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Towards English teachers' professional development: Can self- and peer- observation help improve the quality of our teaching?

**Στοχεύοντας στην επαγγελματική ανάπτυξη των
καθηγητών της αγγλικής: μπορούν η αυτο-παρατήρηση και
η έτερο-παρατήρηση να βοηθήσουν στη βελτίωση
της ποιότητας της διδασκαλίας μας;**

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This study was based on the hypothesis that observing classroom practices could bring forth insights into improving a language teacher's quality of instruction. The present paper describes part of a research conducted to explore two English language teachers' development while being engaged in self- and peer- observation practices for a short period of time. A brief reference will be made to the research design (methodology, context, participants) as well as to the results of the study and the pedagogical implications arising from them. The findings seem to indicate evidence of professional development for both teachers arguing, therefore, for the implementation of such practices within the Greek state school context.

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Η παρούσα μελέτη βασίστηκε στην υπόθεση ότι η παρατήρηση της διδακτικής πράξης (observation) μπορεί να μας προσφέρει βαθύτερες γνώσεις όσον αφορά στη βελτίωση της διδασκαλίας. Η παρούσα εργασία περιγράφει μέρος μιας έρευνας που διεξήχθη με σκοπό να ερευνηθεί την ανάπτυξη δύο καθηγητών Αγγλικής γλώσσας μέσα από τη συμμετοχή τους σε διαδικασίες αυτό-παρατήρησης (self observation) και έτερο-παρατήρησης (peer observation) για ένα σύντομο χρονικό διάστημα. Θα γίνει μια σύντομη αναφορά στο σχεδιασμό της έρευνας (μεθοδολογία, περιεχόμενο, συμμετέχοντες) καθώς επίσης και στα αποτελέσματα της μελέτης και στα παιδαγωγικά ευρήματα που προκύπτουν από αυτά. Τα ευρήματα φαίνεται να καταδεικνύουν την επαγγελματική ανάπτυξη και των δύο συμμετεχόντων επιχειρηματολογώντας μ' αυτόν τον τρόπο υπέρ της εφαρμογής παρόμοιων πρακτικών στο Ελληνικό δημόσιο σχολείο.

Key words: teacher development, observation, self-observation, peer observation

Introduction

Attention is now increasingly being focused on the quality of teaching in Greek state schools and on the issue of the evaluation of teachers. The poor standards in the Greek educational system have led the present government to re-examine the quality of the country's educational system and formulate a new policy to bring about necessary changes. Education reform will, thus, require teachers to rethink classroom practice and collaborate in ways they may have never before. In addition, there is a growing consensus that traditional forms of teacher development are inadequate for addressing teachers' issues and for confronting the challenges teachers face in their everyday practice (Lignos, 2006; Papastamatis et al., 2009).

Within this context, the present study aims to explore the effectiveness of self- and peer-observation as tools for teacher development which will most likely lead to improvement of teacher quality. A literature review reveals that, despite its many benefits, observation carries negative connotations for most teachers who see it as a frightening, stressful and even threatening experience. Traditionally, observations have been conducted by administrators for the purpose of evaluation and that is why they cause considerable stress on teachers (Day, 2005; Richards & Lockhart, 1992; Tsai, 2008). They have often been used for staff appraisal and in pre-service situations, as part of the teaching practicum. This traditional model of observation typically involves a person in a managerial position who assumes the role of the expert, examines teaching based on a prescribed list and provides the teacher with evaluative, judgmental feedback telling him/her what they are doing right or wrong. Instead of a meaningful interaction, observation results in a critique of the teacher's behaviour in class. The power relationships are evident, as Philips (1994:268) observes, with the observer being the expert and enjoying higher status and the observee in a less powerful position.

However, most scholars tend to agree on how important classroom observations are for continuing professional development (Crandall, 2000; Kurtoglu-Eken, 2001; McMahon, Barrett & O'Neil, 2007). Adopting, therefore, a more developmental view in classroom observations, as the present study sets to investigate, will possibly help minimize teachers' anxiety and prove beneficial for both observer and observee. This study is based on the hypothesis that being observed and reflecting on feedback help teachers increase their awareness of their teaching practices, promote their critical thinking and professional growth. It is hoped, therefore, that by adopting a developmental view of classroom observations, within a non-judgmental framework, will prove to be an invaluable tool for teachers and an excellent stimulus for professional development.

