

THE RATING OF EDUCATIONAL AIMS BY GREEK AND ENGLISH STUDENT-TEACHERS

ELIAS MATSAGOURAS
(with STEWART RIDING)

Abstract - 60 Greek and 60 English Primary teacher-training students rated 25 educational aims on a five-point scale under three conditions: (a) representing their estimates of the priorities of their own former Primary teachers; (b) representing what they took to be the views of their present lecturers; and (c) indicating their own intentions for their teaching career. The result showed the two sets of students to have taken up very similar stances in nearly all respects and to be further united in the belief that they had moved a long way from prevailing ideologies of their own schooldays. The findings are discussed in relation to the patterns of Primary Schooling and Teacher Education in both countries.

Introduction

Comparative research has been accused of attending too much to structural features of education systems and neglecting the teachers that make these systems work. Teachers are not like other system components. Not only are they the most immediate cause of learning, the 'point of delivery' of the whole educational enterprise; they operate on the basis of reciprocal relationships with children and this makes them uniquely important. This uniqueness has led scholars like Broadfoot and Garrett to argue strongly for more recognition of the idiographic aspects of teachers in comparative studies, and in particular for attention to be paid to their intentions. Maddock (1983) argues very persuasively that systems and structures can be radically misunderstood without due attention to 'influential ideologies' which can so readily be dismissed through impatience with the subjectivity and imprecision of such notions. Further references will be made to Broadfoot's work, in particular to the BRISTAIX study (Broadfoot et al. 1987). The present study is on a smaller scale, involves no interviewing or follow-up of the results, but does attempt to sample a wider range of teacher, or at least student-teacher, intentions. It employs a measuring instrument which is subject-friendly, simple to use and modify, and potentially appropriate to any aggregation of teachers.

The nature of educational aims and their relation to educational reality are well known to be problematic but there is no doubt that to a large extent the educational experience of pupils is determined by the goals, purposes or intended outcomes of their teachers. Aims appear prominently in documents as diverse as teachers' lesson plans and government policy statements; they may be general and long-term or short-term and specific (when they are conventionally termed 'objectives'); they may be

associated with particular curriculum subjects or they may transcend them; they may be cognitive, affective or psychomotor, distinctions made familiar by Bloom and his colleagues (Bloom 1956); they may be humanistic or instrumental; they may, of course, be implicit rather than explicit, unquestioningly assumed rather than advertised in writing and in rhetoric. Very obviously, statements about aims can generate endless controversy for the simple reason that there are so many of them and never nearly enough time to attend to them all.

This investigation, focusing as it does on the stage of professional training, attempts to identify some elements of the educational and cultural experience of student-teachers as serious candidates for further study while suggesting others may have been over-valued.

Background to the study

The opportunity for a cross-cultural and relatively unstereotyped approach to the question of how teachers begin in their professional training days to form conceptions of their role arose from an ERASMUS programme between Athens University and Bath College of Higher Education. This provided a context for discussing some fascinating comparisons between Greek and English students and practices. Obviously, both sets of students had been subjected to a vast number of aim-inculcating influences that they themselves would want to exert as teachers.

For the benefit of readers familiar with neither, or only with one, the structure and curricula of the Greek and English Education systems will be outlined. This can only be a bare outline; as has been emphasised, the focus of the study is on less tangible considerations. The word 'English' serves as a reminder that in the U.K. Scotland has a quite different system, and even Wales has some individual features. The Greek and English systems are introduced as they would be likely to have been experienced by the subjects of the study. (A negligible number of the English subjects had been educated in Scottish or private schools. A considerable number of Greek subjects had been to private schools. However Greek private schools follow exactly the same national curriculum as state schools and in other ways are under centralised control).

Greek Dimotika Skolia (5½-12)

The pattern of Greek schools and their curriculum date back to the early days of Greek Independence. There have been wide-reaching reforms in 1929, 1976 and 1985. The whole system is highly centralised and tightly controlled. In these and other respects it resembles those of the rest of Europe much more than it resembles England's, where as is well known, there has been (and still is) an extraordinary amount of decentralisation and teacher autonomy. In Greece, as elsewhere, the curriculum is centrally prescribed and controlled and is the same country-wide. So are the textbooks from which it must be taught. Teachers are in theory free to choose the

methods of delivery but in practice this freedom is constrained by resource limitations. There has, in consequence, been much more consistency from region to region and from year to year than in England. There has also been more stability, although the system has come under considerable criticism from Greek teachers and teacher-educators for neglecting individual differences, restricting the development of resource-based learning, limiting teachers' involvement in curricular debate, and fostering a narrow academic elitism to an extent that has retarded the country's development. Linked with these complaints are intensely felt imputations of under-funding. A very clear and readable account in English can be found in Massialas et al. (1988), which also sets out the 1985 reforms addressing some of the above dissatisfactions.

Compared to their English counterparts Greek students would have spent more time and effort in acquiring knowledge from teachers and books and had considerable less experience of active learning. There would have been little attention to display of children's work or visual aids. Science work, for instance, would have been almost entirely book-based without opportunities for experiments. Content knowledge would have been stressed together with a lot of actual learning-by-rote in some areas. Resources of all kinds would have seemed strikingly sparse to an English observer. Outcomes, of course, would have varied very greatly, recalling Aristotle's dictum about the injustice of treating unequals equally. Grading would have been based on coursework and oral tests.

Unlike France, where religious teaching is excluded, and to a much greater extent than in England, the children would have been made very strongly aware of the teaching of the state church. The Department of Government corresponding to the English Department for Education (until recently the Department of Education and Science) is actually the Ministry of Education and Religion. Most teachers would have taken this involvement seriously. They would also, unlike French teachers (Broadfoot et al. 1987) have accepted without question their assigned role of fostering moral and spiritual development. In many cases too, despite their pedagogic formality, they would have impressed observers from other countries as warm and demonstrative. They would have enjoyed a good deal of parental support and respect in the community.

As well as defining a corpus of knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate for the 6 to 12 year-olds of the country, the Greek Primary curriculum also seeks very explicitly to convey a strong sense of national identity to an extent which is distinctly unfashionable in England and which is not approached in the U.K. National Curriculum material in English and the Humanities.

Greek Gymnasia / Lykia

Many of the characteristics of the Dimotika, even to the lack of practical science, would have been true of this 12-18 stage of schooling. The Greek respondents would have experienced a more demanding version of a similar subject-based curriculum,

and of course much less of a change of teaching style on entering secondary school than would the English students. They would also have experienced much more stress on assessment.

Initial teacher education at Athens university

As in England, Greek ITE courses last for four years and end for most students in a qualification which is both a degree and a professional qualification.

