

**HIDDEN MESSAGES,
GENDERED INTERACTION
IN ISRAELI SCHOOLS**

by

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ABSTRACT

Hidden messages, gendered interaction in Israeli schools

This ethnographic study exposes hidden, sex differentiated messages conveyed to boys and girls in Israeli Jewish schools. The analysis of classroom interactions, the school culture, school documents, extra curricular activities, and teachers' reflections about sex roles and their pupils' sexuality, all render valuable information about the powerful undercurrents present in the Israeli educational system, that is officially committed to equal opportunities.

The observations conducted over a full academic year in three schools, are read within their cultural context. References to those social constructs that both generate the subtle sexist practices observed, and explain their deeper meanings and far reaching implications, make this study significant to the understanding of the specific Israeli scene. In addition, the disparity recorded between the teachers' stated commitment to equality, and their explicit and implicit gendered expectations, suggests a line of enquiry relevant to other educational systems too.

The incompatibility between traditional Jewish values, social constructs of modern Israel, and recent feminist critique, results in an ambivalent attitude to sex equity. This in turn leads to the resort to the most circuitous manner of preserving traditional values, that actually contradict the egalitarian ethos of each of the schools studied. Hence, the teachers' belief in the complementarity of the sexes, their interest in the pupils' patterns of heterosexual pairing, the insensitivity noted to subtle forms of sex discrimination, to

sexual harassment and to double standards in evaluations, all suggest an agenda hidden from the teachers themselves.

The gendered interactions and the hidden messages conveyed through them, are most pronounced in extra curricular activities. The conclusion is that whether or not the Israeli national curriculum contains or encourages sexist practices, the schools, in their unique ways, convey traditional messages about sex roles, in extremely subtle manners.

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Chapter 1

THE RESEARCH ISSUE: CHOOSING THE TOPIC

Personal concerns and political activities

Silverman (1985) points out that research begins in one of three ways: large-scale theoretical concerns, a puzzling datum or methodological problem (Ibid, p. 5-8). The definition of puzzling datum best describes my case: an investigator finds topics within the material thrown up by his/her observation, that provide an incentive for worthwhile research.

A clarification of the "puzzling datum" that provided the incentive for this study, requires a biographical note. The inclusion of such information is supported by Burgess (1984; 1985a) who does the same, and rationalizes by quoting other authors of educational studies who recognize and approve of the custom of researchers nowadays to

relate not only their research biographies but also their own biographies as a means of highlighting the reasons that lay behind the selection of a particular area of social investigation in sociological study.

Burgess (1985a), p. 141.

The puzzling datum that motivated me to conduct a systematic investigation of schools, is the unresolved contradiction between the status of women in Israel and the situation of women. The goal was the exposure of the manner in which education in its widest sense, and the process of socialization in general, condition females to abstain from making full use of the progressive legislation, and to adhere insistently to traditional gendered behaviours.

Likewise, the avoidance of critique of those social constructs and customs that enable the perpetuation of sexist and discriminatory practices, even on the part of women in the professional or the political arena, puzzled me, and aroused my curiosity. The fact that gender differentiated practices prevalent in Israel, are regarded as normative, and rarely rejected, lead me to investigate the source of power of the socializing powers that stand in the way of change.

The concern with the impact of formal and informal education on the formation of an individual's self image and concept of ones role in society, dawned on me in my role of mother of two daughters. The bewilderment and growing anger I experienced while watching children's programmes on Israeli Educational Television with my preschool daughters, were the driving force that set me on the path of inquiry into issues of sexism, a word I had never heard of at the time.

The biased world picture presented in the local productions was the most disturbing, since the ostentible reality there was easier for the young viewers to relate to, than that portrayed in American or British programmes. The distorted imitation of Israeli life conveyed through the portrayal of polarized scenes, suggested an educational or political goal that, prior to my involvement in my own children's exposure to society, I had never been aware of.

My professional training in literary analysis, probably facilitated the process of critical viewing, and enabled me to soon clarify and define the source of my discontent. The stereotypical portrayal of male and female figures was pathetic, and the implied characteristics, particularly of females, were offensive. In addition, the limited world of females, as

portrayed in most of the programmes, had no resemblance to my own life style, and actually contradicted the model I was endeavouring to set my daughters.

The need to accumulate evidence that could substantiate a formal complaint, brought me for the first time to the Tel-Aviv feminist club (1980), where I sought women willing to collaborate in a joint effort to conduct systematic observations of locally made children's programmes. Due to ignorance of similar work conducted elsewhere, much time was spent devising our own set of criteria. In later years I discovered great similarity between the form we devised to map our observations, and forms used by more experienced researchers in other countries.

Our findings, carefully processed by the statistician in our group, confirmed our worst fears: while both sexes were presented in an extremely stereotypical fashion, the occupations and mannerisms reserved for the females were limited in scope, unflattering, and at times absolutely demeaning. Ultimately, however, although our data was impressively organized, and the recommendations meticulously substantiated, the abysmal ignorance in political activism of the members of the group, left us with our papers and our pain.

Resources received in 1981 from an equity specialist in Maryland, US, thanks to the initiative of a mutual friend, introduced me to the terms non-sexist education, and anti-sexist initiatives. In retrospect, this was the turning point in my professional pursuits. The following year I came across Progrebin's exhaustive book Growing Up Free (1981) and my drive to make other Israeli parents and educators aware of the issues, became acute.

Another crucial stage in this direction was a tour programme drawn up for me at my request, by the British Council, in 1983. My programme officer in London was intrigued by my novel field of interest, and was delighted when by the end of my brief stay, I could inform her of additional contacts. My visits included The Institute of Education, University of London (Valerie Walkerdine), Department of Extra Mural Studies (Jane Hoy), ILEA Publishing Centre, CUES (Sue Adler), The Open University - women's studies group, Times Educational Supplement (Hilary Wilce), PPA, DASI project (Annie Cornbleet), and Women's Education Resource Centre.

The information and literature I gathered was invaluable to my education. The reports of concerned teachers, the findings of research on classroom interaction, and the classroom practices described, sounded unlike anything I had come across in Israel, despite my involvement in education in a variety of capacities. At the same time, the conversations I held confirmed my thesis that particular social constructs, built into the respective educational systems, explained and caused many of the notable differences in practices.

Intuitively only at that stage, I knew that classroom practices were intrinsically connected with the attitude to the sexes, upheld in each culture. In 1993 too, after having deliberately and systematically observed classrooms, I still maintain that while practices differ in accordance with local culture, the outcome is uncannily similar.

In the absence of any parallel in Israeli research, these hunches of mine could not be confirmed. No classroom observations focusing on gendered interactions had ever been conducted, and no other sources of information concerning

prevailing sexism in schools were in existence. Neither were there then, or now, any grass-roots teachers' groups that objected to the state of affairs, and experimented with models of interventions, conducted conferences, or resorted to any other forms of protest and/or consciousness raising.

The fact that Israeli school culture contains fewer overt sex differentiating practices than are described in UK and USA research, might well suggest that local social norms indeed tolerate scarcely any. Rather than represent a sex fair system, however, I contend that Israeli schools simply rely more on devious and subtler measures, to the same effect. The more discreet nature of the hidden curriculum keeps it out of the public eye, and explains the difficulty of those teachers, parents or pupils who have a basic awareness of inequity, to pinpoint indisputable instances of sexism and sex discrimination. Indeed the hitherto unrecorded practice of conveying gendered perceptions in the evaluations written by teachers, as I expose in this study, is a case in point. The deeply entrenched sexism defies detection by the individual recipient, and can be disclosed only by a comparative study of numerous report cards.

My experience of the local educational system

My acquaintance with the Israeli system, as a pupil, academic, high school teacher, university lecturer, parent and community activist, gives me a vantage point for my hypothesis regarding the powers that enable sexism to persist in schools. Sex typed behaviours, and inequitable treatment were accepted uncritically and taken for granted by me for many years, as they still are by the majority of Israelis. As a teacher and a parent, I have noted that among parents, the situation of girls, and the roles assigned to them in school activities, rarely arouse the

slightest comment. At the most, daughters are encouraged to try even harder.

The lack of Hebrew equivalents for the words GENDER, SEXISM and SEX FAIR, makes it was most unlikely that any sort of discourse on these matters might evolve. Neither is homophobia a topic of discourse, or an issue related to at all in society, let alone at school. Consequently, awareness of subtle processes is kept at bay, and perpetuation of inequitable practices can proceed undisturbed.

A year's position as inspector for special projects (1987-88), granted me even greater access to those empowered to control the system. The post called for continuous contact with school principals, counsellors and teachers, in staff rooms and in classrooms. It also involved me in negotiations with policy makers, including administrators from the board of education of the region I worked in. The indifference shared by all these persons to questions of gender and education was obvious from the start.

My special assignment sheds light on the attitude of the establishment to the issue of sex equity in education in another manner. The appointment as inspector was initiated by the advisor on the status of women to the minister of education, a position installed at the recommendation of the prime minister's committee on the status of women (Namir, 1978). Her original intention was to set up courses for teachers on equity. Since funds for such a project were refused, she requested that I devise and conduct a course on the relations between schools and families instead, and do my best to insert egalitarian messages. After her first year in office (1988) she submitted her resignation from this position, on the grounds that she had

received no organizational, financial or moral support. The unpaid tasks expected of the advisor have never since been transferred to another.

The decision to research this topic

The point of departure for the ethnographic study of Israeli schools, was my committed involvement in the issue in more capacity than one: personal, professional and political.

My interest in the subtle means of conveying hidden sexist messages in educational institutes, and the contradictory information supplied by teachers, practically compelled me into classrooms. On a more formal level, the verification and substantiation of my claims became essential for the continuation and promotion of my own work in the field. A systematic study of gendered interactions in classrooms was now called for, but such research, qualitative or quantitative, had never been conducted in Israel.

The afore mentioned motives gave rise to three distinct queries that were kept in mind throughout. While determining the research model, implementing the methods chosen, and analyzing the data, I was constantly aware of the need to expose facts about Israeli education as an agent of socialization; to enable the connection of my data with an action oriented approach, and finally, to offer a comparative approach that could both clarify and highlight issues, formerly studied only outside Israel.

1. Getting the facts about Israel right

The question that had no answer, mainly because no one asked it, was what was really happening to pupils of each sex, in schools in Israel.

Input from teachers, gathered both in the form of their written statements, and my own records of work with them in different contexts, pointed in the direction of unintentional sexism, that derives from adherence to traditional social constructs. By repeatedly posing identical questions, and requesting that answers be submitted in writing, I gradually established a collection of comments on sex roles, made by teachers and school counsellors. This data, that was accumulated systematically prior to this research, was always generated in settings where my own views on sex equity were known, and so it could be assumed, that whatever was written would be biased.

The contexts in which this data was gathered were usually training sessions I conducted, but included also a course conducted by a colleague, on girls in education (Tel Hai College, 1990), and the staffroom of the school my two daughters attended at the time, where teachers had either participated in a workshop of mine, or had at least heard of my professional interests (Tali school, Hod Hasharon, 1988).

Despite this biased entrance, all recorded statements show total unawareness of gender issues, and more often than not - blatant sexism. Since my intention had been, from the start, to use this data on any public platform available, the outcome served my purpose. It illustrated most emphatically, that even if the respondents were influenced in their responses by a concern for social desirability, they exposed total unawareness of how to answer to "please" me, as there was no way they could depart from their fixed, traditional constructs.

In the INSET courses I conducted, the initial desperate resistance of teachers to the process of consciousness raising, and their vehement denial of the existence of hidden sexist

messages in their work and in their schools, suggested once again that they were either truly oblivious to their own pronounced sexist statements, or else were anxious to cover up the true nature of their biased views.

The few teachers who participated in longer training, which is very sparse, seemed to overcome their initial objections, and even contributed numerous examples of sexist materials. Textual analysis proved to be less threatening for them than a self examination, that might expose their own unconscious contributions to the perpetuation of traditional stereotypical expectations. The suggestion that they too were unconsciously playing a part in an ongoing process of manipulative socialization was offensive, and a source of great confusion. However, directing the ensuing anger at society that had manipulated them into that position, did not come easily to most teachers, as the system is on the whole pro-establishment.

Whereas elsewhere the sex differentiated outcomes found are nowadays attributed to sexist influences, Israeli educators still believe both in the dissimilarity of the sexes and in their complementarity. Hence, the notion that sex differentiation connotes discrimination, is rejected as totally inappropriate to Israeli liberal policies.

Certain sex differentiated behaviours, and instances of undeniable gender imbalance, are acknowledged by educators:

- a. stereotypical choice of subjects for A levels, that results in practically single sex environments.
- b. scarcity of females in science and technology, and a perpetuation of the masculine image of these professions.

- c. lesser investment of females in the planning and advancement of careers.
- d. perpetuation of traditional gendered manners, such as discipline, neatness and regard for authority.

2. Local, action oriented approach

The repeated demands voiced over the years on my own, and in collaboration with women's groups, to ensure provision of sex equity in education, initiate or at least support anti-sexist measures, and incorporate gender and education into teacher training, are still dismissed as inessential in 1993.

The dependence of school staff on directives on the one hand, and the conviction of the ministry, on the other hand, that there is no need to take a stand on the issue of gender, preserves the deadlock. So long as the problem has not been owned by the centralistic system, the introduction of any corrective measures, is an extremely gruelling effort.