The current study explores the professional development of two teachers of English working at a Greek secondary state school while being engaged in self- and peer-observation practices. Combining primarily qualitative as well as quantitative methodology, data will be gained from the analysis of the teaching diary, the feedback sessions, pre- and post- observation interviews with the participating teacher and classroom observations.

Research design

Methodology

The present work can be described as a case study. Data analysis in this paper was primarily qualitative as this was a small-scale study in a particular setting and among a particular group of participants but quantitative data were employed as well in the form of the observation tools that were used for conducting the observations.

Participants and Context

The study involved two teachers of English (a colleague and myself) teaching at Hydra's secondary school¹. The profile of the two teachers reads as follows: I have been teaching in the state school sector for eight years. I have been a teacher in this school for six years now and I am quite familiar with the classes and the pupils. My colleague, Nicole, has been a state school teacher for six years and this is her first year on the island. Nicole holds a BA in English Language and Literature from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and an MA in Translation Studies from the University of Warwick.

The observations were conducted in the first year of senior and junior high school respectively. The first class (Nicole's class) consists of ten pupils who are all at a high level, highly motivated and willing to participate in the lesson. The second class (my class) consists of 26 pupils, all at the age of 16 and permanent residents of the island. They are a mixed ability class and their level ranges from very low to quite advanced.

Procedure

Self-observation

For a period of 8 weeks, starting Monday September 29th and ending Monday December 20th, 2010, I set aside ten to fifteen minutes on each day I had taught the class to write in my diary thus producing 25 entries in total. The diary entries were written on a notebook at home later on the same day for two reasons: first, I needed an environment free of interruptions and noise and secondly, my teaching obligations with other classes did not allow me much time to record my thoughts immediately after the lesson.

Following Bailey' advice, in recording my entries, I did not worry about style, grammar or organization so as to read like "stream of consciousness" writing (1990: 220). My goal was to get complete and accurate data while the recollections of the lesson were still fresh in my mind. For the purposes of the present paper, some of the entries were slightly edited so as to be publicly presented in the following sections.

To gain an alternative perspective on situations, in addition to the journal keeping, I conducted audio recordings for the purpose of self-observation in an effort to seek solutions or explore further an issue of concern that arose out of the journal entries. A tape recorder was placed on the teacher's desk where it could capture the exchanges which took place during the lessons. Ten audio recordings took place on the following subjects: teacher's use of mother tongue in the classroom (what amount and for which

purpose), pupils' amount of participation, interaction patterns, focus on specific pupils' behaviour, lesson structure and timing and pace of the lesson. Some of the recordings were repeated with the same focus so as to verify the initial findings. The reports from all the recordings were written and analyzed in the diary.

Peer observation

A semi-structured interview was conducted before observations began to collect more information on the peer teacher's teaching profile and attitude to peer observation (see Appendix I). The interview then turned into a discussion on issues to consider before the observation scheme was implemented.

The participating teachers agreed to observe each other's classes 6 times and the observations spanned a period of one month, starting Monday November 29th and ending Monday December 20th, 2010. The number of the observations was limited to 6 for the purposes and needs of the present research. Because of overlapping time schedules, it was not possible to conduct a series of consecutive observations. The two teachers compared their schedules and agreed on the most convenient days that the scheme could be implemented. In addition, it was decided that the first observation would not have a particular focus but it would serve to familiarize themselves with the class to observe, the setting, and the pupils. Other practical considerations were addressed as well in this pilot phase of the observations such as the best place for the observer to sit to minimize disruption and the introduction to the pupils of the observer by the teacher. It was agreed that the teacher should introduce the observer to the class without, however, explaining in detail the reason for her presence but pointing out that she is there to watch the teacher, not them (Stillwell, 2009). The pre-observation meetings were arranged to take place one or two days before the actual observation. The venue was the school at times that both teachers did not have lessons. During these meetings that lasted from 15 to 20 minutes the teacher observed would brief her colleague on the specific nature of the teaching event that she would like feedback on. The learning intentions for that particular session and the teaching strategies to be adopted were also discussed. An important part of the preparation was also the setting up of the observation tools to be used². At this point, since my colleague had no prior experience in designing observation schemes, she left the decision on me to design and suggest observation tools that she would find convenient and helpful. She explained what parts of the lesson she would like to be observed and receive feedback on and, therefore, observation tools were designed focusing on the following subjects: timing and pace of the lesson, use of video, interaction patterns, group work, discipline, use of praise and introduction of a new teaching strategy.

