

Teachers' perceptions regarding culturally diverse pupils within History education in an Intercultural Primary school in Greece

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1. The Research Plan

a. The Aim

At the heart of this research project was the intention to explore and investigate what teachers think about the culturally diverse pupils concerning History teaching and how they believe they deal with them through the teaching approaches they follow.

b. The Rationale

Dealing with linguistic and cultural diversity is thought a relatively '*new issue*' in Greece. This is due to a majority of Greeks, teachers included, that still tend to perceive ethnicity and language from a point of view of a homogenous nation in Europe. Recent political developments in Europe, along with changes in the sources, topics and methods of the social scientific endeavour, have made Greek researchers sensitive to issues of the construction of national self-images as opposed to images of national '*others*' (Koulouri and Ventouras, 1994). The principle of equivalence regarding cultural capital of people with different cultural background (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1970) that is to say migrants allocating a culture, which is for them as important as the culture of the '*reception community*' for its members, is not applicable in the Greek educational system. Remigrants' or foreigners' children who might come to the Greek school with knowledge, experiences and representations from two or even more cultural systems, are not given the chance to develop all these in an unhindered way.

Although it has been argued that plurality has been a constant but unrecognized mainly postmodern feature by European states (Coulby and Jones, 1995), many national educational systems endorse monocultural ideologies, monocultural '*habitus*' (Bourdieu, 1981; 1991) to promote rigid and predetermined national identities (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990; Green, 1997). Consequently, minority culture and History remain out of education owing to the hegemonic canon of national knowledge based mainly upon monolithic History education. The History curriculum has always held a primary position in the transmission of national identity and national values. History textbook has always been an important tool in this process, too (Preiswerk and Perrot 1978; Berghahn and Schissler, 1987; Maw 1991a; b; Coulby, 1995; Frangoudaki and Dragonas, 1997; Kapsalis *et al.*, 2000; Koulouri, 2001).

History teaching in Greece is currently undergoing profound changes: new syllabuses, new textbooks and new methods, but cultural diversity is not taken into serious consideration. Yet, the lack of appropriate instructive material, the non-existence of suitably shaped curricula and the insufficient briefing and training of instructive personnel are common features of the education for pupils of diverse cultural background. The principle of equal opportunities is exhausted through the creation of '*Reception Classes*', '*Preparatory Courses*' or '*Intercultural Schools*' where mainly Greek language and culture are taught and there is no recognition of cultural capital of those '*other*' pupils. Teachers that are forced by the educational discourse to abstain from such monocultural, monolingual and '*Hellenocentric*' educational policy, to

improvise and contribute in this way to the contradiction that characterises the educational action (Damanakis, 1998). The most recent legislation about intercultural education in Greece (2413/1996) (G.M.E.R.A., 1996) seems to attempt a radical break away from traditional perceptions, but from a total of 37 articles, only 4 articles have been devoted to '*intercultural education*' with the remainder of the text dealing with issues concerning the education of Greek Diaspora. These provisions do not seem to take into account any ideas promoted by '*cultural pluralism*', according to which the various value systems of individuals are considered to be of equal value and deserve the same respect in society (Katsikas and Politou, 1999; Dimitrakopoulos and Mavromatis, 2002). Greek schools do not cultivate critical dialogue or exchange of ideas among different cultures (Mouzelis, 1998), whereas the Greek History curriculum and textbooks remain highly ethnocentric (Koulouri, 1988; Millas, 1991; Frangoudaki and Dragonas, 1997; Avdela, 1998; 2000; Zambeta, 2000).

The perpetuation of the established groups' '*hegemony*' (Gramsci, 1971), as well as the marginalization of disadvantaged or segregated groups favours the reproduction of mainstream society's norms and values (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1970). The ethnocentric orientation of Greek History curriculum basically focuses on '*Western European civilizations*', whereas African and Asian ones are ignored and somewhat rejected (Frangoudaki and Dragonas, 1997). But, '*omissions and distortions of History play a major role in allowing gossip or stereotypes to become crystallised*' (Gundara, 2000, p.136). The exclusion of histories of minority groups from History curricula '*is part of an overtly or covertly assimilationist policy*' (Gundara, 2002, p.6). The teaching of History, much more so now than in the past, is challenged and called upon to provide a variety of perspectives and offer concepts on promoting human rights within the context of an intercultural education (Georgi, 2003).

History teaching has the potential to promote international understanding and to reduce racist misunderstandings within a culturally diverse society. It is also recognised as one of the key vehicles for citizenship education in a multicultural democracy (Osler, 2005). Teaching and studying the history of '*others*' from their own perspectives and for their own sake counteracts tendencies to insularity without devaluing local or national achievements, values and traditions (Bourdillon, 1994). Accommodating culturally diverse discourse in history education is an empowering and realistic strategy for teachers to show that all their pupils are equally appreciated. Steiner-Khamsi (1994) argues the need to fill in the gaps and break the silences in History education and textbooks by promoting a counter narrative that is not ethnically exclusive, and that does not scapegoat minorities.

Meanwhile, Höpken (1994) writes that the nation is constructed with a variety of identities and should be a mirror of all layers. Those who plan History curricula face a very complicated task. On the one hand, they need to take into account the identities of all the different groups within society. On the other, working within the state education systems, they need to develop a coherent and inclusive story of and for the '*nation*'. The question is what aspect of these differing histories to select and on what principles to make that selection. Thereby, it is incumbent on the teacher to try to ensure that all the children of all ethnic origins can make sense of a past that is their collective heritage (Davies, 1994). This is an important issue for younger children and for the teaching of History in contemporary multicultural Primary schools. Thus, History teaching at school seems torn between a scientific approach and the satisfaction of social and political needs.

Additionally, Edgington (1982) refers to the '*healing powers of school History*' to promote cultural pluralism and anti-racism. History teaching has the potential to

promote global understanding and to reduce racist misunderstandings within a culturally diverse society. What is more, as Ferro (1981) points out, History education exercises a dual function that is, therapeutic and militant. The modernisation of History curricula and their enhancement with appropriate material and activities could unite the different ethnic groups (Leontsinis, 2003). Such issues touch a more international dimension in history teaching and its relative ideological aspects, and constitute an area of interest worldwide either on a '*national*' (Agyeman, 1988; Fry *et al.*, 1991; Flye Sainte Marie, 1994; Andreou, 1995; Claire, 1996; Attwood, 1996; Tsai and Bridges, 1997; Lungo, 1998; Ducret, 1998; Levstick, 2000; Avery and Simmons, 2001; Gannon, 2002; Ermenc, 2005; Popp, 2006), '*inter-national*' (Alexiadou, 1992; Kolev and Koulouri, 2005) or '*supra-national*' level (Council of Europe, 1986; Slater, 1995; André, 1998; Grosvenor, 2000).

Studying and teaching the History of others and other societies from their own perspectives and for their own sake counteracts tendencies to insularity without devaluing local or national achievements, values and traditions (Bourdillon, 1994). When weight is given to other cultures, histories, civilisations and societies, recognition is given to interculturality. The comparative study of the History of other societies and countries can help the pupils to see the History of their countries in a fresh light and from a new perspective. Themes that emerge from literature call not only for the incorporation of intercultural aspects of History, but also for the re-evaluation and re-consideration of pedagogies to allow for new ways of teaching and learning to develop. It is explicit in this literature that innovation involves a change of perceptions and practices at both teacher and organizational levels, and that teachers require due incentives to introduce and promote the intercultural dimension in History education.

Noordhoff and Kleinfeld (1993) argue that teachers' backgrounds influence what is taught, interpretations of classroom situations and pedagogical decisions. Hargreaves (1993) refers to teachers as the ultimate key to social change and school improvement since they define, develop and reinterpret the curriculum. Similarly, Foster (1995) contends that teachers' previous life experiences, their identities or cultures help shape their view of teaching as well as essential elements of their practice. Thus, the perceptions and the lived experiences of predominantly Greek teachers working with an increasingly culturally diverse pupil population as regards History education are interesting to explore and understand. One of the challenges that educational practitioners face in diversified societies is the adoption of inclusive educational practices that cater for the cultural capital of the various groups that make up the pupil population. Accommodating culturally diverse discourse in History education is an empowering and realistic strategy for teachers to show that all their pupils are equally appreciated. With reference to the different elements of the Greek National Curriculum (GNC) and the school cultural diversity, there is growing sensitivity among some of my colleagues that teach in Greek Primary schools with multicultural school population or in IPSs. They argue that the learning environment and the History teaching approaches in terms of the diverse school population can vary according to the teachers' perceptions and ideological backgrounds. This is what triggered me to devise this research project.

3. The Research Operationalisation

a. The Research Question

The study, and especially the data collection, was guided by the following central research question:

What are teachers' own perceptions of cultural diversity and history education in an intercultural primary school (IPS) in Greece, and how do those perceptions impinge on their history teaching approaches, on selecting materials and methods?

b. The Epistemology and the Methodology

The aims of this research are mainly subjective, so an interpretative epistemology is regarded as being the most appropriate approach. Such a subjectivist view focuses basically on the social construction of people's ideas and concepts. Therefore, a social constructionism approach of people's ideas and concepts was applied. This approach deals with the 'deeper' meanings of social actions and how these are interpreted, understood and appreciated by individuals or groups, namely by teachers. What constructionism claims is that '*meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting*' (Crotty, 2003, p.43). To understand the underpinnings of teachers' beliefs and perceptions, a socio-constructivists' framework is assumed, in which knowledge is constructed and mediated within socio-cultural contexts (Blumer, 1969; Woods, 1996). These meanings, perceptions, feelings and attitudes towards others can be in large measure obtained through dialogue.

Using an ethnographic-style approach is very much of general style rather than of following specific prescriptions about procedure (Robson, 2002). In such an inquiry we are trying to understand the culture, practices and understandings of the participants as regards the issues in question. '*The intention of ethnographic research is to create a reconstruction as vivid as possible of the group being studied*' (Le Compte and Preissle, 1993, cited in Cohen *et al.*, 2003, p. 138) and to document the perspectives and practices of this group. Ethnographic-style research, therefore, aims to balance a commitment to catch the diversity, variability, creativity, individuality, uniqueness and spontaneity of social interactions by '*thick descriptions*' (Geertz, 1973) with a commitment to the task of social science '*to seek regularities, order and patterns within such diversity*' (ibid, p. 150). Normally, in educational research they are decoded by gathering profound information and perceptions through inductive qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participant observation. For this limitative project the chosen method was interviewing teachers.

4. The Research Protocols

a. The Interviews

Interviewing is an essential tool for my educational enquiry since the preconceptions, perceptions and beliefs of social actors in educational settings – teachers – form an inescapably important part of the backdrop of social interaction (Scott and Usher, 1999). The relation between an interviewer and an interviewee is basically an '*interactional context*' (Brown and Dowling, 1998, p.73). As Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, p.103) point out '*teachers' perceptions are often revealed only partially and in different ways to different audiences*'. Obviously, in attempting to identify teachers' opinions, semi-structured interview technique (Walker, 1985; Rubin and Rubin, 1995) was regarded as the most appropriate to elucidate these opinions and to offer teachers the opportunity to articulate their views and experiences on their own terms. The

semi-structured interview schedule suggested by Powney and Watts (1987, p.251) containing 'introductory comments, a list of topics, associated prompts and closing comments' was considered as the most suitable for this study using occasionally probes and prompts (Zeisel, 1984; Robson, 2002). A rough 'interview guide' (Gall *et al.*, 1996), 'schedule' (Cohen *et al.*, 2003; Robson, 2002) was supplementally created that helped interviewing process. This guide/schedule functioned more as an *aide mémoire* and was used to ensure that similar topics were covered in all interviews.

b. The Sample

A sample of teachers of the school was selected to be contacted and asked to take part in the research. From those who agreed to participate, four were finally selected according to the grade of Primary education in which they teach History. Following the GNC, History is taught in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Primary school. My sample comprised one male and three female teachers. To fully integrate the participants into the context of this study I felt it essential that a profile of each participant should be given with a view to providing insight and background information about their professional credentials. As a part of the profiling process, all participants involved were allocated an alias in order to protect their privacy.

Basically, the sample is representative enough of the teacher population in the specific IPS and also generally in Greece with reference to gender, since the majority of teachers in the primary sector are women (National Statistical Service of Greece, 2001). Additionally, my sample presents diversity relative to years of teaching experience, years of work experience in the specific school, studies and age as is demonstrated by the following table:

Alias	Year	Sex	Studies	Years of teaching experience	Years of experience in the specific school	Pupils in class		
						B	G	all
F3	3 rd	F	BA in Education	7	3	13	12	25
F4	4 th	F	BA in Education	5	1	11	17	28
M5	5 th	M	-BA in Education -Higher Diploma in Education -MA in Education	30	1	16	15	31
F6	6 th	F	-BA in Education	21	13	14	17	31
						54	61	105

Additionally, it has to be mentioned that teacher M5 had teaching experience in the Greek Community schools abroad for several years.

At the moment of this study the pupils per teacher ratio was 105/4: 26.25 and they formed a multiethnic population¹. Although the school was renamed from 'Primary School for Repatriated Greek Children' to 'Intercultural Primary School' under the law 2413/1996 (GMERA-YPEPTH, 1996; Damanakis, 1998), the teacher of year 5 (M5) has a different opinion about the nature of the school:

¹ The pupils' countries of origin were: Greece, Egypt, Bulgaria, Ghana, Eritrea, Zambia, India, Jordan, Canada, Kenya, China, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Moldavia, Nigeria, South Africa, Ukraine, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Syria, Thailand, Tanzania and the Philippines.

M5: *It is said that the particular school is 'intercultural'. However, it is not. It is a school of migrants' pupils. Neither does an intercultural education syllabus exist in this particular school, nor any specific guidelines of operation.*

c. The Ethical and Political issues

Following Reynolds' (1979) suggestion the purpose and the procedures of the research were explained to the participating teachers. All participants were offered the prospect to remain anonymous and their involvement was only on a voluntary basis. I formally requested permission to carry out my investigation and I acquired headteacher's permission to enter the school. All data of those interviews were treated with austere confidentiality (BSA, 2002; BERA, 2004). Interviewees had also the opportunity to validate their statements in a draft phase.

The evaluation phase of this research analysis is the most politically oriented process (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Hammersley, 1995; Robson, 2002). Innovations, changes, policies or practices implied as new demands following the findings of my research will have their sponsors and advocates but their enemies and opponents as well. Jenkins (1991) concentrates on relationships of history with authority and knowledge. History is never for itself, it is a political battlefield. Moreover, researchers in the field of curriculum who examine historical changes in the configurations of educational knowledge assume that '*internal*' societal actors – for example, national political stakeholders, economic elites, discipline gatekeepers and education specialists - play the dominant role in determining what counts as official school knowledge (Goodson, 1995). Meanwhile, education systems have been key institutions in state formation (Green, 1990) and nation-building having facilitated ethnocentric projects promoted by the states. In this line of thoughts, state-sponsored nationalism, ethnocentrism and strict state control over education (Ward, 1998) are major factors in the formation of school curricular systems (Coulby and Zambeta, 2005). Greece is a vivid example of this.