The total denial of the existence of sexism on the part of educational authorities, is nurtured by the lack of hard data to the contrary. The kind of indepth picture of school life attainable from an ethnographic study, could test my hypothesis that, no matter how much the teachers protest, sexist messages are rampant in schools. The intent of this study is to make use of data, processed through the application of an academic discipline and rationale, in order to confront local policy makers.

No attempt is made to study a representative sample of Israeli schools or Israeli pupils, but rather to examine schools that belong to three distinct streams in Israeli education, each with differently formulated goals, dissimilar populations, and

unidentical organizational models. In effect, the points of divergence are more in terms of structures and strategies than ideologies. In retrospect, the fact that every one of the principals of the schools studied expressed a keen interest in granting all their pupils equal opportunities, qualifies them in a sense to be considered representative of mainstream Israeli education.

3. Comparative approach

Having been initiated into the topic of non-sexist education through readings from other countries, I was curious to compare Israeli school practices with those acceptable in the UK and USA. A study parallel to foreign ethnographic studies, would supply knowledge missing from Israeli educational research. In addition, it could instigate a cross cultural discourse that questions social constructs and norms, that might otherwise be taken for granted in one culture or the other.

Subtle sexist messages are perpetuated by a multitude of locally accepted customs, and yet the effects are surprisingly similar. The exposure and highlighting of such idiosyncrasies, can suggest new directions of inquiry, and offer alternative measures for attaining sex fair education.

British research describes certain explicitly sexist time-honoured practices, criticized indeed by equity specialists, that are unheard of in Israel. The employment of dissimilar means, however, does not invalidate the hypothesis that inequity in education is a widespread phenomenon that overrides cultural differences.

Seen in this light, research on Israel can shed light on processes in other places, and suggest further paths of inquiry,

hitherto unchartered. Findings of research conducted here, might lead to a re-examination of certain conventions elsewhere. A case in point is the hidden gendered messages inserted, albeit unconsciously, by teachers in their written evaluations of pupils' performance. This devious custom that I detected and described, might encourage a similar analysis of report cards in other countries.

My interest in cross cultural exchanges, and comparative studies, determined my decision not to define a so called typical Israeli school. On the contrary, the types of schools selected for the study, and the policies they uphold, undoubtedly have parallels in other countries, though their rationales might be phrased in different terms. Accordingly, this selection makes the study of greater import in the cross cultural sense, than might another, more representative and locally oriented study.

The inclusion in the research model of an institute imbedded in a socialist, declaratively egalitarian system (the kibbutz), a recently founded experimental school, and an indistinct integrative urban school, enables an examination of the extent to which specific social and educational ideologies eradicate traditional mores and expectations.

A more general question is brought to the fore: do diverse educational innovations and ideologies have any direct or indirect influence on the gendered nature of the interactions, or are the latter constant no matter what the special focus of the educational institute.

Whereas this question is dealt with in the context of the Israeli scene, the comparison between various types of state

schools in Israel adds another dimension to the cross-cultural approach. For in the process of challenging the egalitarian centralistic policy of the state of Israel, and even the unique communal organization - the kibbutz, the pattern that emerges is that these promising declarations merely force the sex differentiating practices underground.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature on sexism in education is mainly political in origin, and action oriented in its conclusions. This is not surprising considering that the increasing discourse on sexism in education, and the study of sex inequity in education in the UK, USA and other Western countries in the last two decades, resulted from the re-emergence of feminism in the 1960s, and the liberal movements that attached great importance to integration and equity in formal and informal education, as means of achieving a social transformation.

The names attached to the phenomena are sexism in education, gender and schooling, gender bias, androcentric imbalance, and hidden curriculum. The desired alternative has many names too: non sexist education, anti-sexist teaching, girl friendly schooling, equity and equality in schooling (for discussion of differences see Secada, 1989; Grant, 1989), equal opportunities, options, sex fair, and gender fair. As a survey of relevant literature in Israel exposes, no such terminology is in current use in Hebrew in the discourse on education.

The sense of urgency and the political fervour cause the majority of American and UK writers to adopt a multi-faceted approach. The writers - researchers, feminists and teachers expound social ideologies, document the present classroom inequities, prescribe strategies to reduce or eliminate these inequities, and some even describe and evaluate attempts to bring about a change (e.g. Hartnett, Boden & Fuller, 1979; Spender & Sarah, 1980; Marland, 1983; Lockheed, 1985; Sadker & Sadker, 1985; and others in Klein (Ed.), 1985; Burton (Ed.),

1986; OU & ILEA, 1986; Abrahami-Einat, 1989; Skelton (Ed.) ,1989).

Sanders (1989) who specializes in equity and technology education clarifies the connections:

equity is what we do to achieve equality of outcomes. The process of equity is quite straightforward: **awareness** of a sex imbalance to the detriment of girls and women, **concern** about it, **action** to correct it, and **results** that eliminate it thus achieving equality - of educational, occupational and economic attainments, and therefore equality in self-fulfillment, self-reliance, and the ability to create a decent life for oneself and ones children.

Ibid, p.160

The specific emphases of each country may vary, and are certainly affected by dissimilar political and economic climates, as well as by the form in which education systems are organized. In particular, a comparison of the extent of the research conducted in various countries, illustrates the significance of cultural variables on the engagement in and nature of discourse on gender and education.

Rationale of prevalent inequity and demand for sex equity

The notion that gender is a social construction that results from differentiated socialization and dissimilar educational experiences, rather than from predetermined biological factors and hereditary inclinations, is shared by writers on sex equity. The extensive and landbreaking compilation of research on gender differences (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974) that grounded this theory, and subsequent volumes by others (e.g. Frieze et al, 1978; Linn & Peterson, 1985), are therefore frequently quoted.

Discourse on sex equity and special interest in its implementation, is confined mainly to individuals of a specific political orientation, who are often involved in drives for rights for other sectors of the population too. As Sharpe (1979) states in her preface, her account is intentionally feminist to counter the opposite bias of the past. The opposition to national educational policies and practices, and the concern shared by activists and educators in USA and the UK, that the current international right wing resurgence and return to conservatism, might abort the desired change, is expressed by various theoreticians (e.g. David, 1983; 1986) and practitioners (Myers, 1992).

The constricting impact of the reaction to those reform minded social movements, including the feminist, gay and lesbian, student and other movements of the 1960s, that infused new social meaning into the interrelated spheres of politics, economics and culture, is described by Apple (1989):

The social democratic goal of expanding equality of opportunity ... has lost much of its political potency and its ability to mobilize people. The `panic' over falling standards and illiteracy, the fears of violence in schools, the concern with the destruction of family values and religiosity, all have had an effect.

Ibid, p.13

Biklen & Shakeshaft (1985) in their contribution to the explicitly prescriptive Handbook for Achieving Sex Equity through Education, admit that the particular goal of sex equity in education is part of the larger agenda of feminism. Furthermore, the new scholarship on women is credited to the two interrelated feminist principles. First, "to understand and value women's lives, we must put them at the center of our

inquiry" and second, "the obstacles that women face are structural" (Ibid, p.45).

The political intent is further revealed in that same collection when Sadker & Sadker attribute the resistance of education departments to sex equity to the fact that

political activism is less common among students in schools of education than among students in other academic departments.

Ibid, p.146.

Reviews of theories about sex inequalities in education (Ten Dam & Volman, 1980; Stockard, 1985; Stromquist, 1990), place the prevalent practice in the appropriate social contexts (also Grace, 1978). Stromquist credits neo-Marxist theories with pointing out that "determinants of school failure are located not within motivations and abilities of individuals but within process and objectives of institutions in society" and with identifying "the state as a key institution in generating, regulating, and maintaining social relations". However, "as is the case for functionalist theories, the neo-Marxist explanations of school behavior are gender-blind and unable to explain why inequalities occur within social classes" (Ibid, p.142).

Those classical theories about inequalities in education that are gender-blind, and fail to deal with gender as a major social construct, are of limited usefulness in explaining the persistent disadvantages of women's education. Stromquist insists therefore that "both radical and feminist perspectives would predict that the deepest transformations of education to serve the needs of women will not emerge within the formal

education system, which is monopolized by the state" (Ibid, p.151).

Other social constructs that form educational policy are criticized by Clark (1989), who illustrates how traditional notions of the appropriate discourse for children in classrooms, like free choice, individualism, and naturalism, actually reinforce gender differences rather than create a liberating discourse of equity.

Policy oriented research studies are all in agreement that non-educational factors are the most important cause of unequal opportunities (e.g. Spender & Sarah, 1980; Spender, 1982; Arnot, 1985; Arnot & Weiner, 1987). Other points of departure for discourse on gender and education are philosophical (Gilligan, 1982; Greene, 1985), and economic. Then there is the concern about the power of sexist market forces (Harvey & Noble, 1985), changes in educational structures (Grace, 1978; Deem, 1984) and their effect on inequitable promotion, specifically in educational administration (Shakeshaft, 1985), and the need to grant girls the key to the economic future, i.e. technology (Rothschild, 1988; Sanders, 1986; 1989).

Descriptive literature on gendered schooling

The reliance on hard data of feminist oriented scholars, demonstrates the not unusual resort of a minority group to the cognitive mode of persuasion, in order to advance an idea that is highly personal and emotionally laden for most. Sanders (1989) explains the combination of research and action:

Equity practitioners like myself use research constantly. It informs the programs and materials we develop for schools, the approaches we take, the things we look out for, sometimes the ammunition we use.

Ibid, p.176.

In addition, feminists created a demand for classroom interaction studies and for holistic, ethnographic research, to expose the familiar yet unnoticed gender bias. The result is an abundance of popular publications in the UK and USA on girls' schooling.

The recent literature on sex differences in education includes treatises on socialization of girls, and their plight in schools, much written by feminist theorists and activists. Some are popular in presentation and in their target population (e.g. Belotti, 1976; Sharpe, 1976; Rivers et al, 1979; Adams & Laurikietis, 1980; Progrebin, 1981), others are summaries of research of the last decades (Gersoni- Stavn, 1974: literature of the 1960s, and Pratt, Bloomfield & Seale, 1984: on the 1970s). The most recent category, of the 1990s, is a reassessment of the demand for non sexist education, and a re-evaluation of its effects (Myers, 1992; Wrigley, 1992).

Much of the literature focuses on specific stages in education (French & French (1989) on infant classroom; Best, 1983; Boyd, 1989; Holly, 1985; and Skelton, 1989 on primary schooling. Hall & Sandler, 1982; Davies & Harre, 1989; on women's performance at university level). Another category is school subject, like Attar's study of home economics (1990), or mathematics (Fennema & Meyer, 1989; Walkerdine, 1989; Burton, 1986) and girls' choice of courses (Acker, 1989). Then there is the choice of social class as subject matter, e.g. Sharpe (1976) on working class girls; Crump (1990) on Australian working class schools and Arnot and Weiner (1987) on power relations. Numerous writers opt for a wide ranging description of a variety of aspects and implications of the state of affairs (Wolpe, 1977;

Marini, 1978; Banks, 1980; Stanworth, 1981; Spender, 1982; Danziger, 1983; Clarricoates, 1983; Diamond & Tittle, 1985; Greenberg, 1985; Stockard, 1985; Romm, 1987; and LaFrance, 1991). An extensive and carefully classified bibliography on gender and education, compiled by The Open University (Weiner & Arnot, 1988), testifies to the interest of students and educators in the field.

The assurance that a political intent perpetuates the present state of inequity is shared by most writers. David (1983; 1986) views the strategies employed in the UK and USA to provide equal opportunities, in the historical-political context of the 1980s:

these shifts towards moral education and away from sex equality in education are not only about ideas or ideology but also about material circumstances. They are about the legitimacy of the present inegalitarian social and sexual order, its work ethic and ethic of familialism. But they are also, equally importantly, about how best to prepare children for their real roles in the social and sexual division of labour.

David, 1983. p. 147.

Her description of the effect of Thatcherism in the UK, and Reaganism in USA is still pertinent in the early 1990s, at time when many countries embrace a conservative, nationalistic outlook, that places females in an extremely vulnerable position.

Research on gendered interaction

Interaction studies that focus specifically on gender, constitute a relatively new area of disciplined enquiry (Klein et al, 1985). The data is at times debatable, and meta-studies

reveal inconsistencies in reporting inequities (Lockheed, 1985; Kelly, 1988). However, the diversity itself challenges researchers to pursue this line of enquiry, and further substantiate the ideological stand.

The majority of the literature is biased in favour of action and change for the provision of non sexist education or sex equity in education (the terms vary). As Klein (1988) clarifies openly in the overview of sex equity research, three trends are notable: first, a movement from studying overt to subtle discrimination and stereotyping. Second a shift from male valued to female valued educational outcome goals, and third, an increased emphasis on sex equity outcomes (Ibid, p.153-154).

The research methodology of the aforementioned studies and others varies, with the British more inclined towards the qualitative methods, and the North Americans, who have produced the majority of the publications, towards the quantitative. Significant qualitative research was conducted by Delamont (1980), Stanworth (1981), Ten Dam & Volman (1991, Netherlands), Clark (1989, Australia), with special research interests demonstrated by Diamond (1991, Australia) who studied discipline, Blackwell & McIsaac (1990, Canada) and Shilling (1991) who indicated how space is produced by gendered power relations.

