have been better to say take your bed and walk?'

T: Dimitris, do you remember the story about that big dinner?

(Dimitris is having problems but the teacher helps him and eventually he completes the story.)

Dimitris: Many Phariseics were invited to that dinner but they did not go.

T: Yes, they did not go because many disabled and blind people were invited as well.

Why? What is the message? That Jesus is here for all people. (Sometimes the religious education teacher would answer her questions herself.)

The teacher reprimanded two boys because they were chatting

T: Stavros, I'm sorry, have I interrupted you? (Stavros is chatting, the teacher is really angry and she wants him to stop at last. She is also being ironic.)

T: Dimitris! (He is chatting as well.)

In this lesson the same number of girls and boys made the same number of contributions. In total, sixteen students did not contribute to the lesson at all. The teacher did not make an effort or took any action in order to increase the participation of more students either female or male. The teacher directed questions only to boys. She reprimanded boys and she did not praise any students.

Lesson 10

The last lesson I observed was focused on a revision of the first eight units of the textbook. The teacher asked the students questions about several issues emerging from the context of these chapters. Girls and boys contributed eleven times each. Examples are given below.

T: Apostolis (male)! (Apostolis is chatting.)

T: What did Lucas underline in the gospel he wrote?

M: He wrote about Zacharias.

T: What? (At this point the teacher is being ironic. She is also surprised by the student's reply which obviously she found completely irrelevant.) *He highlighted the fact that the message of God, that Christianity was global.*

T: How did John prepare people for the birth of Jesus?

Tonia (female): He was eating honey.

T: Really? That was all? (The teacher is being ironic again. She shows with her reaction that the student's answer is wrong and even stupid.)

Thanasis (male): By lecturing people and by baptising them.

The teacher did not direct any of questions to students, so those students who were willing to speak, participated but the rest were neglected. Sometimes even when there were volunteers to answer the questions the teacher would answer them herself. For instance:

T: Matthew, Mark, and Lucas what did they write about?

T: The life of Jesus.

T: Why was the gospel named 'tetramorfo' (meaning that it had four morfes=faces)?

T: Because by that the unity of the four gospels is shown and also the each gospel separately.

Most of the students answers were correct but when an answer was not complete or wrong the teacher would make that clear. Examples are given below.

F: The gospel that Matthew wrote is very much related with the rivals of Jewish people.

T: Yes, but the purpose was not to write historical events but to show the power of the Jesus and his teaching.

T: What was Virgin Mary's contribution?

F: She gave birth to Jesus.

T: Yes, but what sacrifices did she do?

F: She was not married and she was ready to suffer.

T: Why did Jesus appear on earth as a human being?

M: So that people wouldn't get scared of him.

T: No.

T: How did John live?

Dimitris (male): Like a hermit.

T: Only that?

Thanasis: He provoked Herodis and the Pharisaics who used to live in sin and hypocrisy.

The teacher by being ironic, reprimanded one girl and one boy for their answers (see previous page). She also reprimanded two boys (Dimitris and Apostolis) for chatting.

In this lesson the participation of girls and boys was equal. The teacher directed no questions to her students. She did not praise any students but she reprimanded one girl and three boys.

Conclusions

In the ten lessons I observed with the religious education teacher, the participation of boys was a lot higher than the participation of girls. Girls contributed a total of eighty-four times and boys a total of one hundred and sixty-nine times. In the majority of the lessons (lesson one, two, three, four, five, six, and seven) boys contributed more than girls. In most of these lessons the differences were big. In three lessons (eight, nine and ten) the participation of girls and boys was equal but in none of the lessons of the religious education teacher the participation of girls was higher than the participation of boys. In lessons seven, eight and nine the names of all the students who participated were recorded. In these lessons very active students were Evagelia, Elena, Tonia and Ilyriana and from the boys, Thanasis, Dimitris, Apostolis and Michalis. In the lessons that there was homework to be checked boys participated more in both the first part of the lesson, when the religious education teacher was quizzing the students and also in the second part of the lesson, the presentation of the new unit. The higher participation of boys in the religious education lessons might be related to the very few questions and tasks that the teacher assigned to female students and also to the teacher's

unwillingness to find ways in order to discourage boys from calling out answers, so that girls who overall did not seem as confident and talkative as boys could have more opportunities to participate in the religious education lessons.

The teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys than girls. She directed questions and assigned tasks to girls a total of eight times and to boys a total of thirty interactions. In most of the lessons, whether the differences were small or big the teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys than girls. In lessons two, three, four, six, and nine, the teacher directed no questions and assigned no tasks to female students. In lessons seven, eight and ten the teacher directed no questions and assigned no tasks to her students.

Overall, the religious education teacher addressed boys by their first names more times than girls and she also addressed more boys than girls by their first names in order to answer questions or perform tasks. Girls were addressed by their first names a total of three times and boys a total of eleven times. In three lessons (seven, eight and ten) the teacher did not address any students by their first names in order to perform tasks or answer questions. In five lessons (two, three, four, six and nine) the teacher addressed only boys by their first names. In one lesson (six) she addressed only girls by their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks.

In total only ten students were addressed by their first names in order to answer questions or perform tasks. Maria, Evangelia, Tonia, (all three female), Apostolis, Giorgos, Leuteris, Stavros and Thanasis (all male) were all called on by their first names once in order to answer questions or perform tasks. Dimitris, Spyros and Petros (all male) were addressed by their first name twice.

The teacher reprimanded girls a lot less than boys. She reprimanded girls a total of three times, twice for misbehaving and once for a wrong answer. The teacher reprimanded boys a total of twenty-three times, twenty-two times for misbehaving and once for a wrong answer. The names of all the students who were reprimanded were not recorded but based on the existing data I would say that Dimitris (male) was noisy. He was reprimanded a total of five times. Apostolis, Michalis and Stavros (all male)

were reprimanded a total of two times. During the lessons of the religious education teacher there were many students who were chatting but the teacher seemed to be lenient with her students.

In a total of eight lessons (one, two, four, five, seven, eight, nine and ten) the teacher did not direct any praise at any of her students. In the rest two lessons (three and six) she praised one boy and one girl retrospectively for their answers.

In lessons two and eight two important incidents occurred. In lesson two the teacher reprimanded a male student who interrupted Petros (another male student) while he was answering a question. The teacher did not reprimand a male student who called out an answer while a girl was raising her hand in order to ask permission to speak. So the girl lost her chance to speak and the teacher did not interfere at all. Again in lesson eight the teacher did not reprimand Dimitris (male) who interrupted Evagelia (female) while she was narrating a story. The religious education teacher was generally reluctant to initiate interactions with her students and that was probably related to her perceptions of group B3. She thought that only some students were interested in her lesson, and that she should therefore allow those students who were interested to participate or she should answer questions herself. But the incidents described above suggest that in some cases, the teacher might have been more reluctant to reprimand boys than girls. The religious education teacher might have thought that that could cause further disruption in the classroom or perhaps she had not realised that the actions of the boys and her apathy might have had negative consequences for girls, or even for boys.

The English language teacher

Contextual information

The textbook consisted of 11 units: 'People's qualifications', 'Visit to England', 'War and Peace', 'Finding a House', 'Historical Events', 'Strange Incidents', 'Accidents', 'Personal Qualities and Characteristics', 'The World of Sports and Advertisements', 'Changes in Society' and 'Future People and Society'. Every unit contained different language functions and grammar points on which the teacher and the students should work and it was divided in smaller units. Also at the end of each lesson there was a 'check' which contained exercises about the points that the students had been taught.

Group B3 was divided in two smaller groups according to the students' knowledge of English. This was done after a test that the students took at the beginning of the year. The group I observed was the advanced one and consisted of eleven children four girls and seven boys. The other group had a different teacher who was not willing at all to participate in my research project. The two teachers used the same textbook for both the groups but in the advanced group the rhythms of work were faster.

During the lessons the teacher communicated in Greek with the students most of the time. The students used English only when they had to read texts or for grammatical purposes. The textbook was mainly written in English, but there were points where Greek was used, such as the instruction of some exercises.

The lessons were not given in B3 classroom, because the room was occupied by another group during the English lessons. Instead lessons were given in another classroom. The students sat in rows, facing the board and the teacher's desk. The students changed seats in every lesson and in most of the lessons they sat next to a classmate of the same sex. The teacher usually stood by her desk and she did not use to approach students.

The teacher found it very hard to control the group and she strongly believed that the economical and social background of the children was the only reason for the children's misbehaviour and for their low performance and bad command of English (diary, March 1998). The teacher-student relationship was terrible and the situation in

the classroom was unbearable for her, but also for me. I personally found it very difficult to concentrate during the lessons because of the noise and the arguments between the teacher and the students.

Lesson 1

In this lesson the teacher and the students completed unit 4 : 'Finding a House'. The unit consisted of eleven sub-units. The last one was titled: 'Louise's note to Peter'.

Some students read the note and the teacher asked questions about the content of the note. For homework the students had to write a note to Tracey explaining to her, how to go from their house to their aunt's house. Some students read their homework and then the teacher proceeded to the next unit : 'Talking about the past'. The students worked on a history quiz which consisted of two exercises. Then the teacher explained to the students how to form the Past Tense of the verb 'to be'.

In this lesson girls contributed twenty-one times and boys twenty-seven times. Girls and boys answered grammar or vocabulary questions, read part of extracts from the textbook and they also asked vocabulary questions. Also both girls and boys asked questions, made comments and informed the teacher about things that were not related to the content of the lesson. Some examples are given below.

M: Madam, I've done the exercise.

T: Where, on the textbook?

T: Stop chewing a gum! (The teacher says to another boy.)

M: Madam, can we chew candies? (He is being ironic.)

T: Yes, you can.

M: All of us have to write this?

T: Yes, you are not an exception.

M: Madam, why don't you write the sentence on the board?

T: Because we mentioned that in a previous lesson.

M: Madam, I can't see properly.

T: Then go and sit somewhere else T (Apostolis' surname).

M: Madam, where is the sentence you want me to read?

T: Here my child. (She is angry but she shows to him.)

F: Madam, can I put something in the bin? (The teacher does not reply because her attention is drawn by a boy who is chatting.)

F: Madam, can I sit somewhere else? (There is a problem with her desk)

T: Yes, go and sit at the back.

F: What page is the quiz on, madam?

T: Page 64.

F: Why are you writing the pronunciation?

T: Not all of you can remember it.

The English teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls twice and to boys six times. She addressed two girls and one boy by their first names in order to answer questions or perform tasks. Two boys were addressed by their surnames. She called on to the remaining three boys by looking at them. Examples are given below.

T: What is the plural of 'goddess'? *T: Margarita?* (She does not answer.)

T: Tonia, you read your classmate's note. (A boy cannot read the note he wrote at home so the teacher asks Tonia for help.)

T: Read the note on page 60. (The teacher asks a boy.)

T: Read the next sentence in the quiz. (The teacher is looking at a boy.)

T: The last sentence P (Giorgos' surname).

T: Stavros (male), *the simple past tense of the verb 'to be'?*

Stavros: I will, you will...

Stavros' answer was not the only one which was wrong. In total three of the boys' answers were wrong. Also boys did not answer the questions of the teacher four times, because they did not know the answers. Only one girl did not answer a question and another girl gave a wrong answer.

Two girls were reprimanded. Unfortunately the teacher of English used either irony or she expressed anger when she wanted to reprimand her students, which made the teacher-student relationship even worse.

T: Margarita, you don't know! (The teacher is angry because the student does not answer her question. She raises her voice.)

T: Pick me up. (The teacher wants the group to find the meaning of this verb.)

M: Lift?

T: No, wrong.

F: Take along.

T: How? On your back? (The teacher is being ironic.)

Both reprimands directed at girls were related to the girls' answers. Boys were reprimanded for not paying attention, for not giving correct answers and for misbehaving. In total thirteen reprimand comments were directed at boys, from which only two were related with their answers. Examples are given below.

T: Go back to your seat. (A boy is standing with no reason. The teacher is angry.)

T: Sit down! (Another boy is standing with no reason.)

T: Don't chat!

T: Of course how can you know the answer! (The teacher is really angry because the boy does not know the meaning of the sentence 'my feet hurt'. The teacher implies that the student is not a very good student.)

T: Leave it, leave it for some other time. You can't read it. Give it to Tonia (a female student) *to read it.* (A boy is trying to read the note that he had written but he cannot make out what he wrote so the teacher gets really angry.)

Only one girl was praised for her answer. Two boys were praised for their contributions to the quiz. Examples are given below.

T: What tense do we use in order to narrate a story?

M: Future.

T: Future?

F: Simple Past.

T: Good, correct.

M: They were great soldiers. (He is reading the history quiz.) *The answer is, the Spartans.*

T: Very good, correct!

Boys contributed more times to this lesson but boys outnumbered girls in the group.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to boys more times but she addressed more girls than boys by their first names in order to answer questions or perform tasks. Boys were reprimanded a lot more than girls. Boys were praised more although the differences were very small.

Lesson 2

In this lesson the English teacher quizzed the students on themes that were taught in the previous lesson. The teacher asked the students to read and translate the puzzle clues that they had read in the previous lesson and she also asked them questions about the Simple Past tense. Then the teacher asked the students to find whether some statements were true or false. She also asked them to read a text about Marco Polo.

Finally the English teacher gave the students some new vocabulary from the text.

In total girls contributed twelve times and boys thirty times. Only one girl read and translated a puzzle clue. Boys read and translated six of them. As far as the grammar points are concerned (the Simple Past tense of the verb 'to be') girls gave five answers which were all correct. Boys gave five answers, two of which were wrong. Three girls and three boys read the statements in task 2 and they said if they were true or false. Six boys read some dates in order to become familiar with the way dates are read in English. Two of them were wrong. Also two boys answered two questions that the teacher asked. Two girls and four boys read parts of the text: 'Marco Polo'.

T: 'Was', it is the Simple Past of which verb?

M: It's the verb 'to be'.

T: F (Michalis' surname) can you say the verb?

F: I'm, you are, he is, etc.

T: The verb 'work' now.

M: It means job?

T: Verb job? P, (Giorgos' surname) you tell me the verb.

P: I work, you work, he has work.

T: No, that's wrong. I told you to study these things, but I said it, I heard it. Come on Katerina (female), you start.

Katerina: I work, you work, he/she/it works, etc.

Some of the girls 'and boys' talk was not related to the questions or tasks that the English teacher had assigned to her students. In total girls made such comments only once and boys four times. Some boys asked questions or made remarks only to make the teacher angry. There were some students who were even being ironic. The teacher usually responded, reacted to the boys' comments either in a bad or a good way. As a result of that the English teacher dedicated a lot of time and attention to boys in this lesson.

F: Madam, what page? (The teacher does not answer because her attention is drawn by a boy.)

T: Stop chatting!

M: Madam, he's got a gum in his mouth.

T: You, change seat. (She says this to the boy not only because he is chewing a gum but also because he is chatting and although the teacher has already looked at him with an angry look he has not stop chatting.)

M: Madam, hang on a minute.

T: What do you want? Why are you disturbing me?