Entrance is extremely competitive: the selection of students is on the basis of a country-wide examination and, because of the under-provision of University education in Greece, those successful would correspond academically to those entering 'first-choice' universities in the UK.

As in Bath, curriculum subjects are studied both 'at the students' own level' and in relation to the curriculum of the *Dimotika*. Apart from the Science laboratories there is little in the way of specialist teaching rooms with displays of books, videos, artefacts, work from local schools etc. as is seen in England. The overall level of resourcing is much below that taken for granted in English ITE circles. Seminars and tutorials operate as in England but a large amount of teaching goes on in mass lectures, even for topics where a workshop approach would be far more appropriate. Unlike Bath prominence is given to the 'Education disciplines' i.e. Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology and History of Education.

In Athens students seldom have the experience of teaching a class individually for any appreciable time. For 40 full days in Years 3 and 4 they work in schools in groups of four to a class - but mainly as observers. This observation is very carefully structured and guided by tutors and includes personal empirical investigation of teaching and learning methods based on the *Dilemmas of Teaching* (Berlak & Berlak 1981). This corresponds to the inculcation of the 'Reflective Teacher' stance at Bath and forms the basis both for discussion and a major written assignment in teaching method. The absence of the traditional 'Teaching Practice' would strike most people familiar with the English pattern as indeed it strikes the author, as a regrettably inadequate preparation.

English primary schools (5-11)

The most obvious and significant fact about English Primary schooling is its variety. This makes the task of providing a readable summary hazardous in the extreme. The English system is one of the most decentralised in the world and was even more so in the Primary school years of the respondents. Not only do the hundred or more Local Education Authorities (LEAs) have wide autonomy in relation to central government, the individual schools cherish their own considerable autonomy vis-à-vis the governing LEA.

Of course there are factors promoting some conformity; the examination system

operating in Secondary education is an obvious example. However, until the imposition of a National Curriculum by central government from 1990 Primary school headteachers were largely free to determine the curriculum for their individual schools. This was the major characteristic of English Primary Schools during the entire period of schooling for most respondents.

The English students, then, would have had no experience as children of anything resembling the present National Curriculum. Their experience would, in fact, have been very varied and, to anticipate an important point, opportunities for sharing this varied experience with each other are deliberately built into their professional course at Bath. Most students, as children, would certainly have seen great variety between different teachers in the same school. For many the formal-informal, traditional-progressive distinction would have become well-recognised, though only a minority would have been consistently taught in accordance with either extreme. Most, however, would have had at school considerably more opportunities than their contemporaries in most other countries for active learning of various kinds and to have been correspondingly less dependent on 'didactic' teaching and prescribed textbooks. In comparison with most other countries, their classrooms and schools would have been well resourced for active learning. Assessment patterns would have been so various as to defy summarising.

It is important to note that this situation can be and probably has been exaggerated unwarrantably. Though an assessment is difficult for a foreigner, my reading and observations incline me to the view of Pollard (1985) and other writers who assert that it really is variety, much more than progressivism as such, that has characterised English Primary Schooling; and that even while the Plowden Report (CACE 1967) was encouraging and endorsing innovative teaching, a large amount of the teaching actually going on was nothing of the kind.

To a much greater degree than in some countries, France for example, English teachers would have regarded themselves as in principle sharing responsibility with their parents for the children's personal, social and moral development and most would have taken this seriously in practice. The pluralistic nature of British society, however, makes it hazardous to generalise about the ethical foundations of this practice. Some teachers would identify themselves as distinctively and explicitly Christian. Only a very small number would claim any other religious allegiance or other well-articulated value-system such as Marxism. The public consensus might be typified as a somewhat relativistic liberal humanism with a Christian historical influence.

English secondary schools (11-18)

Most English respondents spent their secondary years in Comprehensive Schools. These would have been much better equipped and their classrooms better resourced than all but the private sector schools in Greece. The most dependable difference between pre- and post-11 schooling would have been separation of the subjects of the

curriculum. Partly because of examination considerations, partly because English secondary teachers are commonly holders of single-subject degrees, partly because the ideology of progressivism is traditionally much more associated with Primary ITE, the English sample would have experienced overall a pedagogy much more formal than in their Primary (or equivalent) schooldays. In their sixth and seventh Secondary years their curriculum would for the most part have narrowed down to the three subjects of their examinations for entrance to Higher Education, the GCE Advanced ('A') Level.

English ITE

Bath College of Higher Education is fairly typical of the Colleges and Institutes of Higher Education where Primary ITE has a high profile. It has a pedagogical standpoint which is progressive but not radically innovatory. The examination profile of entrants would in general be much lower than at Athens, where something like six out of seven well-qualified applicants are turned down. The rhetoric of formal/informal, traditional/progressive pedagogy is quite commonly used. Broadfoot et al (1987) notes the pervasiveness of this among English teachers. Students adopt this rhetoric, even though the dominant feature of their collective Primary schooling was not so much progressivism as a great and perhaps bewildering mixture, since, as stated above, they very often share their experience of schools in discussion and are encouraged to see them as strung out along the traditional/progressive continuum.

For the first two years students study 'at their own level' - i.e. not related to primary curriculum. In years three and four all the work is related to the Primary curriculum and Education. Only small elements of the Education 'disciplines' appear, (e.g. some Cognitive Psychology in relation to constructivist approaches to Primary Science). More stress is laid on the approach associated with terms such as 'reflective teaching', 'reflective practitioner', 'reflection-in-action' and 'action research'. Several good accounts are available such as Fish (1989) and Calderhead (1987). It asserts that teachers develop their own personal 'theories' about their work, no matter what academic theorising was presented to them as students - therefore, the best course is to help them develop *better* personal theories than to foist on them those of other people, no matter how academically prestigious.

A very striking and important difference is that in the Bath course students have to spend well over 100 full days in school with a gradual shift first from simple observing to participant-observing then to assuming almost complete responsibility for a class. In this, as in the curriculum work, students are constantly pressed to be reflective and evaluative but the formal inculcation of critical thinking 'skills' sometimes associated with this pedagogic trend is not a feature.

Bath students too have much more experience of practical work within the curriculum courses and of opportunities for individual tutorial guidance, both from their tutors and from the teachers with whom they work in schools. Most of the

teaching is organised in groups of seminar size, often adopting a workshop format, and conducted in rooms specially resourced for the curricular area for that session - with appropriate reference material, videotapes, computer programmes, displays of children's work from local schools and so on. Mass lectures, common in Athens, are very rare.