Quantitative research is abundant, most probably because the methodology is more clearly defined, reproducible, and presentable. Much of the literature confirms former research, and even offers similar interpretation. As Kelly (1988) in her meta-analysis of research of varied foci sums it up, the gender imbalance is to be attributed to teachers' classroom management practices. Despite contentions of several researchers that males

do not predominate in class discussion (e.g. Dillon, 1982; Dart & Clarke, 1988; who blame the belief on deficiencies in the methodology), Kelly insists that "the major result is that across a range of countries, ages, dates, subjects and social groups, boys consistently received more attention from their teachers than did girls in the same class" (Ibid, p.17).

Brophy (1985) reviews studies on interaction at different stages of schooling. Dweck, Davidson, Nelson & Enna (1978), and Roberts & Nolen-Hoeksema (1989) focus on evaluative feedback in classrooms, and Sadker & Sadker (1985) on teacher training. There are many notable studies of gendered interaction, and a variety of research designs (e.g. Good, Sikes & Brophy, 1973; Leinhardt, Seewald & Engel, 1979; Good, Cooper & Blakey, 1980; Parsons, Kaczala & Meece, 1982; Mahoney, 1983; Croll, 1985; Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985; Irvine, 1985; Lockheed, 1985; Harris, Rosenthal & Snodgrass, 1986, Nelson, 1987; Worrall, Worrall Meldrum, 1988; and Greenberg-Lake, 1991). The 1980s are characterized by an increasing interest in gendered interaction in science classes, as the six GASAT (Gender and Science and Technology) conferences to date suggest, and numerous feminist studies indicate (Kahle & Lakes, 1981; Vockell & Lobonc, 1981; Whyte, 1984; Morse & Handley, 1985; Whyte, Deem, Kant & Cruickshank, 1985; and Koballa, 1988a, 1988b). A more specific concern produced work on girls and mathematics (e.g. Walden & Walkerdine, 1982; Burton, 1986; and Walkerdine, 1989), while Hoyles (1988) and Sanders (1986) concentrate on computers, and Rothschild (1988) and Sanders (1989) discuss technology and girls.

Lists of observational approaches (Ober, Bentley & Miller, 1971) and systematic classroom observations (Galton, 1978-9), and research projects (Croll, 1986), help place research on

gendered interaction in a scientific tradition. Furthermore, such classroom interaction studies required the development of gender specific methodological tools, often reused and/or modified (See FIAC (Flanders, 1970; Stubbs, 1981; Croll, 1986), PROSE (Galton, Simon & Croll, 1980) and ORACLE (Galton, Simon & Croll, 1980; Galton & Delamont, 1985; Croll, 1986).

Prescriptive literature

The guiding principle upheld by promoters of non-sexist education is consistently that equitable practice in school is good practice (e.g. Pratt, Bloomfield & Seale, 1984). The political nature of this concern with sexism, is based on the belief that schools and educational institutes are used for social engineering (Al Khalifa et al, 1993; Riddell, 1992; Walker & Barton, 1983; Weiler, 1988). It should therefore come as no surprise that many of the publications containing guidelines for reducing sexism in schools, are produced by organizations that have a stated intent to empower underprivileged sectors (e.g. EOC, ILEA, NUT, TUC, NCCL in the UK, and State departments of education in USA). The institutional and collective origin frequently denies credit from particular authors, and the guidelines are therefore listed for convenience in appendix 1, rather than in the bibliography.

The strategies recommended for the penetration of educational institutes and the implementation of sex equity in education, (Klein, 1985; Schmuck et al, 1985; Skelton, 1989) highlight the demand for systematic changes, and the training of the staff (Al Khalifa et al, 1993; Cole, 1989; Myers, 1987). Schmuck et al (1985) express the prevalent stand:

We view the institutionalization of sex equity as both a process and an outcome goal.

Ibid, p.95

The drive to popularize the ideological stand, and accelerate the desired process, explains the resort to additional means. First, the establishment of grass-roots and professional groups and networks. The activities in the UK are described by Arnot (1985), who lists numerous teachers' special interest groups set up in response to the impact of feminism on the teaching profession.

Second, the increase in the number of periodicals that publish articles and research on gender and education, both academic and popular. Third, the production of extra curricular events that employ tactics usually associated with political or commercial campaigns. Exhibitions, posters, T-shirts, mugs, fliers, pencils and pens, stickers, balloons, buttons, rubber stamps and vinyl brief cases are all legitimate means of drawing attention and spreading the word (e.g. "Working Mothers", Institute of Education, 1989; "Did your granny have a hammer" Dublin, 1985; "Maryland Women's History Month", yearly).

The call for action explains the new market of teaching aids. A variety of intervention plans have been developed, including teaching packs, posters, teachers' handbooks, activity books for pupils, rewritten texts (e.g. fairy tales), guidelines for rewriting texts and neutralizing others, and other creative measures employed as part of the curriculum, or else in extra curricular activities (appendix 2).

Reports on fieldwork and outcomes

Documentation of equity interventions in schools ranges from reports on projects and fieldwork carried out by teachers who created their own task forces (see appendix 3), to more systematic studies. Much of the descriptive and prescriptive literature contains information about work for change (e.g.

Weiner, 1985; Weiner & Arnot, 1987), about policy developments (Arnot & Weiner, 1987), and references to unique largescale educational experiments, such as GOAC (Chisholm & Holland, 1987) and GIST (Kelly, 1985; Whyte, 1986).

Tools for self evaluation of teachers (Martini, Myers & Warner, 1984), and various research models for measuring equity in education (Harvey & Klein, 1989) and the effects of intervention projects, testify to the emphasis not only on input and process, but on outcome. Not suprisingly, these studies tend to follow the lead of the activists, rather than direct them.

Klein, a prolific writer on sex equity actually calls one of her articles "Using sex equity research to improve education policies" (1988). She insists that research needs to show if the application of policies dealing with gender, that are to include sex equity policies, sex differential policies and general educational policies, indeed increase or decrease equity in student achievement outcome (Ibid, p.156).

Qualitative research on the outcome includes Pratt, Bloomfield & Seale (1984) who examined the effect of the 1975 UK Discrimination Act on various aspects of schooling, and Schmuck et al (1985) who found positive effects. Myers, an activist herself, wrote a review of her own Genderwatch (1987) after the Education Reform Act (1992). Parallel quantitative research used to measure changes was not found.

Special interest in sexuality

Where discourse on sexism becomes more popular, the issue of sexuality as a facet of ones experience at school, comes to the forefront too (e.g. Holly, 1989; Jones & Mahoney, 1989; Klein, 1989; Lees, 1986). The process of sex education (Jackson, 1980),

including children's self taught education in sex (Best, 1983), are studied for the light they shed on the acquisition of sex roles.

Sexual harassment is included in the discussion of school life too where this concern with sexual interaction prevails (Chandler, 1980; Herber, 1989; Herbert, 1992; Sadker, Sadker & Shakeshaft, 1987; Who's Hurt and Who's Liable, 1986). The research into its short and long term effects, and the power of verbal sexual abuse and double standards (Lees, 1987) is a recent contribution to the literature on gender and education. In the absence of discourse on gender and education, as is the case in Israel, the topic is avoided.

The references to aspects of the pupils' sexuality in educational texts include the typically feminist rejection of the imposition of an androcentric, homophobic culture in schools. The most recent outcome is literature recommending the introduction of lesbian issues (Gardner et al, 1992), and the provision of a supportive atmosphere for lesbian pupils (Harris, 1990) and for nontraditional boys (Coleman & Skeen, 1987). The plight of lesbian teachers has also been described in commercial and academic publications (Khayatt, 1992; Squirrell, 1989; Stafford, 1988), while parallel work on the experience of gay male teachers is harder to come by.

Despite the growing concern with the sexually laden interactions in class, whether among pupils, or between teachers and pupils, no statements of the sort collected in the course of my interviews, are recorded in the innovative literature on sexuality and schooling. The confessions made by male teachers I interviewed, that they distance themselves from their female pupils for fear of being accused of sexual harassment, is an

unusually open admission of a process central to the educational experience.

Literature on Israel

A review of the very scarce literature on sex differences in Israeli education, exposes the lack of discourse on hidden sexism. Insofar as sex differences are examined, the research question is repeatedly intelligence measurements and cognitive abilities, and the methodology is invariably quantitative (Nevo, Safir & Ramraz, 1981; Leiblich, 1985; Prime Minister's committee, 1986; Ganor & Kahn, 1991). No operative conclusions were ever drawn from these studies, except for the demand for more accurate research methods.

In response to pressure from the national council for the advancement of the status of women, a "committee for the study of the asymmetry in intelligence quota of boys and girls in Israel", was appointed by the Prime minister's office (1986). The members included four females and four males. The time limitation of three months set for its work, including the submission of its report, surely reflects on the attitude of policy makers to an innovative study of this nature.

The committee noted that boys seem indeed to have an advantage over girls, but cautiously phrased its conclusions as follows:

1. The committee can not offer an authoritative answer to the question it was assigned. The data presented to the committee suggests a gender difference in IQ levels that is first recorded at pubescence and increases with age. However, the data available and certain

- methodological issues, prevent the adoption of a definitive description of the situation.
2. The lack of research on sex differences in education reflects a lack of consciousness, and prevents the drawing of operative conclusions.
 3. The correlation between social norms and the sliding of girls into non prestigious courses requires attention, as it is women's marginalization that causes these differences in career choices. Only a clear social and educational policy, that imposes integrative measures, of the kind adopted in connection with equality between communities of different countries of origin, can change matters. The establishment must create a society rather than mirror it.
 4. There is no doubt about the marginalization of women in social systems in Israel.

Prime Minister's Committee's Report (1986)
(my translation)

The five recommendations of the committee, none of which were adopted, point to a definite preference for the promotion of quantitative studies on gender issues as reflected by intelligence tests, achievements, placement and career choices. No explicit reference is made to the need to study such instances of discriminatory gendered treatment that might contribute to the outcomes quoted. The recommendations are as follows:

1. That resources be allocated to studies of sex differences in the educational system, to ensure accurate conclusions regarding sex differences in IQ and achievements.
2. That awareness be raised in the ministry of education to the inbuilt process by which the secondary education

becomes sex segregated, to the detriment of an equal opportunities policy.

3. That the weight of IQ on pupil placement be examined.
4. That school counselling and pupil placement policies and practices be reconsidered.
5. That ways be found to include girls in the study of science, mathematics, computer sciences and technology at all levels.

One of the members of this same committee, S. Kahn, added his reservation that the limited time devoted to the study and the lack of a systematic body of research, prevents his accepting the conclusions of the rest of the committee, suggesting an advantage to boys. In a later paper (Ganor & Kahn 1991), he claims his data was gathered more accurately, and on the basis of his findings argues that sex differences are smaller than former research suggests, and that he can prove a clear advantage only in mathematics, but not in verbal or spatial skills.

The rejection of the conclusions and recommendations, and Kahn's insistence on a reconsideration, is of particular importance because of the methodological critique of the reliance on quantitative measures, and the avoidance of an indepth study of contributing factors. Kahn reiterates former findings concerning the greater tendency of girls to skip questions in all three sorts of tests (mathematics, verbal skills, spatial skills), thus reducing their chances of making passable guesses. His conclusion:

It is possible ... that the above mentioned coping style of the girls has wider consequences, that are related to their self image and to their extent of willingness and courage to compete in prestigious

courses of studies and of professional training. This coping style serves as an explanation that is an alternative to the sociological one (in terms of the social marginalization of women), offered by the prime minister's committee for the study of the asymmetry in the intelligence quota of boys and girls in Israel (1986), for why women do not reach the prestigious training courses. It follows that attempts at interventions intended to improve the grades of girls in IQ tests need to emphasize also the style of testing of the girls and to strengthen their confidence in their skills. That is, it can be assumed that the girls' performance will improve if they are encouraged to dare and to guess, and that the differences will be smaller in those tests that have no time limit.

Ibid, p.38 (my translation)

Neither academic nor popular Israeli publications have much to say on sexism in education. The nonexistence of a Hebrew translation of the term 'gender', or names for gendered educational practices (e.g. 'sexism', 'gender imbalance', 'androcentric') or the alternatives (e.g. 'girl friendly', 'sex fair', 'equity'), makes any attempt at discourse a laborious undertaking. The lack of the necessary descriptive vocabulary suggests that the denial of the issue might be the cause, the outcome, or both.

Moreover, the general avoidance of a critique of those pro-natalist, pro-familial social constructs that contribute to the hidden sexism, ensures that they remain deeply entrenched in the popular culture. Female staff and female pupils express no objection to the mainstream expectation that the success of

members of their sex in adulthood include a multitude of scholastic, professional, parental and domestic roles.

The particular combination of advanced legislation for women with a reluctance to abandon traditional gendered expectations, is not challenged in the schools. Shachar (1977) exposes the significantly traditional family attitudes of graduating pupils (17-18 year olds) in four areas: the institute of marriage, role division in the family, courting patterns and pre-marital sexual relations. In her later study in 1990, she found remarkably little change in the views of the same age group.