T: Don't talk! (The teacher says to a boy who is chatting with one of his classmates)

M: Yes, Madam! (He is being ironic.)

M: Madame, why did you write 'to' in front of some of the words you have written on board?

T: In order to show that they are verbs.

In total the teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls twice and to boys five times. The teacher addressed two girls (Elena and Katerina) and one boy (Stavros) by their first names. All the rest of the boys to whom the teacher directed questions and assigned tasks (Dimitris, Michalis, Giorgos), were addressed by their surnames.

The teacher reprimanded boys ten times. Boys were reprimanded twice for their answers and eight times for their misbehaviour. Examples are given below.

T: Put your feet down! (The boy has his feet on the desk The teacher is really angry.)

T: Don't chat! And you (another boy) don't stare at me. I'm not a sightseeing! (The teacher is cross.)

In this lesson boys made many more contributions than girls. The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to boys more times than she did to girls but more girls than boys were addressed by their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks. She also dedicated a serious amount of time on reprimanding boys or on responding to their comments. She reprimanded no girls and praised no students. At the end of the lesson the English teacher told me with great disappointment that children used to be better in her days. The teacher was only thirty-three years old.

Lesson 3

The students worked on the statements that they worked on in the previous lesson. They read them and said whether they were true or false and then the teacher asked some students to find the meaning of some words. The meaning of the words was given in the previous lesson. Then the students had to trace Marco Polo's journey on the map. After that, they read the text about Marco Polo and they answered some comprehension questions that the teacher asked. The students performed another task, they found what Marco Polo did on different dates (task 3). For homework the teacher asked the students to write a small text about Captain's Cook journey.

In total, girls contributed eight times and boys twenty-two times. Three statements were read and described as true or false by one girl. The rest four statements were read by four boys. Three girls and six boys found the meaning of some words. One boy traced Marco Polo's journey and then the teacher described it to the group. Then the text about Marco Polo was read by two girls and three boys. In task three, two girls and three boys took part. One of the boys' answers was wrong. Boys but not girls

made silly comments four times. Examples of the students' contributions are given below.

T: Where did Marco Polo start his journey from?

F: Venice.

T: When did Marco Polo started his journey?

M: In 1271.

T: Which town did he reach?

M: Acre.

T: How many years did he stay in Shangtu?

F: Seventeen years.

T: What did Marco Polo do in 1292?

M: He started the journey back home.

T: What did he do in 1295?

F: He arrived at Venice.

T: That's right.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls twice and to boys only once.

None of the children were addressed by their name in order to answer questions or perform tasks.

The teacher did not reprimand any female students but she reprimanded boys seven times, either for misbehaving or for not paying any attention. Examples are given below.

M: Madam?

T: What do you want? Why did you interrupt me? (The teacher is angry. She shouts at him.)

T: Throw that gum! (She says to another boy. The teacher is cross.)

T: You two come and sit in the front. (She says this to two boys who are chatting.)

T: Take that hat off immediately! (She shouts at a boy.)

T: Come down! (She shouts at another boy who was restless.)

M: I need a tranquilliser! (This boy is being ironic.)

The teacher praised one girl and two boys for their contributions.

T: What English words can we use for 'TAXIDI'?

M: Voyage and journey.

T: Very good!

T: Journey?

F: She explains the difference between journey and voyage in Greek.

T: Very good!

Boys contributed a lot more than girls in this lesson. The English teacher directed more questions and tasks to girls than boys but the differences are very small. She reprimanded only boys and she praised boys more. The differences in praise were extremely small.

Lesson 4

In this lesson the teacher asked grammar questions and then she focused on the translation of seven small texts from the sub-unit: 'Dream and Reality'. The teacher did not manage to complete the presentation of the new unit: 'A Very Strange Story'.

Girls contributed six times and boys seven times. All the students of the group made contributions. Some examples of the students' contributions are given below.

Tonia : Madam, what is the past participle? (The teacher explains to her.)

T: 'you stopped your car'. You (a male student) tell us the negative form.

M: 'didn't stop the car'.

The teacher addressed only two girls (Elena and Katerina) by their first names. In total the teacher assigned tasks to girls three times and to boys eight times. The teacher asked three girls to read and translate each one small text. She asked one boy to form the negative form of the verb 'you stopped'. The boy answered that correctly. Then the teacher asked four boys to read and translate some texts from the unit: 'Dream and

Reality'. The teacher asked a male student to give the meaning of the phrase 'to live in the past' but the student did not know the answer. Then the teacher asked two boys to read parts of another text but only one boy was paying attention and he knew what to read. The bell rang but the teacher kept the children in the classroom in order to read the rest of the text herself.

The teacher reprimanded girls once and boys eleven times. Two boys were reprimanded twice. Boys were reprimanded for being very noisy and for not paying attention. None of them was reprimanded for their performance. Examples are given below.

T: Come on! Take your books out! (The girl hasn't taken her books out of her bag yet and the teacher is cross.)

T: This is how shepherds whistle to their sheep. (She says to a boy who is whistling. The teacher is being ironic.)

T: (He tells jokes to his classmates and he makes a lot of noise.) You shouldn't be a student!

T: (The boy is trying to talk to me. I am sitting just behind him.) Turn around! (The teacher shouts at him.)

T: What do you want? Why are you laughing?

M: Because somebody's uniform was torn.

T: And why do you care?

T: (Two boys are chatting with each other.) Will your dialogue be continued for a long time? (The teacher is being ironic.)

T: Can you (another boy) translate the next one please?

M: Madam, it's difficult.

M: Madam, shall I help him?

T: Wait for your turn and don't talk without asking permission.

T: Stop it! (Another boy is laughing.) I'll throw you out of the classroom!

T: Spyros (male), be quiet!

The teacher praised two students, one female and one male.

T: You (a boy) read and translate the next small text.

T: Very good!

T: Elena, you read the next one.

T: Very good.

In this lesson the participation of girls was proportionally higher than the participation of boys. Only girls were addressed by their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks. The teacher dedicated a lot of time on reprimanding boys and she directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys.

Lesson 5

This lesson can be divided into two parts. In the first one, the teacher asked the students questions about vocabulary and grammar. The students were given new vocabulary in the previous lesson and they had to study it. The teacher explained the formation of the Simple Past tense in the previous lesson and the students had to read some small texts and to underline all the verbs in the Simple Past tense. Then in the second part of the lesson the teacher gave new vocabulary to the students. The students read a dialogue and then they answered comprehension questions about the content of the dialogue.

From girls, it was mainly Tonia who spoke. She contributed nine times and another girl Elena contributed once. Boys contributed twenty-one times. All boys but not all girls contributed to the lesson. In what follows I mention some of the students' contributions.

During the first part of the lesson two girls and three boys read a total of five texts and they reported the verbs in the Simple Past tense. Two girls and four boys found the meaning of some English words. Also a girl (Tonia) answered one question (see below). In the second part of the lesson three boys read parts of a dialogue. Tonia answered one question and she also asked one question: 'Madam, 'clever' does it mean 'exupnos' (the Greek translation)?'. Boys answered nine questions about the meaning of some words from the dialogue they had read. One girl did not answer two

of the teacher's question and three boys did not respond to the teacher's questions or instructions but the teacher did not reprimand any of these students.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to one girl (Tonia) twice and to six boys (Dimitris, Stavros, Kostas, Spyros, Apostolis, and Michalis) ten times. The teacher addressed Tonia, and Spyros each once, by their first names in order to answer questions and perform tasks. She addressed Stavros by his first name twice. The teacher addressed the rest of the boys by their surnames. Examples are given below.

T: Tonia, read the fourth part. (When she finished the teacher asks the following question.)

T: What is the simple present of the verb 'were'?

Tonia: I am, you are...

T: Spyros, erase those things on the board.

Spyros: Me? Why me Madam?

T: You, yes, you!

T: T, (Apostolis' surname) what is the meaning of the word 'probably'? (He does not answer.)

T: X, (Dimitris' surname) what is the meaning of the phrase: 'miles per hour'? (He does not answer either.)

The teacher reprimanded all the girls of the group once because they were chatting:

‘Girls stop talking!’. Teacher reprimanded boys eleven times for misbehaving.

Examples follow.

T: F (Michalis' surname) where are you taking this chair? Sit down. (The teacher is really angry.)

T: Spyros, turn around! (He is chatting with the student sitting behind him.)

Spyros: I can't.

T: Why not? This is not a proper way to sit. (The teacher shouts at Spyros.)

T: Stavros, come and sit in the front. (He was chatting and the teacher wants him to sit close to her so that he can control him.)

T: (The teacher is screaming, she is very angry because the student has been chatting for a long time.) F, (Michalis' surname) stop it!

T: Stavros, stop chatting! (She shouts at him.)

T: T, (Apostolis' surname) stop chatting! Sit somewhere else. There! On your own!

(The teacher is cross.)

T: What, what can I say now? (The teacher says to two boys who are sitting in the first desk and they are playing a game. She is really upset.)

T: Stop it, or you will never sit together. (She shouts at two boys.)

T: Stop doing silly things. (She shouts at a boy who was laughing.)

The teacher praised only one boy for his answer. The boy read the third text and he found all the verbs that were in the Simple Past tense. Once again the teacher spent a considerable amount of time and energy on trying to control the boys of the group who were noisy and even rude and ironic, probably showing with their attitude their dislike for the teacher of English.

Boys contributed a lot more than girls in this lesson. The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks more times to boys than to girls. More were addressed by their first name more often than girls and they were also reprimanded a lot more than girls.

Lesson 6

In this lesson the teacher quizzed the students by asking the meaning of the words which were given in the previous lesson and also comprehension questions. Then she proceeded to the next unit: 'Back to the Present'.

Girls contributed ten times and boys contributed twenty. The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls a total of four times and to boys five times. Girls were addressed by their first name four times and boys only once in order to answer questions or perform tasks..

In total one girl and three boys did not answer the teacher's question. But the teacher reprimanded only one boy. Some students gave wrong answers but the teacher did not

reprimand them. She was helpful with some female and male students who had problems with their answers. Examples are given below.

T: Elena, read the next sentence.

T: Margarita, can you translate that? (She has difficulties but the teacher helps her a lot.)

T: What happened to Coppernickle?

M: He died.

T: Cut the crap. That's what you said the other day. Be serious now. This is like a test. Can you remind us the answer to the question: What was the strange machine that Coppernickle made?

M: (the same boy) A time machine.

T: Giorgos, what happened to Coppernickle?

Giorgos: Madam, I did not write tha .

T: You are so irresponsible!

The teacher reprimanded none of the girls in this lesson but she reprimanded three boys six times. Michalis was reprimanded three times, Dimitris twice and Giorgos once. The male students were mainly reprimanded for misbehaving. Only one Giorgos was reprimanded for a wrong answer he gave. Examples are given below.

T: F, (Michalis' surname) at last, will you stop talking?

T: (later) F, I said stop talking!

T: (later) Stop talking! The third time I am going to throw you out of the classroom.

T: X, (Dimitris' surname) I didn't tell you to look there. (He is not paying attention.

The teacher is angry.)

The teacher praised two girls and none of the boys, although boys gave many correct answers. She praised one girl, who after failing to answer the teacher's first question, she found the meaning of the word 'unfortunately', and another one for reading and translating one sentence. The teacher must have been impressed probably because the student managed to answer correctly. I must admit that the sentence was really easy: 'Goodbye and be careful!

Boys contributed more times to the lesson. The teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to girls and she also addressed by their first name girls more times than boys. She reprimanded only boys and she praised only girls, although boys gave many correct answers. The teacher might have not praised boys for their answers because she was not in very good terms with them. Also perhaps she praised girls for their answers to easy questions because girls seemed to be nicer to the teacher than boys.

Lesson 7

In this lesson the teacher asked for the meaning of some words and also some comprehension questions. Then she asked the students to find out the missing percentages in a poster. Then the teacher asked some students to read the sentences of the questionnaire. She asked questions on grammar points and she gave new vocabulary to the students.

Girls contribute fourteen times and boys contributed eighteen times. Girls and boys answered vocabulary and grammar questions and they also read some sentences. One girl and two boys gave wrong answers and also three girls did not answer the teacher's questions. One girl, Margarita, who was a very poor student (interview, May 1998) did not participate at all in this lesson and also one boy, Dimitris, because he was absent.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to three girls (Katerina, Tonia, and Elena) a total of eleven times and to five boys (Michalis, Spyros, Stavros, Giorgos and Apostolis) a total of thirteen times. The teacher addressed all the girls by their first names and only three of the boys mentioned earlier. The teacher addressed Michalis by his surname and also Apostolis in order to answer questions and perform tasks.

Examples are given below.

T: *Katerina* (female), *how shall we say 'ANAXOPHSH' in English?*

T: (The girl does not answer so the teacher asks another girl) *Elena*?

Elena: She does not answer either.

T: *Katerina, 'means of transportation'?*

Katerina: She does not answer.

T: *Giorgos (male), repeat the percentages now.*

T: *F (Michalis' surname) is there any sentence in the purple box which starts with the verb were?*

F: *Yes, 'Were you inconvenienced in any way on the train'?*

T: *What tense is that?*

F: *Simple past.*

The teacher reprimanded boys twelve times, for misbehaving, for not paying attention and for their performance. On two occasions the teacher's reprimand was directed to two boys at the same time. Examples follow.

T: *Apostolis, be quiet!*

T: *You two, out!* (She says this to the two boys that the teacher has isolated in different desks. The boys are still making a lot of noise and the teacher gets really angry.)

T: *Go away!* (Now the two boys that the teacher sent out, are standing next to the window and they are making silly things.)

In this lesson boys were very noisy like in most of the English lessons. The teacher spent a considerable amount of time on reprimanding boys. At the beginning of the lesson the teacher had an argument with Spyros who refused to change seats. In the end he did, but in the mean time the teacher had spent ten minutes on this argument. It is obvious that the teacher could not cope with the situation in the classroom. The teacher could not control the group and it seems that she could not even protect girls from the boys' misbehaviour. At the end of the lesson she asked a female student who was being disturbed by some of her male classmates, to be patient like her. The situation is illustrated below.

M: *Madam, may I go to the toilet?*

T: *No.*

Tonia: Madam, he is disturbing me.

T: Be patient like be.

T: P (Giorgos' surname), do you have a problem with my patience? (She says to a boy who has been laughing at the teacher.)

Tonia: Madam, please, say something to them. They are making gestures!

The teacher just looks at them in a very strict way.

The teacher's praise was directed at girls three times and at boys twice. The praise that was directed to these students was related with the students' answers.

T: Have you found the percentages?

F: 90.

T: Very good!

T: Elena (female), you read the rest of the sentences.

T: (when the student finishes) Good!

T: Tonia (female), the last one.

Tonia: Were our prices normal?

T: Nice, very good!

T: What about 'AFIXH'? How can you say it in English? (The teacher asks a boy.)

M: Arrival.

T: Very good!

T: What tense is that (played)? (She asks another boy.)

M: Simple Past.

T: Nice.