During the observation, we both agreed that the observer should not be involved in the experience in any other way than keeping notes on the themes that were discussed in advance (Master, 1983; Murphy, 1992). The only exception was the observation on group work where the observer was asked to circulate among the groups of pupils and silently and as discreetly as possible to take notes on the work being done. The observers sat at the back of the classroom so as to have a full picture of the class and make their presence as less invasive as possible (see chapter on peer observation in Bailey et al., 2001).

The post-observation meetings took place either later on the same day or the next day, at school or at a local café, depending on the busy schedule of the teachers. Their duration ranged from half to one hour. An effort was made for the feedback sessions to be conducted as soon as possible after the lessons. The sessions began with the observees' giving their general impression of the lessons, their evaluation of the things that went well or as planned and of the less successful features. Then, the observer presented the teacher with the results from the observation tool or any other additional notes she kept during the lesson. A discussion followed with the two teachers reflecting on classroom procedures and practices, exchanging ideas and suggesting alternative courses of action. In order to assist the dialogue between the two colleagues, a number of questions were prepared to be discussed after the lesson, based on an extensive review of the literature on each topic (see Appendix II).

After the observations were completed, a post interview followed with the aim of determining how the peer teacher perceived the observation scheme and how she conceived its contribution to her professional development (see Appendix III). The questions were based on Malamah-Thomas (1987), Richards & Lockhart (1992) and Weller (2009).

Data Sources

The main sources of *qualitative data* collection were the following:

- the pre and post study interviews
- journal notes
- field notes
- written ethnography
- audio-recordings.

The main sources of *quantitative data* collection were the observation tools; for the purposes of observation, the following instruments were employed:

- Seating Chart Observation Record (SCORE) by Acheson and Gall (in Day, 1990:49-50). (see Appendix V-i).
- Tally Sheet: (see Appendices V-ii).
- Grids: (see Appendices V-iii).
- Checklists: (see Appendix IV)

In some of the tasks, the observer was asked to keep further notes in an effort to collect more information and she was asked to collect instances of the observed behaviour as it was impossible for one person to record everything.

Data analysis

The data from the journal entries were reviewed extensively in order to become familiar with them and to obtain a holistic sense of what was happening. Then, I searched for key words, actions and behaviors and kept informal notes on these features. After reading and rereading the relevant entries and based on the literature of self-observation's contribution to teachers' professional development, five thematic categories emerged in

which the entries were placed. The categories, adapted from Ho & Richards (1993), are the following: *Reflection on teaching methods and approaches*, *Self-awareness*, *Evaluating teaching*, *Diagnosing problems and seeking solutions*, *Evidence of change*. Then quotes for each category were selected.

A similar procedure for data analysis was followed in analyzing the results from peer observation based on the notes kept during observations, during feedback meetings and on the two interviews conducted with the peer teacher. The emerging questions were:

1. *Did peer observation make teachers rethink any of their own teaching methods or styles?*
2. *Did peer observation foster the development of teaching skills?*
3. *Did peer observation facilitate the exchange of ideas, teaching methods and materials?*
4. *Did teachers' confidence grow as a result of peer observation?*

Having discussed the context and procedures of the research and the data analysis methods, we now turn to the presentation of the results.

Presentation and discussion of results

Self observation insights

There are entries in the diary in which the teacher's professional development is documented. For practical reasons, only a few excerpts from the diary will be presented according to the five thematic categories already discussed in the previous section.