The Greek educational system is still highly centralised with no flexible teaching materials while history school textbooks are intended to ensure strict application of the curriculum which is developed by the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (GMERA) as equivalent to state legislation. Textbooks are monitored and approved by the Greek Educational Institute, that is, by a representative of the government while Greek educational agents and institutions appear strongly resistant to any change, especially to history curricula and textbooks, which are considered among the pillars of national identity formation and maintenance.

5. The Data Analysis and the Interpretation

In the first part of the interviews the issues discussed were mainly related to the efforts that most of the teachers make to include culturally diverse elements in their history teaching.

i. Taking cultural diversity into account?

Perhaps the best way to interpret the findings of this research is through highlighting the diversity of perceptions held by teachers regarding cultural diversity and history teaching. Most of the teachers in this research for different reasons each one mentioned that when teaching history they took presence of those '*other*' pupils into account only to a small degree and only due to their personal initiative.

M5: Oh, yes....! *We only have general discussions. Usually, my pupils and I include the historical issues of other cultures in Geography or Literacy occasionally and without systematic presentation of certain historical matters.*

Another added:

F3: *I use other teaching books in my effort to do this. [...] I have observed that every time I teach something out of the school textbook using other material of my own and in my own way, these pupils participate much better.*

Of course,

F6: *I need precise and explicit data given to me by reliable sources. In the textbook I don't have a lot of diverse historical elements or reasons to incorporate them in teaching. [...] Therefore, I search for things relevant to the history lesson out of personal interest. [...] The children prepare a kind of project presenting elements of their own history.*

However, one teacher stated:

F4: *Why should I mix other cultures in my history lesson? I do not want them to be included since I teach Greek history. I do not consider history of other cultures to be basic knowledge. You can learn all this alone if you want! I do not find any reason why a Greek child should get acquainted with a foreign culture.*

On the one hand, teachers who followed a pedagogical rationale perceived it as a form of 'sympathy' towards those pupils concerning the difficulty they have coping with the exigent subject of Greek History due to Greek language deficiencies. On the other hand, other teachers mentioned that they dealt with certain historical elements of diverse cultures only occasionally and cautiously, or not at all.

All of them, though, shared feelings of uncertainty and hesitation. By combining both parts of the interviews I could observe that teachers remarked on the ethnocentric character of GNC and textbooks and the monolithic dimension of the taught subject. They, additionally, implied that official efforts at assimilating or ghettoizing culturally diverse pupils are more intense than efforts at integrating and respecting their historical-cultural background. Moreover, they expressed their conviction that, even if history is connected with configuration and maintenance of Greek national identity, an intercultural approach to history education properly organised might enhance the training of culturally diverse pupils and their smooth integration into social reality. They demonstrated strong dilemmas between traditional and modern approaches to history teaching regarding cultural diversity while a new understanding model in history education had to be adopted and the dominance of the official ethnocentric model had to come to an end. It was also emphasised that the negative elements in history harmed education and should be filtered carefully.

ii. History diversity for inclusion or against inclusion?

Throughout the interviews two main trends were identified, *reasons for inclusion of elements of historical diversity* and *reasons against inclusion*. The main reasons for inclusion could be summarised as follows:

- a. Giving an intercultural dimension to history within the Greek educational system.

A succinct comment by one teacher aptly described that

M5: *All the cultures are alloys, mixtures. There is not a negative or positive rhesus in history as in blood. [...] What should be taught in schools is an intercultural history.*

But the opposition was that

F4: *Forcing our children, the Greeks, to learn about other cultures, I believe, is not useful! Greek History and civilisation are taught in other countries because all civilisations derived from the Greeks. All other cultures have taken elements from our own.*

F4: *The basic knowledge in Greek education is only Greek history, because we are Greeks. We should reinforce and stimulate the Greek spirit because it is what unites us! We should know our Greek roots in order to progress, shouldn't we?*

b. Reducing ethnocentrism within Greek education

F3: *We should wonder whether others influenced ancient Greek civilisation. Our approach to history is totally ethnocentric.*

F6: *In the history textbook of year 6, for example, there are certain reports on Muslim culture but it is given through the Greek perspective.*

c. Demonstrating respect to other cultures, too.

Teachers expressed certain ideology:

F6: *We were not the only ones that had culture! I do not disagree that Greeks offered to culture, but there were also ancient Indians, ancient Egyptians, ancient Chinese... We do not teach about them. Since high school I thought it was only Ancient Greece and nothing else in the world and all other civilisations appeared on earth later!*

F3: *I don't know how much Greeks are interested in the history of those people. I think it happens because we didn't coexist long with other people, or we think we didn't.*

F6: *A Filipino child, an African child or a Muslim child might very well say "Why should I learn about the things what Papaflessas (a priest-hero of the 1821 Greek Independence Revolution) had succeeded?"*

d. Reinforcing historical consciousness for all pupils and especially for specific ethnic groups.

All the teachers reported that the lack of historicity on those pupils' part is a major factor that prevents integration of historical elements pertaining to their culture:

F3: *They have neither their own intense historicity nor historical representation in the Greek educational reality... For example, pupils from the Philippines don't evince intense historical consciousness.*

F4: *They are not interested in learning their country's history...*

M5: *Children from the Philippines don't have roots in their own history; they lack historical information. On the contrary, I could say that Pakistani children are alert to historical issues. They are informed of what has happened in their country's history... To the extent their religion allows them, they develop a historical consciousness; who they are and where they go.*

e. Diminishing historical conflicts and promoting tolerance and respect.

One of the main difficulties reported with reference to including other people's histories was *'the (national) historical conflicts'* in class.

M5: *This kind of conflicts is a permanent element of such classes. Each group of pupils, whether national or religious, classifies the rest into other groups.*

However, another teacher (F4) mentioned that she had never faced such a situation. Moreover, teachers reported on ways of handling such incidents:

F3: *I tackle those issues through discussion and dialogue, in an attempt to pass the message that we are different, with different religions and cultures, and yet we can be friends!*

F6: *Even in delicate matters such as those concerning Muslims in history of year 6 or in texts related on the anniversary of the Greek Independence Revolution against the Turks (25th of March 1821), I haven't faced such conflict. I handle things with discretion and I submit them to detailed infiltration removing parts or negative elements that can cause intensity and conflicts.*

M5: *If you make them an introduction like "you know, cultures and empires wax and wane in the byway of the years... There were the Romans, the Turks, now the Americans" and you pave them the way, this will appear as a tale and neither will the Greek pupils nor the Turkish perceive it as a defeat or a victory.*

Meanwhile, reasons against inclusion could cover issues such as:

- a. Inappropriateness of existing instructive material (textbooks) and dogmatism of the GNC.

They referred to the inappropriateness of the textbooks regarding both content and difficulty:

F6: *I would change the history textbook.*

F4: *The books are difficult but for Greek pupils are fine!*

F3: *My pupils have language difficulties regarding analysis of history issues.*

M5: *History textbook of year 5, namely Byzantine History, is difficult even for pupils of mainstream Greek schools.*

This was aptly summarised by another teacher:

F3: *In the way history textbooks are written, neither are elements of other civilisations included, nor are foreigners taken into consideration.*

Then, they commented on the Greek National Curriculum (GNC):

F3: *I would prefer things to be freer for us, the teachers, regarding curricula...All this cross-curricularity, cross-thematic approach, that is discussed again and again..., has to be taken more into account.*

M5: *Although the GNC is dogmatic by nature, I attempt to find a way out...*

F6: *There has been no provision for connecting the GNC with the histories of those children.*

- b. Lack of infrastructure, reliable historical sources, appropriate teachers' training.

Other reasons most of the teachers remarked on was lack of sources, material and technical infrastructure:

M5: *Those children lack access to historical sources of their culture, with the exception of their family oral traditions.*

F3: *It is beautiful to have books and libraries, sources, materials and reliable sources, use of the Internet... We do not have infrastructures.*

One of the teachers (F3) after certain years in a private school compared public and private education:

F3: *During history sessions we took pupils to the library where we had the computers at our disposal. There was someone in charge that had downloaded all the information we needed. We had it in front of us on our terminals. The children had printouts to do their projects.*

Lack of training was an additional problem:

F3: *I had never been taught how history should be taught! I was not given the motives, the impetus for history study.*

F6: *But, we, the teachers, need a push, training, help and support. [...] The truth is that I would desire to have further training in world history and intercultural education.*

Summarising the second part of the interviews, I could say that issues of history and diversity were discussed in the sphere of ideology. Even though many of those perceptions were either obvious or indirect regarding 'teaching praxis', I considered necessary to ask those questions in order to acquire a fuller picture of the conceptual framework in which the teachers move and express themselves. If any perception pattern can stand out, the important finding of this study was the encompassing belief that diversity in history education is enrichment. However, discrepancies were found among teachers' statements. A possible explanation for those inconsistencies could be the relevant confusion that perpetuates in Greece on issues of national identity protection and intercultural education.

Having said that, the most important question emerging from the data is how those issues combined with the interviewees' ideological background affect their teaching practices. The teachers working in a context without much support feel daily tensions and dilemmas but they try to develop practices that take notions of cultural diversity into consideration. They practice their profession in a political context that does not celebrate cultural diversity and in an educational system that mainly promotes ethnocentrism. Teachers' practices also reflect their social, cultural and mainly political backgrounds while they develop competing paradigms and explanations. Some of the teachers indirectly adopt the stereotype of dividing cultures and civilisations into 'lower-minor' and 'higher-major' ones giving the primership to the 'Ancient Greek grandeur'. These stereotypes directly influence their perceptions towards cultural diversity and affect their teaching practices within history sessions.

Furthermore, although experienced teachers hold different patterns of perceptions and beliefs than less experienced ones (F4), they are not noticeably more homogeneous in their beliefs. As an overall comment I would add here that experienced teachers seem to be more informed of issues of interculturalism and diversity. Teacher M5, for example, appeared more sensitive to matters of interculturalism and inclusion. This might have happened due to his previous professional experience abroad.

A major key finding of this small-scale research project was teachers' diametrically opposed values and how these impact on their teaching, ideas about diversity. We have one teacher who is a very traditional Greek 'nationalist', for whom education is assimilation into Greek culture, language, history. The other 3 reflect much more pluralist values. In education pluralism gets translated into either multi-culturalism (often essentialist view of different cultures) or interculturalism (very rare – recognition of cultural dynamism and change in relation to each other). Those teachers are multiculturalists (M/Cs) and add bits about different cultures.

Those very different sets of values of the teachers have severe impact upon their teaching practices. The M/Cs make a lot of effort to find their own additional materials (i.e. supplementing GNC); the assimilationist attempts to develop pedagogic approaches to make the difficult Greek material more accessible. Both groups reconfigure their values as professional practices – focusing on lesson content or lesson form.

6. The Concluding Points

The dominant notion in this study is that school history should assume a more intercultural dimension through including elements of diverse historical backgrounds. Most interviewees' opinion is that any content in history education can be taught in a more challenging, 'de-constructing' (Derrida, 1996) and anti-ethnocentric manner. Teachers perceive it as a matter of equality, respect, tolerance and anti-separatism. Therefore, a way of tackling equality in ethnocentric history classes, as in the school of my research, centres on both consideration of the 'other' and teachers' perceptions, values, prejudices and stereotyping.

Thus, perceiving precedes meaning making or acting. Since teachers' perceptions are socially constructed (Burr, 2004) they cannot secede from their teaching practices (Foster, 1995). The interviewees' perceptions seem connected directly with the very few or no efforts they make at instructional level. The teachers who believe in the right of diversity and respect of 'other's' culture and history, attempt to include such diverse historical elements in their teaching. However, the wider educational and social milieu, the structure and operation of the Greek educational system move contrary to this direction. The educational policy that Greece follows today still supports ethnocentrism and simultaneously squashes or assimilates the diversity of current educational community. This socio-educational discourse appears so dominant that pulls the situation towards the aforementioned reasons against inclusion of 'other-ness' within history education. The reasons for inclusion that the teachers could follow are then weakened and 'castrated' by this dominant discourse. Having said that, in the 'intercultural' school of my research, where pupil diversity flourishes, teaching sessions and practices seem to lack inclusion of diverse school population's culture and history.

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BIO NOTE

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The Orientation of Greek Education towards Multiculturalism

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The orientation of Greek education towards multiculturalism

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Abstract

The recent transformation of Greece from a country of emigration to one of immigration has resulted in diversity in Greek classrooms. According to the Greek Ministry of Education, during the school year 2004-2005 there were about 140,000 foreign and repatriated Greek pupils in Greek schools out of a total of 1,500,000 pupils, i.e. about 10% of the total school population.

This paper, based on an empirical study conducted in Junior High School of Athens, (in the framework of the fieldwork I conducted for my DPhil thesis), explores the intercultural orientation of mainstream Greek education by presenting results from questionnaires and interviews with Greek teachers and Greek and migrant pupils.

These results indicate that Greek education is not yet seen as an education whose goal is the preparation of all children for life in a multicultural society. Instead, schools in Greece (at least the ones studied), are dedicated to a monocultural and monolingual philosophy even though Greece is a *de facto* multicultural country and this is reflected in the classrooms. Above all, the school, through ethnocentric teaching materials and national commemorative events, reflects the exclusionary construction of the Greek national identity, which defines the concept of 'Greekness' on the basis of religious, linguistic and genealogical criteria, rather than civic ones. Such an approach does inevitably lead to the discrimination and exclusion of those who do not fit in the above-mentioned criteria, i.e migrant pupils. Discrimination and rejection are among the factors that hinder migrant children in developing a positive identity. Schools in Greece are not sufficiently active in combating discrimination and racism, and teachers do not provide a strong enough model to combat them.

Keywords: intercultural education, linguistic diversity, language maintenance, ethnocentrism in Greek education

0. Introduction

Mass immigration into Greece has been reflected in the school population. During 2004-2005, about 140,000 migrant and repatriated Greek pupils were enrolled in Greek schools, accounting for almost 10 per cent of the overall school population (1,449,032) (IPODE 2006). Although no data are available as to the nationalities of the pupils for the school year 2004-2005, during 2002-2003 72% of the migrant pupils were from neighbouring Albania.

Table 1. Distribution of indigenous, foreign and repatriated pupils in Greece during the school year 2004-05.

<i>Type of school</i>	<i>Number of foreign pupils</i>	<i>Number of repatriated pupils</i>	<i>Number of foreign and repatriated pupils</i>	<i>Number of indigenous, foreign and repatriated pupils</i>
Nursery	9,503	1,580	11,083	138,304
Primary	59,334	8,405	67,739	638,550
Junior-High	29,170	7,217	36,387	333,989
Senior-High and Technical-Vocational	15,456	7,528	22,984	338,189
Total	113,463	24,730	138,193	1,449,032

Source: IPODE, 2006

Educational systems with an intercultural orientation develop language policies and organise their curriculum and instruction in such a way that the linguistic and cultural capital of migrant children and communities is strongly affirmed in all the interactions of the school. This way, the school rejects the negative attitudes about diversity that exist in the wider society while preparing migrant and indigenous pupils for life in a multicultural and democratic society (Cummins, 2000). An examination of the measures taken by the Greek state to address the issue of multiculturalism indicates that Greek education appears widely off the mark in terms of striving to reach the

intercultural pedagogic ideal of considering diversity, including linguistic diversity, as a resource.