Objects of the study

Four groups of questions suggested themselves. The first related to 'progressive' pedagogy and the clear differences in the form of initial teacher education: could one expect that Bath students, given their level of resourcing, their comparative wealth of 'hands on' experience in active-learning situations, their constantly being encouraged to regard this as 'good Primary practice', would want to replicate this pattern as professionals? Conversely, could one expect that the Athens students, after a knowledge-based education in school and a forms-of-knowledge pattern of teacher-training, would be more likely to see their future selves as 'formal teachers', as transmitters rather than facilitators, catalysts, stimulators and interpreters? Alternatively, could it be (to take a more optimistic stance) that the greater theoretical content in Greek schools and ITE might equip them with the understanding and analytical powers to play the part of Socratic midwife more convincingly, to be more aware of learning styles and processes, to be more inventive in devising teaching strategies than their English counterparts? Or, a third alternative, might one just find, like Garrett and Sanchez Jimenez (1992) in their comparison of Spanish and English views of problem-solving, a remarkable agreement given the differences in education systems?

The second group related to the comparisons that might emerge from the ways in which social/personal/ethical issues are typically treated in the two countries. Having a child-centred pedagogy implies a concern for the whole child. It is understandable, therefore, that the BRISTAIX study should find that English teachers, in relation to their French counterparts, should *"...have far more ambitious goals. In particular a long term perspective, a responsibility for seeing that children acquire certain permanent abilities and characteristics which will have an effect on the kind of adult they become. They emphasise... development of the child's personality"*. (Broadfoot et al. 1987:292). However, for all that the Greek curriculum is knowledge-based and generally taught very formally, the importance of school education for personal development is not only strongly promoted in official rhetoric, it is actually, as has been noted, taken very seriously by the generality of teachers. Are English future teachers likely to be more 'caring' (in the widest sense of the term), more personalistic than their Greek counterparts?

Thirdly, what of the differences that exist, and the difference in attitude that prevails in the two countries, in relation to the conveying of a sense of national identity. Does this have noticeable consequences for future teachers?

Finally, if differences did appear to be indicated in these respects, I hoped the tripartite presentation of the items might offer some indications as to whether these seemed more likely to diminish in the next generation or to remain as enduring features of our educational, cultural and historical identities. Are Greek and English attitudes, where different, set on a course of convergence?

Research methodology

The questionnaire was designed to produce some reasonably differentiated information about the areas of interest and to require no more time to complete than our students would readily agree to give. It consists of a number of statements expressing educational aims relating to Primary children, each aim followed by a five-point rating scale. The list of statements was presented three times over to each subject. The first time (i.e. 'Condition 1') subjects were asked to make the ratings according to the importance they recalled each aim's having had in their own Primary schooling. The second time ('Condition 2') they gave the rating they perceived each aim as scoring to the staff responsible for their professional training as teachers. For 'Condition 3' they rated each aim *in propria persona*.

Some account of the development of the questionnaire may be helpful for readers interested in using it or varying it for use with other groups or nationalities of students or teachers. In pilot studies conducted at Athens and Bath, variations in the number and content of the items, the wording of the instructions and the number of points in the rating-scale were tried out. Relatively few problems were encountered except with the last of these. Both sets of students took the investigation quite seriously but tended to 'bunch' the responses at the top rather than use the full scale, which initially was seven-point. This tendency was very resistant to dissuasion, particularly in the third condition, although various ways were tried in the wording of the instructions. A five-point scale had been considered too coarse but it seemed to lead to quicker completion of the questionnaire and less overall distortion, though it was very obvious that the scale mid-point was not the psychological mid-point. It was found that the more prescriptive and detailed the instructions were the more their efficacy seemed to diminish as the questionnaire items, 75 in effect, were proceeded with. Setting a limit on the number of permissible high ratings was considered but proved impracticable in view of the extra 'thinking-time' - increasing the tendency to rush the questionnaire or even to hand it in incomplete. In the event the five-point scale with uncomplicated instructions produced an encouraging willingness to complete the questionnaire and, as will be seen, only a minute proportion of items was unattempted.

Selection of questionnaire items

The feedback from the pilot studies led to some general criteria: 1. that all items should as far as possible be seen by students as understandable and relevant in content,

and that the style should not be unduly 'textbookish'; 2. that the total number of responses should not demand more time than one could expect for ready co-operation on a voluntary basis (for this 15 minutes seemed reasonable); 3. above all that the irreducible range of interpretations attaching to each item should be no greater between the two groups than within them.

A large number of items were collected by my Bath colleague and me and translated jointly from one language to the other. Despite the importance of criteria 1 and 3 above, it proved straightforward to find a form of words for each item that we both found satisfactory and with which both sets of subjects seemed happy to work.

The preliminary list of items was reduced to 25; this number seemed about right for the time envisaged in criterion 2 above. The ones chosen seemed suitable for exploring potentially significant comparisons.

Since I knew we should be questioning a large sample I declined the time-consuming exercise of randomising the order of items across respondents and conditions, contenting myself with a single sequence which should not give any undue impression of items deliberately placed in categories.

Procedure

The items were printed three times over in a booklet, each set preceded by a page with the instructions for conditions 1, 2 and 3. The first page also carried the general instructions.

They were given out in an ordinary teaching session or lecture which had by previous arrangement been scheduled to finish 15 minutes before the usual time. Volunteers were not asked for, rather the booklets were given out to those present and these were invited to take part. They were told that those who did not wish to, and those who had to leave early, were quite free to go but the impression was conveyed that most were expected to stay and that the experience would be found interesting. In each session a few students left at this point but the majority stayed. Reassurance was given about the confidentiality of the responses but in most sessions in both countries there were some students who said that the scripts should in principle be anonymous and this point was more or less conceded; though some respondents were quite happy to affix their names and did so.

Students then worked through the booklets in silence where they were sitting and left them with the lecturer in charge of the session when finished. Two in Bath were given in with the whole of the third section omitted, presumably from tiredness or boredom, and these were discarded, as were two others whose authors very obviously had misread the instructions and reversed the order of the number on the scale.