Reflecting on teaching methods and approaches

Diary keeping prompted the teacher to reflect on issues and concerns that were previously unarticulated or have never been carefully considered. Instead of following my usual procedure of checking grammar exercises, I opted for asking students to come to the board and write the answers while their classmates were asked to look for any mistakes. This is what I wrote on the effectiveness of this procedure:

"I think it makes the checking of exercises more interesting because it involves the whole class. It is usually a boring procedure and most of them don't pay attention and mechanically copy down the correct answers. This way, it makes them think. My only doubt concerns the way Ss who come to the board may feel if they make mistakes and be ridiculed by their classmates. Another doubt is about time. It takes more time because we also discuss the answers-why they are right or wrong. But again I think it's more interesting and involving and allows for Ss to talk more instead of being me who monotonously gives the answer by saying yes or no".

Self-awareness

Diary keeping also helped the teacher gain a number of insights about her teaching and contributed to awareness raising. After conducting an observation on the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom, I realized that I used mostly the mother tongue in the grammar section of the lesson and English in the speaking part. The checklist also revealed that

the mother tongue was used more often and for a wider variety of purposes than L2 (see Appendix IV). That made me reflect on why this is so:

"I always explain rules and translate sentences in L1 when I present grammar. I believe that showing the similarities that exist between the two languages helps Ss grasp better the grammatical rules. Maybe I'll try to use L2 in that part of the lesson and see how it goes". "I used mostly L2 in the speaking part where I think it's natural to try and have a conversation in L2".

Evaluating teaching

There were many instances in the diary where I positively evaluated aspects of my lesson and that gave me renewed strength and motive to go on teaching in that difficult class. The following entry was recorded for a listening activity I had produced on my own and which included authentic videos found on the Internet:

"I noticed that they (Ss) were paying attention to the clips-they caught their attention. I was happy to see that one student who is sometimes indifferent during class, raised his hand to answer to all the questions in the activity".

Diagnosing problems and seeking solutions

As a result of reflection, I was able to identify specific aspects of my teaching that I would like to change and that urged me to seek solutions or consider alternative plans of action. After conducting observation on pupils' participation in class, I realized that some of them had not participated at all (see Appendix V-i for what was recorded in the observation tools). I was always aware of this fact but it has never really concerned me in the past. This has prompted me to search the relevant literature and take action: *'What can I do for those low-level Ss in my class? I should try to use pair/group work more and check their contribution within the group'*.

Evidence of change

The short period of engaging in self reflective practices did not allow me to expect evidence of actual change or growth in my teaching. However, the following examples of this nature were recorded in my diary.

I was very concerned about the amount and the purposes for which I use the mother tongue in the classroom. I prepared a checklist and audio recorded a few lessons to provide evidence for the above. The results prompted me to try and use the L2 more often and for situations I had not thought of before. After a month of diary keeping, I noted:

"I used L2 for other purposes except in the speaking activities. For example: For instructions: "Christina, come up to the board and write the answers". For humour: When Ss were commenting on their classmate's writing on the board, they said that she looked like a teacher. The teacher added: "She could be a teacher, couldn't she?"

On comparing the two self reports on the use of L1 and L2 (see Appendix IV for the different results the checklist recorded the second time), I also noted: *"I see that I've used L2 much more and for a variety of purposes. I see that I have improved in this area"*.

Peer observation insights

The relevant notes from the debriefing sessions and the post-study interview as well as the findings from the observation tools will contribute to the analysis of data. Again, some of the findings will be presented in the current section as it is not possible to present them all because of word count limitation. The questions identified in the Data analysis section will be repeated below.

Did peer observation make teachers rethink any of their own teaching methods or styles?

As a result of the information their partner collected, both teachers identified specific aspects of their teaching that they would like to change. During an observation on the use of praise, Nicole made a note on some pupils' behaviour towards a classmate of theirs and she shared this finding in the feedback session: *Nicole revealed something I hadn't noticed: How some Ss made fun of another S. when I nominated him to answer. I wasn't aware how serious the situation was until Nicole pointed that out.*

Did peer observation foster the development of teaching skills?

Although the period of conducting the observations was short, instances of change in teachers' behaviour were documented. Nicole became aware of a problem relating to the participation of one pupil as a result of the initial observation. So, she asked me to pay attention to that pupil's behaviour and how often she nominates her in the next observation task: *This time, Nicole consciously applied nomination strategies to make that S participate more successfully. She was happy to see the change.*

She also pointed out in our post study discussion how useful peer observation has been in identifying that specific aspect of classroom interaction and how much it helped her in future lessons with that class³.