Greece took its first institutional steps towards addressing issues relating to multicultural classrooms in 1983, as in the late 1970s and early 1980s the return of Greek migrants mainly from countries of Western Europe and the United States had started to increase. Thus, with the law 1404/1983 'Tutorial Classes' and 'Reception Classes' were established, aiming to integrate repatriated and foreign pupils into the Greek school system by teaching them intensively the Greek language¹. In 1990, reception classes were integrated within the mainstream school system and pupils were taught Greek language, history and culture. In 1994 a ministerial decision offered the possibility of the introduction of the language and culture of the pupils' countries of origin. Despite this provision, neither the language nor the culture of the pupils' countries of origin are offered in tutorial and reception classes (Damanakis, 1997). According to Skourtou *et al.* (2004), this fact indicates that teaching in these classes remains in essence oriented towards the linguistic and cultural assimilation of foreign pupils.

In 1999, new regulations were institutionalised concerning tutorial and reception classes, allowing for more flexibility and innovation in teaching schemes and curricula. However, their orientation remained the same: the intensive learning of the Greek language. The only difference from previous regulations is that Greek is now referred to as the pupils' *second* language. Consequently, according to the new ministerial decision, teachers in these classes would have to be trained in teaching Greek as a second language

¹ *Tutorial Classes* provide a couple of hours of after-school tuition for minority children. Although the amount of tuition that pupils receive varies per school, in practice the amount of time spent in such classes (often in small groups) can vary between 3 and 10 hours per week. Pupils in *Reception classes* receive 5-10 hours of instruction per group. The number of hours will depend on how many years the student has attended school, how many years of remedial instruction s/he has followed and to what extent s/he is linguistically competent. Absolute beginners receive 10 hours of instruction per week. During the rest of the school day, they attend mainstream classes (Dimakos and Tasiopoulou 2003).

(Skourtou *et al.*, 2004). The same ministerial decision mentions the teaching of the pupils' first language and culture, which, however, remains at the discretion of the prefect, while the teaching of Greek is planned and regulated by the Ministry of Education (Skourtou *et al.*, 2004). In 2003, 422 reception classes and 556 tutorial classes operated all over Greece (Skourtou *et al.*, 2004). The increasing number of migrant pupils in Greek classrooms during the 1990s led in 1996 to the establishment of an 'Office of Intercultural Education' (IPODE) within the Ministry of Education, and to a law entitled 'Greek Education abroad, Intercultural Education and other provisions'. This law represented the first official recognition by Greek authorities that different communities had specific educational needs. The Law consists of 11 chapters, of which only one refers to intercultural education in Greece, the other 10 referring to the education of the pupils in the Greek diaspora. In the law there is a general reference to the aim of intercultural education, its content and its organisational structure. More specifically, the legislators propose the establishment of 'intercultural schools'. These are the new type of school to be attended by mostly repatriated Greeks and foreign immigrants (Damanakis, 1997; Nikolaou, 2000). Furthermore, as Nikolaou (2000) has pointed out, certain measures did not work as expected. The principle of intercultural schools, which were supposed to serve as meeting ground for national and immigrant pupils in a truly culture-enriched environment, was not attained. Although immigrant pupils enrolled in such schools, national pupils stayed away from them, fearing that such schools offered limited opportunities for learning. Eventually, these intercultural schools catered exclusively to foreign pupils and did not become the centres of cultural exchange the authorities had initially envisioned (Dimakos and Tasiopoulou, 2003)

Further legislation, put forward by Greek Ministry of Education and Religion in 1996 in collaboration with Greek Universities and financed by the European Union, supported three large educational programmes which ran between 1997-2000 and 2000-2004. These related to three specific groups of pupils: Muslim pupils in Thrace; repatriated and foreign pupils; and Rom pupils (Dimakos and Tasiopoulou, 2003). The part of the programme concerned with

repatriated and foreign pupils was taken over by the University of Athens. Actions of the programme included the development of bilingual coursebooks (mainly Greek/Albanian and Greek/Russian) and the involvement of bilingual language assistants (in Albanian and Russian) in multilingual classrooms. This programme was piloted in certain schools all over the country, but it has not yet been evaluated. As the present study found out, although certain schools had received bilingual textbook editions, teachers were not aware of their existence, and in any case had not received the necessary training on how to use them. Moreover, according to Skourtou *et al.* (2004), the programme for repatriated and foreign pupils did not include specific guidelines as regards the inclusion of the pupils' mother-tongues in education.

Despite the legal measures taken by the Greek state to address the effects of immigration on schools, immigrant pupils are subject to assimilation pressures in practice, since none of the governmental measures that have been implemented encourages the maintenance of one's ethnic identity and parental language. As a result of these assimilation pressures, the smooth integration of foreign pupils into Greek society is hindered. Therefore, although there are several migrant pupils who excel in Greek school, a large number of them shows signs of low self-esteem and experiences school failure and other school-related problems (Nikolaou, 2000).

1. The present study

In this study, undertaken for the requirements of my doctoral studies at the University of Sussex, I investigated the factors affecting language maintenance among second-generation Albanian and Egyptian migrant pupils in Athens (of an average age of 14). Using a combined quantitative and qualitative methodology, I explored the influence of three sets of variables on language maintenance, namely: a) ethnolinguistic vitality, defined by the demography, status and institutional support of each group in Greece, as well as migrant and indigenous pupils' perceptions regarding these factors; b) migrant parents' attitudes to language maintenance and their role in language

transmission in the home; and c) the attitudes of teachers and the institutional approaches of mainstream Greek education to linguistic and cultural diversity.

As the space here does not allow for a detailed presentation and analysis of all the results, this paper will focus on results regarding the attitudes and approaches of Greek teachers and pupils to linguistic and cultural diversity, addressing the following research questions:

- What are Greek teachers' views on migrant pupils' bilingualism and language maintenance?
- What are the attitudes of Greek pupils towards their migrant peers?
- To what extent does mainstream education in Greece promote interculturalism among Greek and migrant pupils?

2. Greek teachers' attitudes and approaches to linguistic and cultural diversity

In a study by Bombas (1996) involving directors of elementary school directorates and local directors of elementary school administration offices throughout Greece, the vast majority of participants (87.5%) responded that immigrant pupils faced enormous adaptation problems in the schools they attended. Furthermore, one in three respondents believed that the presence of immigrant pupils in the classrooms delayed and negatively affected the overall educational process of the class. Similarly, in a large-scale study conducted by UNICEF (2001), 23% of teachers responded that migrant pupils face behaviour and learning problems at school.

In the present study, 18 out of 30 teachers claim that migrant pupils have some language and adaptation problems at school. The ones who have the most language-related difficulties are pupils from the ex - USSR and pupils of the Muslim minority of Thrace, while Albanian pupils on the whole have the fewest adaptation and language problems. Many teachers mentioned that

'reception classes' should be organised in the school, so that pupils can improve their Greek language skills. In this sense, teachers do not view migrant pupils' bilingualism as being associated positively with learning at school, but rather, as hindering their learning of Greek². However, the majority of teachers (20 out of 30) are in favour of the teaching of mother-tongues at school. The reasons why they propose mother-tongue teaching are: (a) so that the children maintain their cultural identity, (b) possible repatriation, (c) language maintenance as a fundamental human right. Moreover, the majority of teachers believe that mother-tongue classes should be co-funded by Greece and the pupils' country of origin, and that they should take place right after the end of the mainstream lessons.

The above results agree with the results by research undertaken by the University of the Aegean (Skourtou *et al.*, 2004) and by Kassimi (2005). Although teachers in these studies were found to have positive attitudes to linguistic diversity and to believe that other languages are a benefit to a school classroom, they did not seem to accept the fact that a pupil's knowledge of his/her first language is related to his/her learning of Greek, or that bilingualism has any cognitive benefits. Moreover, the view that bilingualism is responsible for learning problems was expressed by some teachers, while very few teachers expressed the view that bilingualism may be associated positively with learning.

In the present study, the majority of teachers (27 out of 30) claim that they are not trained to teach foreign pupils and they believe that special training for all teachers should be organised by the state. A similar need for training was expressed by teachers in the UNICEF study (2001). Moreover, 18 out of 30 teachers in the present study mention they would be willing to learn at least some elements of Albanian, or other migrant languages, as they feel this would shorten the distance between them and the migrant pupils.

² However, according to a large body of research migrant pupils cannot learn effectively the language of the majority culture unless their first language has developed to a significant degree (Cummins 1979, 2000; Baker 2006).

However, and in support of findings by other researchers (Athanasidou and Gotovos 2002; Skourtou 2002; Kassimi 2005), teachers in the present study discourage parents from speaking the minority language with their children at home. In the following excerpt a teacher expresses her concern about Albanian parents not speaking in Greek with their children at home:

It is a problem when they speak their mother-tongue at home, because this fact does not help them learn Greek. Especially some parents speak only Albanian at home, while others speak Greek for the sake of their children. This helps them a lot. A child who has language problems at school, uses this often as an excuse. 'How can I know Greek, we speak only Albanian at home'. It is usually educated parents, (University graduates) who speak to their children in Greek at home because they understand it will do good to their children (Greek language and literature teacher, female, 49).

These concerns on the part of the teachers seem unsubstantiated, as, according results of my study, Greek is increasingly gaining ground in interactions between parents and children in Albanian households. It is rather the ethnic language that is not used at home. This fact is demonstrated in Table 2.

**Table 2. In which languages do conversations take place in your home?
(% data, N=70)**

OPTIONS	CHILD AND MOTHER	CHILD AND FATHER
Mostly/only Greek	32.4	24.6
Equally Greek and Albanian	34.3	40.6
Mostly/only Albanian	33.3	34.8

On the other hand, a concern not expressed by teachers, should refer to the accuracy with which Albanian adults speak in Greek to their children. Research evidence suggests that if the parents are not accurate speakers of the language, this is to the detriment of their children's linguistic development. According to Skourtou *et al.*, (2004):

Only adults who are models of language usage can contribute to the children's correct language development. For effective learning to take place at school, it does not matter in which language communication takes place in the home, as long as communication takes place in a correctly used language (2004:87)

Having examined the ways in which teachers deal with linguistic diversity in the classroom, I now turn to an examination of the extent to which they manage to create a climate of harmonious intercultural co-operation among migrant and Greek pupils.

A large-scale research on xenophobia among Greek pupils conducted by UNICEF in 2001 shows that xenophobia is higher in secondary school pupils than in primary school pupils. Moreover, in a recent Europe-wide study of young Europeans aged 15-24, Greek youths were found to be among the most hostile towards immigrants (European Commission, 2001). Similarly, in a study by Dimakos and Tasiopoulou (2003) on Greek pupils' attitudes to immigrants, strong and negative opinions about immigrants were revealed. Generally, immigrants were considered 'unhealthy', 'crime-prone' and 'tax dodgers'. These points of view seemed to be constant across respondents' social and economic categories. Some of the quantitative results obtained in the present study seem slightly more encouraging in comparison to the studies discussed above. Pupils in the present study, as Table 3 indicates, show a rather 'neutral' attitude to the existence of migrant pupils in the classroom.

Table 3. What do you think of the fact that there are foreign students in Greek schools? (% data, N=70)

'It is good because we learn things about other cultures'	32.9
'It is bad because they create problems in the schools'	27.1
'It is neither good nor bad nor does it affect Greek pupils in any way'	57.1

However, xenophobia is far from absent among the Greek pupils of the present study. Especially some pupils express extreme xenophobic attitudes

towards their migrant peers (especially Albanians) as the following excerpt from a focus-group interview indicates:

Participants: Dimitris, 14; Katerina, 13; Eleni, 14

Dimitris: *Albanians kill Greeks now. Imagine what they will do in a few years, when they have acquired more power.*

Interviewer: *How do you know that?*

Dimitris: *I see it on the news on TV*

Eleni: *They also kill in front of our own eyes. Where I live, near the cemetery there are no lights and there have been many murders, mainly by Albanians, who have killed other Albanians. A lot of murders have taken place there.*

Dimitris: *I have some foreign friends but basically I don't like to hang out with foreigners, especially with Albanians.*

Interviewer: *Why?*

Dimitris: *Hmm, because they are not so good people.'*

Eleni: *Not only do we put them up in Greece, they come here and have fights, swear, etc.*

Dimitris: *They do whatever they want.*

Katerina: *They steal...*

The above extract reproduces – through the eyes of young teenagers – the stereotypical representation by the Greek media of the ‘Albanian criminal’ (Kapllani and Mai 2005). Such negative attitudes on the part of some Greek pupils towards their migrant peers may be hindering the smooth integration of the latter into Greek school, and consequently into Greek society. In this context, one might expect teachers to have a determining role in the social integration of migrant children, as school is undoubtedly the most important institution of socialisation. Interviews with teachers, however, indicate that the majority of them avoid having discussions in class which could help eradicate prejudice and enhance tolerance. Most of the teachers interviewed claimed the reason why they avoid them is so as not to create further tensions. Therefore, some teachers choose to cover up problems that arise, and

pretend that they do not exist, rather than expose and deal with them. The following excerpts illustrate this stance:

We have never talked in class about issues such as 'racism' and 'xenophobia' because there have not been such instances in students' behaviour (Political and social education teacher, f, 36).

We have never had discussions about racism or xenophobia in class because there have never been such instances throughout my teaching experience. On the whole, relations between Greek and foreign students are quite harmonious, at least within the school (RE teacher, m, 35).

A few teachers try to handle the problems, although such discussions usually end up in fights:

During class I try to dissolve the negative stereotype against Albanians. I stress how immigration has helped the Greek economy and agriculture. How they have helped us. I also talk about immigration in Europe. I lived in France as a post-graduate student so I use it as a further example of immigration. These topics are very well received by Albanian students and then heated discussions among Greeks and Albanians follow in class. Sometimes discussions continue during break time and end up in fights between Greeks and Albanians (Physics teacher, m, 42).

3. Ethnocentrism in Greek education: the debate over the flag

The Greek educational system is a good illustration of a school system that attaches particular significance to its account of national history. The continuity of Hellenism from antiquity to the present, constitutes an essential component of Greek national identity that is continuously reinforced in school, particularly through the teaching of history, but also through courses on geography and language (Avdela 2000). In the national narrative reproduced in school, the Greek nation is understood as a natural, unified, eternal, and unchanging entity, not a product of history. The teaching of history neither moves beyond this ethnocentric concept of the nation nor familiarises students with the production of historical knowledge (Avdela 2000). An example of the way history is taught at the Greek educational system is

provided by the following dogmatic statement from one of my interviews with teachers:

When I teach history I do not use any intercultural methods because I believe there are sensitive national issues at stake. I teach history in an ethnocentric Greek way. History is history and nobody can change it (Greek history teacher, f, 54).

According to Avdela (2000), the authors of history textbooks begin their work by taking as given the superiority of Greece's 3,000 year-old civilisation and the belief that it has remained unchanged throughout the centuries; indeed, they are explicitly obliged by the Greek Ministry of Education to write textbooks that promulgate this premise. This emphasis on the superior, continuous and unchanging nature of Hellenism through the centuries determines the specific way that the national 'self' is portrayed in history textbooks, as well as the way that various national 'others' are depicted (Frangoudaki and Dragona 1997a)³. The contents of these books are not questioned and they fail to cultivate critical thinking on the part of the pupils or teachers. The teacher in the following excerpt accepts whatever is written in history textbooks as axiomatic:

Greek civilisation, at least as depicted in history books, which however reflect reality, is superior to the civilisation of these peoples (migrants). This doesn't mean that I will not mention the positive elements of other nations. I may say that Greeks paved the way, but the other nations followed suit (Greek literature teacher, f, 54, Kifissia).