Subjects

The respondents were students in their fourth year or late in their third year at the

English Version of Questionnaire:

1. To develop the ability to write with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. 1 2 3 4 5
2. To learn acceptable ways of settling disagreements and differences with other children. 1 2 3 4 5
3. To develop an understanding of and appropriate attitudes towards healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise &c. 1 2 3 4 5
4. To develop attitudes of respect and, where appropriate, obedience towards teachers, parents, community leaders, older people in general &c. 1 2 3 4 5
5. To develop understanding of and concern for the environment. 1 2 3 4 5
6. To take pleasure in physical activities and skills in P.E., Games. Dance &c 1 2 3 4 5
7. To experience the excitement of expressing themselves creatively in writing. 1 2 3 4 5
8. To develop attitudes of increasing unselfishness so as to be able to relate to others and to empathise. 1 2 3 4 5
9. To understand that the family is where most people find their greatest fulfilment and to develop the attitudes appropriate to family life. 1 2 3 4 5
10. To discover and to solve problems by practical activities with the methods used by scientists in answering questions about the world. 1 2 3 4 5
11. To recognise that much of life is competitive and to respond to the challenges and opportunities that go with this. 1 2 3 4 5
12. To begin to develop the patterns of thinking that will later fit them to take on the responsibilities of citizens in a democratic country. 1 2 3 4 5
13. To develop positive self-concepts from the teacher's encouragement, praise, display of work &c. 1 2 3 4 5
14. To develop the attitudes and skills involved in identifying and evaluating evidence that will later help them to reach informed views on controversial issues. 1 2 3 4 5
15. To become proficient in the basic knowledge and skills of numeracy necessary for success in science, maths &c. as taught in secondary schools. 1 2 3 4 5
16. To begin to develop a coherent set of beliefs and values which will guide their conduct, attitudes, relationships &c. throughout life. 1 2 3 4 5
17. To avoid taking on prejudiced ideas about people from other countries, backgrounds &c. 1 2 3 4 5
18. To take pride in the special importance their language has had in world history and world literature. 1 2 3 4 5
19. To understand that their country's future is closely bound up with the EEC and in fact with all the countries of the world. 1 2 3 4 5
20. To love books and to be in the habit of reading for recreation, for finding out, for developing their knowledge of themselves &c. 1 2 3 4 5
21. To have some understanding of the basic beliefs of major world religions. 1 2 3 4 5
22. To develop a concern for the principle of fairness and to be sensitive to the needs of disabled and disadvantaged people. 1 2 3 4 5
23. To enjoy learning and to develop the desire to go on learning with increasing independence out of and after school. 1 2 3 4 5
24. To develop the realisation that many of the benefits of life as we know it have been made possible by the achievements of great people in our country's history. 1 2 3 4 5
25. To be able to take part in discussion in such a way as to learn from others and to help others to learn. 1 2 3 4 5

two institutions. Pilot studies had shown no difference attributable to year of course and no distinction is made in the presentation of the results.

Statistical treatment

Through an expedient of which statistical purists will disapprove, means were derived from the ratings (see Table 1) as though the data were parametric, and occasionally these means are referred to in the discussion. The probabilities, however, were computed from appropriate non-parametric tests of significance, Wilcoxin's being used for comparisons of ratings made *within* national groups, i.e. directly between Conditions 1: 2: 3: and the Mann-Whitney for the occasions where I refer to significant differences *between* the Greek and English students.

Results

Table 1 - All responses under all conditions expressed as means (N=60).

Columns 3 and 6 - 'Gk S' and 'Eng S' - represent the students' *own* ratings of the respective aims (Condition 3). The other columns are the ratings they *ascribed* to their former Primary teachers - 'T' - and their present ITE lecturers - 'L' (Conditions 1 and 2 of the experiment).

In the great majority of cases in this wide range of items there is an identity of educational aspirations between the Bath and Athens students despite their very different cultural and institutional experience.

Students' own rating compared with those ascribed to their former teachers - i.e. 'Condition 3' with 'Condition 1'

There was an identical tendency for both sets of students to see themselves as much more committed across most of the range of items than their own former teachers, this 'aspirational shift' (for want of a better phrase) was, on average, somewhat more than a complete step on the 5-point scale.

Students's own ratings compared with those ascribed to their ITE lectures - i.e. 'Condition 3' with 'Condition 2'

There is a similar but not identical tendency for the students of both countries to see their lecturers as occupying a position on this scale of commitment intermediate between themselves and their erstwhile teachers, but nearer to themselves. There is more variation here from item to item but the differences between conditions 3 and 2 are on average less than a half a step on the scale - 0.42 for the Bath students and 0.35 for the Athenians.

Item	Gk T	Gk L	Gk S	Eng T	Eng L	Eng S
1 Acc. Writing	3.9	3.6	4.1	3.8	3.1	3.9
2 Resolve Disp	2.4	4.2	4.3	2.7	3.7	4.1
3 Health	2.0	3.2	3.9	2.5	3.4	4.0
4 Respect	4.2	3.1	3.8	3.7	3.1	3.8
5 Environment	2.5	4.0	4.4	2.3	3.7	4.4
6 PE	2.5	3.5	4.3	2.8	4.1	4.2
7 Creat. Writ	2.3	3.9	4.3	2.8	3.8	4.1
8 Unselfish	2.2	4.0	4.2	2.8	3.3	4.1
9 Family	2.9	3.4	3.6	2.6	2.6	3.1
10 Sci Discov	2.3	3.9	3.7	2.2	3.9	3.9
11 Competition	3.0	3.3	3.5	2.8	2.9	3.2
12 Citizenship	2.5	3.6	3.9	2.6	3.3	3.5
13 Self Concept	3.1	4.6	4.7	2.9	3.9	4.4
14 Evidence	2.3	4.0	4.2	2.3	3.7	3.8
15 Numeracy	4.1	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.2
16 Values	3.1	4.0	4.1	3.1	3.5	4.0
17 Anti Prejud	2.9	4.2	4.3	2.6	4.3	4.5
18 Own Lang	3.5	3.9	4.2	2.5	3.1	3.3
19 EEC	2.1	3.3	3.7	1.7	2.5	3.1
20 Books	3.3	4.0	4.5	3.3	3.8	4.4
21 World Relig	2.4	2.7	3.4	1.7	4.1	4.2
22 Equal Opp	2.7	4.3	4.5	2.3	3.8	4.4
23 Continuing	2.7	4.1	4.4	3.0	3.6	4.3
24 Nat Heroes	3.4	3.0	3.3	2.9	2.7	3.1
25 Co-op learn	2.7	3.9	4.4	2.5	4.0	4.3

*Table 1: Bath and Athens students' own (i.e. 'Condition 3') ratings
A cursory inspection of Table 1 is sufficient to see the main trends*

These indications of enthusiasm on the part of the next generation of teachers, while highly gratifying to their tutors, may of course be more prosaically attributed to youthful exuberance untempered by continued experience of the 'real world', or to simple lack of discrimination in using the higher values of the rating scale. However, though something of the sort was expected, its sheer extent came as a surprise, at least before the pilot studies. Similarly with the convergence of Greek and English students; this was predicted but its closeness was not.

From these 'across the board' trends we come to the thematic content. In the introduction a number of potential national differences were suggested, not just in curriculum and procedure, but in the way teachers come to conceive their role. Of course differences are usually easier to spot than similarities in any sort of comparison and the danger of over-polarisation is always acute. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in the so-called traditional-progressive continuum. However, some associated

features can be cautiously isolated and a number of these are reflected in the responses.