The main foci of recent educational research are the effects of the integration policy. Education as a vehicle of social mobility is a central issue in research on education, due to the ongoing immigration to Israel. The effect of the social-cultural background and the ethnic origin of pupils on their educational aspirations and achievements, is truly a valid concern. In most such studies, the sex of the pupils is incorporated as an additional, rarely central variable (Ichilov & Rubineck, 1980; Yogev, 1981; Yogev & Ayalon, 1982; Yuchtman-Yaar & Shapira, 1981; Ichilov, 1983; Maslovaty & Dor-Shav, 1990).

Another topic of interest for educational researchers is the effect of the unique ideology and life style of the Israeli kibbutz, on educational and moral outcome. Gender is regarded as a relevant variable in such studies in view of the gender equality promised in the original kibbutz ideology, and the specific measures taken to implement it, such as communal sleeping arrangements for children, and shared child care. This intended rejection of parents as significant others is of

interest to Devereux et al (1983) and Shepher & Tiger (1983) who studied parental investment and the parenting role of the teacher, and Tubin (1978) who checked the effect of these special sleeping arrangements on the children's perceptions of parents.

However, even where gender is a significant variable, sexism is not pointed at. Likewise, an examination of the correlation between gender and health in the kibbutz (Anson, Levenson & Bonne, 1990), refrains from naming the underlying issue.

The consistent finding in research on the kibbutz in the last two decades is indeed gender inequality (e.g. Padan-Eisenstark, 1973; Shepher & Tiger, 1983; Shamai & Margalit, 1991). However, even though the inequality is attributed to differences in socialization, expectations and employment that contradict the historical ideals, it is never presented as a sexist issue in its own right.

The organizing principles employed in the review of literature from other countries, are hardly applicable in the case of Israel. Indeed, the rationale of the prevalent inequity in society is here too expressed by feminist ideologists (Bat-Oren, 1975; Aloni, 1976; Hazleton, 1978), and feminist scholars (Friedman & Izraeli, 1982). However, the detailed exposure of the operation of the hidden agenda in the socialization of boys and girls, and a definition of the Israeli brand of hidden sexism, is recent and limited (Abrahami-Einat, 1989).

Descriptive literature on gendered schooling is minimal, as is research on gendered interaction (Ben Tsvi-Mayer, Hertz-

Lazarowitz & Safir, 1989; Ben Tsvi-Mayer, 1991). Some concern is shown by the technological education stream, due to the low participation of girls in technological training. Indeed, the only notable equity intervention project to date (NAALEH project, 1989 Ministry of Education) was geared at encouraging high school girls to choose engineering, and this was discontinued after two years, regardless of its measurable success. Its limited experimental nature has stimulated no research, evaluative literature, or call for replication.

Sexist messages in text books and children's reading books is a topic repeatedly described (Kaufman, 1976; Fredkin, 1987; Abrahami-Einat, 1989; Mahler, 1991). However, the limited circulation of MA theses (Kaufman), or other non commercial publications (Fredkin, Mahler), keeps the information out of the public view.

The few examples of prescriptive literature produced in Israel (Ben Tsvi-Mayer, Ben-Zeev & Abrahami-Einat, 1984; Fox, 1985; Abrahami-Einat, 1989), have not created a demand for more, which is understandable in view of the denial of the problem. The scarcity of the literature is further explained by the absence of fieldwork, or anti-sexist projects to report on and evaluate. It is therefore appropriate that one of the most revealing documents to date, is a study of the Israel Women's Network (Benson & Harverd, 1988) of the extent of implementation of the recommendations set forth by a governmental committee on the status of women (Namir, 1978). The disregard recorded, for those changes suggested back in 1978, that were to provide equitable treatment in schooling, exposes the consistent dismissal of the issue of gender and education.

There is no parallel in Israel to the special interest in sexuality and education that the feminist lesbian viewpoint aroused in the UK and USA. The instructional materials prepared by the department for sex education and education for family life of the ministry of education do not touch upon homosexuality explicitly. None of the teaching units produced by the department for use in class offer information on the topic, let alone guidelines for work in class. Sex educators are provided with references to relevant literature, and some hours of INSET courses are devoted to the issue occasionally. This information about the official programme for schools was verified in a conversation with the head of the department for sex education and family life, in May, 1993.

The closest the state curriculum comes to discussing contemporary issues, is in the recommendation of flexibility of sex roles, and joint responsibility for birth control. If this alone were intended to bring about a change in attitudes to sexuality, courting and gender roles in heterosexual relationships, longitudinal research does not record it (Shachar 1977, 1990).

A quantitative measure of the interest in gendered schooling is the availability of data. A library search for relevant material at Tel-Aviv University school of education at the onset of this study, yielded nine items. In response to a recent request (October, 1992) for data from 1980 onwards on sexism, sex differences, anti-sexist interventions and sex roles, submitted to Israel's National Institute for Research in the Behavioral Sciences (Henrietta Szold Institute), only four items were delivered, although the minimal charge is for ten. Apart from the significant scarcity of items found in this search, the interpretation of these key words reveals a

perpetuation of the aforementioned concerns. Of the four items, three use sex as a variable in studies of educational mobility and social integration, though never as the focus of the study. Only one is a survey of trends in women's education (Kfir, Ayalon & Shapira, 1990).

In the most recent publication on women in Israel (Azmon & Izraeli, 1993), a collection of 26 articles formerly published in professional journals in English, the same pattern is detectable. The studies are organized under five headings: women and the family; women at work; women's experiences over the life cycle; women and political life; the social construction of gender. The inclusion of only one article on education (and that from 1989), clarifies why there is no separate section on education.

The reprinting in **English** of such a compilation of research by Israeli academics, in the Publication Series of the Israel Sociological Society, does not make it easily accessible to Israeli students, educators, parents or policy makers. Hence studies on women, issues of sex equity, and most relevant to this dissertation, work on gender and education, continue to be excluded from the body of descriptive and critical literature in Hebrew.

Chapter 3

THE MYTH OF EQUALITY IN ISRAELI SCHOOLS

The school culture

The prevailing common knowledge on sex equity in Israel, is nurtured by popular myths on women in the military and in kibbutzim, and by the precedent of the female prime minister Golda Meir. In addition, the Israeli tradition of co-education, the high ratio of girls in education at all levels, and impressive changes in the education of Jewish females of Oriental origin, helps create the false impression that all is open to females in education. In the absence of certain explicitly gendered practices recorded in research from the UK for example, things do indeed seem equal, and the invisibility of the discriminating reality is perpetuated.

To start with, since Israel has no tradition of secular single sex schools, certain practices that involve single sex groups are not built into the system, not even as remnants of past customs. Having pupils form lines by sex, arranging the class register by sex, or having signs over entrances designating them for "boys" and "girls", even if the segregation is no longer observed, was never the custom.

Another commonly quoted expression of sex differentiation in the UK and USA which is in fact culture biased, is physical education, where the investment of time and funds, and the ensuing rewards, are regarded by many as sexist issues. However, while PE is the only subject for which Israeli schools have an officially different national curriculum for males and females, the general lack of active participation in school sports, means the sexist issue involved is muted. Moreover, the fact that a

school's performance in matches is of little or no consequence to its prestige or attractiveness, denies the male pupils the advantage of having the honour of the school depend solely on their performance.

The paradoxical situation of women in Israel

Such cultural and historical dissimilarities that suggest a good measure of sex equity in Israeli education, need to be put to the test. A possibility to be considered is that this state of affairs is in line with an already acknowledged paradox in Israeli society, as regards women's formal status versus actual situation. This unresolved paradox, slowly becoming more obvious to wider circles in Israeli society, is that there is no correlation between the legal and formal status of women, and the situation of women in reality. Consequently, women do not attain the positions and power they should have been capable of theoretically.

Similarly, the scarcity of explicit expressions of sexism in schools, does not prevent familiar, routine practices and perceptions from being gendered through and through, especially in activities that are extra-curricular.

Israel is notably advanced in legislation in favour of women. Family leave, equal pay, laws against rape by spouse, are examples of longstanding laws that women in other countries are still fighting for. Israeli women have also been granted protective legislation, e.g. limiting work on night shifts with the exception of crucial services like nursing. Feminists question the equity of such a law, that gives traditional family values and sex roles priority over fair competition for jobs, especially in industry.

The Declaration of Independence (1948), a document of legal importance in the absence of a constitution in Israel, states that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, sex or religion. Furthermore, women are guaranteed equality and support by the socialist ideology that made Israel a welfare state from the start, and has since prevented any change in concept or practice, no matter which political party is in power. Childcare is provided by the state and by women's organizations, and is far more accessible than in the UK or USA.

Concurrently, however, significant instances of sex discrimination are perpetuated by powerful counter forces, all deeply ingrained in the culture. The unique combination of the three forces is a singular Israeli phenomenon.

1. The religious code of law that controls citizens' personal affairs (marriage, divorce, and some instances of illegitimacy).

In Israel, where State and Church are inseparable, it is the females as a group who are most vulnerable, as the Rabbinical court gives precedence to the male in several common situations.

For example, a man must consent to grant a divorce, and cannot be forced to do so, even if he is a wife batterer, or long separated from his spouse; a woman cannot serve as a judge, or testify in religious, Rabbinical courts even when they deal with family affairs; a man is not penalized in any way for conducting extra marital affairs, and a married man fathering a child of an unmarried woman, causes neither himself nor his offspring, any legal complications; a married woman pays a price

for infidelity: she loses her claim to alimony even before the divorce settlement, she is likely to lose her claim for child custody, any children born of this relationship are illegitimate, and she is forbidden to marry her lover even after she is granted a divorce.

2. The centrality of the family, and the emphasis on heterosexuality this implies.

Judaism does not advocate celibacy, and bearing offspring is no less than a religious duty, as is sexual intercourse within marriage. The birth rate in Israel in 1993 is the highest in the industrialized Western world (2.72 per family).

Although the pressure to marry and raise a family originates in the Jewish culture, the trauma of the holocaust of the second world war, added the dimension of urgency. Survivors who had lost all relatives, established new families to solidify their claim on life. The seven wars fought in Israel since 1948 have kept alive the historical fear of genocide. The common experience of bereavement, intensified by the small size of the population, adds to the appeal of the larger family, as consolation and refuge.

3. The frequent wars, and constant threat of war, that makes military service pivotal.

The dissimilar experience of the sexes in the Israeli Defence Forces, in particular the fact that women do not take part in combat, although they train men in combat skills, sustains the popular argument that women do not defend the state, or contribute significantly to security. As such they are constantly reminded of their dependence on males. Consequently,

the common circular argument goes, their lack of combat experience means they do not understand matters of defense, and disqualifies them for positions of power, since political decisions in Israel are invariably integrated with security issues.

To conclude, whether these forces are backed by a legal system (power of Rabbinical courts), tradition (family oriented culture), fear of persecution and historical events (six million Jews killed in World War II), or international crises and political complications (wars and terrorism since 1948), their power to prevent women from fully realizing their civil rights, should not be underestimated. The subtle control exercised by these highly emotive social systems and constructs, is paramount for Jews in modern Israel.

Access to data

The requirement that Israeli academics publish in international journals, rather than contribute to the local publications in Hebrew, leaves vital updated information in the hands of the few. This rule applies to the research literature on women in Israel too, most of which is not available in Hebrew. The very little that has been published specifically about gender and education in Israel, is in English, (Nevo, Safir and Ramraz, 1981; Scher, Norman & Hershkovitz, 1981; Leiblich, 1985; BenTsvi-Mayer, Hertz-Lazarowitz & Safir, 1989) and has obviously not reached the teachers, nor created any demand for change. Even the most commonly quoted studies, written in Hebrew, about sex stereotypes in school texts (Kaufman, 1976), and socialization patterns in schools (Maon, 1974), are unpublished MA theses, and therefore not generally accessible.

The most recent book on Israeli women, with the apt title Calling The Equality Bluff women in Israel (1991), is a case in point. While adamantly insisting on the need to confront the paradoxical situation, the editors could not offer the same text in the language of the land. As they explained on the occasion of the launching of the book (Tel-Aviv university, November 1991), the majority of contributors were reluctant to spend time and/or money on translating their respective articles into Hebrew, as such a publication would grant them no professional gain. The likelihood of a publishing house taking this task upon itself was out of the question, given the limited market for such books.

Paradoxically then, the Western orientation of Israeli academia and the preferential craving for publications abroad rather than in Israel, result in the distancing of any possible discourse on sex equity. The learned denouncement of the "bluff", i.e. the false but popular myths of equality, as presented in this new collection, is lost yet again on the Israeli public.

The ultimate effect is twofold: first, criticism of local practices and constraints, and the possibly ensuing call for change are kept at bay. Second, the notion that feminist theory and activism are relevant and appropriate but in other languages and other cultures only, is ostensibly confirmed.

The state policy

The Israeli Ministry of Education upholds and exercises, with varying degrees of success, an official policy of equal opportunities. The ultimate goal is social integration as befits a state founded on socialist values, and an unequivocal obligation to serve as a refuge for all Jews who wish to live in

Israel. The official state ideology in education, is not one of competition and excellence, but of encouragement and empowerment. In a young state of immigrants, that has no tradition of social classes, with their assigned vocational aspirations or exclusive educational institutes, the centralized and politicized educational system is indeed in a unique position to help form a new, unifying culture, and to strive for social integration and equality of outcome.