The teaching of history in Greek compulsory school is determined to a great extent by the way the Greek school system is organised. Each course in this

³ It was long ago pointed out, for example, that junior high and high school history textbooks are ethnocentric because they portray Bulgarians and Turks as hostile and inferior, while Greeks are full of virtue and talent and superior both spiritually and militarily (Ahlis 1983). Although ethnocentrism persists in more recent school history textbooks, descriptions of other peoples are more nuanced and to a great extent free from the blatant negative characterisations of older textbooks (Avdela, 2000). However, the recent introduction of a more 'progressive' history textbook in Greek primary schools sparked unprecedented reactions by representatives of the Orthodox Church, politicians and parents. Its critics accuse the authors of the book of glossing over the hardships that Greeks faced under Ottoman rule in favour of adopting a more politically correct approach (*Kathimerini*, English edition, 6/3/2007).

highly centralised system (the system of textbook production is one of the most centralised in Europe) is based on a single textbook that follows to the letter the detailed official curriculum for each grade. This syllabus and its corresponding textbook allow teachers little flexibility in the classroom (Avdela, 2000).

The above discussion provides a framework within which the 'notorious' issue of the Greek flag in the hands of Albanian pupils may be considered. The flag debate started in 2000 when an Albanian pupil was elected flag-carrier in a commemorative (military-type) school parade in northern Greece, because he had the highest marks in the school. Greek pupils (under the encouragement of their parents) occupied their school so as to stop their Albanian peer from carrying the flag. Moreover, the reactions of the Greek public opinion were unprecedented, and the issue was presented as a national cause by the mass media. In the end, the Albanian pupil withdrew from his right to carry the Greek flag. Similarly, in the present study, some Albanian pupils claim that they are ready to resign from the right of being flag-carrier, as they have realised that the majority of the Greek public opinion see it as a 'provocation':

I wouldn't even think about it. After what we see on TV, all these reactions, it is out of the question (Albanian boy, 14).

It is interesting how in the following excerpt an Albanian pupil has internalised so much the exclusivist discourse of Greek public opinion that he has been convinced that indeed, it is not right for an Albanian to carry the Greek flag:

I believe it is the Ministry's fault because the law says that the best student should carry the Greek flag regardless of nationality. The law should say that only Greek students should carry the Greek flag. Like this we wouldn't have had all these problems. Sometimes I don't think this is a racist thing. It is a Greek flag, not an Albanian flag. It is unfair for the Greek kids because they are the majority. An Albanian should not carry the Greek flag (Albanian boy, 13)

As the excerpts above indicate, the flag issue remains a controversial one in Greek educational matters. Every year Albanian flag-carriers are elected and

every year there are similar reactions even though foreign pupils are entitled to carry the Greek flag according to the law. In the following excerpt, a teacher explains why the issue of the nationality of the flag-carrier is so important for Greek people:

...in other countries they do not do military parades at school so this is not an issue, but then, other countries do not have our tradition and culture. They do not have our history, not only in terms of the great civilisation we once created, but also in terms of hardship. And such hardship makes a people magnify situations and feelings. This is also connected to the ancient Greek tradition whereby the brave man is the virtuous man, the one who is brave in the battle. I believe that this is in every Greek's genes. And we have had to prove this many times throughout our history. Other peoples have not had to do so, and maybe this is why they do not attribute so much significance to symbols, parades, flags etc. (Greek literature teacher, 56).

According to the above teacher, the national self is defined as superior because it is an entity that maintains as its immutable features the national traits of patriotism, courage, and love of freedom. In this sense, it is a rather airtight cultural entity that does not change and cannot be influenced, as indicated by the repeated use (highlighted by underlining in the quote) of the first person plural.

The exclusivity of the Greek ethnic community naturalises origin and belonging. As in other cases, Greek nationalism activates a mechanism through which it begins to identify those characteristics that enable the 'nation' to see itself as an established and pre-defined phenomenon (Handler, 1988; Foster, 1991). For example, senior members of the conservative party *Nea Dimokratia* (New Democracy) suggested that bearing the flag is a question of birthright, thus overriding the civic conception of the nation. The substitution of civic with ethnic understandings of the nation figured again in 2003, when the Prefect of Thessaloniki declared 'You are born a Greek, you cannot be turned into a Greek!' (Christopoulos, 2004). This distinction between civic and biological nationality is reproduced by discussants in another revealing focus-group excerpt :

Dimitris: *They must not carry the Greek flag because they are not Greeks and the parade is*

Eleni: *Only for Greeks!*

Katerina: *Greek parents react when they see an Albanian carrying the Greek flag and not a Greek, because they don't belong to our country.*

Interviewer: *And how will an excellent Albanian student be rewarded if not with the flag?*

Eleni: *With prizes*

Kostas: *No. With nothing! And even if an Albanian child was born in Greece to Albanian parents, this does not make him Greek, so he should not carry the flag.*

According to Kapllani and Mai (2005) and Tzanelli (2006), the debate within Greece regarding the 'right' of the Albanian pupil to hold the Greek flag is nothing other than an internal negotiation of the contours of Greek identity and of its place in the European political order. That is, Greece, a country traditionally placed at the (economic and cultural) margins of 'Europe', could easily regard the influx of foreigners from other, even more 'underdeveloped' Balkan countries as an attack upon both its internal cultural homogeneity and its European 'purity'. Moreover, this perception of the 'Albanian other' as 'underdeveloped' is extended over anyone (Asians, Africans, East Europeans) who does not come from the West, and who is, thus, considered to be economically, socially, and culturally inferior to 'us.' This comparison leads Greeks to believe even more strongly that they belong to the modern, advanced and powerful West, whilst the impact of the traditional, primitive East on the Greek social, cultural and ethnic 'self' is weakened.

4. Conclusion

As discussed in the introduction to this paper, educational systems with an intercultural orientation develop language policies and organise their curriculum and instruction in such a way that the linguistic and cultural capital of migrant children and communities is strongly affirmed in all the interactions of the school. This way, the school rejects the negative attitudes about

diversity that exist in the wider society while preparing migrant and indigenous pupils for life in a multicultural and democratic society. This paper has demonstrated that Greek education is not yet seen as an education whose goal is the preparation of all children for life in a multicultural society. Instead, schools in Greece are dedicated to a monocultural and monolingual philosophy and most teachers have been raised, educated and even trained in the tradition of a monolingual and monocultural country — even though Greece is a *de facto* multicultural country and this is reflected in the classrooms. Above all, the school, through ethnocentric teaching materials and national commemorative events, reflects the exclusionary construction of the Greek national identity, which defines the concept of ‘Greekness’ on the basis of religious, linguistic and genealogical criteria, rather than civic ones. Such an approach does inevitably lead to the discrimination and exclusion of those who do not fit into the above-mentioned criteria, i.e migrant pupils. Discrimination and rejection are among the factors that hinder migrant children in developing a positive identity. Of course, discrimination and racism are not created only in schools, nor can schools alone prevent them. However, combating prejudices, stereotypes and racism is unimaginable without the collaboration of teachers in schools, for there is no other institution, nor social forum in which the majority and the minorities living amongst them may come to grips with such an understanding of co-existence. Schools in Greece are not sufficiently active in combating discrimination and racism, and teachers do not provide a strong enough model to combat them. What is more, despite the exclusion of access not only to institutional citizenship (through the barriers to naturalisation)⁴ but also to ‘cultural’ citizenship (e.g. as shown by the flag incidents), many of these children have decided to remain and create their lives in Greece. The Greek state, apart

⁴ In order to become Greek citizens, immigrants have to be resident in Greece for more than 10 years in the last 12. This is one of the longest residence requirements for naturalisation in Europe. Moreover, a high fee is to be paid by the applicant (1,500 euros), and the decision is discretionary. Furthermore, authorities are not required to reply within a specified period of time and need not justify a negative decision to the applicant. If an applicant is rejected, s/he may apply again after one year (Triandafyllidou and Veikou, 2002). Foreigners born on Greek territory are not granted citizenship, even in the absence of acquiring a parental nationality: they must wait until they reach adulthood to apply for naturalisation, although this requires 10 years of continuous residence (Gropas and Triandafyllidou, 2005).

from the need to reconsider the educational system in order to make it more inclusive, needs also to reconsider its migration policy and responsibilities *vis-à-vis* these children, the second generation.

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Contemporary Greece: Structures, Context and Challenges.

“Comparison of Civic values,
attitudes and skills among
participants and non-participants
of the Greek National High-school
Debating Tournament.
Some preliminary findings.”

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Abstract:

Western democracies are being confronted with a pressing combination of old and new social problems that are being confounded with political apathy and what is being termed ‘democratic deficit’. Civic education has a long history but mixed results in trying to instil democratic values and increase civic engagement, both claimed to be part of a solution. Educational competitive debating has been proposed as a means to increase critical thinking, deliberation skills and civic involvement. What consequently becomes of some importance is the examination of whether competitive educational debating can positively influence the civic values, attitudes and skills of participating students.

This paper presents a small part of preliminary findings from the ongoing analysis of empirical research conducted at 15 Greek high-schools in two time periods (November-December 2006 and March-May 2007) under the framework of the doctoral thesis titled “Democracy and debate – instruction in rhetoric and civic education”. In order to examine hypothesized relationship between participation at the National High-school Debating Tournament and that of civic knowledge, civic values and of civic skills like argumentation and critical thinking, two questionnaires were given to a representative sample of students who participated at the tournament and to a control group of students that did not. The basis of both questionnaires was the Greek version of the questionnaire used at the IEA Civic Education Study at 1999.

Keywords: civic education, debating, IAE civic study, Greece, high-school, critical thinking, argumentation

NOTE:

This paper reflects work in progress and, therefore, I ask for your understanding regarding its shortcomings, but not for your leniency. I am really interested for your comments, your suggestions and your criticism regarding my claim and my effort to support it. Please email me your feedback.

Thank you.

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Introduction:

This paper¹ endeavors to present part of the ongoing empirical research of the doctoral dissertation titled “*Democracy and debate: instruction in rhetoric and civic education*”, which I am currently pursuing at the University of Athens’ department of Political Science and Public Administration.

The main claim of the doctoral thesis is that *instruction in and participation at rhetorical activities, like debating, is beneficial to better prepare students for their future role as citizens*. The examination of this claim has a significant empirical component, preliminary findings of which are presented here.

This paper consists of three parts. The first part argues for the significance of examining whether debating can be beneficial to better preparing students for their future role as citizens. The second part is a description of the research method used in trying to answer this question, its assumptions, its tool and its limitations. The third part is a discussion of selected preliminary results and of some tentative conclusions.

¹ There are several people I would like to thank for their support in helping me prepare this paper and, generally, in assisting me pursue my doctoral research. Here I acknowledge the help of my PhD supervisor Professor Gerasimos Kouzelis, Professor Georgia Kontogianopoulou–Polydorides, Professor Georgios Papagounos, my parents John and Katerina Polychronidis, the statisticians and friends Vanessa Voudouli and Sarantis Kamvissis and, from the schools that participated in the research, the numerous professors and students that took part.

Part one: why is it significant to examine whether debating can be beneficial to better preparing students for their future role as citizens?

This question has a personal dimension, which has to be spelled out from the very beginning. For about ten years now, I have participated at several debating tournaments, as a contestant, as an adjudicator and as an organizer. Now, I am currently employed part-time as a debate coach at a private high-school and I continue to adjudicate at debating tournaments in Greece and abroad. Because of this long and deep involvement, I believe that participation in these rhetorical activities not only has contributed to my personal growth, but has also been complementary to my studies in political science and to my social activities at volunteer organizations. As a consequence, in pursuing my current academic goals, I chose to combine my experience from debate with the field of political socialization. This gave birth to my PhD proposal and this paper is an effort to present, in an academic audience, preliminary findings of this examination of whether debating can actually be beneficial to better preparing students for their future role as citizens.

Besides the aforementioned personal dimension, there are several good reasons that I believe make the above question worth asking. One category of reasons has to do with the current challenges contemporary democracies face and the shortcomings of the educational system to meet them. Western democracies are being confronted with a pressing combination of old and new social problems that are being confounded with political apathy and what is being perceived as a ‘democratic deficit’. Many reports² point out the necessity for citizen involvement in alleviating negative social situations that endanger social cohesion, like racism, in dealing with environmental problems, like pollution and the need for recycling, in pointing out inefficiencies of the state, through active use of institutions like the Ombudsman. The necessity for active citizenship

² See for example the preamble of the Europeans Commission’s “Europe for Citizens programme 2007-2013”, accessible at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/activecitizenship/index_en.htm

involvement is also made explicit through the continuous interest in the academic study of citizen involvement³ and the numerous efforts to promote civic engagement.⁴

Education has traditionally been employed by the State as a means to promote, among other goals, responsible social and political behavior. By teaching students the political and legal institutions of society, the State endeavored to socialize future citizens for their future role as adult members of society, their rights and responsibilities. In many countries, a course of civic education has been used to teach students of their civic rights and obligations and to promote, at least as a declared goal, civic engagement and active involvement in political and social affairs.

Nevertheless, it has been consistently argued that school taught courses in civics are generally ineffective in realizing their stated goals.⁵ In addition, the courses are not considered as central in the curriculum, in most cases they are not taught by specialized teachers, their content is considered irrelevant by students, because it does not illustrate connections with their social and political experience.⁶ Civic education courses seem to focus on knowledge of institutions and legal statutes, rather than providing students with skills that will help them fulfill their future role as citizens.⁷ Additionally, it has been argued that the school climate is counterproductive in teaching democracy and any efforts to transmit or instill democratic values, respect and dialogue are negated by teaching and administrative practices.⁸ As a conclusion, civic education faces many challenges, while having several shortcomings to its methods and practices.⁹

³ Numerous conferences on civic education take place all over the world (information accessible through the very comprehensive website of CIVITAS International: <http://www.civnet.org/index.php>). Also read about the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study projected for 2009: <http://www.iea.nl/icces.html>

⁴ European Association for Education of Adults - Active Citizenship: <http://www.eaea.org/citizenship>.

⁵ See Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides, Georgia, Mary Kottoula, and Kelly Dimopoulou (2000).

⁶ For example in Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides, Georgia (ed) (2005) it is mentioned that "In contrast with the current culture and political activism of Greek youth at the time of the research [1999], Democracy in schools is being taught in a rather abstract and idealized form, cut from fights against oppression, unless they refer to foreign occupation". (124)

⁷ See Τσόμσκι, Νοαμ (2002) [Greek translation of: Chomsky, Noam. (2000)] Where it is also mentioned that there is a fundamental contradiction between the stated aim of promoting active citizenship and at the same time considering public participation in public policy a serious threat (p.27).

⁸ In criticisms against civic education one also finds the claim that "instead of teaching autonomy, it inculcates students with the dominant ideology". See Τσόμσκι, Νοαμ (2002) (p.49)

⁹ Enslin, Penny, Shirley Pendlebury and Mary Hjiattas (2001)

Additionally, the mere fact that there are numerous inter-governmental¹⁰ and non-governmental¹¹ efforts to improve Civic education and associate it with Human Rights and Peace education (another clear deficiency of the current system), is a strong indication that the State has failed to do so.