Boys contributed more times than girls in this lesson. The teacher directed more questions and tasks to girls and she also addressed girls more times than boys by their first names in order to perform tasks and to answer questions. Only boys were reprimanded in this lesson although some girls did not answer the teacher's questions. Perhaps the teacher was lenient on girls because they were quiet. The differences in the number of times that girls and boys were praised are small.

Lesson 8

In this lesson the teacher first quizzed the students about their homework. The students had to translate some sentences in English. Then the teacher asked some students questions and then she asked some students to read the new text: 'Guess the Country'. Then the teacher asked the students to do an exercise. The students had to find how many times forms of dialogue or narrative appeared in this unit.

Three girls contributed six times (Tonia contributed three times, Elena twice and Katerina once) and six boys contributed twenty-four times (Michalis was absent). One girl and two boys gave wrong answers and also one boy did not read part of the text that the teacher had asked him because he was not paying attention and he did not know where to read. But none of these students were reprimanded by the teacher.

The teacher helped some boys with their answers but she also helped one female student who had problems with the translation of a sentence. In total the teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls six times and to boys twenty-two. The teacher addressed girls by their first names six times in order to answer questions and perform tasks. She addressed boys by their first names a total of three times. She addressed Giorgos once by his first name and twice by his surname. For the rest of the boys, the teacher used their surnames in order to direct questions or assign tasks to them. Examples are given below.

T: Read the third sentence X (male) (Dimitris' surname).

X: Did you enjoy the voyage?

T: Yes, when we travel by boat it's a voyage not a trip. Tonia (female), the next one.

Tonia: What kind of cabin did you have?

T: Stavros (male)? (He had to read the next sentence.)

Stavros: Did you like your cabin?

The teacher did not reprimand any female students but she reprimanded boys seven times because they were misbehaving. Examples are given below.

T: You go and sit there, on your own!

T: T (Apostolis' surname) don't talk! Tell us the verb the subject and the object in this sentence. Turn around you X (Dimitris' surname). Giorgos, stop combing your hair!

T: We are going to do the first exercise on page 74. Start doing it now. T (Apostolis' surname) please turn around you!

M: Madam, is this a narrative?

T: You have to find it yourself. Apostolis, is this the first time you are doing this? X (Dimitris' surname), don't talk!

The teacher praised girls once and boys three times for their answers.

T: Okay now let's read it all over again. X (Dimitris' surname). (Dimitris is reading).

T: Good, very good! Spyros.

T: Good! Go on X (Dimitris' surname). No, no, who hasn't read at all? Elena.

T: Good! Go on P (Giorgos' surname).

T: What is the meaning of the word 'movieland'? X (Dimitris' surname)?

M: He gives the meaning in Greek.

T: Very good! 'Children's land'?

It seems that in this lesson the teacher dedicated a lot of time and attention to boys, either by directing questions and assigning tasks to them or by reprimanding them.

Also the teacher used to answer back to silly or ironic comments of the male students.

Some examples are given below.

T: Open your book! (The teacher is angry because the lesson has already started and a boy has not opened his book)

M: A lot or just a little bit?

T: Open it as much as you like.

Giorgos: Madam, you didn't ask me if Tonia's answer was correct?

T: Why do you know the correct answer? (The teacher is being ironic),

T: T (Apostolis' surname) Have you done the exercise?

M: (with a sarcastic smile) I'm doing it now!

T: You don't need to get tired, you can do it next year. (She implies that he will have to repeat the year because of his poor performance.)

Boys contributed a lot more than girls in this lesson. The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to boys more times than to girls but she addressed girls more times than boys by their first name. Only boys were reprimanded in this lesson and boys were praised more than girls although the differences are not great.

Lesson 9

In this lesson the teacher evaluated the students performance by asking them to read and translate parts from the text 'Guess the Country' and then by giving them a test on spelling, vocabulary and grammar points. At the end of the lesson the teacher started presenting the next unit but she only had time to explain a task to students and to ask them to perform it at home.

Girls and boys made few contributions to this lesson. Three girls (Tonia, Elena and Margarita) and two boys (Spyros and Dimitris) read and translated parts of a text and one girl (Elena) asked a question. The teacher was very helpful and patient with one girl, Margarita, who had serious problems to translate. But she did not help Dimitris, who had difficulties in translating some sentences. Instead she translated the sentences herself. Perhaps she was more helpful with Margarita because she was a poor student whereas Dimitris was considered to be better student(interview, May 1998). Some interactions that the teacher had with her students are given below.

Margarita: She is reading a text but she has problems.

T: Tonia, help her. Tell her what the word 'visited' means.

Tonia: She gives the meaning of the word 'visited' and then the teacher helps Margarita with some other words such as: famous and land.

T: Come, one, it's easy.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls four times and to boys twice. Girls were addressed by their first name three times in order to perform tasks and boys twice. Examples follow.

T: First, the verbs 'travelled' and 'started'. You have to write the affirmative, negative and interrogative form. Exercise 2: You have to find the meaning of the following words: trip, arrive, interesting and evening.

Elena: Do we have to write both simple and continuous tenses?

T: What are you talking about? (The teacher is crossed.)

The teacher reprimanded all boys once because they were making noise and they were chatting. She also reprimanded two girls. Tonia was reprimanded for helping one of her male classmates during the test and Elena was reprimanded for not understanding one of the exercises in the test.

The teacher praised one girl and one boy for their answers.

Spyros: He reads a part of the text.

T: Good! Go on X (Dimitris' surname).

T: Go on Elena. (The teacher corrects her accent.) Why are you talking? (The teacher says to all the boys of the group. The teacher is cross.)

Elena: She reads and translates correctly.

T: Good! Go on Margarita.

In this lesson girls contributed more times than boys and the teacher directed more questions and tasks to girls. Although the differences were small the teacher addressed girls by their first name more times than boys in order to perform tasks.

Conclusions

Girls' overall contributions were less than those of the boys. Girls contributed a total of eighty-seven times and boys a total of one hundred and seventy. In most of the

lessons (two, three, five, six, and eight) the participation of boys was a lot higher than the participation of girls.

In all the lessons that involved checking of the students' homework or knowledge about the previous unit, boys participated more in the first part of the lesson but also in the presentation of the new unit except for lesson four in which the participation of boys was higher in the first part of the lesson but equal to the participation of girls in the second part of the lesson.

In the nine lessons that I observed the teacher of English directed questions and assigned tasks to girls a total of forty times and to boys a total of seventy-two. In all the lessons, except for lessons three, six and nine, the teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys. The differences in every lesson are not big, except for lesson five and eight. In lesson five the teacher directed questions to girls twice and to boys ten times and in lesson eight the teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls six times and to boys twenty-two times.

The English teacher addressed girls by their first names a total of thirty-one times and boys a total of twenty-four times. Sometimes she addressed boys but never any girls, by their surname. Tonia was addressed by her first name a total of eleven times, Katerina eight, Elena nine and Margarita three times. From the boys Stavros was addressed by his first name in order to perform tasks or answer questions a total twelve times, Spyros eight and Giorgos four times.

There are no differences in the amount of praise that girls and boys received. They were both praised a total of ten times. Things are different as far as reprimand is concerned. Girls were reprimanded a lot less than boys: they were reprimanded a total of seven times and boys a total of seventy-eight times. In lessons five, six, seven and eight the names of all the students who were reprimanded were recorded. Michalis was reprimanded the most, a total of eight times. In all the lessons boys got a lot more reprimand than girls, mainly for their misbehaviour: chatting, laughing, not paying attention, annoying other students, being rude, ironic and answering back. Girls were reprimanded a total of three times for their answers and boys a total of nine times only.

In many lessons there were students mainly male, who did not answer questions or gave wrong answers and they were not reprimanded by the teacher. In total girls were not reprimanded for not giving answers, or giving the wrong answers or for not having done their homework, eight times, whereas boys were not reprimanded twenty-five times. In lesson one boys did not answer questions four times and they gave three wrong answers but only two boys were reprimanded for their wrong answers. Girls who in two cases did not perform well, were reprimanded. In lesson two boys gave nine wrong answers but they were reprimanded only twice. Girls did not give any wrong answers. In lesson three only one boy gave a wrong answer and he was not reprimanded. In lesson four, boys did not perform the tasks that the teacher assigned to them twice and again they were not reprimanded. In lesson five, girls did not answer questions twice and boys three times but none of these students were reprimanded. In lesson six girls did not answer questions once and boys three times but one boy was reprimanded. In lesson seven, girls did not answer questions or gave wrong answers four times and boys twice but none of these students were reprimanded. In lesson eight, girls did not perform tasks once and boys three times but again none of these students were reprimanded by the teacher. In lesson nine the only student, Elena who asked the teacher a question, was reprimanded. It seems that the English teacher was lenient as far as the performance of male students is concerned. Perhaps the teacher was already upset with the boys' misbehaviour in the classroom and she could not spend any more energy on reprimanding them. On the other hand on few occasions the teacher seemed to be lenient with female students. For instance in lessons six she praised only female students although one of them gave an answer to an easy question and in lesson nine she provided help to Margarita but not to Dimitris although they both had problems with answering questions.

The English teacher had a serious problem of obedience and control with her male students. In every lesson she would dedicate time and energy in order to reprimand them or even argue with them. The teacher probably felt that she could not do anything to change this unpleasant situation. In lesson eight she even asked Tonia, a female student who was really annoyed by the behaviour of some male students, to be patient like her. So the teacher not only lost time by reprimanding boys but she also seemed incapable to protect girls from the boys' misbehaviour.

The maths teacher

Contextual information

The textbook consisted of nine chapters which contained different themes: Chapter 1: The Rational numbers, Chapter 2: Equations and Inequations, Chapter 3: The Irrational numbers, Chapter 4: Trigonometry, Chapter 5: Functions, Chapter 6: Statistics, Chapter 7: Symmetrical Shapes, Chapter 8: Mensuration of the Circle, Chapter 9: Three Dimensional Shapes. When I started observing lessons with B3 the teacher and the students were working on Chapter 6: Statistics and at the fifth lesson the teacher proceeded to Chapter 7: Symmetrical Shapes.

The maths lessons took place in B3's own classroom. The teacher worked on the board most of the time and he never really used his desk in the front of the classroom. The students were sitting in rows facing the board and the teacher's desk. They changed seats in every lesson and they usually sat next to a classmate of the same sex.

During the maths lessons, the students were quieter than they were during the English lessons and they did not call out answers as usually as they did during the religious education lessons. But it seems that they were not as quiet as they were during the modern Greek and physics lessons. The students seemed to be on good terms with the maths teacher. They respected him and they never expressed bad comments about him during class or on other occasions, in different settings (diary, May 1998).

Lesson 1

The lesson started with the presentation of the concepts of sample and frequency. The teacher had already referred to these concepts in a previous lesson but he felt it was very important to repeat these to the students. First the teacher explained the concept and the importance of sample and then he proceeded with an exercise about frequency. The students were given the marks of 32 pupils of the second year of Secondary school and they had a) to make the chart of the frequencies and of the relative frequencies, b) to find the mode and c) the percentage of students who got less than 16 (the maximum a student can get in Secondary level is 20 and the minimum is 0). Also the teacher asked the students to make a histogram for this exercise. The students were

working independently while the teacher was writing the results on the board. During the lesson the teacher asked the students some questions and he also asked some students to contribute in solving the exercise.

In this lesson girls contributed ten times and boys contributed twelve times (Thanasis, Dimitris, and Petros contributed each twice). The same girl (Tonia) contributed eight times. Tonia was the only female student who tried to attract the teacher's attention, who really wanted to be noticed either because of her personality or perhaps she liked maths a lot. Examples are given below.

Tonia: Sir, please slow down.

T: Well, whenever you here the number you draw a line.

Tonia: I've finished.

T: Hang on. You are not alone here!

Tonia: Sir, 0,15625 is not correct.

T: Yes, there has been a mistake.

Tonia: Sir, (she is shouting) I've done it (the chart of frequencies)!

T: Okay.

Tonia: Sir, there isn't enough room on my paper (for her histogram).

T: What can I do Tonia? It's okay, you can do it at home.

Tonia: It's Okay sir. It doesn't matter. (She seems disappointed.)

Tonia did not answer any of the teacher's questions. Only once she helped by giving the result of a division. The teacher had asked a male student, Petros, to do the divisions for the exercise because he had a calculator, but Tonia had already done the divisions at home and she was very willing to answer. The teacher had not asked her or any other girl any questions at that point. Towards the end of the lesson one question was answered by a female student.

T: Where do the numbers start from?

F: From 0.

T: No, not from 0, from 9.

The teacher did not direct questions to girls but he directed questions to boys seven times. He addressed five boys by their first names in order to answer questions or perform tasks (Petros was addressed twice, Thanasis, Giorgos, Michalis were addressed each once). Examples follow.

T: Thanasis, would it be right to ask only people who live in Athens or in Thessaloniki (in order to find who will people for vote in the next election)?

Thanasis: No.

T: Very good. (He asks another boy, he looks at him.) What if we ask ten people from Athens and ten from Samos (a place), will the sample be good?

M: No, because Athens' population is bigger than Samos.

T: What is population? (He looks at another boy.)

M: The total.

T: We have the students of one group here and we want to find the academic level of the group. Shall we do a survey with all the population Michalis?

Michalis: No.

T: Why not? There are only thirty-two students.

Then the teacher asked two boys to help him with an exercise.

T: Giorgos, are you going to help me a little bit here? (Giorgos goes towards the board) Let's find the relational frequency now. Petros, are you going to help us?

Petros: (He has got a small calculator and the teacher wants him to divide $2:32 = 0.0625$.) The next one (he is using the calculator) is 0.0938.

T: Petros, divide it by 5 now.

One girl and four boys asked the teacher for instructions or help. The teacher was helpful with all of them but also a bit harsh with a male student, Dimitris. Perhaps the teacher was already very tired with the questions of the students and he lost his patience at some point.

F: Shall we use the paper with the millimetres, sir?

T: Yes.

M: Shall we draw lines sir?

T: Do what I am doing. I'm speaking in Greek, Dimitris. (The teacher raised his voice, He is cross.)

M: Sir, is it like that?

T: Yes, you have to cross every five.

M: Sir, can you come here for a minute, to help me?

M: (another boy) Sir! Can I show you something? (The teacher approached both of the last two boys as they had requested.)

The teacher reprimanded three girls for not paying attention and one for the quality of her work.

T: Elena! (She is chatting with the girl who is sitting next to her)

Elena: But sir, I'm talking about the lesson!

T: I don't give you (he means the whole group) the right to talk to your classmates not even about the lesson.

T: Hang on! You are not on your own! (This comment is directed at Tonia who was the first one who finished the exercise and she wants to inform the teacher about that.)

T: E, Vagelitsa, look here my girl. (She is writing, she is not looking at the board).

T: (He corrects the histogram of a female student.) You have no excuse for making such mistakes. (by 'you' he refers to her but also to the whole group).

The teacher reprimanded boys eleven times, for not paying attention or for causing trouble such as making noise or chatting and for their work. Stavros and Dimitris were reprimanded three times each.

T: Stavros, Dimitris! Pay attention!

T: Stavros are you still there? Come on! Hurry up!

T: Michalis! Please be quiet!