Section 1: Aims related to 'progressivism'

Learner responsibility

A principal characteristic in the traditional-progressive collocation is that of learner-responsibility. This has been given great prominence by progressives. In keeping with this children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, are given opportunities, confidence, motivation and skills so to do, instead of being expected passively to receive inert knowledge or closely to follow teacher-inculcated procedures with little occasion for expressive possibilities. Such aims, I hoped, would be closely associated with the interpretations students gave to items 7, 10, 13, 14, 20, 23, 25 (see questionnaire above). Since the number of unanswered items was minute, each shape may be taken to represent the mean derived from 60 respondents. No *N* is less than 58.

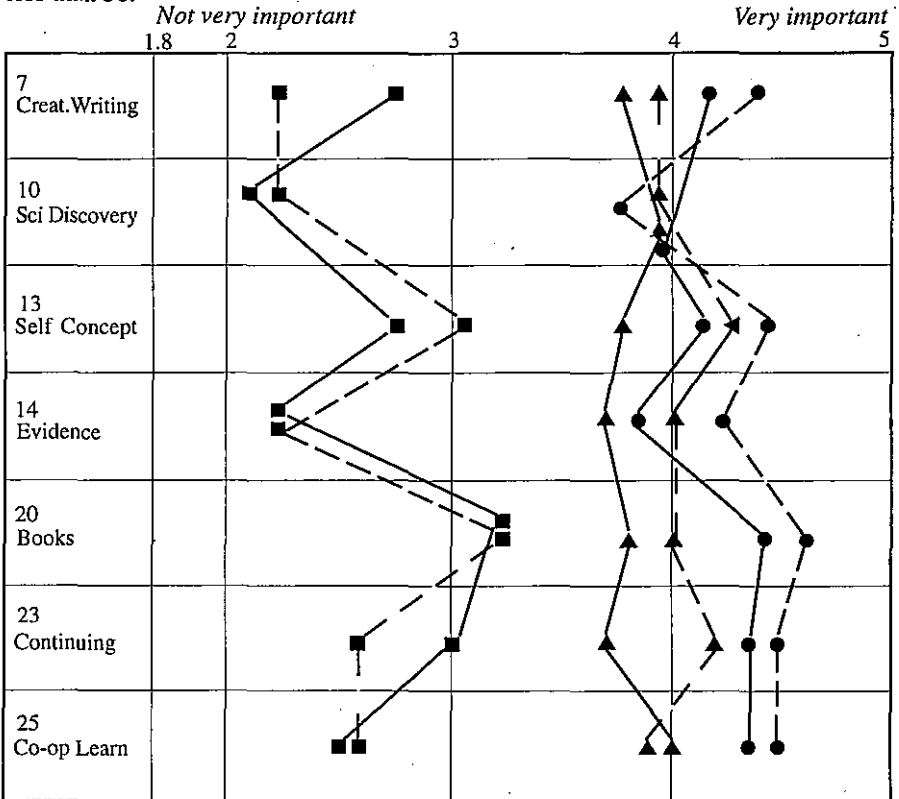


Fig. 1.

Fig. 1* shows the mean responses for both nationalities under the three conditions. The similarity between the Greek and English students' stated priorities is very obvious. Equally obvious is the shift from the priorities ascribed to teachers; the differences here are all greater than one complete step on the scale. The greatest difference is 1.8 in the English sample (Item 25) and 2.0 among the Athenians (Item 7). The statistical analysis showed massive confidence levels with the p values even for the lower differences approaching vanishing point.

It has been emphasised that very much more time and money are spent on the practicalities of realising these objectives at Bath than at Athens where there is far less opportunity not only for working with children but also for 'workshop'-type active, co-operative, resource-based learning. However, the values assigned to lecturers seem to show (I make this point with due institutional modesty!) that lecturers at Athens, despite their operating in a much more formal and 'academic' context, are perceived by their students as no less effective than the Bath lecturers (as perceived by their students) in promoting a child-centred, active and co-operative pedagogy.

Assessment

Another frequently encountered feature of the traditional-progressive continuum is the place given to assessment. Academic gains which are easily demonstrable and measurable have been traditionally valued but are liable to be given less prominence in contexts where discovery, co-operative learning, child-centred and creative work are the order of the day. The next two items (Number 1 and 15, see questionnaire above) to be considered are from different subjects areas but have this coherence.

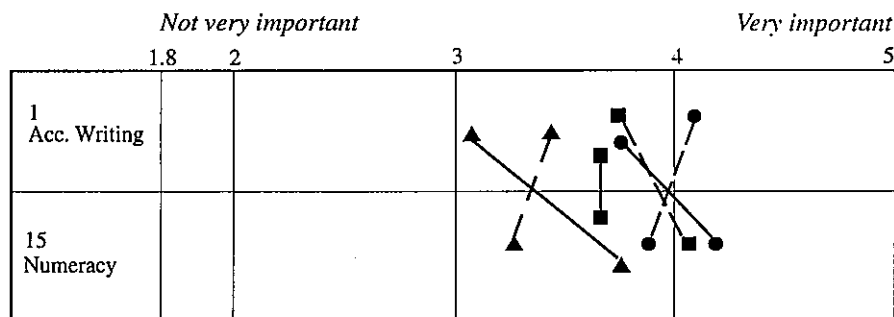


Fig. 2.

*Keys to figures 1-9. In the figures which follow the mean scores are presented in simple graphs. Conditions 1, 2 and 3 of the questionnaire administration are represented by shapes: a square ■ for the mean of ratings ascribed to former teachers; a triangle ▲ for those ascribed to lecturers; a circle ● for the students' own ratings, the unbroken lines — represent the English results, broken lines — — the Greek.

The results here are less clear-cut. It can be seen from Fig. 2 that English and Greek students equally give high priority to basic numeracy and the 'transcriptional' skills of writing and in so doing both groups are very close to the perceived priorities of their own former teachers. The only national differences lie in the perceived priorities of lecturers. Greek students see a tendency for their tutors to be less concerned than they about both objectives ($p = .001, .003$); English students seem to view the tendency in a similar light in relation to Numeracy and they are even more ambitious than their lecturers in the case of Writing ($p = .001$). Though these aims are often represented as antithetical to those in the previous group no obvious difficulty in reconciling the supposed clash of ideology appeared in the sample.

Competitiveness

A third sub-grouping related to progressivism is the single item 11, the only item directly addressing the issue of competitiveness. It has, of course, been quite closely linked with 'traditional' pedagogy in both countries. It is necessarily connected with assessability of learning just considered and is, for teachers, if not for student-teachers, hard to reconcile, conceptually and in the classroom, with the co-operative ethos considered in the first sub-section.