A second set of reasons that make the question of whether debating promotes civic values and skills revolve around the efforts to promote civic engagement and responsibility through alternative and more experiential methods. Among several proposals¹² that aim at experiential learning and involve rhetorical skills, competitive educational debating has been proposed as a means to increase critical thinking, deliberation skills and civic involvement.¹³

Debating as an educational practice in secondary education (teacher initiated) and higher education (student initiated) has worldwide acceptance for many years with numerous national and international debating tournaments.¹⁴ There are several organizations¹⁵ that promote debate education as a means to expand and deepen Democracy by teaching critical thinking and argumentation, by promoting engagement in several social and political issues through encouraging public dialogue.

It must also be mentioned that reservations regarding the scope and method of debating do exist.¹⁶ But they make the question of whether competitive educational debating can positively influence the civic values, attitudes and skills of participating students even more interesting and challenging.

¹⁰ Like UNESCO or European Commission's efforts mentioned previously.

¹¹ Like CIVITAS mentioned previously or like the educational efforts of Amnesty International and countless other NGO's

¹² e.g. the National Issues Forums. [See Gastil, John (2004)], the Model United Nations, The European Youth Parliament or the Greek Youth Parliament (Βουλή των Εφήβων).

¹³ See Farrow, Stephen (2006), Colbert, Kent (1995) and Greenstreet, Robert (1993).

¹⁴ See e.g. the World Debating News blog: <http://worlddebating.blogspot.com/> and the website of the World Schools Debating Championship: <http://schoolsdebate.com/>

¹⁵ International Debate Education Association: <http://idebate.org/>

¹⁶ Greene, Ronald Walter and Darrin Hicks (2005).

Part two: Research methodology

This part consists of four elements. First, there is a brief overview of the *research design*, which includes the clarification of the research question and the preparation of the research tool. Second, there is a description of the *reduction of the sample size and the number of variables* examined for the purposes of this paper, as well as the consequent limitation of this reduction to the results of the statistical tests employed. Third, there are two *methodological issues* regarding sample representativeness and determination of causality. Finally, there is a presentation of the *main statistical tools* employed for the purposes of this paper.

2.1 Research design

The research design includes the clarification of the research question and the working hypotheses, and a description of the research tool in relation to the working hypotheses.¹⁷

2.1.1 The research question and working hypotheses

Taking as given that it is significant to ask whether debating can be beneficial in better preparing students for their future role as citizens, the next step was to develop working hypotheses that can be empirically testable. These hypotheses, corollary to the basic claim of the research, once corroborated by the evidence should indicate, at the first level, correlation between participation and desirable civic characteristics and, at a second level, causality between participation and those characteristics.

The first working hypothesis, that can be termed “*the participation correlation hypothesis*”, is that there should be a positive correlation of participation to the debating tournament and elements conducive to a positive citizen identity, i.e. knowledge of

¹⁷ For a description of the selection of the sample and the actual data gathering process see the respective appendices (pages 42 and 43)

political structures and concepts, critical thinking skills and, finally, opinions exhibiting understanding of the role of citizen and reflecting democratic values, like (a) respect to fundamental rights and freedoms, (b) tolerance to minorities, and (c) willingness to active political participation. This first working hypothesis, given a quantifiable research tool, can be broken down to two more specific hypotheses:

(a.1) Participating students (especially those who are competing at the tournament, that is, had the most active involvement in the process) should score differently (higher) from their non-participating peers.

(a.2) Those who have participated longer should score differently (higher) from those who had a shorter participation and substantially different (much higher) from their non-participating peers.

The second working hypothesis, that can be termed “*the tournament causality hypothesis*”, is that in the above correlation, if existing, participation at the debating tournament is a causal factor that increases desirable skills and positively shifts desirable opinions. This second working hypothesis can be specified as:

(b.1) Regarding variables that can be expected to change in a short period of time (mostly skills but, probably, not values) there should be different (higher) scores between the two time moments, before and after the tournament, for students who participated (especially those who participated for the first time), in comparison to their non-participating peers, whose scores should not have any substantial difference.

2.1.2 The research tool - two questionnaires

It was a fortunate coincidence to get acquainted with the IEA Civic Education Study¹⁸ and the questionnaire that was employed, which was quantifying and analyzing variables related to knowledge, to skills and to opinions of 14 year old students in 28 countries.

The questionnaire employed in Greece for the The IEA Civic Education Study¹⁹ was adjusted into two versions, a full one (288 variables) and a shorter one (174 variables). The first version was modified from the original mainly under consideration of age (deleting some knowledge questions deemed too easy for high-school students and making some other skill questions a bit more difficult), as well as adding some questions pertinent to the research question (skills questions related with argumentation and demographic questions about debate experience and tournament participation).

The second version, which was to be used for the second phase of the research, used most of the questions of the first version without repeating demographic questions, knowledge questions and some opinion questions which were considered not useful or pertinent for the research question. Additionally, it was deemed useful to add some open ended questions that would collect student opinions on contemporary social and political issues, which would be receptive to more qualitative analyses later.

¹⁸ For information about the IEA study, which took place at 28 countries on 1999 and was addressed to 14-15 year old students at the last year of obligatory education, cf. Torney-Purta, J. et al. (2001). A very useful and detailed book on the methodology of that research was published in 2004 as Schulz, Wolfram and Heiko Sibberns (Eds.). **IEA Civic Education Study Technical Report**, Amsterdam: IEA.

¹⁹ Used by permission by Professor Gitsa Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides, who as head of the Greek coordination Centre of IAE, supervised the second phase of the study for Greece. For the Greek part of the study and about the Greek coordination Centre of IAE see Κοντογιαννοπούλου-Πολυδορίδη, Γεωργία. (Επ.). (2005). (in Greek)

2.2 Data and variable reduction

For the purposes of this paper and mainly due to time limitations, I selected only a handful of variables²⁰ and run the statistical tests only to a small number of participating students (all students from four schools, two from Athens and two from Thessaloniki). Even after my original selection I had to further limit the variables and results that I would present here. The selection was mainly with the criterion of clarity and interest to the examination of the working hypothesis. It has to be stated that this paper is a preliminary effort to deal with a great number of data and, as such, I will be very grateful for suggestions for further analyses of my data set.

The following table gives an overview of some characteristics of the sample used for this paper.²¹

Table 1: Selected characteristics (gender, class, previous year's marks) of students from 4 schools

	debate training	no debate training	
gender			total
male	11	13	24
female	26	22	48
total	37	35	72
class			total
1 st Lyceum ²²	16	14	30
2 nd Lyceum	16	13	29
3 rd Lyceum	5	8	13
total	37	35	72
previous year's marks			total
up to 10	0	1	1
10_11,9	1	2	3
12_13,9	1	1	2
14_15,9	1	6	7
16_17,9	2	8	10
18_20	32	17	49
total	37	35	72

²⁰ For the purposes of this paper only 180 variables were considered from the total 462 variables used in both questionnaires. The list of the considered variables can be found at Appendix B, page 38

²¹ For analytic characteristics of each of the four participating schools see Appendix G, page 47

²² In the Greek Educational system there are 9 years of obligatory education, divided into 6 years of Elementary school (Dimotiko) and 3 years of middle school (Gymnasium). There are additionally 3 optional years of High school (Lyceum).

At table 1 we can observe that while on gender and on school class there seem to be a roughly even distribution between debaters and non-debaters, there seem to be an uneven distribution of students according to last years marks, both within the control group and, especially, within the debaters group, This raises the question of whether, from this research, we can make valid conclusions for all participants at the tournament and, then, validly formulate inferences in comparison to the general student population.

2.3 Methodological issues

2.3.1. Teacher selection according to higher than average marks

I argue that we can make valid inferences, with some qualifications, for the following two reasons. First, it seems that in all participating schools, students that train for and take part at the debating tournament have above average marks. This can be explained by the motivation of each school administration and respective teachers to compete well at the tournament, what we can call *teacher selection*. Despite the selection of debaters by schools, probably based on their overall school performance, for which last years average grades are a good indication, we can still make valid inferences for the total student population that *participates* at the tournament. Second, regarding the control group, I believe that even though we can't use its answers to validly make inferences for the general student population, we shouldn't be alarmed, because we can still make valid comparisons with the debaters' group.

A control group slanted towards higher marks is useful for the purposes of this research, because it is roughly equivalent to the debaters' group in that respect, thus allowing valid comparisons. Additionally, this design conveniently removes, at least partially, the effect of school performance in our comparisons. In other words, because debaters seem to have higher than average marks it would be only by having a control group with similar school performance that we can concentrate on the effect of participation on the variables we are measuring.

2.3.2 Self-selection and direction of causality

There is, however, another important methodological concern: the effect of *self-selection*. This effect is well known in survey studies, where answering is voluntary. It has to do with the difficulty of making valid inferences to the whole population based on answers of people who might have had higher motivation to participate, for several reasons, while disregarding the answers of people who couldn't or simply didn't want to participate. As a result, the results of such surveys can not be used for valid inferences for the characteristics of the whole population.

This is not the case for this study, because, as part of the design, almost all students who were trained for the tournament completed a questionnaire. Even though it was optional, there were hardly any students who didn't want to participate in both phases. Actually, in several answers of the open ended question “*Please evaluate the questionnaires and the overall experience of participation in this research*”, there was a clear indication of satisfaction, mainly on the grounds that there haven't been many opportunities for them to express their opinion in political and social matters.

Even though the self-selection effect in participating at this research is of no concern, there is a second level of self-selection, that of self selection effect in *participating at the debate team*, that in addition to the multiple factors that affect socialization, will create difficulties in trying to determine the *direction of causality* in the “tournament causality hypothesis”. In other words, this difficulty lies in determining whether participation in the debate team affects civic competencies and values or, *conversely*, it is preexisting civic competencies and values that influence students to choose to participate in the debate team.

According to the design of this study, this second self-selection effect and the teacher selection effect are addressed in the comparison of two time moments. Had the study included only one phase then, indeed, it would be very difficult to determine whether debate instills e.g. civic competence, or whether pre-existing civic competence leads

people to want to debate. Such a correlation would be interesting in itself but it wouldn't further the cause of trying to verify the "tournament causality hypothesis". Nevertheless, because we are comparing the same groups in two time moments we can theoretically discern some part of a causal effect, if debaters' answers on the second phase indicate a substantial difference, in comparison to the first phase, while the control group's answers do not.

2.4 Main statistical tools

The statistical tools that I have employed for this paper, through the computer program SPSS 13.0, are descriptive and non-parametric. For this paper I will only use one type of comparison, a comparison between the debating group (D) and the control group (~D), at the same time moment. Therefore, there will be two D/~D comparisons, one for the first questionnaire (t1) and another for the second questionnaire (t2), that is, before and after the debating tournament. In the future, I plan on using different tests that will allow me to compare two different time moments.²³

For this set of comparisons I am using the Mann-Whitney test, which is a non-parametric test that assesses whether two samples of observations have a different probability distribution. The Null hypothesis is that the two samples (that must be independent, as it is in this case) come from the same distribution. In other words, I am testing whether the Null hypothesis that there aren't any differences between the compared groups can be rejected with a statistical significance level of at least 0.5. The requirement of the Mann-Whitney test that the observations are ordinal is met because all of the variables tested are ordinal.

The two main limitations from the aforementioned design and the choice of only this statistical tool is that we can't examine at all the "tournament causality hypothesis",

²³ A type of comparison for the future will be the comparison within each group between two different time moments, one for Dt1/Dt2 and one for ~Dt1/~Dt2.

because the chosen tool can't compare dependent samples. Regarding the "participation correlation hypothesis" we can examine it only partially because we need further breaking down of the limited sample into different levels of experience and frequency of participation at debate trainings, and this will lead to very small sub-sets of data that can't guarantee validity to our conclusions. Still, simply by employing a plain frequency distribution we can see to what direction the difference lies in a variable that we spotted a difference.

Part three: Discussion of selected test results and tentative conclusions

In this part I will first explain the grouping of variables employed in the statistical tests and present selected results from the Mann-Whitney Tests performed for the two main sets of comparisons. All statistical tables of the tests can be found at Appendix F, p.44. Based on the following discussion I will offer some tentative conclusions regarding the current examination and the future steps for examining further the claim that competitive educational debating can positively influence the civic values, attitudes and skills of participating students.

3.1 Grouping of variables

The variables used for comparisons in this paper²⁴ are divided in four categories: Knowledge, Skills, Argumentation and Opinions (the latter subdivided into Democracy, the Citizen, Immigration and future political Participation). In order to make the comparisons the data set was grouped by the variable “B_I_00 - Participation II” which had two values: “0” (did not participate at all at the debate training at my school) and “1” (participated at least once per month at the debate training at my school).

Knowledge, Skills and Argumentation questions were of the multiple choice type with three wrong answers that returned the value “0” and one correct, which returned the value “1”. This means that the distributions of these values are all binomial. Opinion questions were also of the multiple choice type, using a Likert scale with two negative and two positive answers, and a “don’t know”, which means they are all non-parametric, i.e. can’t be said to have a specific kind of distribution.

²⁴ For the full list of variables considered for this paper look at Appendix B, p. 38

The Mann-Whitney test will be run in two different groups of data. One for the answers of the first questionnaire and another for the answers of the second questionnaire. A summary of the statistical test and the grouping of variables can be seen in the following table.

Table 2: Summary of statistical tests and grouping of variables

<u>Comparisons</u>	<u>Statistical Test</u>
<u>a) Dt1 / ~Dt1</u> Knowledge Skills Argumentation skills Opinions -Democracy -The citizen -Immigration -Future political participation	Mann-Whitney (two independent samples, ordinal variables)
<u>b) Dt2 / ~Dt2</u> Skills Opinions -Democracy -The Citizen -Immigration -Future Political participation	

D = debaters, ~D = non-debaters, t1 = December 2006, t2 = April – early May 2007

3.2. First questionnaire

After running the Mann-Whitney test, we can reject the Null-hypothesis that the two groups (debaters and non-debaters) have the same distribution for the following variables:

Knowledge

Table 3: Statistically significant differences from knowledge questions from t1 at $\alpha=0,05$

A_l_3 $\alpha=0,018$ (political rights)
A_l_12 $\alpha= 0,020$ (example of non-democratic government)
A_l_13 $\alpha=0,036$ (consequence of small newspapers' buyout)
Total knowledge ²⁵ $\alpha=0,029$ (sum of correct knowledge answers)

What is really interesting in this category is that most of the questions were answered correctly by both groups. The fact that most questions were correctly answered is probably more of an indication of the level of difficulty (or, rather, the ease) of the questions, than a proof of the similarity between the two groups. It's only through adding the variable "Total Knowledge" that an overall difference (however small) is exhibited. This last variable, after a weighted average,²⁶ shows that with a level of significance of $\alpha=0,029$ we can be fairly certain that, over all, debaters did better in knowledge questions (even if slightly), which can probably be explained by the higher average marks compared to the non-debaters, and therefore doesn't seem to be affected by participation in debate. This makes sense because debating, as an educational activity, does not focus on a certain body of knowledge, rather on student abilities to organise their material, their thoughts and their time, so as to provide a persuasive speech in favour or against a position, usually reflecting current affairs and controversies. It doesn't "teach" in the traditional sense but rather offers experiential knowledge on argumentation, reasoning, critical thinking and rhetoric.