T: Giorgos, why have you sat down? (The boy is supposed to write on the board.) We haven't finished yet!

T: Stavros! Look here!

T: For God sake Dimitris! (He is chatting.) I finally stopped the lesson because of you!

T: Stavros, are you still there? Hurry up!

T: Hurry up Michalis!

T: (He is looking at a boy's histogram.) Don't have these things stuck next to each other!

The teacher praised none of the girls for their answers. He praised boys twice for their answers. An example is given below.

M: If I add all the sums together I'll get 100%.

T: Bravo! Bravo! I was going to say that but you said it first.

In this lesson the teacher interacted more with boys, by helping them, asking them more questions, by assigning tasks to them and by praising and reprimanding them. Boys participated more than girls in this lesson, although the differences were small. Even when the teacher was reprimanding boys he did so in some cases in order to attract their attention, to make them pay attention even when there was no indication that they were not, at least to my knowledge. Girls seemed to be quieter than boys but not necessarily more concentrated and focused than boys.

Lesson 2

In this lesson the teacher introduced the grouping of statistical intervals and he informed the students that they were going to work on the paper with the millimetres. For the explanation of the formation of groups of statistical data the teacher used an example from the textbook: the heights of different people (1.50-1.95cm) and he organised the data in a chart on the board, which the students had to copy and then they had to make a diagram for the pictorial representation of the data.

Height	Choice	Frequency	Relational F. %
1.00-1.50		4	5
1.55-1.60	111 1		
1.60-1.65			
1.65-1.70			
1.70-1.75			
1.75-1.80			
1.80-1.85			
1.85-1.90			
1.90-1.95			
Totals		80	100

From the girls, only Tonia contributed three times. Boys contributed nine times.

Examples are given below.

T: What do all these men have in common?

Tonia: They are all the same.

T: No.

T: Men are expected to join the army according to a division, a class. For instance let's take those men who were born from February until September 1972. They are in class 2 (the example is not real).

F: Was that your class sir?

T: He does not reply.

Tonia (female): Sir, there isn't enough room in my piece of paper.

In both cases the teacher did not reply. The teacher gave feedback for Tonia's wrong answer but he did not comment on the other things he said, probably because he felt that they were not related to the lesson.

T: Dimitris (male), come here! (In front of the board where the teacher is standing.)

T: What size are you?

Dimitris: 16.

T: How tall are you?

Dimitris: 1.79cm.

T: Good. I'm size 16 as well but I'm 1.75 cm tall. How does this happen?

M: He does not answer.

T: Let me say that again in a more comprehensive way. People who are 1.75 cm - 1.79cm tall wear size 16. How can you explain that?

M: He does not answer again.

T: Dimitris, please be quiet! Say what you think!

T: He explains the question again.

M: The boy does not reply again.

T: What seems to be the problem? (Then the teacher looks at another boy and he expects an answer.)

M: Well, the manufacturers cannot make clothes for every single person, so they use a group of heights for each size.

As we can notice the same boy answered two questions and also the same boy (Dimitris) was asked the same question by the teacher five times, but he did not answer it. The teacher was extremely patient and helpful with the student. The other boys who spoke during the lesson did not answer questions instead they asked for instructions or they made comments. Examples are given below.

M: Sir, have you noticed that someone has broken the window?

T: Please not now. Let me explain the lesson!

T: Now after Easter we are going to do a survey.

M: It will be about the performance in our group.

T: No, wrong, it's going to be something else. Anyway we'll talk some other time about that. You'd better start writing what I'm writing on the board.

M: Sir, is the last height 1.94?

T: Yes.

M: Sir, what is that?

T: Totals. (The teacher added the data in the chart and he wrote the totals.)

M: Sir, what have you written there ? (He refers to one of the figures in the first column.)

T: It's easy because you write one every five intervals.

The teacher was very willing to answer the questions of these students. The teacher helped another boy, he went close to him, he had a look at his copybook and he helped him with the histogram. That boy had not asked for the teacher's help.

In total the teacher directed questions or tasks to girls three times and to boys nine times. The teacher addressed only one boy by his first name, Dimitris. Examples are given below.

T: What about you my girl, have you learned any Greek? Do you understand anything or is it all Greek to you? (He asks a female student who has immigrated from another country and she has a serious problem with the language. Then he talks to the girl who sits next to her). *Help her, but you also have to pay attention to the lesson.*

During the lesson the teacher offered her no help and support. The teacher reprimanded two girls. Alexandra for not paying attention and Elena for chatting. The teacher reprimanded boys seven times (Dimitris was reprimanded three times and George twice) either for not paying attention and chatting or for not working as hard as they should. Examples are given below.

T: Giorgos, please! (He is chatting.)

T: Dimitris, please be quiet!

T: Stavros, why are you chatting? Have you finished?

T: Giorgos, keep on working! It doesn't matter if you make a mistake.

T: Dimitris, keep on working! Why have you given up?

T: Dimitris, please! (He is chatting.)

M: Sir, have you noticed that someone has broken the window?

T: Please, not now. Let me explain the lesson! (The teacher is cross.)

The teacher praised none of the girls. The teacher praised two boys for their answers.

Dimitris was praised for giving very simple information (see below).

M: A male student goes towards the teacher in order to show him his work.

T: *Very good!*

T: *How tall are you?* (The teacher asks Dimitris.)

Dimitris: *1.79cm.*

T: *Good.*

The participation of boys was higher in this lesson. The teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys than girls and he also reprimanded and praised boys more. Girls and boys were mainly reprimanded for misbehaving in this lesson.

Lesson 3

In this lesson the teacher did not proceed to the presentation of a new unit. Instead he referred to a survey that the students were supposed to do the following week and he gave explanations and instructions about the use of the questionnaire. The survey's target population was the inhabitants of the area in which the school was situated. The purpose of the research was to get an idea about the financial and social status of the population and the number of children each family had or wished to have. The students had already worked on statistical data and on sampling methods, so the survey would have been a practical exercise for them. Unfortunately the research was cancelled later due to the weather.

The questionnaire consisted of fifteen questions. All the questions belonged to a different category. The first four questions were about the respondent's name, surname, age and sex. The second category referred to their address (name of the street and of the area). The third category was related to the subjects' marital status (married, divorced, whether both husband and wife work, number of children, age of the children, rooms occupied by each child, number of children that the subjects wish to have and reasons for not wanting to have more children). What is really interesting

at this section is that one of the options for not having any more children was 'professional reasons' (working mother, trips). The phrase in the parenthesis which functions as an explanation for 'professional reasons' may suggest that being a working mother is an obstacle for having children whereas being a working father does not seem to be a problem. The next category consisted of questions about the education of the respondents (Primary, Lower Secondary level, Lyceum, University, Foreign languages: English, French, German, other languages). The last part of the questionnaire consisted of questions about the type of occupation of the respondents, the financial situation of the respondents, the number of rooms that their house had and the number of people that were living in the respondent's house.

In this lesson there were not many interactions between the teacher and the students. The teacher spent a lot of time giving instructions and explanations about the questionnaires and the conduct of the research. In total girls and boys contributed seven times each. One girl (Tonia) contributed twice. All the questions or comments of the students were related to the questionnaire. Some examples are given below.

M: Sir, why shall we do the survey on Wednesday? Why don't we go on Thursday?

(The research was going to take place in the market.)

T: Because there is no market on Thursday.

M: Sir, what are we going to write at number 10: the level of knowledge?

T: I'll explain everything in a minute. (He sounds a bit cross.)

T: Now let's see, before you do the survey you have to do a pilot study.

M: Sir, to how many people are we going to give this questionnaire?

T: If each one of you brings four questionnaires to me I will be very happy. I think that a sample of 180 people is a good sample.

F: Can we ask a person who is not married if he wants to have children?

T: Yes, why not?

F: What if someone speaks Arabic?

T: You'll tick 'other language'.

F: What if they don't want to answer a question?

T: I shall refer to that now. First remember to go only to the market and nowhere else. For no reason you will go out of the market.

The teacher answered all the questions of the male students or at least he informed the students that he had heard their answers. As far as the female students are concerned, two girls did not get any reply from the teacher concerning their questions.

F: It's says somewhere 'they work'. Who? (In the questionnaire it is clear to whom it refers: 'Husband, Spouse, Both of them', so perhaps the teacher thought that it was not necessary to answer this question.)

F: But we might accidentally ask people who don't live in this area. (The teacher did not respond, perhaps because he had already said that the students should not ask people who do not live in the area.)

In this lesson the students did not get any praise. The teacher reprimanded only one girl for not paying attention. The teacher reprimanded five boys six times. One boy, Leuteris, was reprimanded twice. Boys were reprimanded either for not paying attention or for making noise. Examples are given below.

T: Tonia (female)! Pay attention! (She was daydreaming.)

T: Kostas! Please! Leuteris, you too, please! (Both boys were chatting.)

T: Leuteris (male)! Please! (He is chatting.)

T: You, (he refers to a male student who is chatting) go and sit there.

M: Why?

T: Because I say so. (The boy obeys the teacher and changes seat.)

T: Spyros (male), pay attention!

T: Dimitris (male)! You have become a savage! (He's been very restless. The teacher is angry.)

In this lesson girls and boys contributed equally but the teacher reprimanded boys more than girls.

Lesson 4

In this lesson the teacher referred again to the questionnaires that he had prepared for the survey. Then the teacher explained the difference between the mean and the median by demonstrating some examples.

Girls made nine contributions to this lesson and boys made five. Tonia contributed four times. Examples of the girls' and boys' contributions follow.

M: Sir, can I ask you something?

T: No, I haven't finished yet.

T: Are there any children who would like to interview their parents?

Two girls and one boy raise their hands and they volunteer to interview their parents.

M: Sir, what if some people don't have children?

T: That's better. That's exactly what we need.

T: Today we are going to talk about the mean and the median. Please take notes. We don't have any white chalk.

F: Shall I go and get some?

T: Yes.

The teacher directed questions to girls twice and to boys once. The teacher addressed these students by their first names.

T: Spyros (male), I'd like to ask you something. Have you found the mean of the marks you got for the second term?

Spyros: In order to see my overall performance? Yes, I've found the mean.

Then the teacher writes on board the following:

M T W T F S S (the days of the week)

900 800 120 1700 900 100 300 litres of petrol that the petrol station sold to the customers last week

T: Elena (female), if you wanted to find the mean what would you do?

Elena: I would add all the sums and then I would divide the total by 7.

T: Very good! Tonia (female), all these things we are saying now, tell me, in what unit do they belong to? I'd like to write it on the board.

Tonia: It's 6.6: Mean-Median.

The teacher was helpful with a girl who did not seem to be clear with the concepts of mean and median.

F: Sir, is the median between 900 and 1000? (She refers to the examples mentioned above.)

T: I'll give one more example. Please write all of you. Let's say that I went to the supermarket and I bought six things that cost 100 drachmas, 200, 700, 1000, and 500 drachmas.

100

200

500 mean

600

700

1000

Now let's say that a student got the following marks in four subjects: 10, 10, 10, 20.

The mean is twelve but the median for this example is 10.

Tonia: I found that 20 is the mean.

T: Tonia you are not paying attention. We go from the smaller sum to the bigger.

The teacher reprimanded two girls. One girl for making noise and another one (Tonia) for her answer. The teacher reprimanded two boys a total of four times for misbehaving. The same boy (Dimitris) was reprimanded three times. The teacher praised only one girl for her answer, Elena, but he did not praise any boys. Examples are given below.

T: Alexandra (female), be quiet! (She was chatting.)

T: Dimitris (male)! Please be quiet! Dimitris! (The boy is chatting.)

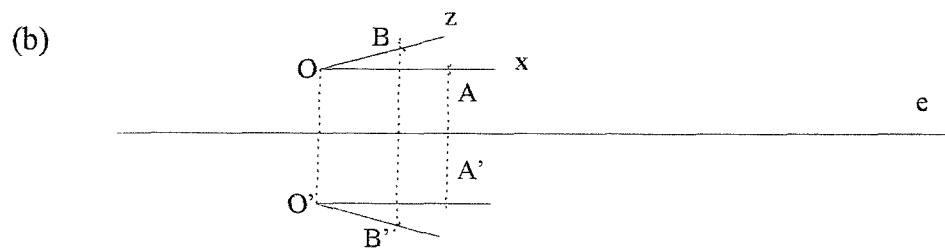
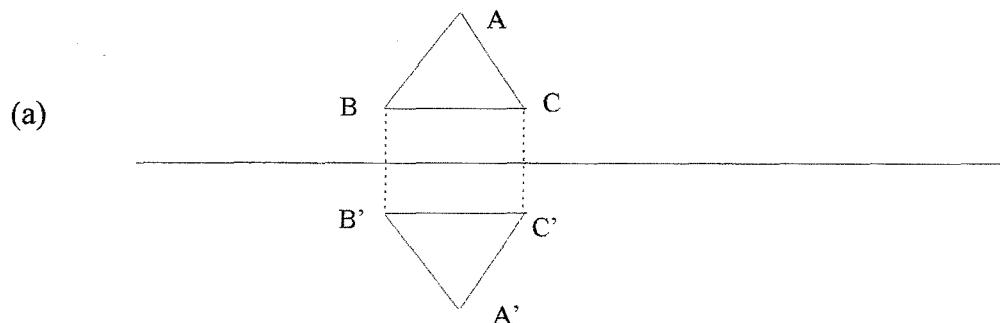
T: Dimitris! Stop it!

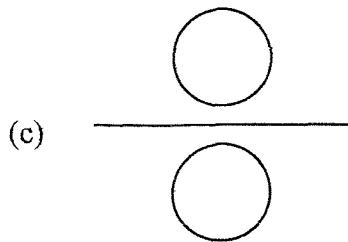
T: Kostas (male), please go and sit there. (He is chatting.)

In this lesson girls contributed more than boys. The differences in reprimand and praise and in the number of questions that the teacher directed to girls and boys were very small. The same applies to the number of girls and boys that were addressed by their first names in order to answer questions.

Lesson 5

In this lesson the teacher presented three examples of shapes which are symmetrical about a straight line (reflexive symmetry) (see below).





The teacher was working on the board while the students were trying to draw the shapes in their copybooks. The students were working pretty much on their own, so in this lesson there are not many interactions between the teacher and the students. In total only one girl contributed once and three boys contributed each once.

M: Sir, where exactly shall we draw the straight line?

T: Stavros (male), look here to see something that you don't know. (The teacher explains to all the students how to find the symmetrical point and then how to draw the perpendicular.)

T: Dimitris (male), have you done it? (The teacher means the drawing.)

Dimitris: He nods yes.

M: Sir, how did you find the symmetrical point for the circle?

T: I drew the perpendicular like I did with the other shapes.

Tonia (male): Sir, my plan doesn't look very good.

T: (The teacher walks towards her to have a look at her work) You've made a mistake. (The teacher corrects it and then he has a look at Elena's work) *You too.* (He corrects Elena's work as well.)