Compulsory free schooling was instituted by law in August 1949, by the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, about a year after the establishment of the state. This applied to children aged 5, in kindergarten (school starts at age six), through to grade 8 inclusive, regardless of age. In 1968 compulsory education was extended till age 15, and in 1978 the free education bill was extended to include all of secondary education (till grade 12 inclusive). Primary schooling, and the greater part of the high schools are governmental, under the bill of compulsory schooling (1949). The state, through the Ministry of Education, grants accreditation to schools, determines the content of the curriculum, appoints the teachers, supervises their work, issues certificates to the graduates of the various stages of study, and is also responsible for most of the financing. The local councils are responsible for the construction and maintenance of the educational institutes, and for the hiring of teachers in secondary schools. The funding comes from local property taxes and from moneys transferred by the Ministry of Education.

The greatest innovation to be introduced into the educational system in the 44 years of the state, that is called to this very day 'the reform', was the establishment of the junior high school. Instead of a two stage school system (kindergarten is compulsory and free but not included): eight

years of primary school (starting age 6) and four years of secondary school, the 12 years were divided in the 1970s into three stages: six years of primary school close to home, three years in junior high school that strives for social heterogeneity, and therefore might require bussing, and three years of secondary school, academic, comprehensive or vocational. Since only slightly more than half the local councils adopted the reform and the integrative system it promotes, the two models coexist. As for pre-schoolers, in either system children of 5 years old attend kindergarten that is invariably in a one storeyed building with a standard form of playground, provided by the local council, and unattached to any primary school.

The ongoing debate in academic circles, concerning the effectiveness of this reorganization, has not been resolved, and is a popular topic of research (see review of literature on Israel). In accordance with the state policy of granting equal opportunities, all pupils attending junior high have indeed been admitted into an upgraded system, that is staffed by more qualified teachers than formerly taught in primary schools till grade 8.

In this concentrated effort to advance lesser privileged communities, girls are never singled out or regarded as a group with special needs. Since the educational process is officially committed to equal opportunities and to the social integration of the whole student body, the rationale for a concern with sex equity as a separate concern, has not yet been incorporated into the system.

The integrative junior high schools, and indeed the whole educational system, are to implement the 'melting pot' ideology,

intended to mold Jews of all countries of origin into a uniform mentality that is Western, Zionist, and basically secular. In this reconstruction, preference is granted to the cultural heritage of Jews from Western and Eastern Europe, while Jews from Arab countries are expected to make necessary adjustments.

Obviously the cultural diversity might make certain modes of behaviour, imported from different countries of origin, unacceptable to a teacher, who apart from her/his own bias, is anxious to prepare school children for the prevalent Israeli culture. However, no parallel demand or aspiration for uniformity in the conduct and performance of both sexes is included in official guidelines. The widely held belief in the complementarity of the sexes, explains why there is no perception that the conduct of boys and girls at present, much less in their future lives, will or should be identical.

The definition of equal opportunities in Israeli education

Preferential treatment, or affirmative action is granted to population groups that are undisputedly disadvantaged as far as acquaintance with the mainstream culture is concerned. Firstly, new immigrants are entitled to special tutoring, especially in Hebrew, and can choose to write their matriculation examinations in languages other than Hebrew.

Secondly, as part of the effort to provide under privileged children with equal chances, "developing towns", i.e. peripheral settlements not up to the cultural and economic level of the main cities of Israel, are granted specially allocated state funds. This is meant to compensate for the disadvantaged environment, and the inability of the parents to take upon themselves the financial burden of supplying extra facilities. Again, since girls are not regarded as disadvantaged as a group,



even in these poorer and more traditional communities, no similar concern is ever shown for their particular needs.

The habitual refraining from discourse on gender in educational circles, is demonstrated by the programme of the first National Convention of Teachers and Educators in Israel, held at Tel-Aviv University in September 1991, by the equivalent of the British NUT. Although equal opportunities were discussed by panels of experts, sexism was totally excluded from their discourse even by way of analogy and methodology. Those studies that purported to be on equality, confined themselves to a comparison of the scholastic achievements of pupils, with the variables examined being locality, ethnic origin and religion.

Avoidance of overt sex discrimination would be taken for granted, and is ensured by clearly defined instructions circulated by the executive director of the Ministry of Education (1983). The sex differentiating hidden curriculum, on the other hand, is not critiqued as it perpetuates embedded social constructs: boys and girls are expected to do equally well at school, but in adulthood are to complement each other in their jobs (the army being paradigmatic), and above all in their emotional lives, and in their respective domestic and parental roles.

Even when gender is introduced as a variable in educational research, it is presented as an additional dimension of cultural disadvantage, and evidence of the conservatism of these communities. Sex differentiation, as such, does not merit discourse on the part of those academics or practitioners who express their concern and commitment to equality in general, including all three principals of the schools which will come under scrutiny in this dissertation.

Social integration, and the status of women

Another explanation for the absence of discourse on gender from analyses of inequality in education, is the dramatic effect modern Israeli culture has had on the lives of Jewish females from Middle Eastern and North African Arab states. The liberal, Western and progressive legislation and customs, have changed the status and lives of many women considerably.

The compulsory education law ensured that girls were sent to school, and reduced the high ratio of illiteracy among females from these Moslem countries in the 1950s. In addition the economic pressures that forced males and females to abandon their traditional roles, and join the labour force in unprecedented occupations, contributed to the widespread dissolution of the Oriental (Sephardic), strictly patriarchal family structure. Whereas at first females, forced to seek paid employment, worked as unskilled labourers, especially in housework and agriculture, the younger generation now boasts growing numbers of graduates of teacher training colleges who have already entered the teaching profession, mainly in primary schools. This change in the labour market is one of the more commonly quoted examples of successful socio-economic upgrading of these women and their families.

Despite the rapid radical social changes reflected in the present composition of the teaching profession, no critique of the system, or demand to improve the lot of other Sephardic females within the system has emanated from this new class of teachers.

The improvement in the educational and occupational opportunities for Oriental women contributes to the general feeling of content on the part of Israeli educators, as far as

girls are concerned. Although Sephardic Jews continue to constitute the greater part of the under privileged class in Israel, those striking and promising changes that have indeed been brought about, are regarded as progress for females. Consequently, educators' eyes are diverted from hidden and subtle forms of sexism that still affect both the privileged and the less privileged girls.

Moreover, no grass-roots organizations of teachers have ever been formed to date to ensure that the female pupils be assisted to depart from their traditional roles. The reasons are cultural and historical.

The process that took place in the UK in the 1960s and 1970s, when interests of legislators on the one hand, and activist teachers and parents on the other, were beginning to converge, and to herald change, has no parallel in Israel. These were not decades of radical, anti-establishment youth culture, nor of growing vocality and visibility of minority groups. Instead the closely spaced wars of 1967 and 1973 launched simultaneously by several neighboring Arab states, heightened the concern with physical survival, enhanced nationalistic sentiments, increased the birth rate and reinstated the pro-family, militaristic and right wing values.

Sex as a determinant of a pupil's performance

Another closely related reason for the firm belief of teachers in the existence of equal opportunities (but not of equity in the American sense), is the local data concerning the connection between sex and a pupil's performance. Numerous studies of children's achievements check the contribution of sex, SES, country of origin, religion and religiosity of pupils on their performance at school. Invariably the research points at country of origin as the most influential variable, though sex

contributes in various ways (see review of literature on Israel).

Official figures describing the prominence of female pupils in the school system create the semblance of considerable educational advantages to the girls. The percentage of Jewish children aged 14-17 attending high school in 1992, points at an advantage for the girls: 96% of the females were at school, a considerably higher rate than the 87% of the males (Central Bureau of Statistics report, 1993).

Slightly more than half the pupils in the 14-17 age group studied in vocational schools in 1988. Here the hidden sexism is detectable, as an analysis of the courses offered reveals that, at least on the non academic level, females are viewed as having different vocational futures, and vastly dissimilar aspirations for financial rewards. The variety of professions offered to girls, or socially accepted for girls, is limited and nearly invariably lead to low status occupations (Ben Tsvi-Mayer, 1991). Most common are fashion, nursing, hairdressing, and secretarial work.

In view of the limited training options into which girls are channelled in vocational schools, completing ones matriculation examinations is considered more remunerative in the long run. This accounts for the preference for academic high schools, where indeed the percentage of females is slightly higher than males.

However, without additional training, most females after graduation lack marketable skills. Consequently, the preference for academic high school studies, does not guarantee the girls higher professional status, nor better paid jobs than those

offered to the boys who opt for vocational schools. Since advanced professional training in Israel, does not usually commence before age 21-22, after the completion of military service, this interim period between secondary and tertiary education, plays a central role in the career choices and patterns of young adults.

The disparity between the world of the male soldier and that of the female soldier, is far greater and more encompassing than any gendered differentiation pupils might experience at school. The future careers of males and females are influenced, directly and indirectly, by the requirements and benefits of military service. Males have a better chance than females of acquiring professional training of sorts, the rationale being that their longer tour of duty makes their training worthwhile. In addition, graduates of vocational schools in mechanics or technology, are always in demand, and therefore stand a good chance of gaining experience in their field. These graduates are predominantly males. Female graduates of vocational schools usually have less attractive expertise to offer the military, and rarely practice their profession. Consequently, fewer females than males can expect their service to be a significant stage in their career plans.

Moving on to university level, it must be noted that since the early 1980s about half of the undergraduate students in Israel are females. Moreover, in accordance with the practice throughout the state educational system, there are no single sex universities. However, even the massive presence of females in the co-educational institutes of higher education, does not ensure them equal chances of obtaining high status and high paying positions. The subtle channelling that takes place in academic high schools, causes most females to avoid concentrating on science and technology, and to specialize in

subjects that perpetuate their prominence in humanities and social sciences, and then earn degrees that do not offer many remunerative jobs. In 1989, 74.4% of the students in humanities were female. They were very prominent in languages, teaching and education, arts, theatre and music, social work, criminology and para-medical professions.

To conclude, using Arnot's distinction (1985), the Israeli system, as part of the liberal discourse, adopts the egalitarian approach that values equal opportunities by guaranteeing equal conditions. The second approach to equity, represented by the feminist advocacy for girl-centered education, anti-sexist curricula and teaching, and the removal of power from males in order to overthrow patriarchal relations, is no more than a peripheral issue in Israel. The claim of feminist scholars and activists in the UK and USA that anti-sexism is good educational practice, has no parallel in the Israeli educational scene.

The outcome is that the gendered nature of all social and school interactions is a non issue among Israeli educators, and have no bearing on their definition of equity. The aforementioned quantifiable and undisputable data about girls in the local educational system, e.g. their academic success, their high attendance rate, and their impressive advantage over their mothers' education and educational opportunities, blinds even the professionals to the prevalence of sexism, and to the power of the traditional social constructs on gendered interactions.

This thesis is about exposing the hidden forms of gendered interaction, with a view to confronting the educational establishment with evidence of the sub-text of the pro-equality national curriculum.

Chapter 4

ISRAELI TEACHERS' NOTION OF EQUALITY

The discrepancy between the commitment to equal opportunities declared in interviews, and the varied forms of hidden sexism observed in school activities, calls for a clarification of Israeli teachers' notion of equity.

An analysis of the phenomenological meaning of interactions is deficient so long as it is detached from the wider structures in which the school is embedded. Therefore, before proceeding any further with instances of gendered interactions, the concepts of these teachers need to be located in their cultural context. As a researcher it requires my 'making the familiar strange', and defining the subtler levels of the cultural environment in which I myself was raised.

The tenet at the basis of Israeli liberal educational policy, is that a commitment to equality (there is no Hebrew word for equity) is compatible with the concept that the sexes are equal yet different. Israeli teachers, the vast majority of which are females, and lowly paid, do not dwell on the thought that schools are pivotal in the process of maintaining and reproducing the existing sexual division of labour. It follows that enabling boys and girls to preserve their so called distinct 'natural' roles, characteristics and life plans, is the common interpretation of a policy of equal opportunities, and this is the essence of the talks conducted with staff members of the three schools studied.

The sex differentiated expectations and interactions observed, and the opinions and statements recorded, substantiate

my argument that there is no call for change. The assumption, that prevails throughout the educational system, is that insofar as gender differences exist and are pronounced in the children's schoolwork, or conduct at school, they are accepted as representing and mirroring undisputed social norms. In the absence of any influential public or professional criticism of this adherence to traditional social constructs, educators and the educational establishment continue to adhere to the conviction that their treatment is sex fair. The fact that the result of refraining from comment or disapproval, is the perpetuation of gendered behaviour, is not seen as detrimental to the educational process.

On the national level, gender issues are not on the agenda in initial training courses, nor in inservice training. No strategy is worked out to reduce the effects of sex typing, or to encourage children to move beyond the behaviour patterns associated with their gender. No regular monitoring of teaching practices and materials for sex bias is carried out by the ministry, and the term 'equity specialist' is non-existent.

The ongoing process by which sex differences in classroom interaction patterns originate mainly in the pupils, whereas the teachers are primarily reactive (Good, Sikes & Brophy, 1973; Lockheed, 1985), is grasped in very partial a manner, as revealed in the interviews. However, the disregard for the deeper short and long term implications, means that the impact of the hidden messages is consistently underestimated. This in turn contributes to the reluctance to engage in an organized effort to mitigate the effect of the gendered interactions, and the latent discrimination they sustain.