²⁵ This is a composite variable created by the sum of correct answers for the grouping of Knowledge questions.

²⁶ Debaters' weighted average = $(2*11)/37+(4*12)/37+(8*13)/37+(14*14)/37+(15*9)/37 = \mathbf{13,65}$
 Non-debaters' weighted average = $(5*1)/35+(6*1)/35+(10*2)/35+(11*1)/35+(12*5)/35+(13*12)/35+(14*9)/35+(15*4)/35 = \mathbf{12,69}$

Skills**Table4: Statistically significant differences from skills questions from t1 at $\alpha=0,05$** **A_I_10 $\alpha=0,009$ (meaning of political sketch)**A_I_22 $\alpha=0,018$ (judgement- clearest example of corruption)A_I_24 $\alpha=0,036$ (recognition of opinion)A_I_25 $\alpha=0,040$ (meaning of political sketch)A_I_26 $\alpha=0,040$ (text interpretation)

In 5 skills questions, that is more than 1/3 of the 14 skill questions for t1, we can reject the Null hypothesis with $\alpha=0,05$. I believe this is a significant finding that supports the “participation correlation hypothesis”. With the examination of the frequency distribution for each group we can clearly see that the significant difference we have discerned from the Mann-Whitney test is in favor of the debating group.

Table 5: Correct and wrong answers with weighted percentages of t1 skills questions

<u>Debaters</u>					<u>Non-debaters</u>			
correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%		correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%
33	89,19%	4	10,81%	A_I_10 $\alpha=0,009$	22	62,86%	13	37,14%
37	100,00%	0	0,00%	A_I_22 $\alpha=0,018$	30	85,71%	5	14,29%
37	100,00%	0	0,00%	A_I_24 $\alpha=0,036$	31	88,57%	4	11,43%
36	97,30%	1	2,70%	A_I_25 $\alpha=0,040$	29	82,86%	6	17,14%
36	97,30%	1	2,70%	A_I_26 $\alpha=0,040$	29	82,86%	6	17,14%
average	96,76%		3,24%		average	76,22%		18,38%

It's an interesting finding that the sharpest difference would be on a question that that the students were asked to interpret the meaning of a political sketch. This task was associated with visual reasoning and decoding, that, supposedly, younger generations are rather proficient. One would expect that the control group would score higher.

Argumentation**Table 6: Statistically significant difference from argumentation questions from t1 at $\alpha=0,01$**

A_I_33 $\alpha=0,004$ (argumentation - finding unwritten premises)

Skills questions give an indication of an overall ability of judgement and perception, evidently desirable skills for future citizens. However, even more significant for critical thinking are specialised skills that have to do with argumentation or, in other words, the recognition, use and evaluation of arguments i.e. supporting claims through premises.²⁷

One of the most intricate, and difficult to master, argumentation skills is recognizing correctly unspoken/unwritten premises, sentences that are entailed or implied, so that the argument is persuasive. Interestingly, this variable asked students exactly that and we can reject the Null hypothesis at the demanding $\alpha=0,01$. The frequency distribution in the next page is very illuminating of the difference between the two groups.

Table 7: Correct and wrong answers with weighted percentages of unspoken assumption t1 question

<u>Debaters</u>					<u>Non-debaters</u>			
correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%		correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%
17	45,95%	20	54,05%	A_I_33 $\alpha=0,004$	5	14,3%	30	85,71%

It is apparent that the difference in this quite difficult question is significant, indicating a strong connection between participation in debate training and at least this argumentative skill. The Mann-Whitney test, however, did not result in any other statistically significant differences at $\alpha=0,05$ that would lead us to reject the Null hypothesis. It would be very interesting to see whether this result could be replicated in t2 but, unfortunately, there isn't a similar question at the second questionnaire.

²⁷ For this link between critical thinking and argumentation cf. Gold et.al. (2002), in relation to education cf. Winch, Christopher (2004) and, especially related with debating, cf. Colbert, Kent. (1995) and Greenstreet, Robert. (1993).

Democracy**Table 8: Statistically significant differences from Democracy questions from t1 at $\alpha=0,05$**

A_A1 $\alpha=0,031$ When everyone has the right to express his opinion freely...
A_A10 $\alpha=0,026$ When it is forbidden to citizens that criticize the Government to speak in public meetings...
A_A13, $\alpha=0,015$ When there exist many and different organizations for those who want to belong to them...
A_A24 $\alpha=0,031$ When citizens trust the Government and the State without doubt...

So far, variables were binomial and it was very easy to point to the direction of difference between the two groups, if one existed. Now, starting with the analysis of questions about opinions and attitudes, it has to be stated that the analysis can't be as simple. There are four possible answers (five, including the "don't know") and the distribution is more complicated. Furthermore, even though we might have personal preferences and beliefs about the answers of the questionnaire, technically, there aren't correct and mistaken answers. Our point of view now should become more descriptive, instead of evaluative. As a result we have to be more cautious about the conclusions that we make about differences in be as certain about the relationship. The frequency distribution for the above variables, using the *mode*, i.e. the most frequently occurring value in the data set, as an indication of central tendency, produces the following results:

Table 9: Frequency distribution for Democracy variable A1- t1
When everyone has the right to express his opinion freely...

A_A1 $\alpha=0,031$ mode	debaters		non-debaters	
	4		4	
very bad for democracy	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
rather bad for democracy	0	0,00%	2	5,71%
rather good for democracy	1	2,70%	4	11,43%
very good for democracy	36	97,30%	27	77,14%
don't know	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
missing	0	0,00%	2	5,71%

Here, we see a small but, yet, significant difference between the two groups. Debaters answered towards one pole of the answers almost 100%, while there was a wider spread for non-debaters. A small indication of the "participation correlation hypothesis" that probably has to do with the central place speech has in debating. Learning to respect the

right to free expression of others is considered to be or of the corollary benefits of²⁸ debating.

Table 10: Frequency distribution for Democracy variable A10- t1

When it is forbidden to citizens that criticize the Government to speak in public meetings...

A_A10 $\alpha=0,026$ mode	debaters		non-debaters	
	1		1	
very bad for democracy	36	97,30%	24	68,57%
rather bad for democracy	1	2,70%	5	14,29%
rather good for democracy	0	0,00%	1	2,86%
very good for democracy	0	0,00%	2	5,71%
don't know	0	0,00%	1	2,86%
missing	0	0,00%	1	2,86%

In interpreting the results of Table 10, there is an analogy with the previous point. The values of open criticism and direct confrontation are promoted in debating, under the caveat of responsible and ethical considerations. Nevertheless, criticizing the Government in any circumstance, and especially in public meetings, is one of the cornerstones of the right to free speech in Western Democracies.

Table 11: Frequency distribution for Democracy variable A13- t1

When there exist many and different organizations for those who want to belong to them...

A_A13 $\alpha=0,015$ mode	debaters		non-debaters	
	4		4	
very bad for democracy	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
rather bad for democracy	1	2,70%	2	5,71%
rather good for democracy	8	21,62%	13	37,14%
very good for democracy	28	75,68%	16	45,71%
don't know	0	0,00%	2	5,71%
missing	0	0,00%	4	11,43%

This is a question that highlights another interesting point in the possible differences between the two groups. Students who participate in debating seem to demonstrate an increased amount of certainty and self confidence compared to their non-debating peers.

²⁸ cf. Mitchell, Gordon R. (1998) and Rowland, Robert et.al (1995).

In expressing their opinion, they tend to take more strong positions and also choose not to answer or to answer “don’t know” less often.

Table 12: Frequency distribution for Democracy variable A24- t1

When citizens trust the Government and the State without doubt...

A_A24 $\alpha=0,031$ mode	debaters 1		non-debaters 2	
very bad for democracy	21	56,76%	9	25,71%
rather bad for democracy	11	29,73%	12	34,29%
rather good for democracy	2	5,41%	8	22,86%
very good for democracy	3	8,11%	3	8,57%
don't know	0	0,00%	1	2,86%
missing	0	0,00%	2	5,71%

In this question, the amount of self confidence is exhibited more strongly. The number of debaters who evaluate blind trust to the Governemnt and the State as negative (or rather negative), is almost double to the number of non-debaters who think that its positive (or rather positive).

The citizen

Table 13: Statistically significant difference from Citizen questions from t1 at $\alpha=0,05$

A_B5 $\alpha=0,039$ Would participate to a peaceful protest against a law that he/she considers to be unjust

In the following table the difference is not that big but is existent. Debaters do not hesitate to chose an active participation to politics though a peaceful demonstration as very important for the role for the good citizen, while non-debaters exhibit, one average, more hesitation to do so, by either diminishing the importance or by not answering.

Table 14: Frequency distribution for Citizen variable A_B5

How important is for a good citizen to participate to a peaceful protest against a law that he/she considers to be unjust?

A_B5 $\alpha=0,039$ mode	debaters 4		non-debaters 4	
not important	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
rather not important	1	2,70%	4	11,43%
rather important	8	21,62%	10	28,57%
very important	27	72,97%	17	48,57%
don't know	0	0,00%	1	2,86%
missing	1	2,70%	3	8,57%

Immigration

Table 15: Statistically significant difference from Immigration questions from t1 at $\alpha=0,05$

A_H8 $\alpha=0,029$ All countries should accept refugees who are trying to avoid wars or political persecution at other countries

This was a question that both groups found difficult to take extreme positions in both sides, or even to answer. Yet the fact remains that almost double as many debaters chose the most tolerant positions as compared to non-debaters. Debating might have to do with promoting tolerance, as it is hypothesized that taking both sides of an issue makes you more receptive to different points of view and thus less likely to take extreme positions that can't be reasonably changed.

Table 16: Frequency distribution for Immigration variable A_H8

All countries should accept refugees who are trying to avoid wars or political persecution at other countries

A_H8 $\alpha=0,029$ mode	debaters		non-debaters	
	3		3	
completely disagree	1	2,70%	3	8,57%
disagree	4	10,81%	4	11,43%
agree	15	40,54%	14	40,00%
completely agree	12	32,43%	5	14,29%
don't know	1	2,70%	4	11,43%
missing	4	10,81%	5	14,29%

Future Political Participation

Table 17: Statistically significant differences from Participation t1 questions at $\alpha=0,01$

A_M2 $\alpha=0,006$...learn about candidates/parties before elections
 A_M7 $\alpha=0,004$...fundraise for a social cause

Both of the following tables exhibit a very strong relationship between participation in debate and willingness to be more politically and socially active. The venue of participation seems to be less activist, rather mellow. It would be interesting to see whether these choices would remain the same, after the debating tournament.

Table 18: Frequency distribution for Participation variable A_M2

...learn about candidates/parties before elections

A_M2 $\alpha=0,006$		debaters		non-debaters	
mode	4		4		4
I will certainly not	0	0,00%	4	11,43%	
I will probably not	1	2,70%	5	14,29%	
I will probably	10	27,03%	8	22,86%	
I will certainly	25	67,57%	15	42,86%	
don't know	0	0,00%	2	5,71%	
missing	1	2,70%	1	2,86%	

Table 19: Frequency distribution for Participation variable A_M7

...fundraise for a social cause

A_M7 $\alpha=0,004$		debaters		non-debaters	
mode	3		3		3
I will certainly not	1	2,70%	3	8,57%	
I will probably not	4	10,81%	12	34,29%	
I will probably	18	48,65%	14	40,00%	
I will certainly	13	35,14%	5	14,29%	
don't know	0	0,00%	0	0,00%	
missing	1	2,70%	1	2,86%	

So, from the results of the first comparison that is between debaters and non-debaters, based on the answers to the first questionnaire there is indication that supports the “participation correlation hypothesis”. Debaters seem, on average, in all cases that the statistical test concluded a significant difference in their answers, be more respectful to the freedom of speech, to be against censorship, and in favor of open public criticism, more thoughtful towards refugees and will probably participate in some kind of political action, like fundraising, staying informed, and probably participate in peaceful demonstrations

3.3. Second questionnaire

In the second questionnaire there were no knowledge questions as it was reasoned that first, the same questions would probably be answered once again correctly by the vast majority of students and, second, different questions would not be easily comparable. Additionally, as it has been stated before, educational debating doesn't make a claim, nor does it aim in transmitting knowledge, rather an inquisitive outlook towards life armed with critical thinking tools and public speaking skills.

Due to time restrictions no argumentation questions were included to the second questionnaire and the skills questions that were finally incorporated, were not as many and there are concerns that they are not directly comparable to the results of the first phase. One would expect, that after the participation at debate trainings and at the debate tournament differences in skills would be more pronounced.

Skills

Table 20: Statistically significant differences from skills t2 questions at $\alpha=0,05$

B_I_16 $\alpha=0,013$ (recognition of fact)
B_I_17 $\alpha=0,047$ (recognition of fact)

Differences did exist but they were not as numerous, nor where they very pronounced. Nevertheless, a significant finding lies in the difficulty of a about 1 out of four students from the control group to discern between a sentence that conveys a statement of fact (regardless of its veracity) from three other sentences that convey an opinion.

Table 21: Correct/Right answers with weighted percentages, skill question B_I_16 at t2

<u>Debaters</u>					<u>Non-debaters</u>			
correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%		correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%
34	91,89%	3	8,11%	B_I_16	24	68,57%	11	31,43%

Table 22: Correct/Right answers with weighted percentages, skill question B_I_17 at t2

<u>Debaters</u>					<u>Non-debaters</u>			
correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%		correct	weighted%	wrong	weighted%
34	91,89%	3	8,11%	B_I_17	26	74,29%	9	25,71%

Democracy**Table 23: Statistically significant differences from Democracy t2 questions at $\alpha=0,05$**

B_A4 $\alpha=0,036$ When newspapers are free from governmental control...
B_A13 $\alpha=0,035$ When there exist many and different organizations for those who want to belong to them...

Of the two Democracy questions that were answered differently in a statistically significant way at $\alpha=0,05$, one refers again to some aspect of freedom of expression, in this case the freedom of information and the independence of the press, which is considered a cornerstone for modern democratic states. On first glance the difference doesn't seem large, but it exists,

Table 24: Frequency distribution for Democracy variable B_A4

When newspapers are free from governmental control...

B_A4 $\alpha=0,036$ mode	debaters		non-debaters	
	4		4	
very bad for democracy	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
rather bad for democracy	0	0,00%	6	17,14%
rather good for democracy	11	29,73%	10	28,57%
very good for democracy	26	70,27%	18	51,43%
don't know	0	0,00%	1	2,86%
missing	0	0,00%	0	0,00%

The second question for which we can reject the Null hypothesis, interestingly enough, was also indicated in the analysis of the first questionnaire. This is the first (and the only in this research) question that the difference between the two groups can be accepted. In closer observation the distributions are almost identical between the two phases, raising the question of how many other variables would behave similarly (i.e. retain the original distribution) but this could not have been picked up by this test.

Table 25: Frequency distribution for Democracy variable B_A13

When there exist many and different organizations for those who want to belong to them...