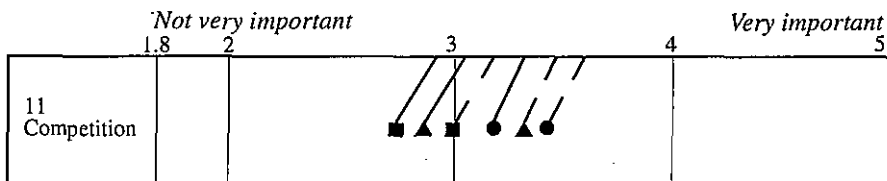


Fig. 3.

In relation to all foregoing items this is chiefly remarkable for the smallness of the variation within as well as between the national groups. Though explicitly individualistic all six means are close to those for item 4. Moreover, though implicitly anti-progressive it does not present any contrast to the results for item 25; the shift is much smaller but it is in the same direction. It seems from this that student-teachers in Greece and England are, if not confused, quite pragmatic, prepared to go to great lengths to promote co-operation while recognising and making provision for the competitive tendencies which abound in both countries!

Section 2: Social and interpersonal aims

This section is concerned with the communication, through both the official and the 'hidden' curricula, of personal values. Teachers in different settings explicitly and implicitly reveal differing conceptions of their professional responsibilities. In relation to the conclusions of the BRISTAIX study previously noted, my English colleague and I felt sure that the English and Greek experience would be much more

similar than either would be to the French. This was supported from what our students seemed to be asserting.

The findings will be presented in four sub-sections and again the distinctions made may seem arbitrary.

Peer-related values

The first group consists of four items which seem quite general and straightforwardly linked by their relation to values of the kind that are promoted not only in various parts of the curriculum but also communicated informally in both classrooms and playground situations (see items 2, 8, 7 and 22 in the Questionnaire above).

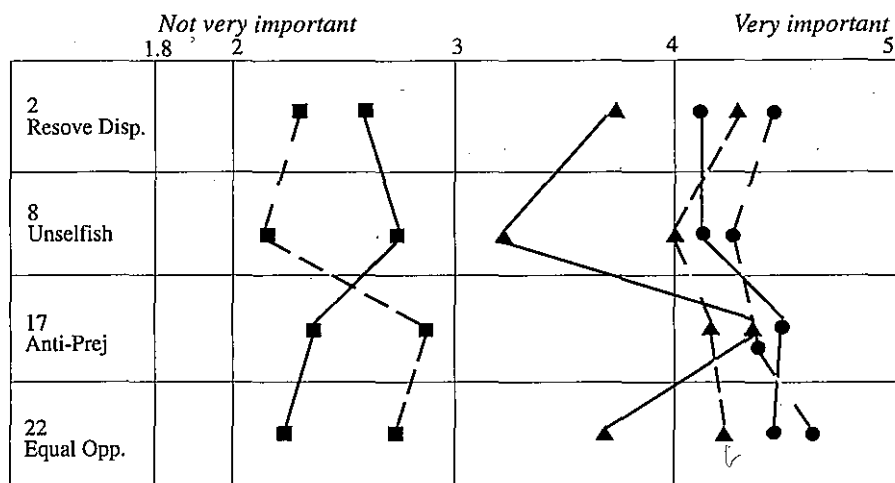


Fig. 4.

Here again the pattern of similarities and differences is extremely striking. There is almost perfect correspondence between Greek and English students in their own priorities. Moreover they both rate their own teachers as comparatively lukewarm in all these respects. They are similar overall in tending to rate their lecturers as more committed than their teachers but it can be seen that the Greek students view their lecturers as equalling their own concern whereas the English students do this only in the case of item 17. With the other three items the differences ascribed by the English students are all highly significant ($p = .0008, .0001, .0001$).

Institutional values

The next two items (Numbers 4 and 9 in Questionnaire above) might well have

been included with the previous four but I was prepared to see them treated somewhat differently by the respondents since they seem more institutional and less peer-related in character.

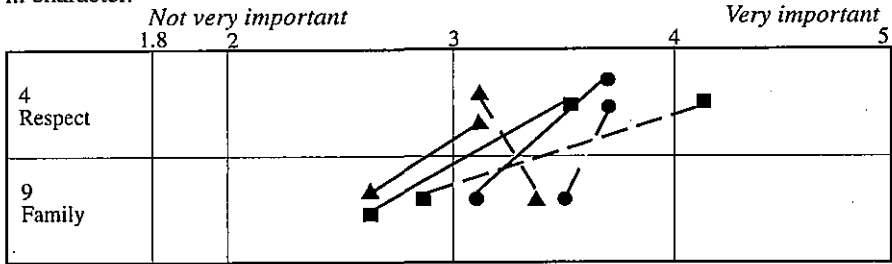


Fig. 5.

In relation to item 4, Greek and English students show an identical level of concern and also perceive an identical level of concern (though significantly lower than their own) on the part of their lecturers ($p = .0004$ Greek, $.0001$ English). Both students take their own teachers' concern to have been equal to their own whereas the Greek students seem not to profess a concern equal to that of their teachers ($p = .004$).

Item 9 produced more of a surprise. Family cohesiveness is widely regarded as one of the most consequential differences between the countries, immediately apparent at all levels and in all patterns of social organisation. The huge difference in crime rate between the two countries, for instance, is conventionally attributed to this. The mean difference of 0.5 between English and Greek students ($p = .005$) is certainly not negligible but appreciably less than expected. 3.6 is actually one of the lowest mean values from the Greek sample. Even more of a surprise was the low score ascribed to Greek teachers. The difference between the scores ascribed to the two sets of lecturers was broadly in line with expectations but here again a larger difference would have occasioned no surprise.

Miscellaneous

Items 3 and 5 (see Questionnaire above) in this section are linked through being 'fashionable' - frequently the subject of media attention - and having a conceptual

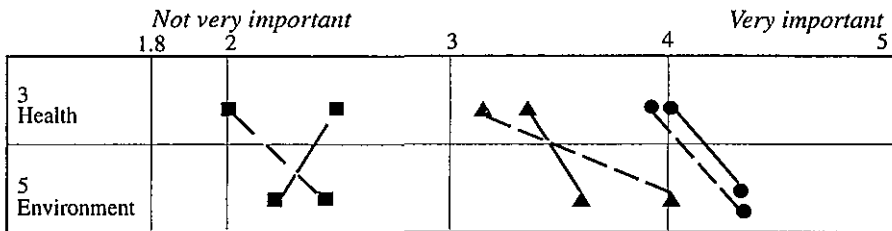


Fig. 6.

relation in that themes of care, forethought, avoidance of greed, subordination of short-term to long-term satisfactions, and so on, strongly attach to both.