Did peer observation facilitate the exchange of ideas, teaching methods and materials?

The observations gave teachers access to new strategies and material. After witnessing the successful use of specific strategies, both teachers expressed their desire to employ them in their classrooms as well. I particularly enjoyed Nicole's Christmas video and I noted:

Ss enjoyed it a lot. They laughed. I liked that and I'm thinking of using it in my lessons. What I really liked is that the parts of the video were followed by comprehension questions. So, Ss were watching for a purpose and had the chance to do some speaking as well.

Did teachers' confidence grow as a result of peer observation?

An important part of the post observation discussions was the focus on teachers' strengths. Both teachers found themselves being praised for elements of their teaching and that boosted their self esteem. Being very concerned with the issue of classroom discipline, a lot of our discussions centered around this theme. My colleague was able to empathize with me and gave me positive feedback on my handling of the situation. Reading from my notes:

Nicole remarked that this behaviour had a positive effect on some Ss who calmed down after they saw that they did not get my attention by behaving badly. She said it was the best thing to do in classes like that. She boosted my confidence by telling me that I did a very good job and it was not my fault that Ss were behaving this way.

Having presented the results of the present research, let us now discuss whether any problems occurred during the implementation of the self- and peer- observation processes and if any, how they were dealt with.

Potential problems

During diary keeping, I did not seem to face any particular practical issues. The procedure I followed was quite simple in practice and the time devoted to writing did not keep me busy from my other obligations. As for the peer observation process, the most inhibiting factors in conducting peer observation are teachers' reluctance in taking part and their anxiety when being observed. Luckily, the colleague I worked with was particularly willing to participate and extremely welcoming as far as accepting visits from other teachers is concerned.

Anxiety did not turn out to be a hindering factor either. It is natural for teachers to feel uncomfortable when being observed, however, as both teachers noted, the class dynamics were not affected in a negative way by the presence of the observer. In the post study interview, Nicole noted *that she had witnessed a slight change in her pupils' behaviour in that they seemed to have put more effort during the lesson and were highly motivated to participate*. The repeated visits also helped teachers grow accustomed to the idea of being observed. Furthermore, the trusting relationship between the two colleagues and the positive and constructive nature of feedback both played a crucial role in minimizing stress. The observation tools were designed to yield objective data rather than pass judgment and the open, non-judgmental dialogue in which they engaged at the feedback meetings contributed to teachers' not feeling threatened or evaluated by the whole process.

As far as the issue of time is concerned, there appeared to be no difficulties related to overlapping schedules. The teachers organized to conduct the observations at times that suited them both and, therefore, did not resort to the school's administration's help in order to change the school's schedule. In addition, the length of the pre and post observation meetings was kept short so they were not viewed as an imposition to the teachers. They were scheduled to take place during teachers' free time and thus were not seen as a burden.

As to the use of the observation tools, none of the teachers faced difficulties in completing them. To this end, the initial informal visit to each other's class helped them

to familiarize with the class setting and the pupils. In addition, the tools were designed with the aim of keeping the procedures simple.

It seems, therefore, that the two processes undertaken by the teacher in an effort to promote her professional development appear quite feasible within the state school context and their pedagogical implications will be further discussed in the following section.

Are self- and peer- observation really worth it? Implications and discussion

The results of the present study seem to suggest that self- and peer- observation of teaching constitute both useful and feasible ways for teacher development. The pedagogical implications that arise for the usefulness and feasibility of the above practices within a state school context are the following:

(1) From the analysis of results, it can be said that *diary keeping* has illuminated the teacher's insights about her own teaching, fostered reflection on her own teaching practices and helped her uncover significant variables that would otherwise have gone unnoticed. The teacher diary documented her professional growth and her struggle to become a better educator.

(2) As far as *peer observations* are concerned, they have proved to be beneficial for the participating teachers. They have provided them with a richer understanding of teaching and enabled them to come up with more effective solutions to improve their classes. However, it must be noted that to make such practices effective, we need to follow certain guidelines:

- Though some studies have revealed teachers' dismay at participating in classroom observations (Richardson, 2000), this was not the case in this study. Neither of the two teachers was threatened by the presence of the colleague-observer because she was there to report on elements of teaching and help each other reflect rather than punish or criticize. The trusting, non judgmental relationship between the two colleagues arises as an important factor.
- The peer observations included a pre-observation and post-observation meeting, both crucial in conducting successful observation schemes.
- Giving proper feedback is a basic principle so as teachers to welcome collaboration as a non-evaluative, low-stress means through which to reflect upon and improve their teaching (Forbes, 2004).