Discipline in class is an example of the upholding of 'natural' differences. The dissimilar boundaries set for each sex, and the consequential punitive measures, are never denied by the teachers, who admit that the lenient attitude to boys, stems from their inability to cope with the habitually disruptive behaviour of male pupils. Even those male teachers who declare that they are more patient and tolerant with the girls, reveal total unawareness of their own strict responses to the slightest departure of their female pupils' from the 'appropriate' meek conduct and subservient position, as noted by me in their classes. Whereas boys are regularly warned several times before being dismissed from class, or punished in any other way, girls are rarely offered the chance to reconsider their conduct, and thus escape punitive measures.

The lack of critique of traditional gender roles is manifest in teachers' attitude to the pupils' choice of subjects too. Adolescents of either sex, who take an unconventional stand, and opt for studies in which they are a minority, or in which the teacher has low expectations, are actively discouraged in devious ways. The computer lessons at Hez, described in detail in the section on classroom interactions, illustrate female teacher's assumption that computers are not part of the world picture of girls. A class in home economics at the kibbutz demonstrates another female teacher's awkwardness with a male pupil's willingness to make an unpopular choice.

The case at Kibbutz school will demonstrate the point: the home economics teacher told me of the scarcity of boys in classes she conducted, and explained the presence of a sole male in a class I attended. She made a point of informing me that it was only the special emotional needs of that male pupil that could explain his choice of subject. She went into details of

what she described as his general maladjustment, and his craving for attention.

Whether there was truth in her description of the boy's needs, and secondly, whether there was any connection between his emotional needs and his decision to attend a home economics class, is practically irrelevant. What is most significant in this story is the disclosure of this female teacher's opinion regarding the inappropriateness of the participation of boys. In what sounded like an effort, most likely unconscious, to preserve her class as a strictly female domain, she describes the boy who broke the rules as a deviant, suggesting that any male who joins is somewhat deficient. This teacher shows no awareness of the contradiction between this interpretation and her former declaration that boys and girls alike are free to attend her classes.

In a similar vein, PE teachers at Hez school express neither objection to, nor desire to change the different training programmes. One of the male PE teachers sitting in a group in the staff room is from Germany, where he taught pupils in mixed groups, and even trained girls and boys together in competitive sports. He admits that he regards this as a positive and pleasurable approach, but is sure there is no hope of changing matters in this school (or country), as the situation here is regressive.

Considering such instances of differentiated treatment that result from traditional notions of sex roles, the teachers' concern with equal opportunities might seem like double talk. In a different cultural setting the teachers' statements might be viewed as a denial, or cover-up motivated by their desire for approval, if only from the researcher. However, in the Israeli

context, such statements should be regarded as a sincere statement of intent and conviction, albeit far removed from their actual practice. Furthermore, I would argue that given the prevalent insensitivity to hidden sexism, the teachers observed and interviewed are probably typical in this respect of the school staff and, by extension, of the larger part of Israeli society. Rather than expose their duplicity, the teachers' complacent belief in their own fair treatment of all pupils, grants insight into their concept of equity.

Language and social constructs

The socio-linguistic approach to the conversations and practices recorded in the course of this research, is indispensable to an analysis and understanding of exchanges within an unfamiliar culture.

Given that language is a mirror of a culture, the constraints of the Hebrew language at this point in time, explain and justify the lack of discourse in the educational establishment, and among Israeli teachers. The absence of certain words from the vocabulary of a culture, is a reliable indication of the 'unmentionables'. The three key terms, nay, concepts, that are pivotal to this research, equity, gender and sexism (or sexist), are non-existent, or as good as non-existent in Hebrew. It follows that terms describing counteractive measures, such as 'girl friendly', 'anti-sexist', 'non-sexist' or 'sex fair', do not exist either.

The significance of no words

No word means no setting up of formal platforms for consideration of, or debate on such issues, and no attempt to define criteria or devise guidelines for detection. Since there is no recognizable or describable problem, no effort is required

to reduce or counterbalance the effects of the phenomenon that has not been established.

The total disregard for these three issues (gender, equity and sexism), is illustrated not merely by the lack of a Hebrew equivalent, but by the fact that despite the lack of a term in the language, no resort is made to a foreign term. Hebrew in its present form is an ancient language revived only 100 years ago, and of necessity words are constantly being created either by the 'street', in response to the needs of modern living, or added officially by the National Academy of Language. At times the unmet need causes words from other languages, but mainly from English, to be incorporated into spoken Hebrew, e.g. feminist, homosexual, chauvinist, and their respective nouns.

This resort to foreign words, enables the immediate discourse on these issues, and testifies to an urgent need. The common usage of non Hebrew words prevails at times even alongside approved Hebrew terms. Again the choice of words is significant, for example sex, impotent and orgasm.

The fact that other than in feminist oriented academic circles, not even foreign terms are resorted to, testifies to the general unawareness of the need for fine distinctions in these matters. The linguistic need that ongoing preoccupation with and discourse on these issues would have created, is evidently nonsubsistent. Since these key words stand for social constructs that are central to any definition of sex equity, their very absence helps define, by negation, the stand of teachers and educators. No less important is the light this sheds on certain aspects of Israeli society and culture that are relevant to the framework within which they function. One of the consequences is that in these circumstances the topic of my

research is a non issue, that requires elaborate explanation, to laypersons and to teachers alike.

An attempt, therefore to formulate an approximation of the actual concept of equity, that these teachers would never put in so many words, must begin with the naming of phenomena. A clarification of the denotations and connotations of those Hebrew terms that are closest in meaning, and are indeed used by the teachers, should contribute to an understanding of the full meaning, within the cultural context, of the thoughts and feelings they expressed concerning boys and girls in school. Finally, this cultural overview puts the ostensible contradiction between the teachers' statements and behaviours observed in the wider context.

The first missing word: `gender'

To start with, gender with all its transitory social implications, has no translation into Hebrew. Moreover, the Hebrew word MIN that means sex and also sort (i.e. kind), is loaded with very corporal connotations, as when coupled with appropriate qualifiers it is the only way in the language to denote venereal diseases MACHALOT MIN, or genitalia EVREY MIN. A similar stress on the physiological aspect exists in the word for female, NEKEVA that derives from the word NEKEV meaning opening. The physical form of the female genitalia is consequently the term chosen to describe a person of this sex, a constant reminder of her role as a partner in a heterosexual relationship, and as a bearer of children.

The lexical and methodological approach associated with differentiating gender from sex, is missing from the agenda of social scientists in Israel, and obviously from teacher training too.

The second missing word: `sexism`

A problem that has no name in Hebrew, and is not referred to by any other term in any of the staff rooms of the schools I visited, is sexism. There is good reason to believe this is true of other schools too. As a matter of fact, unlike `gender` and `equity`, a term for sexism has been coined, and as in English it is analogous in form to racism. However, apart from the pitiful few who are involved in feminist sociological work, this word is unheard, unused and unknown, testifying to the lack of demand on the part of the public for the idea it serves.

The word closest in meaning is discrimination (AFLAYA), that with a modifier is used to describe discrimination on the basis of sex (AFLAYA MINIT). The judgemental and legal stand implied by this phrase, limits its use to the description of proven unfair outcomes of actions, or refrainment from action. This term is not associated with subtle forms of differentiation, or such approaches offensive to one sex, that have not as yet been established as discriminatory practices.

Offensive forms of address to women, as in jokes, evoke the use of the word `chauvinist`, meaning male chauvinist, instead of the missing term `sexist`. This is not a satisfactory substitute as it has no parallel term to describe offensive attitudes to males, and leaves a vast range of practices and attitudes, unaccounted for.

It follows that the subtle and at times unconscious instances of differentiation on the basis of sex in the Israeli education system, that this study focuses on, are as good as indescribable in Hebrew.

The third missing word: 'equity'

The third key concept that has no Hebrew equivalent, nor even a non- Hebrew term used, is equity. The closest word is equality (SHIVYON). The teachers' stated commitment to equality, and the concern of the school system with an equal opportunities policy, originates from a completely different concept, i.e. the concern for social integration and the promotion of the 'melting pot' ideology. Other than special programmes for obviously disadvantaged groups, measures to counteract the built-in hidden messages that undermine the liberal philosophy, are a no issue.

The lack of clarity that results from inaccurate language usage, is best illustrated by the analysis of the verbal exchanges conducted with the teachers. When given the opportunity to express their views on gendered interactions and sex roles, they could only resort to current usage of Hebrew, thus exposing the consistent avoidance of the issues described by the missing terms. The repeated references to sexuality on the one hand, and the omission of social constructs and socializing forces on the other, indicate that the whole concept of gender is indeed unknown.

thus, the missing key terms, together with the gendered nature of the language, contribute to the perpetuation of the silence on the issues studied.

Chapter 5

**THE RESEARCH MODEL: RESEARCH ISSUES, POPULATION, METHODOLOGY AND
PROCESS**

The research issues

The declared commitment of the Israeli educational authorities to an equal opportunities policy on the one hand, and the perpetuation of traditional sex roles on the other, is the contradiction this study set out to trace to school practices. The consistent denial of sexism, on the part of teachers and policy makers alike, generated this indepth study, aimed at disclosing the subtle manner in which differential encouragement and messages are conveyed, as the outcome would suggest. The nature of the influential yet hidden brand of sexism, that coexists alongside an ideological rejection of any built-in pupil differentiation, whether on the grounds of sex or class, is to be defined. A holistic approach, that examines the gendered messages in the context of the cultural background that permits and encourages yet disowns them, leads to the formulation of a theory of the special mechanism working in Israeli society to curb changes in sex roles.

The underlying forces that contribute to the staying power of the subtle and constantly denied gender differentiation in the Israeli school system, are ingrained in the national ideals propogated by the centralistic school system. Those traditions that discourage the adoption of a more flexible and egalitarian definition of sex roles, seem to be unequivocally embraced by the staff, to judge by the conversations held in the course of this research. So much so that the more the teachers deviate from the formal curriculum, and develop their own

extra-curricular activities, or rituals, the more rampant the sexism is.

This study is comparative in its international and cross cultural references by necessity, if only because Israeli social scientists and educators have not delved into the issues of sexism in schools, and the operation of schools as a prime socializing agent determining sex roles. The survey of research literature helps initially to single out Israeli idiosyncracies, and determine relevant terms of reference. The next stage is the anchoring of school practices, that are no more than symptomatic of the prevailing social constructs.

Ultimately, the comparisons compel the researcher to devise, on the basis of insight more than on literary precedents, new measurements to assess the impact of those indigenous forces that influence the local scene. A combination of inter-cultural comparisons and intra-cultural analyses, should shed light on those same constructs that preserve the delicate balance of contradictory forces in the liberal yet traditional view of women in Israel, and grant insight also into the expertly camouflaged barriers that stand in the way of change.

My objective is to study various facets of school life with the intent of exposing the diversity of means by which concepts of sex roles, which will require a definition too, are conveyed. In addition to detecting teachers' manners of action, the response of pupils will be another focal point. Their direct or indirect responses to gendered messages will be examined, their compliance with or rejection and critique of the world picture presented in school, and in turn the effect of this feedback on the staff's behaviour and views.

The exact nature of the gendered world picture presented by schools, is the theory I shall strive to generate in this study. The categories formulated to lead up to the theory will cover the sources, constructs and arguments teachers draw on to explain or justify their conscious or unconscious stand, and the manner in which they defy the stated commitment of the system to an equal opportunity policy.

This research is not designed to replicate studies conducted in other countries, or to validate data accumulated by social scientists elsewhere. Nevertheless the literature on hidden sexism in school systems, and on classroom observations that detect sexism, is used as a valuable starting point and a reference. Its main contribution, however, is to highlight the cross-cultural and multi-cultural diversity of school practices, and the need for a clarification of cultural messages.

The research questions and search for a new formulation led me to determine the groups and other sources for qualitative data as the study progressed, rather than prior to my setting out on my field work (see Glaser & Strauss 1967 for the discussion of such a model). The need to decode and translate Israeli social constructs and practices, for the benefit of scholars and feminists from other countries, forced me to strive to "make the familiar strange" (Delamont 1981).

The concentration on similarities and dissimilarities between the practices in Israel and elsewhere is an invalid goal, when these are presented out of context. The educational experiences are therefore viewed not merely in terms of the structure of the schooling system (Lutz, 1986), but in a broad and inclusive cultural context.

Since the premise on which this study is undertaken is that a centrally controlled educational system both mirrors and perpetuates the establishment, it follows that for the researcher who is a product of this system, the point of view adopted needs to be simultaneously involved yet distanced, clarifying yet critical, and both introspective and international.

Seen in this light, my personal concern with the issues, and my political and professional activities to bring about change, as elaborated on in the former section, put this dualistic view to the test. Moreover, in adherence with the qualitative methodology, they testify to the pertinence of the inclusion of the biases and interests of the researcher as an individual, to the comprehension of the rationale, and of the circumscription of the research, and its major focal points.

The schools studied

The selection of the research population, in this case - selection of schools for close scrutiny, was not determined by an intention to choose schools that qualify as definitive representative samples of Israeli pupils and/or teachers. Even the complex intellectual and demographic acrobatics that such a commitment calls for, would not warrant a presentation of a reality that is accurate or meaningful in terms of the research questions at hand.