As expected, the pattern of responses shows remarkable similarity, with both student groups seeing themselves as massively more concerned than their teachers, and with their lecturers accorded in intermediate position. Even the smallest difference, that between the Greek students' ratings ascribed to lecturers for item 5, nudges the 1% level of significance ($p = .011$) while all the other differences are very highly significant with p values below .0001. The whole issue of topicality and media coverage in relation to educational goal-setting is yet another candidate for further comparative study. It might be supposed to have been influential in the according of very high ratings on item 17, for instance, but it is not so easy to see a place for it in relation to the equally high ratings given to item 13, since no corresponding surge of publicity relating to self-esteem is known to have arisen in Greece or England since the time when our respondents were at Primary school.

The final two items (Numbers 12 and 16, see Questionnaire above) were thought to be linked, perhaps rather tenuously, by being especially tentative and vague in character.

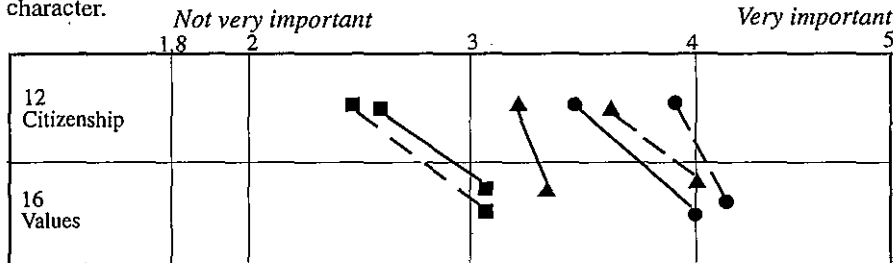


Fig. 7.

In Item 12 a huge shift is apparent, more so with the Athens students, whose difference from their Bath counterparts is not far from significance at the 1% level ($p = .013$). In Item 16 another within-group shift is also obvious. There is no difference between Greek and English students in their own scores but the Greek lecturers are credited with a greater commitment than the English. ($p = .001$) These differences may reflect curricular aspects of the two institutions but seem much more likely to have some other basis. This is another question which the data are insufficient to answer.

Section 3: Aims related to national consciousness

The issue of nationalism emerged as a topic for comparison in the early stages of planning for this study and is the reason for the inclusion of items Number 18, 19 and 24 (see Questionnaire above). As can easily be seen the intention was to place nationalism in a social and historical context in a way that deliberately avoids its being placed in opposition to the theme of equal opportunities. Even so it was expected that

a large difference would be found between Greeks and English, since among English students in general nationalism is not fashionable and manifestations of embarrassment about their country's colonial past are very commonly encountered. In Greece, by contrast, the decisive conflicts of the last two centuries are almost universally associated with the wresting of freedom from an alien and oppressive enemy, and celebrated as such at all levels of society.

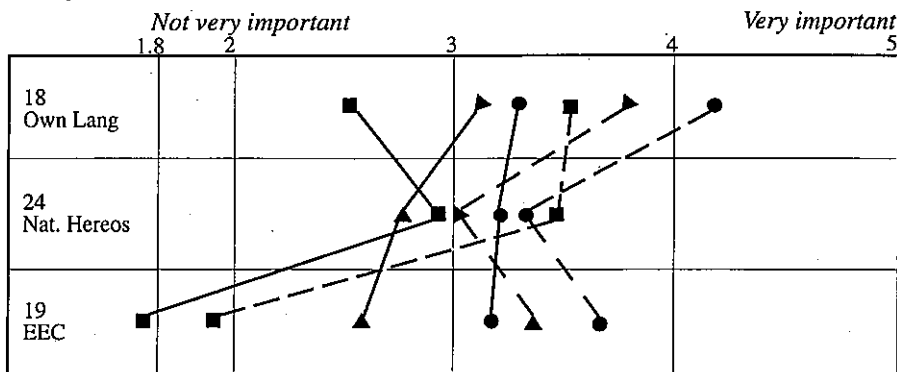


Fig. 8.

In fact this expectation was fulfilled far more decisively in Item 18 than in 24, the reverse of what might be thought. In relation to the 'Great Personages' theme only the perceived difference between Greek and British teachers is significant at the 1% level ($p = .011$) though the difference between the two sets of lecturers approximates only to the 5% level of confidence ($p = .051$). In the Language item all three differences across nationality are very highly significant ($p = .0001$).

The findings are highly interesting. As indicated above the place of the '1821' and later struggles is apparent to any spectator of the modern Greek scene. English equivalents to the hereos of 1821, Alfred the Great, perhaps, are much more remote in time, much less celebrated in books, films, festivals and in school. A large number of the 'great and the good' are presented to the attention of children in English schools and in books like the Ladybird series; but perhaps their very number and the variety of their achievements prevent a clear focus. It remains to be explained why the expected ardour has cooled so much among the Greeks!

In the case of language my more modest expectations of a difference were overfulfilled. Here it had been assumed that despite the widespread enthusiasm among Greeks for learning other languages, their consciousness of their own tongue's 3,000 year history and enduring influence, its richness and flexibility, would ensure their viewing it with pride and enthusiasm. The enthusiasm among UK teachers, lecturers and students for English with its rich literature and world language status would, so it was suggested to me, be tempered with some degree of guilt related to English inadequacy in foreign languages and to the imputation of English linguistic

imperialism - a very common theme in both initial and in-service teacher education. In Bath, as in all such institutions in the country, very much attention is directed to the needs of pupils whose mother tongue is not English whereas in Greece a corresponding situation hardly exists. Greek lecturers would not normally think of sensitising their students to problems experienced by the inconsiderable number of children who turn up at school ignorant of Greek; whereas in England this occurrence is very common (the number of mother tongues spoken by schoolchildren is in excess of 180 in the London area alone!). In consequence students are made very sharply aware of the damaging educational effects of cultural and linguistic ethnocentrism. This sensitivity was expected to be aroused by the wording of item 18. However, such a line of explanation, even if adequate to account for the 0.9 difference between the student means, offers no help in accounting for the ascription by the Bath students of a mean value *lower* by 0.8 to their former teachers. One would have expected it to be higher. The same trend on the part of the Athens students is similarly puzzling. As with other puzzles encountered along the way I can only note that this is a case for further investigation with a more discriminating battery of test items.

In the case of item 19 it was expected that responses would be influenced even more by extra-academic influences. The differences between the Greek and English scores under all three conditions were expected, and in fact all three between-group differences are significant ($p = .04, .0004, .0008$). My expectation was based on the more internationalist outlook of Greeks in general, stemming from their perception of their country's being small with some much larger and not over-friendly neighbours. The pattern of progression across the three conditions, very clear in both nationalities, was also what I expected to find. The overall lower figures from the English respondents support the conclusion that their high rating in the case of Item 21 is related to within-course factors.