B_A13 $\alpha=0,035$ mode	debaters		non-debaters	
	4		4	
very bad for democracy	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
rather bad for democracy	1	2,70%	5	14,29%
rather good for democracy	8	21,62%	9	25,71%
very good for democracy	27	72,97%	18	51,43%
don't know	1	2,70%	3	8,57%
missing	0	0,00%	0	0,00%

Note: In the second questionnaire there were no Citizen or Immigration questions that we could reject the Null hypothesis with a level of significance of $\alpha=0,05$. Even though there were two such cases at the analysis of the first questionnaire, it seems that no effect could have been detected, probably due to small sample size or because views on these issues could not be affected substantially by exposure to debate.

Future Political Participation

On the contrary, regarding future political participation there are three variables that we can reject the Null hypothesis at the $\alpha=0,05$ level of significance. Actually for two of them we can reject the Null hypothesis even at the $\alpha=0,001$ level of significance.

**Table 26: Statistically significant differences from Participation
t2 questions at $\alpha=0,05$ and at $\alpha=0,001$**

B_M4	$\alpha=0,006$...write letters to newspapers for social or political issues
B_M8	$\alpha=0,005$...gather signatures for a petition
B_M9	$\alpha=0,033$...participate in a peaceful protest or demonstration

The three variables, if taken together, can indicate a further move towards activism, in comparison to the results of the first questionnaire. From actively asking information about the elections and gathering money, the debater group, on average seems to have become a little more active in social affairs by indicating willingness for the future to use more active means of participating for the future. However, it must be observed that the difference is not as pronounced as the skills questions of t1. Both groups are near the central values. Debaters are exhibiting more certainty towards participating, in comparison to non debaters, but the difference between the two positions, though demonstrably existent, is not pronounced

Table 27: Frequency distribution for participation variable B_M4

...write letters to newspapers for social or political issues

B_M4 $\alpha=0,006$	debaters		non-debaters	
mode	3		2	
I will certainly not	4	10,81%	9	25,71%
I will probably not	10	27,03%	14	40,00%
I will probably	20	54,05%	10	28,57%
I will certainly	3	8,11%	1	2,86%
don't know	0	0,00%	1	2,86%
missing	0	0,00%	0	0,00%

Table 28: Frequency distribution for Participation variable B_M9

...gather signatures for a petition

B_M8 $\alpha= 0,004$	debaters		non-debaters	
mode	3		2	
I will certainly not	2	5,41%	6	17,14%
I will probably not	11	29,73%	19	54,29%
I will probably	20	54,05%	7	20,00%
I will certainly	3	8,11%	2	5,71%
don't know	1	2,70%	1	2,86%
missing				

Table 29: Frequency distribution for Participation variable B_M9

...participate in a peaceful protest or demonstration

B_M9 $\alpha= 0,033$	debaters		non-debaters	
mode	3		3	
I will certainly not	1	2,70%	4	11,43%
I will probably not	4	10,81%	9	25,71%
I will probably	17	45,95%	15	42,86%
I will certainly	14	37,84%	7	20,00%
don't know	1	2,70%	0	0,00%
missing				

3.4 Tentative Conclusions

After examining the results from the Mann-Whitney test and looking closer at each selected variable through their frequency distributions there are a few points that can be made regarding the effort to corroborate the main claim that instruction and participation in rhetorical activities, like debating, is beneficial to better prepare students for their future role as citizens.

As it has been mentioned, there are several limitations to this paper. First, only a small part of the sample was examined and then with only a small amount of the recorded variables. Secondly, there was no examination between two different time moments for each group (the tournament causality hypothesis), nor any analysis with more sophisticated statistical tools that would reduce the variables (like factor analysis) or examine more complex relationships (like with non-linear / logistic regression).

Nevertheless, despite those shortcomings some interesting results were found regarding the “participation correlation hypothesis”. First, there was an over all difference in knowledge questions, that, as surmised, doesn’t have anything to do with debate participation but probably is an effect of age and the ease of the questions. On skills, findings regarding interpretation of the political drawing and the recognition of fact and opinion were interesting. On opinions it was shown that debaters probably have a greater sensitivity to issue of freedom of expression and also tolerance to minorities. These are findings that have to be corroborated with the full sample and through further tests but with different grouping variables like gender, class/age, school marks and a host of other demographic data that can prove useful. Using the proper statistical tools to compare dependent and independent samples is also very important. Methodologically we can notice that values are much harder to discern through statement of opinions and can be reasonably assumed that they do not change in such a short time.

The direction of causality will probably be very difficult to establish. It's very probable that causality is working both ways thus producing a virtuous circle where benefits from debate enhance the positive outlook of those students participating, which first joined or were selected because of that outlook. Also, further analysis can be hypothesized to indicate whether students that have been debating longer will produce stronger indications to the indicators. Although it might be difficult to discern to effects of age, experience and general competence it is a direction that has to be taken.

It's still too early in this research process to have definite results. However, with a reasonable amount of certainty we can support that debating does indeed enhance some deliberation skills and strengthen critical skills pertaining to the recognition, use and evaluation of arguments. It is with less confidence that we can support that opinions can change only due to participation to the debating training and the tournament. But even that remains to be examined.

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Appendix A: Greek National High-school Debating Tournament

The National High-school Debating Tournament (Πανελλήνιοι Μαθητικοί Αγώνες Επιχειρηματολογίας – Αντιλογίας) took place for the first time on December 2001 with the participation of 18 schools from the cities of Athens, Thessaloniki and Serres. The tournament was an initiative of the European Cultural Centre of Delphi (Ευρωπαϊκό Πολιτιστικό Κέντρο Δελφών) as part of the year long commemoration the occasion of 2400 years from the death of Socrates. The tournament was co-organized by the Ministry of Education and was put under the auspices of the Greek Parliament, which also provided financial support.

Participating schools were each asked to form a five-member team which participated in three preliminary debates. In those debates teams were randomly assigned to argue either in support or against a previously unknown proposition after 20' of preparation. During preparation time the five members cooperated without outside help and without the use of electronic means and selected three of them to speak for the team.

Each debate comprised of six speeches with those speaking in favor of the proposition alternating with those speaking against. The first four were of 6' duration and were called constructive, while the last two were of 4' and were called summaries. The debate was moderated by three adjudicators, most of them teachers from schools other than those participating in that specific debate. Adjudicators were assisted by a student timekeeper who indicated remaining time through a tablet. Seven criteria were used by the adjudicators to mark each speaker (methodology, argumentation, rebuttal, structure, team-spirit, style, participation) with the team receiving the sum points of its members. The team with the most points won the debate.

From the three preliminary rounds the best four schools advanced to the semi-finals which along with the grand final were held at the auditorium of the Old Parliament. There was substantial coverage from the mass media because the event was under the auspices of the Greek Parliament. Its President presented the winners, the finalists and the best speakers with awards, which also included an honorary attendance to the Greek Youth Parliament (Βουλή των Εφήβων).

In the following two years, the number of regions, to which an open invitation was sent to schools from the Ministry of Education, increased from 2 (2001) to 5 (2002) and to 7 (2003). This led to an increase of participating schools from 18 (2001) to 54 (2002) to 89 (2003). Regional preliminary tournaments, with three qualifying debates each, were organized in major cities with the best schools advancing to the final tournament which was held in Athens mid to late December. In 2004 and 2005 there was no increase of participating regions or schools and there were small variations on the number of schools participating from each region. (see relevant table below)

Last year, there was a substantial decrease of participating regions and consequently of participating schools, due to a decrease of the financial contribution from the Greek Parliament. The finals, like 2005, were held later than the previous years (late January, early February).

At the time of submittal of this paper (early June 2007), the registration phase for next year's tournament had just finished, confirming concerns that, due to budget cuts, the number of participating regions and, consequently, of participating schools would be reduced. Only schools from central Macedonia and Attiki were invited to register. The exact number of participating schools is not officially known but a reasonable estimate would be that not more than 45 schools will participate next year.

Table 30: Number of schools participating at the National High-School Debating Tournament (2001-2007).²⁹

Year	Schools	Tournaments (schools participating/advancing)
2001	18	Finals in Athens (18)
2002	54	Finals in Athens (18), Preliminaries: Athens(12/5), Patras(6/1), Thessaloniki(21/8), Ioannina(4/1), Iraklio(10/3)
2003	89	Finals in Athens (12), Preliminaries: Athens(13/2), Patras(9/1), Thessaloniki(26/4), Ioannina(7/1), Iraklio(8/1), Alexandroupolis(10/1), Larissa (16/2)
2004	~90*	Finals in Athens (14), Preliminaries: Athens(13/2), Patras(4/1), Thessaloniki(26/4), Ioannina(4/1), Iraklio(6/1), Alexandroupolis(~20*/3), Larissa (16/2)
2005	~80*	Finals in Athens (20), Preliminaries: Athens(23/6), Patras(4/1), Thessaloniki(26/6), Ioannina(~4*/1), Iraklio(5/1), Alexandroupolis(7/2), Larissa (10/3)
2006	53	Finals in Athens (12), Preliminaries: Athens(17/4), Thessaloniki(28/6), Larissa (8/2)
2007	~45*	Finals in Athens (~12*), Preliminaries: Athens (~17/5*), Thessaloniki (~28/7*)

* Estimation

²⁹ The table was compiled by the author of this paper, who has been a member of the organizing committee of the Tournament since 2001.

Appendix B: List of variables by type

Variables from both questionnaires (A – first phase, B – second phase) = 179

-grouping variable: Participation II -did you participate at the debate training at least once a month?

-demographic variables =12

<i>variable name</i>	<i>content</i>
A_II_1	age
A_II_2	gender
A_II_12_Mom	education of mother
A_II_12_Dad	education of father
A_II_17	past participation to debate team
A_II_23	participation to other rhetorical events
A_II_26	last year's average marks
A_II_28	school year
B_I_1	frequency of debate training
B_I_3	participation at the debate team
B_I_6	school year
B_I_7	previous semester average marks

-knowledge variables =20

<i>variable name</i>	<i>content</i>
A_I_1	knowledge (role of the citizen)
A_I_2	knowledge (laws)
A_I_3	knowledge (political rights)
A_I_4	knowledge (importance of political organizations)
A_I_5	knowledge (aim of syndicalism)
A_I_6	knowledge (serious threat for democracy)
A_I_7	knowledge (illegal political action)
A_I_8	knowledge (reason for the existence of more than one political party)
A_I_9	knowledge (fundamental right of the parliament)
A_I_11	knowledge (violation of political rights)
A_I_12	knowledge (example of non-democratic government)
A_I_13	knowledge (consequence of small newspapers' buyout)
A_I_14	knowledge (democratic societies basic need)
A_I_15	knowledge (most important outcome of regular democratic elections)
A_I_20	knowledge (fundamental characteristic of the free market)
A_KS_1-2, B_KS_1-2	Knowledge (example of active political participation)

-skills variables =27

<i>variable name</i>	<i>content</i>
A_I_10	skill (meaning of political sketch)
A_I_16	skill (text interpretation)
A_I_17	skill (text interpretation)
A_I_18	skill (text interpretation)
A_I_19	skill (judgement-violation of the principle of equality)
A_I_21	skill (judgement- support to democratic claim)

A_I_22	skill (judgement- clearest example of corruption)
A_I_23	skill (recognition of opinion)
A_I_24	skill (recognition of opinion)
A_I_25	skill (meaning of political sketch)
A_I_26	skill (text interpretation)
A_I_27	skill (text interpretation)
A_I_29	skill (recognition of fact)
A_I_30	skill (recognition of fac)
A_I_31	skill (argumentation – recognition of conclusion)
A_I_32	skill (argumentation – persuasiveness of premise)
A_I_33	skill (argumentation – finding premises)
A_I_34	skill (argumentation – evaluation of argument's persuasiveness)
A_I_35	skill (argumentation – criterion of persuasiveness evaluation)
B_I_8	skill (recognition of opinion)
B_I_9	skill (recognition of opinion)
B_I_10	skill (recognition of opinion)
B_I_13	skill text interpretation
B_I_14	skill text interpretation
B_I_15	skill text interpretation
B_I_16	skill (recognition of fact)
B_I_17	skill (recognition of fact)

-opinions variables =120

<i>variable name</i>	<i>content</i>
A_A1-25 , B_A1-25 =50	Democracy
A_B1-15, B_B1-15 =30	The good citizen
A_H1-8, B_H1-8 =16	Immigrants
A_M1-12, B_M1-12 =24	Future political participation

A. How good is ... for democracy?

- A1 When everyone has the right to express his opinion freely...
- A2 When differences in income and financial situation between rich and poor are small...
- A3 When politicians in power grant important public positions to members of their family...
- A4 When newspapers are free from governmental control...
- A5 When private companies have no restrictions from the government...
- A6 When all newspapers belong to the same company...
- A7 When the people demand their political and social rights...
- A8 When immigrants are encouraged to abandon their native language and customs...
- A9 When political parties have directives that support women who want to run for public office...
- A10 When it is forbidden to citizens that criticize the Government to speak in public meetings...
- A11 When the citizens have the right to freely elect their political leaders...
- A12 When the judges and the Courts are influenced by politicians...
- A13 When there exist many and different organizations for those who want to belong to them...
- A14 When the Church is separate from the State...
- A15 When young people are obligated to participate in activities that benefit society...
- A16 When a minimum income is secured for all...
- A17 When political parties disagree on important issues...
- A18 When the people participate in political parties to influence the Government...
- A19 When laws, that women claim to be unjust to them, are modified...
- A20 When all television channels present the same opinion on political issues...
- A21 When people refuse to obey a law that violates human rights...
- A22 When news papers are forbidden to publish articles that might be offensive to some minorities...
- A23 When rich business owners have larger influence to the Government than others...
- A24 When citizens trust the Government and the State without doubt...
- A25 When people protest peacefully for a law they consider unjust...

B. The good citizen...

- B1 Obeys the law
- B2 Votes in all elections
- B3 Participates to a political party
- B4 Works hard
- B5 Would participate to a peaceful protest against a law that he/she considers to be unjust
- B6 Knows the history of the country
- B7 Is willing to join the armed forces to defend the country
- B8 Is keeping track of political issues at the newspaper, the radio, the television or the internet
- B9 Participates in activities that benefit the local community or society at large
- B10 Respects government officials and those who hold public office
- B11 Participates in activities that promote human rights
- B12 Participates in political discussions
- B13 Participates in activities that protect the environment
- B14 Has patriotic feelings and is devoted to the country
- B15 Is willing to ignore a law that violates human rights

H. Immigration

- H1 Immigrants should be able to maintain their native language
- H2 Children of immigrants should have the same educational opportunities with children of this country
- H3 Immigrants who live in a country several years should have the right to vote at elections
- H4 Immigrants should have the possibility of maintaining their customs and way of life
- H5 Immigrants should have equal rights with everyone else in the country
- H6 Immigrants should be prohibited to participate at political activities
- H7 When a country has many immigrants its difficult to be united and patriotic
- H8 All countries should accept refugees who are trying to avoid wars or political persecution at other countries

M. In the future I will

- M1 ...vote for parliamentary elections
- M2 ...learn about candidates/parties before elections
- M3 ...become a member of a political party
- M4 ...write letters to newspapers for social or political issues
- M5 ...become a candidate for regional or local government
- M6 ...volunteer to help the poor or the elderly
- M7 ...fundraise for a social cause
- M8 ...gather signatures for a petition
- M9 ...participate in a peaceful protest or demonstration
- M10 ...protest with graffiti
- M11 ...protest by participating in traffic disruption
- M12 ...protest by participating in public buildings squatting

Appendix C: List of schools that participated in the research

Attiki Region

1st Arsakeio Lyceum of Psihiko
1st General Lyceum of Kesariani
2nd Arsakeio-Tositseio Lyceum of Ekali
2nd General Lyceum of Haidari
2nd General Lyceum of Ilion
3rd General Lyceum of Egaleo
Lyceum of private school “Avgouleas-Linardatos”
Lyceum of private school “Moraitis”
Lyceum of private school “Othisi”

Macedonia Region

1st General Lyceum of Sykees
1st General Lyceum of Evosmos
3rd General Lyceum of Serres
Arsakeio Lyceum of Thessaloniki
Lyceum of private school “Mandoulides”
Music Lyceum of Serres

Appendix D: Sample design and selection

It was reasonable to consider that the main object of the study would be students that were trained for and later participated at the National High-School Debating Tournament. For comparison, a control group of non-competing or, generally, non-participating students would also be needed. Only schools that participated at the tournament would be a target of the study, because it was reasoned that valid comparisons, while trying to control for outside influences, could be made only between participating schools.