The teacher did not really direct questions to girls. But he initiated three interactions with three girls (Tonia, Elena and Evagelia) and two interactions with two boys (Stavros, Dimitris) (see above). He checked carefully the work of Elena and Tonia but he did not explain to them why their plan was wrong and he did not suggest a different more appropriate way of working. He simply stated that their work had serious mistakes and then he drew the correct plan for both girls. The teacher asked Evagelia to make a note of all the students who had not brought their drawing instruments on that day and then to hand it in to him.

As far as praise and reprimand is concerned the teacher praised none of the students but he reprimanded girls once and boys four times for misbehaving.

T: Spyros (male), can you stop the conversation? (He is chatting.)

T: Now, I hope you all have your drawing instruments. (The teacher realises that one boy and one girl have not brought their drawing instruments. He shouts at both of them.) Why haven't you brought your drawing instruments? Evagelia, make a note of all the students who haven't got them with them today. (He asks Evagelia, to do that. In Greek schools the best student in each group, according to last year's performance, is responsible for keeping a register and she/he is also usually the student to whom the teacher assign responsibilities.)

T: F, (Michalis surname) what are you doing? (The boy is standing by the door.) Sit down! This is the last day that I see these things happening.

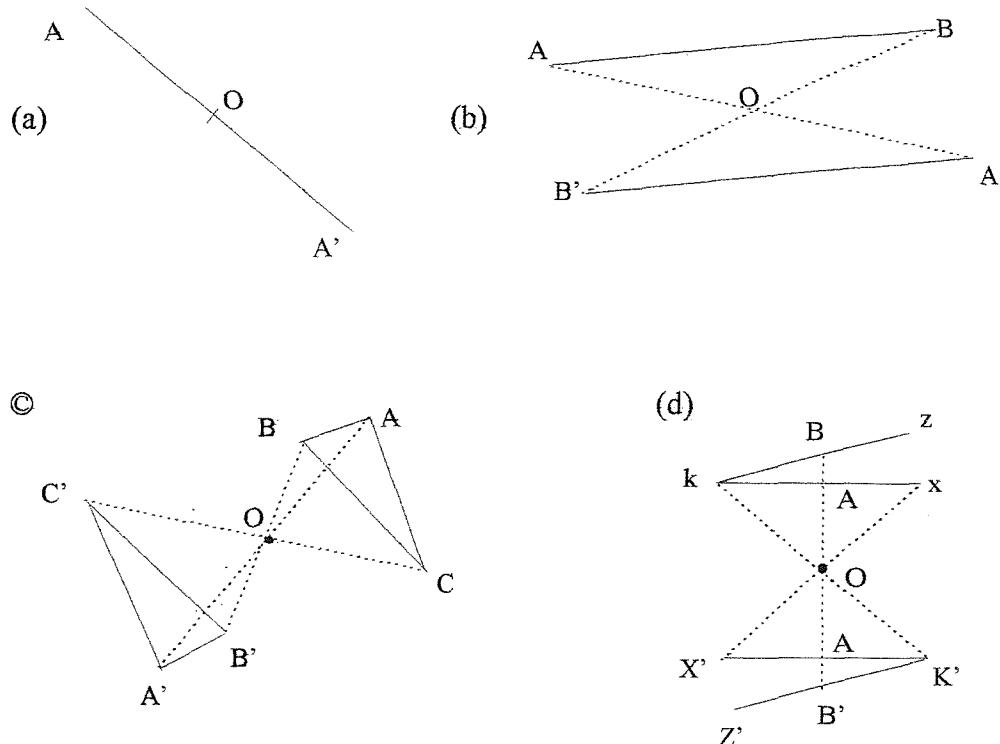
T: Kostas (male), look at the front! (The boy is chatting with another boy who is sitting behind him. The teacher shouts at him.)

T: Tonia (female), you should pay attention to this! (Tonia is not looking at the board.)

The differences in the participation of girls and boys are not great. The teacher addressed only boys by their first name in order to direct questions to them. Boys were reprimanded more than girls although the differences are small.

Lesson 6

In this lesson the teacher and the students dealt with rotational symmetry. The teacher drew on board (a) a point A, (b) a line AB, © a triangle ABC and (d) an angle AkB and then he found their symmetrical shapes about a point O. The students had to draw the same shapes as well. The students were working very independently. The teacher checked the work of some students but most of the time he was giving instructions to the students about the shapes.



In total girls contributed five times and boys contributed sixteen times. One girl (Tonia) contributed three times. Examples of the girls' and boys' contributions are given below.

M: Sir, we've brought our drawing instruments.

T: (The teacher did not comment on that.) Have we talked about symmetry?

M: Yes.

T: You have to find the symmetrical point of A with O as the centre point.

M: Where are you going to put A?

T: Here.

M: A and O? On the same line?

T: Yes Giorgos, always on the same line. (The teacher is a bit angry.)

M: Hang on a minute sir.

T: Come on children! (The teacher says to the whole group which seems to be rather tired, restless and not in the mood for serious work.)

T: Now, we are going to find the symmetrical shape of a triangle.

M: Hang on a minute sir. We haven't finished the other one yet!

T: It's okay, Michalis. We all have work to do. (The teacher is a bit cross.)

M: Sir, shall we put O wherever we like?

T: Yes.

The teacher was very helpful with all the students who needed instructions and clarifications. He answered all their questions and he accepted to see their work when they asked for it. Only one girl asked for instructions. The teacher helped her but he also reprimanded her because he had already given instructions. Boys asked for instructions and help seven times. Examples follow.

F: Sir, what shall we do? (She asks at the beginning of the lesson.)

T: Oh, come one you are not going to open your copybook now, are you? (The teacher is really angry because the student should have already started working but he does give her instructions) You have to find the symmetrical point of A with O as a centre of symmetry.

M: Sir, can you come here please?

T: (The teacher looks at the boy's work) You should do a smaller triangle!

M: Sir, I cannot see the points K and Z.

T: Okay, I'll show them to you.

M: Sir, look. (He shows his work to the teacher.)

T: (He goes to the student's desk, he praises the student for his work but he also corrects some things on the shape) Bravo!

M: Sir, shall we unite all these together now?

T: No.

M: Is there a 'K' point there?

T: Yes.

In total the teacher directed questions, assigned tasks to girls five times and to boys eleven times. Examples are given below.

T: Tonia (female), bring your book here, right away! (The teacher wanted to see what tasks had already performed in the previous lessons.)

T: Dimitris (male), have you said anything?

Dimitris: No.

T: Dimitris, are you having problems with the shape? (Then he walks towards him in order to help him.)

T: Dimitris, look here please! (Dimitris is not chatting or daydreaming.)

The teacher seemed to be very interested in Dimitris' work and in helping him. Dimitris was not a brilliant student but certainly he was not hopeless or incapable of drawing a shape. He was a very bright child according to his teachers (diary, May 1998) The teacher also asked Stavros, another male student to observe how the teacher was making the symmetrical shape of the triangle. The student was not chatting or day dreaming but obviously the teacher wanted to make sure that he had his full attention and that the student would not miss the important task. The teacher checked the work (the shapes that they had drawn) of four girls and five boys. The teacher addressed girls by their first names once in order to answer questions and boys twice.

T: Leuteris, in order to find the symmetrical point of AB about point O, what would you suggest?

Leuteris: The symmetrical point of O?

T: No, the symmetrical point of AB about point A. (Eventually the teacher answered the question himself.)

T: How am I going to find the symmetrical point of a circle, Spyros?

Spyros gave a correct answer and then Evangelia suggested an alternative.

T: Yes, you could also do it like that.

In total girls were reprimanded five times. The same girl, Tonia was reprimanded twice for not being quiet. Two girls were reprimanded for the shapes they had drawn . Examples are given below.

T: Tonia! (The teacher wants her to listen to him.)

Tonia: But sir, I want to write something.

T: I don't care!

T: Why have you done it like that? You've got compasses. Why aren't you using it?

(He says to a girl. Then he talks to another girl.) *Why do you make me unhappy? Why have you done the shapes like that?*

The teacher reprimanded five boys a total of seven times. Examples are given below.

T: What is that? (He means Dimitris' shape which was not good.)

T: Dimitris, (the other Dimitris) I didn't ask you to sit there so that you can chat.

Stavros go and sit there!

Stavros: Why?

T: I'll tell you later. Tonia, you'll be next.

Tonia: But sir I didn't do anything!

T: Good, but you shouldn't have done it with a pen.

(The teacher reprimanded Dimitris at this point for his shape but he also praised him.)

T: Stavros and Thanasis pay attention now! (They are not looking at the board.)

T: Do it all over again. (The teacher reprimands a male student whose shape is not good at all.)

Two girls were praised twice for their nice and correct shapes.

T: Bravo! (The teacher says to two female students whose drawings has just seen.)

Three boys were praised four times. The same boy, Giorgos was praised twice. All these students had drawn very nice and correct shapes.

T: Bravo! (He says to Giorgos.)

T: Bravo! (He says to Giorgos again and he also gives him a friendly tap one the back.)

T: Very good! (The teacher says to Michalis.)

T: Good! (The teacher says to the other Dimitris.)

In this lesson boys participated a lot more than girls either by asking for instructions or by answering the teacher's questions. The teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys. The differences in reprimand and praise are small.

Lesson 7

In this lesson the teacher worked with the students on exercises about angles subtended on the circumference and angles subtended on the centre of the circle. The exercises were part of the unit: 'Angles subtended on the circumference'. The teacher had already focused on these concepts in the two previous lessons which I did not observe.

Overall, girls made fourteen contributions to the lesson and boys sixteen. But although girls and boys contributed almost the same number of times in this lesson, more boys than girls contributed. Tonia was the most active girl in the group, she contributed nine times, Evagelia who was one of the best students in the group contributed three times and Ilyriana twice. Dimitris contributed four times, another boy called Dimitris contributed twice, Apostolis, Giorgos and Thanasis also contributed each twice, four other boys contributed once each. Some examples of the boys' and girls' talk are listed below.

Dimitris (male): Sir, I'd like to sit there. (He can't see very well)

T: He nods to him.

T: Draw a circle of 3cm radius. Tonia (female) how many degrees is angle AMB?

Tonia: Half of the angle subtended at the circle of the centre, $AMB=65$.

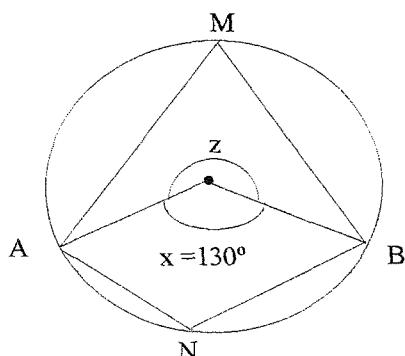
T: Dimitris, (the other Dimitris) what about the other angle?

Dimitris: 65.

T: No. Tonia?

Tonia: 360.

T: Correct, very good!



The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to girls four times (two to Tonia, one to Alexandra and one to Evagelia) and to boys six times (two to Giorgos, two to Thanasis, one to Stavros and one to Dimitris). All these students were addressed by their first names. Examples are given below.

T: What about the angles y and z, Giorgos? (He helps the student.)

Giorgos: 45.

T: Stavros, at the second shape, how many degrees is angle x?

Stavros: 45.

T: Come on now Stavros. (The answer is wrong, the teacher asks Thanasis.)

Thanasis: 90.

T: Excellent! (At this point the teacher explains to Evagelia how the correct answer was found. Evagelia had not asked for an explanation and she was a very competent student. Perhaps the teacher noticed something that was not perceived by the researcher.)

T: Angle s? Thanasis?

Thanasis: 90.

T: Very good! Angle z? Alexandra, whose performance is very low in all subjects and this had made me very sad! (She does not answer and Evagelia gives the correct answer.)

Alexandra was a very poor student and she was very quiet in all the subjects. The maths teacher and most of the teachers that I observed hardly ever made an effort to help her or to direct questions, or assign tasks to her. In this lesson the maths teacher directed a question at her but he did not give her a second chance and he did not offer her any help like he did with Giorgos, for instance.

The teacher reprimanded four girls six times. Tonia was reprimanded three times for misbehaving, two girls for not sitting properly and Alexandra for her performance. He reprimanded six boys thirteen times. Apostolis was reprimanded five times for misbehaving, Spyros twice for the same reason, Stavros twice, for not paying attention and for giving a wrong answer, Petros once for being noisy, Dimitris once for giving a

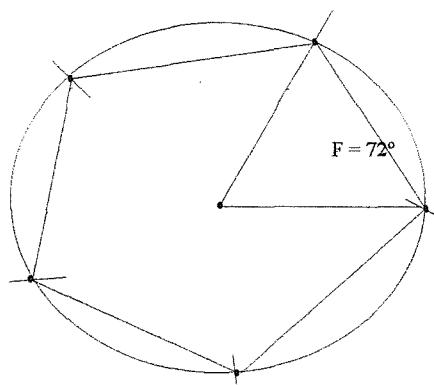
wrong answer and once for misbehaving and the other Dimitris once for misbehaving. The teacher praised Tonia once and Thanasis twice for their answers.

The strongest differences in this lesson occurred in the number of girls and boys who participated and also in the amount of reprimand that girls and boys received.

Lesson 8

In this lesson the teacher worked with the students on a regular pentagon ABCDE. In order to draw the pentagon the students had to draw a radius and then a central angle f . Then the students united all the points (ABCDE) and then they united these points with O, the centre of the circle. Then they had to find the perimeter and the area of the pentagon. In order to do that the teacher asked the students to work on the triangle inside the pentagon and to estimate the base and the height of the triangle. The teacher drew the shape on the board and he also wrote the formula. The students worked independently. The teacher not only gave instructions to the students but he also asked them questions and he checked the work of all the students.

Two girls, Elena and Tonia, made one contribution each and five boys made a total of six contributions to this lesson (Giorgos made two contributions, Petros, Leuteris and Spyros one each)). Some examples of the girls' and boys' contributions to this lesson are given below.



T: Today we are going to draw a regular pentagon. How are we going to draw a pentagon, Giorgos?

Giorgos: We are going to make radius and an angle.

T: What would be the name of this angle? (The question is directed at Giorgos again.)

Giorgos: Central angle.

T: So let's say $f=?$ Say it (he asks Giorgos again) and I will give you a very good mark for this term. (He does not reply so the teacher asks Alexandra who does not reply as well. Finally Petros answers the question.) $f=360/5=72$

T: Leuteris, the diameter. Do you remember the formula?

Leuteris: He gives a wrong answer.

T: No. $d=6$.

T: How are we going to find the area of the pentagon. Do you have any idea? Elena?

Elena: 5 3 which is the radius...

T: Something more simple. Spyros.

Spyros: He gives a wrong answer.

T: No. Tonia.

Tonia: We are going to find the area of the circle and then we will multiply it by 5.

T: Very good!

In total the teacher directed questions to girls three times and to boys five times. One of these girls did not reply and from the boys, Giorgos who was asked three questions answered only two of them. Two boys, Leuteris and Spyros gave wrong answers. Girls and boys were addressed by their first names three times in order to answer questions.