My decision was to study the population of schools that while of distinct categories, can be described as mainstream secular Jewish state schools, as they do not cater for pupils with special needs, are centrally located in Israel, in surroundings not characterized by a high proportion of

newcomers, by a single or predominant ethnic community, or by a distinct socio-economic class.

The heterogeneous nature of the population of Israel makes any attempt at defining the so-called Israeli culture, a contentious issue. The vast majority of the population (at the time of the research, 1991 - total 4 million) has lived in Israel for less than 40 years, originates from scores of countries, and speaks all manner of languages. This given diversity defies the official aspiration for uniformity in schools, hence a consensus on an irrefutable representative, would still leave great variety to be accounted for.

The imposition of common educational goals represents a resolution to strive for uniformity in mentality and atmosphere and preferably in teaching practices too. The commonly used metaphor of a 'melting pot', represents the ideology of cultural absorption and integration. The undeniable multi-cultural diversity is tolerated rather than emphasized or appreciated, and accordingly, socialization into the Israeli way of life, and internalization of the norms deemed most appropriate by the state school system, are expected of children and teachers alike.

Alongside the prescribed process of teaching newcomers about the Israeli culture, schools are often required to accommodate the multiple cultural influences and inputs of their student body, that are often in varying degrees of internal tension to start with. Among the diverse social constructs that schools try to level out are notions of sex roles, sexism and appropriate gendered behaviour and expectations.

As noted by researchers (see review of literature on Israel), the significant variables that determine these social constructs are the country of origin, the ethnic community, the number of years they and their families have been in Israel, and the degree of religiosity. In many complex ways there is a correlation of sorts between the socio-economic level of the population and the aforementioned factors related to the background of the pupils. However, as far as sex roles are concerned, the delicate balance between the the force of the original culture and the extent of internalization of the Israeli culture is so central, that it often neutralizes the influence of the economic factor.

In view of these multifarious factors, the choice of a school that is supposed to be typical of a pluralistic society, that in effect strives for uniformity, is a formidable challenge to the social scientist, that is usually resolved through the employment of multifaceted quantitative measures. Since the purpose of this research is to expose certain social constructs and their effect on the school system, the insistence on a representative sample is no less than a travesty of scientific methodology.

The random selection cannot, however, include those institutes that a-priori reject, for ideological reasons of their own, the egalitarian policy prescribed by the state. Since the intent is to define those forms of hidden sexism that are usually perpetuated unconsciously, and denied vehemently, there is no point collecting data from those schools that openly advocate sex differentiation. These, I would argue, are best studied separately, with adequate reference to their specific policy, and particular social constructs.

This explains the exclusion of religious Jewish schools from this study. The state educational system incorporates a separate yet approved stream of religious education, mostly co-educational in the first years, and single sex in junior high and high school. Although the curriculum is only slightly dissimilar, with boys traditionally learning different religious texts, the socialization is explicitly differentiated, with each sex being instructed in the observance of the traditional roles ascribed within the traditional Jewish family.

An even more strictly gendered system, that is not subject to the centralized control over the education of age 5-18 is called most appropriately "the independent education". This is the official educational system run by and for the most extreme Jewish orthodox community. This community, mainly of Western European origin, that insists on a total rejection of secular scientific studies, and a complete dissociation from the media and culture of the state, has very strict ideas about separation of the sexes, a dogmatic code of dress, and radically differentiated educational goals and roles for each sex. For example, the ideal adult male is he who excels in his religious studies. He is accordingly expected to devote himself to his intellectual pursuits, while the wife is to be the main breadwinner, and the person in touch with the outside, secular world. However, the economic dependence on the wife's labour does not imply a reversal of domestic and parental roles. Since birth control is disapproved of in these circles, and families think nothing of having ten children, the female child is raised knowing her role is to take full responsibility for the large family's well being, as the father is to be left to his religious pursuits.

This stream is in many ways opposed to the national consensus as expressed by the national curriculum, which should come as no surprise in view of the fact that it denies the sovereignty of the state of Israel, due to it being in their eyes a secular state rather than a state established by a Messiah. One of the consequences of this dissociation is the refusal to serve in the Israel Defence Force, an issue of far-reaching political and social implications.

Other schooling systems that do not belong to the mainstream, and were therefore excluded from this study, are the Israeli Muslim, Christian, Beduin and Druze, with their own social constructs that require a separate definition. In these communities, the conflict between the traditional sex roles and the demands of life in a modern Westernized state, creates tension too. A close study of messages conveyed by their schools requires an intimate acquaintance with the respective cultures. It goes without saying that observations of classroom practices could only be carried out by someone who not only speaks the language but is also well versed in the cultural context.

Ethos of the schools selected

In choosing the schools to be studied, the agreement of the respective decision makers with the centralist dictates is more significant a variable than the population, or location of the school. The ethos of each of the three schools selected, as stated by their headteachers, is indeed in full accordance with the official policy of the Ministry of education. In this respect then these schools can be regarded as representing the mainstream, and promoting the official policy. The following brief descriptions of the schools selected, clarify the different points of departure that lead each of the schools to declare the particular reasons for their commitment to equal

opportunities. In addition the dominant pattern of classroom interaction is reviewed, and the correlation between the stated ideology and the extent of equality in the teacher - pupil relationship is examined.

Hez school

The first school I visited will be called here the Hez school. It is a typical Israeli urban junior high school, grades 7-9, located in a densely populated town near Tel Aviv. In accordance with the national educational and social 'melting pot' ideology, all junior high schools in this town, Hez included, are committed to social integration. The student body, heterogeneous in the socio-economic backgrounds and ethnic communities, is designated by the municipality, and bussed, where necessary, from various parts of the town.

The principal of Hez school is a staunch believer in social integration, and regards the implementation of an equal opportunities policy as a necessary condition for the achievement of this goal. She admits that teachers confront considerable difficulties in the heterogeneous classes, but is proud of her staff that does its utmost to ensure equity which, she informs me, includes sex equity.

The classroom interactional pattern most prevalent at Hez school is the rather unlikely combination of a highly structured presentation on the part of the teacher, and an unofficial and unstated lenient approach that permits a "free for all". The pupils do not always bother to raise their hands, as they realize that within indeed rather vague boundaries, they need not wait for permission to offer their answers, ideas or comments. The teachers express discontent at times with the

outbursts, but on the whole exercise a very lax disciplinary code.

Hez school, with its task oriented approach, and lax discipline, is more representative of the Israeli scene than Tev, which is a select and experimental school, and on the other hand the kibbutz school with its explicit ambivalence concerning achievements and grades, that is attributed to its socialistic bias.

Hez school has 650 pupils, and 59 teachers, of which 56 are female. The headteacher is a female physics teacher. The school is five years old, and this is the first year the present headteacher is in office.

Kibbutz school

The kibbutz movement has its own educational institutes, though within the centralized state system, and confined by the national curriculum. The pre-school and primary schooling (grades 1-6) is supplied in the kibbutz, by teachers who are kibbutz members or outsiders hired for the job. When the numbers are too small to enable the setting up of a regular structure, studies are conducted in mixed age groups. Once the pupils complete grade 6 (age 12) they are considered old enough to study outside the kibbutz, and are then bussed to regional schools, with each such school serving several kibbutzim, and offering a variety of study courses.

My rationale in choosing a kibbutz school for my study was that a study of attitudes to the sexes in Israeli education could not exclude the kibbutz educational institutes. For the kibbutz is not merely a unique Israeli form of communal living, of interest to many social scientists, but a commitment to

socialist values and to equality in the rights and duties of the two sexes. Indeed, a demand for changes in roles assigned to women in the kibbutzim has been voiced recently by women and social scientists alike. The educational system, however, has not as yet been transformed by any radical changes, meaning that the system can still be regarded as preparing the young generation for life on a kibbutz, while replicating the traditional ideals and sex roles of the parents' generation.

The kibbutz school has its own rationale for upholding an equal opportunities policy, that has nothing to do with the needs of the specific student body. The idea originates in the socialist, egalitarian world view that justifies the perpetuation of this style of life. As a matter of fact, in the case of the particular school observed, the diversity in economic backgrounds of the pupils, make it at least as heterogeneous as Hez school, with its own particular twist. In this case affluence is not determined by the family of origin but by the kibbutz the child belongs to. This is a regional school, to which most of the pupils are bussed from kibbutzim that vary in their affluence, and in the access they offer to cultural enrichment. The children of the hosting kibbutz, which happens to be one of the more affluent in the country, choose to keep to themselves as a group. In fact, it was pointed out to me that during recess, the local kids take off on their bikes, and go to their homes for refreshments or a rest, rather than mingle with their class mates.

As far as the classroom interaction patterns are concerned, the teacher - pupil relations are egalitarian and informal on the surface, with minimal resort to external signs of authority on the part of the staff. However, while the observable familiarity between teachers and pupils, reflects the non

hierarchical ideology, it does not immediately disclose the mode of interaction common in class.

Although the teachers are generally less formal and achievement oriented than at Hez school, and more likely to relinquish an authoritative role, they do not regularly seem to care for too much interaction with their pupils in the classrooms. This somewhat insular approach was accounted for by the teachers, in their talks with me, as part of their egalitarian world view. They are committed to the policy that no demands be imposed on pupils, and that each one be permitted to sit in whatever classes s/he chooses, and do as much as one desires or is capable of doing. They admit that working with highly heterogeneous groups creates predictable difficulties, including the imbalance between the greater participation of the better pupils or the more disruptive ones, and that of the weaker and less confident individuals. However, they shun from any coercive measures, and maintain that engagement in the classwork is the prerogative and responsibility of the individual, and it is not for them to interfere with the individual's choice by insisting on participation or even on completion of assignments.

The school chosen, that is here called Kibbutz school, is a spacious regional school, for grades 7-12. It is built on the land of a well established kibbutz founded in the late 1930s, on the coast of the Mediterranean. It serves 17 kibbutzim, with the children from all but the host kibbutz being bussed to school. The school offers studies leading to the equivalent of British A levels, alongside technical and mechanical vocational courses.

The school was founded 18 years ago as an open school, that did not prepare pupils for A levels. In the last 5-7 years it

has changed in response to changes in kibbutz life that resulted in the demand of members to acquire professional training. It now places more emphasis on technological studies and on preparation for academic studies. This transformation did not, however, effect the admission policy. The school is not selective, even in the high school classes, and admits all children of the region, including pupils with special educational and emotional needs.

There are 700 pupils in the school (grades 7-12), 438 of which are in the high school (grades 10-12). The staff consists of 116 teachers, 62 females and 54 males. However, since most of the male staff teach non academic courses (e.g. metal, woodwork, electricity), the relevant figures are 13 males and 44 females in the academic high school, that is the focus of this study.

Tev school

The third school selected for this research represents an alternative type of educational institute within the state system, geared at the population that requests something other than the integrative junior high, and does not belong to the kibbutz movement.

This school, which will be called Tev, is like no other school in the Israeli educational scene. It is one of a small group of schools devoted to the pursuit of special subjects, that appeal to children with special interests, and the appropriate talents. Due to the exclusive focal points of these schools, they are exempt from the regular obligation to accept pupils according to zones, and have also been granted the right to select their pupils on a meritorious basis. Applicants to such schools are screened for potential and/or performance, in accordance with the area of specialization of the school, e.g.

music, performing arts, painting, environmental studies or natural sciences.

The uniqueness lies first and foremost in the statement of purpose, i.e. in the school's commitment to academic specialization in certain clearly defined subjects, and in the promotion of likewise specified personal skills. In contrast to the general educational system that in its elementary and junior high stages is never selective, such schools openly declare their intention to grant their graduates an advantage over pupils of the standardized state schools.

The school under consideration, for ages 6-14 (elementary and junior high school), specializes in the study of nature and the environment, and places special emphasis on active contribution to society. As befits a school of this sort, the newly renovated building it inhabits has an instructional zoological garden, founded in 1953, in its back yard. This small and friendly zoo is frequented regularly by tours from other schools, that come to view the 30 different species of mammals, 50 fowls, 40 reptiles and numerous fish and amphibious creatures.

One of the predictable consequences of the special intent of the school, is the experimental nature of much of the teaching process. The innovative methods implemented in order to ensure the attainment of the stated goals, offer the pupils unique opportunities. In fact, the novel and creative activities geared at stimulating youngsters of high potential could be of considerable benefit to others too, even when removed from the context of the specific subject matter.

Although this is a state school, and schooling should therefore be free, monthly fees are demanded from the parents, at the rate of about 50 pounds sterling in 1990, in order to cover some of the special costs. The possible discrimination that this financial burden might have created, is somewhat modified by the local councils, that subsidize the studies of the less affluent. Apart from securing a good education for the talented underprivileged, the system ensures social integration, and prevents such schools from becoming elitist institutes for the wealthy.

Whereas the kibbutz ideology contains a stated commitment to the equal rights of the sexes, a school like Tev, that departs from the standard educational concepts in certain respects, requires a clarification of the attitudes to boys and girls too.