It is probably unnecessary to point out that this item was ineptly worded, conflating internationalism with support for the EEC! Part of the interest was due to the Bath-Athens link's having stemmed from an EEC-funded ERASMUS programme; but plainly I should have separated the two components. Responses to the item as worded cannot avoid being prone to rapid shifts in consequence of sudden events, for instance to any pronouncement by a prominent EEC figure which occasioned delight or distress in either member country.

Section 4: Specific curriculum course-related items

The remaining couple of items, namely 6 and 21 (see Questionnaire above) were chosen in the hope that they would provide some measure of influences stemming from the different curricular experiences of the students. Both subjects receive great emphasis in the Bath course and very little in Athens and a corresponding difference in student values was predicted.

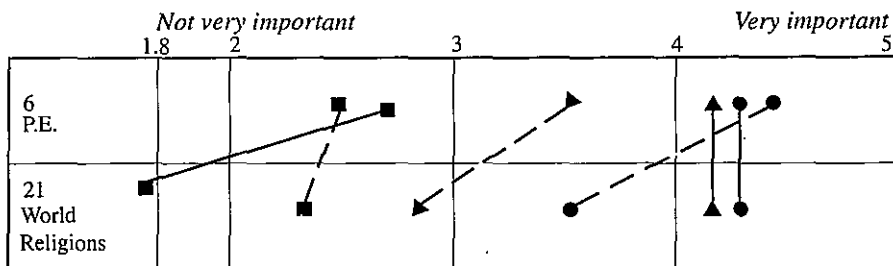


Fig. 9.

This was amply fulfilled in the case of Item 21 but emphatically contradicted in respect of Item 6. Here it is interesting to see that the Bath students rate their lecturers as sharing their high commitment whereas the Athens students, while no less enthusiastic, see their lecturers as only intermediate between themselves and their former teachers.

With World Religions Greek students were less committed than the English ($p < .0001$). However, as with PE, Bath students see their lecturers as equally committed, whereas there is a very significant difference ($p = .0001$) between the Athens students' own feelings and those they ascribe to their lecturers. Again further investigation would be needed to determine whether these findings are experimental artefacts or attributable to some curricular or extra-curricular source of attitude change.

Conclusions

1. Student-teachers at Athens and Bath are similarly enthusiastic, optimistic and forward looking. They have, Greeks and English, developed a very wide conception of the teacher's role within and outside the school curriculum. This confirms and extends to Greece Broadfoot's (1987) findings: *"It is the whole child-social, personal and academic - for which the English teacher is trying to provide."*

2. There is equally strong support for Broadfoot's findings about the pedagogical 'progressivism' of her sample of English teachers, a respect in which they differed markedly from the French. In what she says about the English Broadfoot could be speaking for the new crop of Greek teachers as well. There is also support for the apprehensive note she sounds in this regard: *"who (the typical English teacher) sets herself the unachievable goal of an individualised pedagogy in a class of over 30 children and has no clear idea of the limits of her responsibility."*

3. Results from both nationalities indicate that student-teachers are also more influenced by their lecturers than the latter sometimes suppose, especially when the influence is exerted in the direction of the optimism and idealism of the kinds just noted.

4. At the level of methodology, the three-phase questionnaire used here produced results which appear worthwhile and dependable, as well as quickly and easily gathered.

5. Along with the most numerous, clear-cut, and significant findings, those relating to cross-national similarities, some interesting differences emerged.

Recommendations

In relation to each of the five general conclusions, taken in turn, some recommendations may tentatively be suggested.

1. In both countries the 'concern for the whole child' is too widely and firmly established for change, beyond redefinitions of responsibilities, to be at all likely. I think that this task of defining responsibility is a social and political matter and ought not to be left, by default, to the teaching profession. The difficulty, obviously, is not that teachers lack dedication: it is entirely the opposite. These results support the opinion, expressed now more and more frequently, that teachers are apt to take on more burdens of care than in the long term they can reasonably bear. This is a more urgent problem in England, with its very high rate of family breakdown.

2. 'Individualised pedagogy' and all this term implies is not just a matter of classroom organisation and teaching methods; it is strongly related to teacher ideology. The present study underlines a fact which educational policy makers must take more into account. In England, where freedom to be traditional or innovatory has prevailed for three decades, it seems that this ideology has adapted to the degree of standardisation brought about by the National Curriculum, which, though to some extent opposed and resented, has been shown to permit much of the progressive ethos in Primary practice there. In Greece, where this standardisation has always existed, a greater gap exists between teacher aspiration and classroom reality, a much greater gap if this study does not misrepresent matters. The tensions resulting from this will, at least in the long term, need to be resolved. The Greek Ministry of Education does not have the benefits, nor the problems, arising from the local checks and balances found in England. However, just as in the UK, it has to operate in a political arena - in effect a finely balanced two-party democracy - in which teachers have Unions to articulate their opinions and parental wishes have to be heeded. Centralised as the system is, it cannot move too far beyond nor too far behind the perceived consensus and - it goes without saying - is as powerless as the Department of Education in England to police what goes on in individual classrooms.

3. It is always pleasant when empirical research produces findings favourable to one's own profession! I hope that fellow teacher-educators reading this paper will be encouraged, and that readers with influence on policy-making will bear in mind our potential contribution.

4. This study compares just two national patterns. Even at the preliminary level of data-gathering which it represents I should like to see findings from other countries

which, in ways other than merely institutional, have to take account of each other in an increasingly inter-conscious world. The development of our questionnaire was described in some detail above in the belief that it is a valuable research tool, and in the hope that it will be translated into other languages, extended, and used. The focus here has been on teachers in the stage of their professional preparation. A comparison of the findings with ones derived from the questionnaire responses of established teachers is an obvious topic for further research.

5. The differences that emerged between the two groups pose problems which a quite different research design will be needed to answer. The tantalising and paradoxical results in the area of Nationalism and Mother-tongue teaching are a particular challenge. In this the kind of in-depth follow-up employed in studies like the BRISTAIX would be indispensable.

Elias Matsagouras is a professor in the Department of Primary Education in the University of Athens with a special responsibility for teaching and learning methods. Between this and his own teaching in Primary schools he has gained higher degrees in Canada, been Visiting Scholar at George Washington University in the USA, and Educational Counsellor at the Greek Embassy in Washington. He has published very extensively in Greece on both theoretical and classroom-related topics. Address for correspondence: University of Athens, Pedagogiko Tmima, Ippokratous 33, Athens, Greece. Fax: (351) 3605355; Email<ematsag@atlas.uoa.gr>

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