The teacher reprimanded three girls (Elena, Tonia and Antonia) for chatting and not paying attention. The teacher reprimanded three boys four times. He reprimanded Thanasis for not using a clean page for drawing, Stavros for not paying attention and Spyros twice, the first time for not paying attention and the second time for not working properly, for not using a pair of compasses. The teacher praised two girls, Tonia and Elena once each and one boy, Thanasis twice. Examples are given below.

T: It's perfect! (The circle that Tonia drew.)

T: Yours too Elena!

T: Good! (The teacher means the shape of the student. He checks the shapes that all the students drew.)

T: He writes on the board: $A = \frac{1}{2} b h$

A of the triangle = $\frac{1}{2} l a$ (stands for the area of the circle)

A of the pentagon = $5 \frac{1}{2} l$

5 l equals what?

Thanasis: The perimeter of a rectangular.

T: Perfect! A of the polygon = $1/2 p$ of the rectangular $a = 18 \cdot 1.8/2 = 16.2 \text{ cm}^2$

Boys contributed more than girls in this lesson. Also the teacher directed more questions to boys. The differences in reprimand and praise were small.

Lesson 9

In this lesson the teacher and the students worked on revision exercises because the teacher was planning to give them a test the following week. The exercises were related to equations and inequations.

In total four girls (Ilyriana, Evangelia, Antonia and Tonia) contributed each once and four boys contributed a total of seven times. Apostolis contributed twice, Giorgos contributed three times, Thanasis and Stavros contributed once each. Examples of girls' and boys' contributions to the lesson follow.

T: We are going to do some advanced exercises from chapter 2. (The teacher writes on the board) $3-5x/3 = x-1/2-13x/6$. Has anyone got the solving instruction for equations? Open your book. (The solving instructions are in the textbook.) Ilyriana read the instructions.

T: Now, we are going to find the Lowest Common Multiple: 3 2 6 | 2

T: Stavros, $3-5x/3$ what am I going to multiply that by? 3 1 3 | 3

Stavros: 2. 1 1 1 | 6

Apostolis: Sir, I did not understand that.

T: He explains it to him.

Tonia: Sir, there is another way to do it. (Tonia explains her idea.)

T: Yes, it's correct.

Evagelia: Shouldn't we write -0?

T: No 'my girl'! 0 cannot take- (The teacher is being sarcastic, probably because the student ought to know the answer.)

T: Apostolis, tell me something when a number changes side, does the sign of the number change as well?

Apostoli: Yes.

T: Thanasis, why have I added -6-9?

Thanasis: Because their signs were positive.

T: Antonia, clean the board. (When she finishes the teacher writes on board.)

$$\frac{+2}{3} = \frac{11}{12} - \frac{2+1}{4}$$

T: Giorgos, are you going to help me solve this?

Giorgos: We are going to find the LCM which is 12.

3	12	4	2
3	6	2	
3	3	1	
1	1	12	

T: Perfect! Go on Giorgos. What am I going to multiply the first fraction with?

Giorgos: 12.

T: Come on, don't disappoint me.

Giorgos: 4.

In total the teacher initiated directed questions and assigned tasks to girls (Ilyriana and Antonia) twice and to boys (Stavros, Apostolis, Thanasis, and Giorgos) four times. All these students were addressed by their first names. Ilyriana was asked to read the solving instructions in the textbook and later Antonia was asked to erase the sentences on the board. As far as boys are concerned the teacher asked them questions about the exercises and he gave them a chance to participate, to say what they think. Boys were given a chance to express their ideas whereas girls were asked to do jobs. Also the

teacher was very helpful with Giorgos who was a very poor student. The teacher gave him another chance after his wrong answer (see above). Giorgos was the only student who was praised by the teacher for his correct answer. The teacher reprimanded girls four times and boys six times. Examples follow.

T: Tonia (female)! (She is chatting.)

T: Elena (female), sit in a more proper way please!

T: Giorgos and Kostas (both male), pay attention here! Elena, you are not paying attention. Stavros (male), you too! (a little bit later) Stavros, I'm doing this lesson for you and you are not paying attention! (The teacher is angry.)

T: (He says this to the boy who is sitting next to Giorgos.) Don't help him! (Now the teacher addresses another boy, Spyros, who is sitting at the first desk) Stop it! I didn't ask you to sit there so that you can talk more. I cannot believe that you have the nerve to do such a thing!

T: I'm fed up with you Dimitris (male)! (He has been chatting and making a lot of noise for quite some time.)

In this lesson the same number of girls and boys participated in the lesson, but boys contributed more than girls. The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to boys more times and he addressed boys more times than girls by their first names in order to answer questions or perform tasks. He also reprimanded boys more times than girls.

Lesson 10

In this lesson the teacher spent a lot of time on informing the students what they should read for the final exams and also on commenting on the students' absences during the whole academic year. The teacher presented a revision exercise related to the Pythagorean theorem. He asked the students to draw an isosceles triangle and the height and then to calculate the area of the triangle.

In this lesson there were not many interactions between the teacher and the students. Girls spoke more than boys in this lesson. Five girls (Ilyriana spoke twice, Evangelia, Tonia another girl spoke once each) spoke a total six times whereas boys did not

contribute at all. The teacher directed questions or assigned tasks to boys (Michalis, Kostas, Giorgos and Petros) four times. He addressed all these boys by their first names. Examples are given below.

T: Michalis, please go the classroom of B2 to see if I have left a book there.

F: Sir, are we going to study everything from chapter 1?

T: Yes.

Alexandra: Sir, why have you written chapter 3 twice?

T: Because I want you to study only some units from chapter 3. Kostas, Giorgos, Petros, have you seen what you have to study? (These students were not chatting or laughing, still the teacher wanted to make sure that they had heard his instructions, either because he did not trust them or because he was really concerned about these students.)

Evagelia: Sir, on the day we are examined in maths are we going to be examined in another lesson as well?

T: I don't think so.

F: Sir, how many exercises are you going to give us in the final test?

T: Probably two.

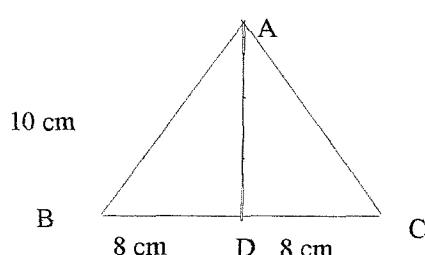
T: (The teacher draws an isosceles triangle) The height is also?

Ilyriana: The perpendicular?

T: Yes. We are going to use the Pythagorean theorem. Are we going to use - or +?

Ilyriana: -.

T: Yes.



$$AD^2 = AC^2 - DC^2$$

$$AD^2 = 10^2 - 8^2$$

$$AD^2 = 100 - 64$$

$$AD^2 = 36$$

$$AD = \sqrt{36}$$

$$AD = 6$$

$$A = \frac{b \cdot h}{2} \Rightarrow A = \frac{16 \cdot 6}{2} \Rightarrow A = \frac{96}{2} \Rightarrow A = 48 \text{ cm}^2$$

The teacher did not praise any of the students in this lesson, but he reprimanded one girl, Tonia, and three boys (Thanasis, Leuteris and Dimitris) for misbehaving.

Examples follow.

T: Tonia where are you going? Sit down! (Tonia is standing and she is walking towards the door without asking for permission from the teacher.)

T: Thanasis, sit properly! (Thanasis is very laid back at his chair.)

T: Leuteris, don't fold your book!

T: Dimitris! (He is chatting.)

In this lesson only girls made verbal contributions in this lesson. But the teacher directed questions and tasks only to boys and he seemed to be very concerned about some boys. He also reprimanded boys a little bit more than girls.

Conclusions

Boys' overall participation was higher than girls. Girls participated a total of sixty-one times and boys a total of seventy-eight times. In seven lessons (lesson one, two, five, six, seven, eight, nine) boys participated more than girls, though the differences were not great, except for lesson six. In one lesson (three), girls and boys participated equally and in two lessons (four and ten) girls participated more than boys. Although the names of all the students who participated in the lessons were not recorded, some

students seemed to be very active such as Tonia, Evangelia and Ilyriana and from the boys: Giorgos, Thanasis, Apostolis, Stavros and Dimitris.

The teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to boys more times than he did to girls. He directed questions and assigned tasks to girls a total of twenty-two times and to boys a total of fifty times. In seven lessons (one, two, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten) the teacher directed questions and assigned tasks to boys more times. In lessons four and five he directed questions and assigned tasks to girls more times than he did to boys but the differences are small. In lesson three the teacher did not ask any questions.

Boys were addressed by their first names more times than girls in order to answer questions and perform tasks. Girls were addressed by their first names a total of thirteen times and boys a total of twenty-nine times. In most of the lessons (lesson one, two, five, six, seven, nine and ten) the teacher addressed boys more times than girls by their first names, though the differences are small in most of these lessons. In total Tonia was addressed five times, Elena, Evangelia and Alexandra twice each and Ilyriana and Antonia only once each. As far as boys are concerned, Giorgos was addressed seven times, Dimitris five, Thanasis and Stavros three each, Apostolis, Michalis, Leuteris, Spyros and Petros twice each and Kostas only once, in order to answer questions or perform tasks.

In all the lessons I observed with the maths teacher boys were reprimanded more. Girls were reprimanded a total of twenty-five times and boys a total of fifty-eight times. Girls and boys were mainly reprimanded for not paying attention or chatting during the lesson. Girls were reprimanded six times for giving wrong answers or not doing good work in the classroom and boys were reprimanded eight times for the same reason. Although the names of all the students who were reprimanded were not recorded, some of the students who were reprimanded were Elena, Evangelia, Alexandra, Tonia and Antonia (all female). All the boys were reprimanded throughout the ten maths lessons.

Overall, girls were praised a total of six times for their contributions and boys a total of thirteen times. Although the differences are very small, in four lessons, (one, two, six, seven and nine) boys got more praise than girls. In one lesson (four) girls got more praise and in three lessons the teacher did not praise any students. Also in one lesson girls and boys were praised the same number of times.

By directing questions and assigning tasks to boys more times and by reprimanding and praising them more than girls, the teacher showed overall more attention to boys.

Additionally on many occasions the maths teacher seemed to be interested in the participation of some boys. In lesson one the teacher did not ask Tonia to report any of the results of the divisions, who had already done at home. Instead he preferred Petros to try to do them in the class, by using a calculator. In lesson two the teacher directed the same question to Dimitris five times and he was very persistent, helpful and patient with him. A similar incident never occurred with a female student. In the same lesson he also praised Dimitris for a very simple, easy answer. In lesson three the maths teacher, although he answered the questions of all the male students he did not answer the questions of two female students. What is also interesting is the teacher's concern and effort to attract the attention of some male students, Giorgos and Stavros, in many lessons.

Conclusions from the observations with the five teachers

The analysis of the observations with all the teachers has shown that boys overall participation was higher than the participation of girls in four subjects: modern Greek, religious education, English and maths. The overall participation of girls was higher than the overall participation of boys only in physics lessons.

Overall all teachers, except for the modern Greek teacher assigned more tasks and directed more questions to boys than girls. Also all the teachers except for the modern Greek teacher and the English teacher addressed boys by their first names more often than girls in order to answer questions and perform tasks.

Overall all teachers reprimanded boys more than girls for both their performance and their behaviour in the classroom. There were no important differences in the amount of praise that girls and boys received, except in the case of the maths teacher. He was the only teacher who overall praised boys a lot more than girls.

The analysis of the observations has also provided evidence that suggest that the modern Greek teacher was on some occasions more lenient with girls whereas the physics teacher seemed on some occasions to be more friendly and lenient with boys. There is also evidence which suggests that the English teacher was in a sense more lenient with boys on some occasions and on some others she was more lenient with girls. The only male teacher in this study, the maths teacher sometimes seemed to be very interested in the participation of boys.

All the issues mentioned in this section will be discussed in detail in the following chapter: Discussion of the findings and conclusions.

Chapter 7

Discussion of the findings and conclusions

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of this study and provides answers to the research questions (see page 4, chapter 1). It also compares the findings of this research with those of other studies related to teachers' perceptions of gender and teacher-student interaction and discusses the limitations of this study. Finally I turn the attention to the contribution of this study and its implications for practice.

The subject of the study: Gender and teacher-student interaction

This study explored teacher-student classroom interaction in a mixed ability group in a working-class secondary school in Greece. It also explored the links between the teachers' behaviour in the classroom and their ideas about gender and, to a limited extent, their life experiences. It threw light on other issues, which provide insights of the gender construction in the school, such as the students' perceptions of their teachers, the principal's approach to gender equality, and the division of labour in relation to extra-curricular activities in the institution.

Teachers and gender

The analysis of the data provides evidence which suggests that it was only the modern Greek teacher who perceived gender as a social construction which has an impact on the students' behaviour in the classroom. The physics teacher and the religious education teacher did not seem to have stereotypical ideas about the abilities and the behaviour of students, or to know how gender can influence their teaching. The English teacher, the maths teacher (the only male teacher in my study) and to a bigger extent the principal, although they acknowledged the effect of social factors such as the parents' ideas, and the students' socio-economic background, on students' performance, achievement and identities, also ascribed different characteristics to female and male students and to women and men. Further they expressed the belief that these differences are mainly innate or related to the personality of an individual. Similar results were reported by Altani (1992) in her survey research in seventeen primary schools in Greece. Although some of the teachers who took part in her study referred to socialisation as a reason for gender differences, the majority of the teachers explained gender differences in terms of biology. Most of the teachers in her study did not see gender as a factor which plays an important factor in children's socialisation and schooling.

In the present research, the modern Greek teacher and the physics teacher focused on some issues which might be detrimental for girls such as the absence of a girl-friendly curriculum and the unintentional sexist comments of some teachers. However, overall

the respondents viewed education as an area which is generally neutral as far as gender is concerned. They placed the emphasis, relating to gender inequality, on the traditional ideas about women and men in Greek society and on those areas which show striking gender inequality, such as employment in many sectors. Notions of education as an egalitarian place in which gender is a non-issue have been reported by other researchers in primary, secondary education and higher education. Such notions might reflect stereotyped ideas about the sexes or lack of awareness of gender issues or perhaps unwillingness to acknowledge sexism when people do not have the strength or support to fight against it (Skelton, 1985; Whyte, 1986; Maguire, 1993).

The findings of my study suggest that there is a contradiction or disparity between the respondents' idea that gender cannot pervade education in the way it pervades other areas, and the accounts they provided about their experience as teachers. First, all the female respondents referred to sexist or problematic behaviour of some male principals with whom they worked in the past, but they all emphasised the importance of an individual's personality and not of gender, in personal and professional relationships. Additionally one female respondent, the modern Greek teacher referred to conflict between her and her female colleagues in the past, which according to her, had arisen due to her close relationship with her male colleagues and the informal way she related to students. The principal referred to other problems in the relationships among women: such as competition and lack of honesty. Perhaps these two women faced problems in the relationships with other women because of their dynamic personality or other differences between them and other women. Two female respondents, the English teacher and the principal, referred to men's potential sexual interest in them as an obstacle in relationships with male colleagues. Also two female respondents, the modern Greek teacher and the English teacher, believed that if they were male they would behave differently as teachers, and would even be perceived differently by their students. Additionally three female respondents, the modern Greek teacher, the religious education teacher and the principal, referred to differential treatment of female and male students at the University where they studied. Yet, according to all the respondents, gender inequality was not so much of a problem in education.