(3) The procedures followed in this study as to the implementation of self- and peer-observations, are quite *feasible* to be conducted by teachers working in state schools. The model implemented for the purposes of the current research is relatively cost effective, requires little equipment and virtually no outside expertise. It does involve teachers being present in each other's classes. However, that fact did not prove to be a hindrance to the smooth flow of the school's timetable since both teachers chose to perform the peer observation tasks at times they were free from their teaching duties. The schools' administrators were both willing to make changes in the schedule if needed.

Therefore, a warm, supportive environment is favorable to teacher's growth of qualities and skills (Wyatt, 2010).

Finally, the limitations of the present study need to be acknowledged.

Limitations of the present study

The findings of this study apply to the number of teachers studied here and further research of this kind is needed to establish whether the issue raised in the current research applies elsewhere. The present case study is unique and its generalisability is thus limited. In addition, as this was a small-scale study conducted for a short period of time, further research is needed to explore the longer term benefits of peer- and self-observation practices. A longitudinal research could, thus, provide a greater opportunity for change in teachers' behaviour to become evident.

It is appreciated that the observation processes studied in the present research offered valuable insights related to teachers' professional development and the improvement of the quality of their teaching. However, the process could have been enriched by a slightly extended training phase for the observers. The absence of training for the peer teacher did not create any difficulties as to the completion of the observation project mainly due to the fact that the researcher was also a co-participant and was able to guide her colleague through the process. Future research could provide valuable insights as to whether and to what degree the trainability of observation skills contributes to the overall success of such professional development practices.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study originated as an effort to approach a theme which has received little attention within the context of Greek state schools. It was carried out in order to investigate the effect professional development practices such as self- and peer-observation has on teachers' development and quality of teaching.

The present research was designed to focus on two specific ways of development: self-observation through the use of diary keeping and peer observation in the form of two teachers' observing each other's classes and discussing on feedback. Combining qualitative and quantitative data, this study employed a wide variety of data collection methodology. The findings indicate that the research conducted gave us valuable insights on the implementation and the benefits such professional practices can offer to teachers. On the basis of the findings, it would seem that self- and peer- observation contributed to teachers' professional growth in a number of ways. They helped teachers increase their awareness of their teaching practices, promote their critical thinking, exchange ideas and collaborate for the benefit of the students. The whole process proved to be beneficial for both participants.

While we do not wish to over-generalise findings on the basis of a single case and although such practices are quite alien to the Greek context, the success of this project could be seen as an indicator that teacher development processes such as the ones examined in the present paper, can actually take root in Greece.

Notes

1. Hydra is a small island in the Argo-Saronic Gulf with a population of fewer than 2000 people. There is one junior high school with 60 pupils and a senior high school with 58 pupils.
 2. See Wajnryb (1992) for a variety of observation tasks teachers can use, modify and adapt depending on their research purpose and characteristics of their settings.
 3. See Appendix V-iii for the change in the interaction patterns that was documented in the observation tool.
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Appendix I

Questions for pre-observation interview

- What's your educational background?
- How many years have you been teaching (private and public sector)?
- Have you ever been involved in peer observation? If yes, why and in what context?
- If no, why not?
- How do you view peer observation? Are you in favor or against it? Why?
- Why would you be willing to take part in a peer observation scheme?

Appendix II

(For reasons of convenience questions on only one topic are presented here)

USE OF PRAISE

To be discussed at the feedback session

- What types of praise does the teacher use? For what purpose:
 - to express her approval or delight ?
 - to support positive learning behaviour ?
 - to provide encouragement given the effort rather than accomplishment?
- Is the teacher having a strategy? Is this strategy conscious or subconscious?
- Is there a category of students that is praised more or less than others? What is the teacher's behaviour towards weaker or stronger students?
- Did the teacher overuse praise? Did the teacher use praise in limited amount? What are the results in each case?
- What makes teachers' praise effective?
- What are the effects of praise on students?