This led me to select 40 schools that had registered to participate in the tournament of 2006.³⁰ The criterion used was whether I knew the respective teachers responsible for training the debate team, estimating that it would, therefore, be easier to get permission to conduct my research to their school.³¹ In my application to the Ministry of Education I had selected more schools that I would need to have a representative sample. By then I had concluded I would need about 10-12 schools and 200 students, with about 2-3 schools from each participating region.

As mentioned above, a crucial aspect of the research design was to complete the first phase of the questionnaire before the respective regional preliminary tournaments. As a consequence of, first, the time that I received the positive answer to my application³² and, second, the number of schools that agreed to give me permission before the tournament,³³ I would proceed with conducting the research at 15 schools.

The selection of students that would take part in the research would be made in cooperation with the professors responsible for training the debating team. I would ask them that all students, no matter with what frequency, that participated at the meetings of the debating team, a number that varied among schools,³⁴ should complete the questionnaire, along with a roughly equal number of students with equivalent, if possible, characteristics like school class and gender, chosen randomly.

³⁰ The Ministry of Education sends an open invitation to school units every spring through regional educational directors. Schools have a deadline to register to participate regarding the next school year usually till end of May or early June. As member of the Tournament's Organizing Committee I knew by early June which schools had registered.

³¹ According to the procedure to get a permission to conduct research in state schools there must be a detailed application sent to the Ministry well ahead of time with the condition that the questionnaire would be anonymous (this information is available in Greek at <http://www.pi-schools.gr/structure/departments/tetet/guidelines.htm>). Through internal administrative referral, the application is then evaluated by the Pedagogical Institute, which then sends a positive or negative recommendation to the responsible directorate at the Ministry. The final decision rests at the Ministry which then informs the applicant of the result. Even when positive, there is the condition that the final decision, whether and when, to grant access to the school rests with the respective school Principal. Students also have the right not to participate.

³² I handed over my application on mid-June 2006 and was informed of the positive outcome late November 2006, just a few days before one of the regional preliminary tournaments, with the consequence of excluding this region from the data gathering process, and barely able to hand the first questionnaire to the two other participating regions just on the last week before their respective preliminary tournaments.

³³ Out of the 20 schools that I communicated with asking permission to conduct my research, 5 did not grant me permission citing difficulties in tampering with the demanding time-schedule.

³⁴ There are schools that only trained the five member team, maybe with a couple of alternates, while other schools trained over 15 students, in some cases over 30!

Appendix E: Data gathering process

The first phase of the research was conducted in early to mid December 2006 in just two weeks due to the expediency of collecting the questionnaires before the respective regional tournaments. I did not face any problems with the 15 schools that had agreed to participate and in all cases the school principals and responsible teachers were very helpful.³⁵

To ensure the anonymity of the participants but at the same time make possible to have individual comparison over two time moments I followed a specific Protocol of Confidentiality and Anonymity. I coded each questionnaire with a unique number and asked the teachers to keep an alphabetical list of the participants with their respective unique codes. I collected the number-coded, but anonymous for me, questionnaires and did not take a copy of the list. Teachers kept the participant's list but did not have access to the completed questionnaires. This way results were anonymous and remained confidential. It was indeed very helpful that, with one exception, I was present throughout the completion of the questionnaires in all schools.³⁶

In the second phase, March - early May 2007, I personally went to most of the participating schools with the second and smaller questionnaire coded with the respective unique number for each student and distributed them myself, verifying that each student got the same code like in the first phase using the list that the teachers had kept. After completing the questionnaires, as I had promised to the students, the list was destroyed. In the case of three schools, due to difficulties of scheduling a single time for the whole student sample, I left them the questionnaires, which the professors then mailed me back.

Though rare, it did happen that the original list of the names of participants and their respective codes was misplaced and could not be recovered. I had insisted not to keep a list for myself to ensure the anonymity of the participants. It was fortunate that in both schools the administration had kept an alphabetical list of the first phase participants (as almost all schools did for excusing absences from class). After a suggestion from a teacher I brought the questionnaires from the first phase so that students could recognize their handwriting. Their respective codes were then copied to the cover page of the second questionnaires. Fortunately this happened only in two schools out of the fifteen that participated at the research.

³⁵ For the list of schools that participate look at Appendix C, p.41

³⁶ Due to severe time restriction, in the case of two schools very close to each other, I first went to one, handed the questionnaires, gave directions and answered questions and then went to other to conduct the research. The teacher of the first school was really helpful and brought the completed questionnaires to the second school, shortly afterwards.

Appendix F: Mann-Whitney test's result tables

Underlined: Null Hypothesis rejected with 0,01 level of significance.

Highlighted in yellow: Null Hypothesis rejected with 0,05 level of significance.

Highlighted in grey: Null Hypothesis rejected with 0,075 level of significance.

1. Totals Skills t1, Knowledge t1, Argumentaion t1, Skills t2

	Skills total t1	Knowledge total t1	Argumentation total t1	Skills total t2
Mann-Whitney U	490,0	460,0	623,5	552,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,068	,029	,779	,267

Comparison Dt1 / ~Dt1

2. Knowledge t1 (A_I_1-9, A_I_11-14, A_I_20, A_KS1-2)

	A_I_1	A_I_2	A_I_3	A_I_4	A_I_5	A_I_6	A_I_7	A_I_8	A_I_9
Mann-Whitney U	630,0	624,0	555,0	592,0	609,5	609,5	624,5	627,0	629,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,331	,933	,018	,071	,281	,281	,914	,600	,304

	A_I_11	A_I_12	A_I_13	A_I_14	A_I_A20	A_KS1	A_KS2
Mann-Whitney U	529,0	535,5	573,5	614,5	484,0	450,0	447,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,104	,020	,036	,437	,092	,291	,501

3. Argumentaion t1 (A_I_31-35)

	A_I_31	A_I_32	A_I_33	A_I_34	A_I_35
Mann-Whitney U	563,0	612,5	442,5	550,5	607,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,287	,813	,004	,171	,586

4. Skills t1 (A_I_10, A_I_16-19, A_I_21-29)

	A_I_10	A_I_16	A_I_17	A_I_18	A_I_19	A_I_21	A_I_22
Mann-Whitney U	477,0	628,0	628,0	601,5	571,5	552,0	555,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,009	,526	,526	,504	,116	,084	,018

	A_I_23	A_I_24	A_I_25	A_I_26	A_I_27	A_I_28	A_I_29
Mann-Whitney U	585,0	573,5	554,0	554,0	583,0	606,5	586,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,338	,036	,040	,040	,356	,441	,325

5. Democracy t1 (A_A1-25)

	A_A1	A_A2	A_A3	A_A4	A_A5	A_A6	A_A7	A_A8	A_A9	A_A10
Mann-Whitney U	515,0	478,0	523,5	385,5	534,5	604,5	536,5	549,0	558,5	495,5
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,031	,112	,213	,300	,331	,911	,073	,432	,351	,026

	A_A11	A_A12	A_A13	A_A14	A_A15	A_A16	A_A17	A_A18	A_A19	A_A20
Mann-Whitney U	573,5	607,0	434,0	549,5	538,0	438,0	548,5	572,5	462,5	484,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,131	,932	,015	,455	,373	,052	,448	,634	,062	,092

	A_A21	A_A22	A_A23	A_A24	A_A25
Mann-Whitney U	6,5	510,0	546,0	438,0	577,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,887	,221	,230	,031	,533

6. The Citizen t1 (A_B1-15)

	A_B1	A_B2	A_B3	A_B4	A_B5	A_B6	A_B7	A_B8
Mann-Whitney U	563,5	573,5	444,0	571,0	434,5	548,0	559,5	464,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,638	,764	,057	,933	,039	,695	,813	,091

	A_B9	A_B10	A_B11	A_B12	A_B13	A_B14	A_B15
Mann-Whitney U	508,0	570,0	544,0	525,5	537,5	482,5	531,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,319	,937	,640	,503	,613	,223	,721

7. Immigration t1 (A_H1-8)

	A_H1	A_H2	A_H3	A_H4	A_H5	A_H6	A_H7	A_H8
Mann-Whitney U	503,5	383,5	462,0	448,5	422,0	495,0	398,0	346,5
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,899	,055	,466	,321	,147	1,000	,158	,029

8. Political participation t1 (A_M1-12)

	A_M1	A_M2	A_M3	A_M4	A_M5	A_M6	A_M7	A_M8	A_M9	A_M10	A_M11	A_M12
Mann-Whitney U	570,5	403,0	514,0	454,5	550,0	572,0	381,0	491,5	457,5	472,5	556,0	548,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,574	,006	,222	,054	,440	,615	,004	,120	,052	,077	,484	,423

Comparison Dt2/~Dt2

9. Skills 2 (B_I_8-17)

	B_I_8	B_I_9	B_I_10	B_I_13	B_I_14	B_I_15	B_I_16	B_I_17
Mann-Whitney U	626,0	609,5	611,0	637,0	559,5	566,5	496,5	533,5
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,637	,281	,800	,866	,188	,278	,013	,047

10. Democracy t2 (B_A1-25)

	B_A1	B_A2	B_A3	B_A4	B_A5	B_A6	B_A7	B_A8	B_A9	B_A10
Mann-Whitney U	607,5	615,0	526,5	487,0	505,0	593,0	572,0	589,5	591,0	610,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,408	,664	,060	,036	,075	,406	,076	,480	,391	,690

	B_A11	B_A12	B_A13	B_A14	B_A15	B_A16	B_A17	B_A18	B_A19	B_A20
Mann-Whitney U	628,0	609,0	486,0	603,5	647,0	609,0	577,5	570,5	611,0	542,5
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,669	,365	,035	,607	,995	,801	,407	,363	,662	,186

	B_A21	B_A22	B_A23	B_A24	B_A25
Mann-Whitney U	637,0	627,5	611,0	581,0	619,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,891	,814	,550	,419	,607

11. The Citizen t2 (B_B1-15)

	B_B1	B_B2	B_B3	B_B4	B_B5	B_B6	B_B7	B_B8
Mann-Whitney U	550,0	523,5	573,5	640,5	640,0	543,0	550,0	529,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,188	,101	,374	,934	,920	,176	,200	,134

	B_B9	B_B10	B_B11	B_B12	B_B13	B_B14	B_B15
Mann-Whitney U	647,0	647,0	612,5	585,5	611,0	490,5	554,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,995	,995	,640	,448	,648	,058	,258

12. Immigration t2 (B_H1-8)

	B_H1	B_H2	B_H3	B_H4	B_H5	B_H6	B_H7	B_H8
Mann-Whitney U	535,0	564,5	590,0	445,5	617,5	629,5	605,0	595,0
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,132	,273	,482	,700	,720	,825	,610	,531

13. Political participation t2 (A_M1-12)

	B_M1	B_M2	B_M3	B_M4	B_M5	B_M6	B_M7	B_M8	B_M9	B_M10	B_M11	B_M12
Mann-Whitney U	560,0	516,0	608,5	419,5	615,5	589,5	538,0	413,0	469,5	586,0	577,5	514,5
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,240	,074	,641	,006	,701	,475	,157	,005	,033	,589	,405	,111

Appendix G: Selected characteristics of four schools

Table 31: Tournament participation history of four Schools³⁷

	city	ownership	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
school A	Thessaloniki	private	No	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	Yes	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>
school B	Thessaloniki	public	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
school C	Athens	private	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
school D	Athens	public	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Yes / No - Participation in the preliminary tournament

Underlined – advancement to the final phase

Bold – advancement to the Grand finals

Italic – Winner of the Grand finals

Table 32: Totals of selected characteristics of students from 4 schools

gender	debate training	no debate training	total
male	11	13	24
female	26	22	48
total	37	35	72
class			total
A' Lyceum	16	14	30
B' Lyceum	16	13	29
C' Lyceum	5	8	13
total	37	35	72
previous year's marks	debate training	no debate training	total
up to 10	0	1	1
10_11,9	1	2	3
12_13,9	1	1	2
14_15,9	1	6	7
16_17,9	2	8	10
18_20	32	17	49
total	37	35	72

³⁷ Compiled by the author of the paper.

Table 33: Totals of selected characteristics of students from School A

gender	debate training	no debate training	total
male	1	2	3
female	7	6	13
total	8	8	16
class			
A' Lyceum	4	3	7
B' Lyceum	1	1	2
C' Lyceum	3	4	7
total	8	8	16
previous year's marks	debate training	no debate training	total
up to 10	0	0	0
10_11,9	0	0	0
12_13,9	0	0	0
14_15,9	0	0	0
16_17,9	0	0	0
18_20	8	8	16
total	8	8	16

Table 34: Totals of selected characteristics of students from School B

gender	debate training	no debate training	total
male	4	5	9
female	4	4	8
total	8	9	17
class			
A' Lyceum	0	0	0
B' Lyceum	8	8	16
C' Lyceum	0	1	1
total	8	9	17
previous year's marks	debate training	no debate training	total
up to 10	0	1	1
10_11,9	1	2	3
12_13,9	0	0	0
14_15,9	1	3	4
16_17,9	2	3	5
18_20	4	0	4
total	8	9	17

Table 35: Totals of selected characteristics of students from School C

gender	debate training	no debate training	total
male	3	1	4
female	7	3	10
total	10	4	14
class			
A' Lyceum	4	0	4
B' Lyceum	6	4	10
C' Lyceum	0	0	0
total	10	4	14
previous year's marks	debate training	no debate training	total
up to 10	0	0	0
10_11,9	0	0	0
12_13,9	0	0	0
14_15,9	0	0	0
16_17,9	0	2	2
18_20	10	2	12
total	10	4	14

Table 36: Totals of selected characteristics of students from School D

gender	debate training	no debate training	total
male	3	5	8
female	8	9	17
total	11	14	25
class			
A' Lyceum	8	11	19
B' Lyceum	1	0	1
C' Lyceum	2	3	5
total	11	14	25
previous year's marks	debate training	no debate training	total
up to 10	0	0	0
10_11,9	0	0	0
12_13,9	1	1	2
14_15,9	0	3	3
16_17,9	0	3	3
18_20	10	7	17
total	11	14	25