Teachers and equality in the school

The respondents' belief that education is a more egalitarian place for women might be related to the fact that the respondents focused mainly on direct discrimination and not on indirect, subtle sexism and discrimination. It is possible that all the respondents saw education as a safe working environment for women, in which they could relate to many other women and in which they would not have to face extreme situations which could arise perhaps in traditionally masculine occupations. Moreover in public education teachers have a stable and secure job and until recently the only criterion for the teachers' appointment in public schools, was a degree from a Faculty of Pedagogy (Pigiaki, 1999). Perhaps these two factors contributed to the teachers' notion that schools are better places to work, as compared perhaps with private institutions, which set higher demands and which do not provide stability and security like the public institutions. Also perhaps the respondents viewed schools as more 'humane' working places where discrimination could not pervade the relationship with young children (Riddell, 1988).

The respondents did not seem to be aware of issues which provide evidence of indirect or institutional sexism in the particular school where the research was carried out. None of the respondents referred to their teaching, to students' traditional gender-related likes and aspirations and to the unequal division of labour in the school, as factors which might reflect or contribute to gender inequality. The analysis of the observations has shown that all the teachers had different attitudes towards female and male students in group B3. This had important consequences for the students of B3, as I shall discuss later on. Evidence from the questionnaires that the students completed suggests that female students had stereotypical feminine likes and educational and professional aspirations and male students had stereotypical masculine likes and educational and professional aspirations. Among the female and male students of B3 there were also small differences in their leisure activities, the obligations they had at home and the way they perceived their teachers, yet the school did not address any of the gender issues. Similar differences in the leisure activities (mainly sports) and the responsibilities (mainly housework) of girls and boys were also reported by Collins et al., (1996) in their study at primary and secondary level. Differences were also

reported by Furlong et al., (1990) in their study with young people (aged nineteen). Young women spent more time on reading books or out visiting friends and young men spent more time playing sports.

Perhaps the teachers and the principal were not aware of the differences in students' likes, aspirations, obligations and responsibilities or perhaps they did to some extent, but they perceived these differences as natural or as not as important as other issues in the school, such as the problematic behaviour of some students or the students' unprivileged backgrounds. Also none of the respondents seemed to have realised that more female teachers and female students were involved in the extra-curricular activities of the school than male teachers and male students, and that even when males were involved they performed traditionally male tasks, such as football training.

The teacher respondents were also not aware of some other, more general issues such as the limited participation of women in higher posts in Greek education or the traditional choices of female and male students in Greek secondary schools and Universities (see page 15, chapter 1). One should perhaps not expect or demand from teachers that they actively seek such information themselves.

Gender was an important categorising and organising factor for both teachers and students in the school although neither teachers nor students expressed this explicitly. Perhaps the respondents did not really take on board this role of gender or perhaps some things had become so natural and embedded in the routine of everyday life that almost no one tried to challenge them. In any case the analysis of the data does not provide evidence to suggest that any of the respondents, except for the modern Greek teacher, were involved in any way in the promotion of gender equality either in the past or in the school where this research was carried out. But the promotion of gender equality in schools is not only or mainly the teachers' responsibility. The teacher respondents were brought up in contexts which offered them different resources but also restrained them in many ways.

Teachers and their life experiences

The physics teacher and the maths teacher (the only male teacher who took part in this research) who were two of the oldest respondents (the principal was the oldest of all) did not feel that gender was an important factor in their personal and professional lives. They both highlighted other important issues in their lives: the physics teacher referred to the emphasis that her community put on preserving Greek ethnic identity and Christian-Orthodox religion and the maths teacher referred to the restless period of the dictatorship as a defining factor in young people's lives. Neither of them felt that gender had influenced their lives in a negative way, and overall they did not seem to feel bitter, angry or disappointed as a result of gender discrimination or gendered upbringing and lack of opportunities. Although the principal mentioned the fact that when she was young, it was difficult for women in Greek society to challenge dominant ideas and make different choices, she believed that gender was not really an important factor in her relationship with her parents and later in her relationship with her husband.

For the younger teachers, the modern Greek teacher, the religious education teacher and the English teacher, gender seems to have had a larger effect, but in different ways. Evidence from the interviews suggests that the modern Greek teacher felt that the traditional ideas and expectations of her parents defined the relationship she had with them and caused conflict, bitterness and guilt. Perhaps all these factors made her sensitive to gender issues and later provoked a sense of resistance both in her personal and professional relationships. The other two young teachers, the religious education teacher and the English teacher, did not experience such intense situations. In particular the religious education teacher was very happy with the way her parents treated her but she acknowledged the fact that being a single woman in a traditional society can be restrictive or restraining some times and positive in some other circumstances. The English teacher felt free in her parents' family but she was not happy about the preference that her parents showed to the male child of the family, her brother. This teacher felt strongly about her experience as a female secretary in the past, when she had been treated unfairly.

Although the teacher respondents did not comment on all of the issues, nevertheless the analysis of the interviews has provided some interesting insights into the respondents' lives. First, although they all said that responsibilities were equally divided in their families, the evidence suggests that the female respondents, even the ones who were not married or had children, had slightly more responsibilities than the male teacher and also that the female respondents had different likes from the male teacher. Of course the information about the respondents' lives is limited and there was only one male respondent with whom comparisons could be made. Second, although all the parents of the respondents had mainly traditional roles in their families, none of the respondents, except perhaps for the modern Greek teacher, seemed to think that things might have been different in those years. Or perhaps the traditional female and male roles in the family became part of everyday life and therefore natural for the respondents.

Another important issue is the professional choices of the respondents and the way they felt about their job as teachers. All the female respondents except for the English teacher had become teachers out of the love for children and the need to offer something good to children, whereas for the male teacher it was a decision which was based on financial reasons. All the research participants, except for the religious education teacher, who was not an experienced teacher, and the physics teacher who was an experienced teacher, identified advantages and disadvantages of their job, but it was only the maths teacher (male) who seemed to be unsatisfied because of the pay. He was also the only respondent who mentioned not appreciating the teaching profession when he was young.

Teachers' behaviour in the classroom--explanations and consequences

Evidence from the observations shows that all the teachers behaved differently towards girls and boys in group B3. All the teachers, except for the modern Greek teacher, directed more questions at boys and assigned more tasks to boys. The modern Greek teacher directed more questions to boys. The differences were strong for all the teachers but they were strongest in the case of the religious education teacher. The strong difference in the amount of questions and tasks that the English teacher

assigned to boys is partly associated with the difference in the sex ratio in group B3 (the group consisted of four girls and seven boys whereas in the lessons with all the other teacher the group consisted of eleven girls and eleven boys).

For all the teachers, except for the modern Greek teacher, the most common way to direct questions or assign tasks to students was by looking at the students or by addressing them by their first name. The physics teacher, the religious education teacher and the maths teacher in very few cases addressed some male students by their surname in order to assign tasks or direct questions to them. The English teacher used the boys' surnames more often than the other teachers.

The modern Greek teacher addressed students with their first name in order to assign a task or direct a question to them more often than all the other teachers, and the religious education teacher less often than all the other teachers. Based on what the modern Greek teacher said about her previous experience as a teacher, she might have done that out of a belief that relationships with students should not be formal or distant. With the exception of the modern Greek teacher and the English teacher all the other teachers used the students' first names more often when they wanted to assign a task or to direct a question to male students than they did when they wanted to assign a task or to direct a question to female students. The highest number of girls who were addressed by their first name in order to answer questions or perform a task was recorded in the observations with the modern Greek teacher.

In the case of the English teacher the analysis of the observations has shown that this teacher often used the students' surnames when she wanted to assign a task or to direct a question to male students, but she never did that with any of the female students in the group. Addressing a student with her/his surname is certainly more formal and less friendly in Greek classrooms. Perhaps the English teacher wanted to keep a distance or to show that she was strict with the boys who used to misbehave a lot and cause trouble in her lessons. She also might have thought that because girls seemed to be quieter than boys, they deserved softer, nicer treatment.

There were also students who were never addressed by their first name when they were required to answer questions or perform tasks. The analysis of the observations has shown that in all the subjects except for English (there were only four girls in the group) and modern Greek, it was rather girls than boys who were not addressed by their first name. The highest number of girls who were not addressed by their first name in order to answer questions or perform a task was recorded in the religious education lessons. This is related to the fact that boys would often call out answers without the teacher's permission to speak, and also to the teacher's unwillingness to encourage girls or boys who did not participate in the discussions. The religious education teacher saw the overall performance of the group as poor and explicitly said that she preferred working with those few students who seemed to be interested in her subject.

Another important point is the performance of the students who were addressed with their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks. In the subject of modern Greek all the students who were mentioned by the teacher as intelligent, good or hardworking (interview, May 1998) were addressed by their first name when called on to answer questions or perform tasks but some other students who were not good, were also addressed by their first name when so called on. In the lessons with the modern Greek teacher the very good students of the group, Evangelia (female) and Thanasis and Petros (both male), were addressed by their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks more often than all the other students in the group.

In the physics lessons of all the students that the teacher had mentioned as intelligent, good or hardworking (interview, May 1998), all the males and almost all the females were addressed by their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks. There were also few female and male students who were not mentioned by the teacher as good or hardworking and they were addressed by their first name in order to answer questions or perform tasks. A male student, Dimitris, of whom the physics teacher was very fond, was addressed by his first name more times than any other student in the group.

The religious education teacher addressed by their first name all the male students whom she mentioned as intelligent or good in the interview, but not all the female students whom she mentioned as intelligent or interested in her subject.

The English teacher's case was different. The fact that her group was actually half as compared with the other teachers, gave her the opportunity to direct questions and assign tasks to all the female and male students. Either by using their first name or their surname she addressed all the male students of the group whom she identified as very good students (interview, May 1998).

The maths teacher, the only male teacher in this study, in order to ask questions and assign tasks, addressed by their first name all the male students, whom he mentioned as good, intelligent or hardworking, but not all the female students whom he mentioned as good intelligent or hardworking in the interview I had with him. A male student, Giorgos, whose performance was poor (diary, 1998) was addressed with his first name in order to perform tasks and answer questions more often than any other student in group B3.

The evidence suggests that all the five teachers worked with the students they thought were good, intelligent or hardworking, but they also worked with some of the students who were not so good. So perhaps in that sense the differential treatment of good and bad students that the students of B3 mentioned in their questionnaires existed to some extent; but the evidence suggests that there was also differential treatment of girls and boys, which the students had not perceived or perhaps did not think of as important. This data suggest that there were differences in the way that teachers used first names in order to address girls and boys although the picture is a complex one. In any case it should not be forgotten first that the evidence about the students' performance is based only on the teachers' comments and second that it was not always easy for me to record the names of all the students who contributed in the lessons.

Another important difference in the behaviour of teachers towards girls and boys was the amount of reprimand that they directed at girls and boys. All the teachers reprimanded boys more than girls but the maths teacher and the English teacher

reprimanded boys a lot more than all the other teachers. Also the maths teacher reprimanded girls a lot more than all the female teachers. Perhaps the maths teacher (male) felt that he should not be tolerant and also that he had to be more strict than his female colleagues when his authority was challenged. The fact that there were only seven boys in the group makes the problem that the English language teacher had with her male students look even worse. All the teachers reprimanded boys a lot more than girls for things such as chatting, not paying attention, being rude and laughing. Also all the teachers, except for the religious education teacher, reprimanded boys more times than girls for their answers or for not doing work in the classroom. However, the differences were not as strong as they were in the amount of reprimand that girls and boys received for their misbehaviour. Although information about each individual student is not available, limited evidence suggests that the male students who were identified in the interviews with the teachers as naughty were actually the most noisy students in the group. This was not the case though with the maths teacher who described the whole group as restless, but the evidence from the observations suggests that it was boys who were actually more naughty than girls.

Differences in the number of times that girls and boys were reprimanded for not giving answers, for their homework or for their work in the classroom occurred in the modern Greek lessons, physics lessons and the English lessons but they were not as strong as the ones described earlier. The modern Greek teacher's more lenient and supportive attitude towards girls might have resulted from her perception of boys as more confident and talkative than girls. The physics teacher reprimanded boys more often than boys about their answers because as the evidence from the observations suggest, boys did not seem to study as hard as girls. But, when students did not perform well, the physics teacher seemed to be more lenient with male students than with female students. Overall she seemed to be closer and more friendly with boys. Perhaps she was generally more tolerant with men (diary, April 1998). In the case of the English teacher the differences are too strong to be explained mainly by the sex ratio in the group. Evidence from the interviews suggests that the English teacher expected boys but not girls to be exceptionally intelligent and to perform well and girls but not boys to be polite and quiet. Evidence from the observations also suggests that the English language teacher was not capable of coping with the boys' misbehaviour or

even of protecting the girls of the group from this misbehaviour. Yet, although she reprimanded boys more than girls, she was, in a sense perhaps, lenient with male students because their misbehaviour and lack of work warranted even more reprimands. On the other hand on few occasions the English language teacher seemed to be more lenient and helpful with girls perhaps because she believed that girls, who according to her were not as intelligent as boys but nevertheless they were quieter than boys, should be in a way rewarded for their obedience.

The physics teacher praised her students more than all the other teachers, and the religious education teacher praised her students less than all the other teachers who participated in my study. None of the teachers praised their students a lot. The amount of praise that all the teachers directed at their students was less than the amount of reprimand they directed to them, except for the physics teacher who praised girls, but not boys, more than reprimanding them. There were not however on the whole important differences in the amount of praise that girls and boys received by their teachers, except in the lessons with the maths teacher. He praised boys more than girls. This might be related to the maths teacher's idea that generally boys are not as responsible as girls with their work and do not study as hard as girls, so that perhaps he felt that he had to motivate boys by praising their work. The analysis of the observations suggests that the maths teachers seemed to be more interested in attracting boys' attention in the classroom and improving their performance. The English teacher directed the same amount of praise at girls and boys, but there were fewer girls in her group, so it seems that the amount of praise that girls received was proportionally higher than the amount of praise that boys received. This teacher believed that almost all the boys in the group were better students than the girls, but perhaps because she was not on very good terms with the male students of B3, she was reluctant to praise them.

There seem to be connections between the teachers' ideas and their practices. The modern Greek teacher might have tried intentionally with her actions to encourage girls to participate in the lessons, because she was aware of the domination of boys in her classrooms and she was also more sensitive than the other teachers to equality issues. Although the physics teacher believed that teachers should do something about

sex differences there is no evidence to suggest that she knew how differences between girls and boys functioned in teacher-student interaction and what consequences they might have. But nevertheless she tried to improve the performance of boys by encouraging them to participate, perhaps because as the evidence from the observations suggests, girls were more responsible than boys with their homework so that the physics teacher might have felt that boys were being left behind. The religious education teacher was generally not interested in changing gender or performance and participation patterns in her classes. This teacher's apathy was evident in her teaching style. The English language teacher and the maths teacher (the only male teacher) had some stereotypical notions about the behaviour of girls and boys and it might be that these ideas were related to the attention that these two teachers gave to boys. Hence the evidence suggests that there were differences in teachers' behaviour towards girls and boys. There is also some evidence that such behaviour may be related to differences in the way teachers perceived girls and boys. Moreover, teachers' different behaviour probably had different consequences for girls and boys. Evidence from the observations shows that the overall participation of male students was higher than the overall participation of female students in all the subjects I observed, except for the subject of physics. The differences were stronger in the religious education lessons and the English lessons. Smaller differences occurred in the modern Greek lessons and the maths lessons. It should be borne in mind that I observed less than ten lessons with the modern Greek teacher and the English teacher.