Appendix III

Questions for post-observation interview

- During the present peer observation programme, did you feel comfortable teaching the class while being observed?
- Do you think there were any changes in the dynamics of the class as a result of an observer present? If yes, what types of changes occurred?
- Did the observation instrument work? If not, why not? Could it be improved? If so, in what ways?
- Did you find the results of the observation useful? If so, in what ways were they useful? In what ways has your experience impacted on your practice?
- How useful do you think it would be to do these types of observations more regularly?

Appendix IV

i. 6/10/2010 Observation tasks used in self-observation.

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>L1</i>	<i>L2</i>
Give instructions	✓✓✓	✓✓
Explain meaning of words	✓✓✓	
Explain grammar rules	✓✓	
For classroom management	✓✓✓	✓
Praise students	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Explain abstract or cultural aspects		
Tell jokes	✓✓	
Explain errors	✓✓	
Check comprehension	✓	✓
Other L1: to nominate Ss ✓✓✓✓ Comments: L2 was mainly used to conduct the speaking task of the unit where instructions and explanations were given in English.		

ii. 17/12/2010

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>L1</i>	<i>L2</i>
Give instructions	✓	✓✓✓
Explain meaning of words	✓✓	✓✓✓
Explain grammar rules	✓✓	✓✓✓
For classroom management	✓	✓✓

Praise students		✓✓✓✓
Explain abstract or cultural aspects		
Tell jokes		✓
Explain errors	✓	✓✓
Check comprehension	✓	✓
<p>Other L2: to nominate Ss ✓✓✓ Comments: This time, English was also used more in the grammar section of the lesson.</p>		

Appendix V—i Seating Chart

		Danny ↑ _G	(Fratzeskos)*	(Konstantinos)*	(Stefanos)*
		(Alexandros)*	Lucas ↑ _G	Mania ↑ _G	(Evi)*
		Christina ↑ _G	(Katerina)*	Evaggelia ↑ _G	(Manolis)*
Harry ↓ ¹		(Helen B.)*		John M. ↑ _G	(Fanis)*
Andreas ↓ ¹ ↑ ₀		Julio ↑ _G		Nouri ↑ _G	
Carolina ↑ _G		(Vassiliki)*	(Helen G.)*	George ↓ ¹	

Teacher

Pupils' participation (* Ss did not speak at all)

- ↓ = Teacher asks a question to the whole class
- ↓¹ = Teacher asks a question to individual student
- ↑_i = Student responds to individual question by the teacher
- ↑_G = Student responds to a general question by the teacher
- ↑₀ = Student does not respond to the question

Appendix V—ii Tally Sheet

TASK A

Put a ✓ every time the student is **disruptive** and the teacher **addresses** the problem.

Put a ? every time the student is **disruptive** but his / her behaviour goes **unnoticed** by the teacher.

		Danny	Fratzeskos	Konstantinos		Stefanos
		Alexandros	Lucas	Mania		Evi
		Christina	Katerina	Evaggelia		Manolis
Harry		Helen B.		John M.	Fanis	Michael
Andreas		Julio		Nouri		Vaggelis
Carolina		Vassiliki	Helen G.	George		John A.

Teacher

Appendix V—iii Grid

Interaction patterns in Nicole’s class/ focus on specific student -8/12/2010

Nomination Strategies	No of tallies	Questioning strategies	No of tallies	Student’s reaction	No of tallies	Teacher’s feedback	No of tallies	Student’s behaviour
T. names or identifies S. and asks question	✓✓	Yes/no✓✓		S. answers correctly	✓✓✓✓	Explicit correction		When S could not give the correct answer, T asked peers to help. This was done tactfully and after T has exhausted all other means. Also, it seems T’s routine to do that, Ss are used to it and it doesn’t seem awkward or insulting.
T. asks question and then nominates or identifies S.		Short answer✓✓✓✓		S. gives the wrong answer	✓	Recast		
T. asks question, then selects one of the students who offers to Answer	✓✓✓✓	Open ended		S. does not give an answer		Clarification request		
S. shouts the answer before T. nominates Anybody		Display		S. does not give the complete answer	✓	Repetition of error	✓	
		Referential				Elicitation	✓	