There seems to be a connection between the higher participation of boys and the amount of tasks or questions that the teachers asked the female and male students. However, although the modern Greek teacher directed more questions to girls, it was boys and not girls who overall participated more and although the physics teacher directed more questions and assigned more tasks to boys it was girls and not boys who participated more. In the first case (modern Greek teacher) evidence from the observations suggests that the higher participation of boys might be related to the higher participation of boys in the discussion-analysis of the text, during which it was easier for boys to call out answers or to express freely their ideas without having to be nominated by the teacher, whereas in the first part of the lesson, when the teachers

checked the students' homework, the students would usually speak after having been nominated by the teacher.

In the second case (physics teacher) things were different, because there was a lot of homework to be checked, and many times male students did not manage to make contributions probably because they had not studied.

In the case of the religious education teacher three things worked against girls. First the extremely small amount of questions that were directed to female students, second the fact that many lessons did not involve homework, which might have given girls a chance to contribute more and third the fact that the religious education teacher was not really interested in controlling the situation in her group which overall seemed more restless than it was during the modern Greek or physics lessons.

In the case of the English teacher although the sex ratio in the group influenced the outcome, the fact that the male students often contributed to the lesson in order to annoy the teacher, whom they seem to dislike, made the differences in the participation of girls and boys even bigger. In the maths lessons there was no homework to be checked and students did most of the work during class.

In general boys dominated the lessons either by participating more in almost all the subjects or by attracting the teachers' attention with their misbehaviour. The evidence from the questionnaires suggests that the students were not aware of the teachers' differential treatment. Either the students had not perceived the differences in teacher-student interaction, or perhaps they were interested in other things such as the quality of the lessons, or the personality of the teacher. Neither girls nor boys chose the modern Greek teacher, who tried to give girls a better chance, as their most favourite teacher. Moreover the students of B3 did not notice any forms of gender discrimination and did not seem to view gender as an important factor in teacher-student interaction.

In a study of children's views about their teachers (Cullingford, 1993), secondary students did not perceive gender as a salient factor but they did highlight the fact that

sometimes boys are treated differently from girls for the same actions which to some extent was justified due to the differences in the behaviour of girls and boys. Children bring to school their own stereotyped ideas. These might be more gender stereotyped in a traditional male dominated society and even be reinforced if schools do not take any action.

Other factors affecting teachers' behaviour

Other factors which might have had an impact on the teachers' behaviour in the classroom apart from the teachers' perceptions and the sex ratio in the case of the English teacher, are the principal's lack of involvement in the promotion of equality in the school, the lack of support and in-service education for the teachers and the low status of the school. Evidence suggests that the principal did not encourage teachers to organise activities which could promote gender equality in the school , possibly because she perceived sex differences as mainly innate (interviews, December 1998) and also because of her experience as a teacher. According to her, girls dominated the lessons in her classes in the past. Additionally she thought that women were capable of solving the problem of inequality themselves. Another negative factor was that the teachers had never been involved in any research or training about equal opportunities or sex discrimination either as student teachers or later as teachers. Also, although sex equality was established by law in Greek education, the Ministry of Education or other institutions had not offered effective guidance or support to the teachers in the school in order to raise their consciousness and to help them to make their school a more egalitarian place. Last, the non-intellectual and low economic background of the students might have attracted the attention of the teachers more than other perhaps more subtle issues such as gender and gender differences which teachers and students alike might have seen as 'natural'.

Conclusions about this study and similarities with other studies

The main points coming out of this research are: first, the teachers' different expectations for girls and boys, second the way these expectations were expressed in teachers' practices and in particular the differential treatment of girls and boys in the

classroom and third the consequences of the teachers' actions. Teachers' general lack of awareness or low level of awareness of gender as an organising and categorising factor in children's behaviour and generally in schooling-combined with their largely tacit assumptions about gender-probably influenced the way that teachers related to girls and boys in the classroom. Sikes (1993) and Altani (1992) also found that teachers had different perceptions and expectations of their students, and other authors such as Lafrance (1991) and Robinson (1992), have supported the idea that teachers express their ideas in their practices.

Whether intentionally or unintentionally the teachers treated girls and boys differently. On the whole, boys got more of the teachers' attention and dominated the classes by answering more questions and performing more tasks than girls, by being addressed by their first name more often than girls and by receiving negative comments either for their behaviour or their work.

Many studies have supported the same idea, that boys get more attention in the classroom (Kelly, 1986; Morgan and Dunn, 1990; Younger et al., 1999). In my study, although misbehaviour was an important factor in teacher-student interaction, it was not the only reason for boys' domination in the classroom. On the whole the teachers except for the modern Greek teacher, showed more attention to boys by asking them to answer more questions and to perform more tasks, or in some cases by being more tolerant, friendly or lenient with boys. Grima and Smith (1993) also found that teachers directed more questions to boys, chose more boys than girls to answer questions and called on more male students. Although the results of many studies have shown differences in the amount of reprimand and praise (Altani, 1992; Merett and Wheldall, 1992) that girls and boys received, overall, in my study important differences occurred only in the amount of reprimand that girls and boys received both for their behaviour and performance. Teachers praised less than they reprimanded and there were very little differences in the extent to which girls and boys were praised. The only exception was the maths teacher who praised boys more than girls.

The attention of teachers to boys resulted in most cases in boys' higher participation in the classroom. That might have serious consequences for girls. Altani (1992), in the study mentioned earlier, found that boys not only took up more turns and were more competitive than girls in all the four primary classes she observed, but also that the majority of primary teachers in her study identified participation in the classroom as the most important factor for evaluating the students' performance. By encouraging boys to participate or by not doing anything in order to control boys' domination in the classroom, teachers may not only deprive girls of opportunities to improve their performance but also of opportunities to speak, to express ideas and perhaps improve their verbal ability, their confidence in presenting and defending ideas in front of an audience. Even when girls do better than boys, and nowadays they do in many levels of education in Greece and in England (see chapter 2) girls are often passive in the classroom but they learn on their own. This kind of learning might not be so effective or useful for women's confidence or future careers (Luke, 1994).

Limitations of this study and suggestions for future research

This study focused on gender and teacher-student interaction and attempted to explore possible explanations of the teachers' differential attitudes in the classroom. The study provided information about different patterns of interaction between teachers and girls and boys as groups. It would have been useful and perhaps it would have given new insights if there had been extensive information about the patterns of interaction with individual students in group B3. Although this was not the focus of my study, there is limited evidence about the interactions of teachers with individual girls and boys.

In this study I highlighted the fact that the boys' overall participation was higher in almost all the subjects that I observed and it was partly related to the different attitudes that teachers had towards female and male students. The analysis of the students' talk was not the focus of this study but still the evidence suggests that although boys participated more than girls, their talk was not always related to academic questions. So perhaps future research can focus on the quality and effect of boys' higher verbal participation on girls' and boys' learning and performance and also on the effect it might have on girls' and boys' personality development.

Another area which needs further research is the students' perceptions of gender and their views about equality in schools and society. In this study the students' perceptions were explored to a limited extent and in order to support or contradict the data that the observations provided. Future researchers could focus on students' perceptions of gender and explore explanations and consequences for teacher-student interaction or the students' future educational and professional choices.

Although this research provides useful insights of gender and indirect sexism in education, the small number of teachers who participated in the study does not allow for generalisations about the effect of factors such as the age of teachers, the subject they taught, and the teachers' background, on their perceptions of gender. Future researchers should look into these issues as well as into the effect of life experiences on the formation of teachers' identities. Moreover more research is needed in a variety of different schools and in a variety of places. Gender might be constructed differently in an upper-class school or in a rural school in Greece.

Contribution of this study and its implications for practice

Gender and indirect sexism is an area which has been neglected in Greek education and research (Eliou, 1995). In this research evidence has suggested that although officially equality in education and society has been established, girls are being excluded from many educational processes through the working of the hidden curriculum. What is more interesting is the lack of awareness of the salience of gender in all aspects of life. This is not to say that the respondents in this research were intentionally sexist, but perhaps in the society in which they grew up stereotyped ideas about gender were more rigid and the restraints stronger than they might have been in different contexts. So as a result, people have internalised dominant ideology and have learnt to perceive it as normal or natural even when the evidence might have suggested otherwise (Arnot, 1983; Figueroa, 1991). Since in everyday life individuals do gender with their actions by drawing on the dominant discourses, one wonders how powerful and traditional gender ideology has been in Greece even after the legal changes of the last two decades.

However, readers should not speculate that even in a restraining environment humans have no capacity for change. In this study evidence suggested that people can reflect on their actions and become conscious of gender and sexism. For instance the case of the modern Greek teacher suggested that sometimes intense moments and strong experiences in a person's life help her/him towards personal understanding and gender consciousness, but unfortunately this is not always the case. This is why attention must be focused on the ideas of people that are expressed everywhere: in education, in the family, or at work, and which may have serious consequences. Teachers and generally those involved in education should be given opportunities either through training or in-service education to reflect on their lives and practices and to transform their identities and actions in ways that are creative not only for students but also for children.

Teachers and students should find a meaning in change in order to enforce new ideas and practices. For that we need more research and training in the area of gender and education in Greece. But we also need to take the matter of equality seriously and to escape naïve approaches which see legal provisions as the only answer needed to sex inequality. If the aim is egalitarian schools in which neither girls nor boys are disadvantaged and excluded in any way, then we must realise that there is still a lot of work to be done.

I hope that this research can provide those who read it, whether they are teachers or not, with an opportunity to reflect on their lives and practices and I also hope since it is one of the very few pieces of work of some substance on gender and education in Greece, that it can draw the attention to what has been neglected for a long time in my country: the role of teachers in reforms and the importance of perceptions and ideas in everyday practices. As a feminist I hope I have contributed something, small but important, to the fight for the equality of sexes.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The research instruments

Oral history interviews (used with the five teachers and the principal)

- How long have you been teaching?
- Have you been teaching only in this school or also in others?
- What subjects are you eligible to teach?
- What is your age? (roughly between 30-40, 35-45, 40-50)
- Where were your parents born?
- Do you think that their place of origin had any effects on their personality or ideology?
- Where did your parents live most of their lives?
- Where were you born?
- Did you live there or did you move to another place?
- What was your parents' occupation?
- What are your parents' educational qualifications?
- How did your parents share obligations and responsibilities in the family?
- Having in mind the way you were raised would you consider your parents modern or traditional?
- What kind of responsibilities did you have at home?
- What rules did you have to follow as a child and later as a teenager?
- What rights did you have as a child and later as a teenager?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- Have your parents treated you in a any different way because of your sex?
- Have you ever felt oppressed because of your sex and in what way? (in your parents' family or now in your family, if you have one)?
- When did you choose to become a teacher ?
- Why did you choose to become a teacher?
- Where did you study?
- How was your life as a student?
- What was the participation of female and male students in your department?

- What comments could you make about the climate at your department, the interactions and the relationships between female and male students and between students and academics?
- Are you satisfied with your job at the moment (pay, status, enjoyment) ? If not why?
- Are you married?
- What is your wife's or husband's occupation?
- How do you share obligations and responsibilities at home (financial matters, housework, upbringing of children)?
- Where do you live?
- What are your professional plans for the future?
- How do you spend your free time with your children?
- What do you think of your children's future?
- What do you wish for your children's future?
- Have you ever participated in any research programme?

Semi-structured interviews (used with the five teachers and the principal)

- What do you do in your leisure time?
- Would you like to engage in any activities?
- Is there something you would like to do in your free time which is not possible and why?
- Do you have closer relationships with any colleagues at this school?
- (If yes) What things do you share in common with these people?
- Do you discuss only professional matters ?
- How would you describe your co-operation with female and male colleagues based on your experience in this school and in other schools where you worked before?
- In the schools you worked the majority of principals were women or men?
- Where any differences in the way you related to them?
- Have you ever thought in what way your life would be different if you were a man/woman?
- Who do you think is the best student (at your subject) in B3?
- Who are the most quiet, polite and obedient children in B3?
- The most intelligent children in the group?
- Are there any children who have potential but they do not work very hard?
- Are there any children who are very responsible with their work and they try hard to improve?
- Do you find any children in B3 more exciting and interesting to work with? Why?
- From your overall experience as a teacher can you focus and comment on any differences that you observed between girls' and boys' behaviour in the class?
- Should and could the school do anything to tackle these differences?
- Have you ever heard anything about the equal opportunities policy?
- Do you believe that it can bring positive changes to schools?
- During your studies at the university was there any subject about the equality of the sexes or the equal opportunity policy?
- Have you ever participated in any seminar or in-service education programme concerning gender equality in education?

- Do you believe that there is any kind of sex discrimination in education (curriculum, textbooks, organisation of the school, towards female and male teachers)?
- Do you think that the equality of the sexes has been achieved in the Greek society?

Questionnaire A (distributed to all the students of the school)

1. Where were you born?
2. How old are you?
3. What group and year are you in?
4. Where was your mother born?
5. Where was your father born?
6. What is your mother's occupation?
7. What is your father's occupation?
8. My mother has finished a)primary school b)gymnasium c)lyceum d)Institute of higher education d)university
9. My father has finished a)primary school b)gymnasium c)lyceum d)Institute of higher Education d)university
- 10.What job would you like to do in the future and why?
- 11.Circle your sex a)girl b)boy.

Questionnaire B (distributed to B3 only, it included the questions above plus the following six)

1. Who is your favourite teacher and why?
2. Who is your less favourite teacher and why?
3. Do you believe that the teachers who teach your group treat girls and boys in the same way? (Justify your answer, please)
4. What do you do in your free time?
5. What obligations and responsibilities do you have at home?
6. Do you believe that your mother and your father offer equally important things to your family? (Justify your answer, please)

Appendix 2

An extract from my diary

pp. 299-300

An extract from field notes of an observation with the physics teacher

pp. 301-302

(*μετα - τεχνολογίας ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας*)

11/3/98

Report now ought to be one of the
Borbonia in their case supervision and
recovery of Badminton (Participation in
the school-life) before it is to be
done. Once this is accepted, I will make
supervision in the
area.

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Score 20. Jisan se pike use they jinwool
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specie

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y de allí se va a la raíz de la caja que dice

I didn't see the two DCA receiving sites. I did see one to 1510. Era reported DCA said it's difficult to get a signal from the DCA receiving sites. DCA said they were to be used for the first time. DCA said they were to be used for the first time.

what is the effect of exaggeration?

5. Expression. what's the meaning of that.

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