In the case of Tev school, the rationale for the so called equal opportunities policy is unlike that of Hez or the kibbutz school. As an institute that is unique in its areas of specialization, it is in the privileged situation of being entitled to, indeed expected to, experiment with different teaching and organizational methods. In the innovative child centred structure introduced by the principal, pupils are granted more choices than usual, coupled with more responsibility concerning the area and scope of their studies. Equity is viewed as a necessary condition for the implementation of this system.

The particular style of classroom interaction at Tev school shares some of the characteristics of each of the former two. As in the kibbutz school, scholastic achievements and grades are not presented either as the ultimate goal or as a threat, as

they frequently are at Hez school. At the same time, however, greater emphasis is put here on the individual, and therefore group projects and independent studying are the most common learning experiences. Unlike the often unengaged atmosphere in the kibbutz classroom, active participation is encouraged and expected here. The teacher - pupil interactions, as at Hez school, are not regulated by hand raising as much as by calling out. An additional dimension observable only at Tev, is the frequent situation of a teacher tutoring a single pupil, or a pupil presenting independent work.

There are 640 pupils at Tev, 194 of which are in the junior high. There are about 60 teachers, some of which hold part time positions. There are only six males on the staff: three are teachers, two are guides for outings, and one is responsible for the audio visual equipment.

The school is in its fourth year, and the headteacher has been there from the start, and has given a lot of thought to the formation of a unique school atmosphere. She was chosen personally by the mayor to set up this experimental school, after earning much praise for succeeding in the transformation and upgrading of a problematic school in a slum area, for which she has since been honoured with a national prize for her contribution to education.

The methodology selected for the study of these three schools was determined, first and foremost, by the lack of research on gendered interaction in Israeli schools. This implies that any comparisons made, must be to observations conducted elsewhere. A prerequisite of such cross cultural comparisons is the isolation of those cultural determinants that

give local colour both to the declarations about and to the practice of sex equity or sexism in schools.

Once in the schools, an initial period of qualitative observation exposed such vast differences between the patterns of classroom interactions in each of the three, that it soon became clear that there could be no uniform criteria for organizing the phenomena recorded under rigorously predefined headings. Moreover, the variety of patterns of sexist interactions detected, and the different sources of data explored, necessitated the constant reassessment of categories, and the formulation of appropriate research tools.

The qualitative research model

The vast literature of the last two decades expounding the likelihood of discovering meaningful and practical information through interaction studies (Wragg, 1975), and particularly through ethnography (Eggleston, Galton, & Jones, 1975; Morrison, 1975) in educational research, testifies to the growing popularity of this approach (Adelman, 1981; Atkinson, 1981; Morgan, 1981; Roberts, 1981; Woods, 1981, 1985, 1986; Delamont & Hamilton, 1984; Silverman, 1985; Burgess, 1985, 1985c; Galton & Delamont, 1985; Measor, 1985; Croll, 1986; Lutz, 1986; Agar, 1986).

While writers might emphasize different aspects, merits or constraints of an ethnographic research model, the scrutiny it has been put through has established it as a reputable scientific, reliable and informative approach. Consequently, a justification of an avoidance of quantitative methods, and of such experiments that are reproducible, is no longer demanded of every researcher embarking on a qualitative study.

The ethnographic methodology, by virtue of its rejection of a preplanned structure and design, and "the simplistic behavioural emphasis of the prespecified coders" (Delamont & Hamilton, 1984, p.20), is experientially abundant. The phenomena or strips observed and examined, like observations, conversations, interviews or literary texts, represent a wide range of activities and rich sources of data.

An extensive survey of ethnographic research literature in classrooms was compiled by Hammersley (1980), who cites studies that show the growing tendency to link research in this area to macro issues. It also, however, contains a warning that this approach should not be at the expense of grounded theory, or a substitute for the necessary acknowledging of the complexity of the interrelations between the internal organization of settings and the impact of external forces. This reservation is indeed crucial for the generation of a balanced theoretical statement, and a meaningful integration of the micro and macro dimensions.

Another reservation of a very different nature refers to the limitations of ethnography when unaccompanied by a Marxist approach that seeks to establish a critique of the world of appearances in everyday life in the capitalist schooling system (Sharp, 1986). The distrust stems primarily from the tendency of ethnography to focus on the individual in action and in interaction, rather than on those social realities which Sharp claims are "existentially independent of consciousness and which must form part of the object of any science wishing to understand human behaviour" (Sharp, 1986, p. 122).

Sharp's analogy between "the typical fascist school" and "schools operating under bourgeois democracy" (p. 131), is a sweeping and provocative oversimplification. However, this

reservation of mine is not to suggest that I would deny the complex and constraining connection that exists between the school system and the stated or unstated norms of the forces in power, in a given time and place. In fact, while abstaining from Sharp's controversial and argumentative tone, many theorists and practitioners of qualitative research, are guided by this premise.

In this case, the rationale for selecting an ethnographic model, with little control over the action, evolves mainly from the particular requirements of an investigation into uncharted land, in an attempt to map sexism in the Israeli educational scene. This point of departure also entails the need for the presentation of an adequate portrayal of the scene, that might contribute to the clarification of the local social constructs that both cause and explain the patterns of interaction recorded.

The ethnographic methodology strives to retain as complete a picture as possible of the matter studied, through receptiveness to multi-faceted input from varied and unforeseeable scenes and sources. This inclusive collection of qualitative data, has preference here over a model that requires the breaking down of situations of varying complexity into standardized quantifiable components. The rationale for the eventual focussing on certain sources of data is required, but the preliminary open-mindedness is the most important stage.

The research model that is not confined by a predetermined set of goals has a chance of noting that which is most important in classrooms (Croll, 1986, cites also Hamilton & Delamont, 1974, and Delamont & Hamilton, 1984). Woods's reservation (1986) is pertinent too: "pre-defining categories ... [makes] the

meanings behind the observed actions ... easily misinterpreted or inadequately represented" (p.48).

The exploratory nature of my study necessitates the avoidance of an initial specification of the aspects of interactions to be described, which would a-priori exclude other clusters of information (Croll, 1986; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This in turn would limit the scope of the study to those categories and properties the researcher could come up with, based on former theories or research s/he is acquainted with. McIntyre (1980) states it more emphatically when he argues:

it is not logically possible to use predetermined categories in order to explore the realities of classroom life and thus to formulate questions which arise from it

Ibid., p.10

The process of immersion of the observer in the schools, with as open a mind as possible (like Woods, 1985), and the evolving formulation of the foci as s/he becomes more acquainted with the scene, is best suited to my purpose and point of departure. Moreover, ethnography is well suited to the probing of the meaning of social relations and of social processes for the subjects being observed (Croll, 1986). Thus phenomena recorded can be studied for their effects on all parties involved in the interactions, i.e. staff, pupils and observer. Disparities between the readings of the situations of the participants help expose the macro dimensions of the micro study, thus adding value to the findings (Silverman, 1985). Hence a close study of the discourse conducted in educational institutes can serve as the base of a grounded theory about the manners by which social constructs related to gender are perpetuated, or alternatively critiqued in Israel.

The use of an ethnographic model does not preclude the gathering of statistical evidence based on systematic observations when an accurate quantitative statement is required (e.g. Crump, 1990). In educational research on gender, the quantitative data might describe the division of teachers' attention in class to pupils of each sex (Croll, 1984; Woods, 1986), or subject selection (Crump, 1990). In this study the ethnographic methodology employed is inclusive. The data sources and modes of recording include non participant observation, structured observation, single person and group interviews, content analysis of documents, all in response to changing circumstances and opportunities. Quantitative categories are resorted to only in the textual analysis, in order to supplement qualitative measures of tone and attitude employed.

After the event it can be stated that the lack of research on gendered interactions in Israeli schools was turned to an advantage: it precludes the bias that usually goes along with perusing piles of studies, and the tendency to attempt to replicate them.

In addition, the need to overcome the well hidden nature of the sexist messages, rather than the complexity of the phenomena (Croll, 1986), determined the choice of an open ended series of observation guidelines, and the abandoning of exact operational definitions and predetermined observational procedures.

The monitoring of classroom activities is usually intended to facilitate the development of, or the adoption of new teaching habits (McIntyre, 1980). This study too aspires to an applicable outcome, and for this purpose a methodology that makes both the process and the findings accessible to the layperson is advantageous. Although my research is not on a

large scale, its nature and method grant school staff and teacher trainers a wider view of the nature of teachers' gendered interactions than they could obtain from their own experience. It also presents them with a reference point against which their personal experience can be located, and individual approaches and modes of behaviour better understood within the context of their typicality and uniqueness.

As part of the intent to exercise minimal control over the school events observed, I refrained from establishing a fixed routine for my visits to the three schools. The random sampling of days and lessons enabled me to observe events that are admittedly not representative of the school routine, like the celebrations of holidays (see Shavuot ceremony at Tev), special activities (see Language activity at Hez), the composition of report cards (Tev), or the class coping with the absence of a teacher. The exclusion of such days would result in a misrepresentation of the totality of the experience of a pupil at school, and the range of interactions with teachers. In retrospect, each of the special activities I observed, with no advance notice, proved to be very high in a scale of sexism. All these special activities happened to be deeply culture based, evolving either round religious or national celebrations, and drawing on the Israeli-Jewish cultural heritage. There is no way such events could be worked into a predetermined research schedule.

Constraints taken into consideration in devising the research design

The first thought was given to the effect of my presence on the staff. The intention was to be unobtrusive and non-disruptive, and to use the observations as a non-reactive measure. Croll (1986) cites teachers as claiming they are not aware of

differences in their pupils' behaviour when an observer is present, but still goes to the bother of recommending a long set of preliminary measures to be taken by the observer, most of which were adopted by me. Teachers' whose lessons I attended told me, when asked, that they were not aware of any effect of my presence on their pupils. This still leaves me in agreement, however, with Croll's contention, that it is hard to know whether the teachers themselves behave differently.

In order to establish a positive work relationship with the teachers, and minimize my control over the situation so as to ensure that I witness the regular scene, I resorted to several measures in my interactions with the staff. Most of these are recommended by writers on systematic classroom observation (e.g. McIntyre, 1980; Croll, 1986; Woods, 1986).

- A. Familiarization process of going through the research procedure, but with no notes taken.
- B. Discussions with teachers, and explanation of the purpose of my presence.
- C. Assurance that the study is not concerned with judging individuals, and definitely not teachers.
- D. Assurance that the results of the research are confidential.
- E. Refraining from any undue pressure on teachers to get them to take part in the study. Permission to enter requested individually.
- F. Awareness of the fact that the staff has been approached by their senior, usually the principal, and verification that they have genuinely consented to take part in the study.
- G. Request for feedback from teachers about their feelings about being observed.

- H. Clarification that my interest is in the normal situation, and not in any performances put on in my honour by teachers or pupils.
- I. Apology to teachers who want feedback on their class work that the content and/or codes can be explained fully only after observations are completed.

The argument that ethnographers overrate themselves when they talk of their impact on the classroom, because they underestimate the power of the routinized patterns of classroom activities and traditional forces, is made by Hammersley (1980), McIntyre (1980) and Agar (1985). Hence, although the presence of the ethnographer is indeed a constraint on the actions of the subject under observation, it is most of the time overridden by the many other constraints that have the weight of tradition behind them.

In addition to the clarification of my relations vis a vis the staff, the contact with the pupils requires a clear contract too. With the intent of minimizing my control over pupils' behaviour, the interactions with them were based on two guidelines. First, an attempt to be unobtrusive and non-disruptive. Second, instructions to the teachers to explain that the researcher is a non participant observer, and is to be treated as a "fly on the wall". Furthermore, through verbal and non verbal communication, my reluctance to be drawn into class happenings was reiterated throughout. As suggested by Croll (1986) the pattern of interaction chosen was an attempt to avoid interaction with pupils, and if and when directly approached, to respond politely but briefly, and refer any questions about the work to the teacher.

Another constraint I was aware of every time I visited the schools, was the importance of the appearance of the researcher, and the adherence to the code of dress of the subjects.

While ethnographers would generally agree that merging into the community under observation requires the adoption of the particular code of dress, Measor (1985) emphasizes the unusual importance it has in ethnographic educational research. She insists one cannot overrate how critical it is for interviewers "to consider and monitor their appearance and image" (Ibid., p.60). When involved in research that places the researcher in the company of teachers and pupils, one needs to bear in mind that teachers act as a constraint in matters of clothing, and their notion of what is appropriate carries more weight than pupils' (Ibid., p.61).

So crucial is appearance in teacher culture that, Measor insists, it is an important factor in determining the data that the researcher obtains. Furthermore, she goes into great detail regarding the manner in which the interviewer's appearance can make or break an interview, and cites Bogdan & Taylor (1975) and Burgess (1984) as pointing out the need for the interviewers to monitor their personal characteristics, comments, gestures and actions, since they can influence the interview.

The effort to comply with the code of the school, appearance wise, and in my case, with each of the three, resulted both from the need to merge into the background, and to be amenable to the staff. It gave me great satisfaction to be asked by an Art teacher at the Kibbutz school whether I was a kibbutznik, adding that I looked like one. This confirmed that my efforts, that definitely required the adoption of a style of dress that was not my usual one, had been successful.

The effect of the researcher's ideas and impressions is to be taken into account, since letting these views and opinions be known can be a block to data collection (Measor, 1985; Scott, 1985; Woods, 1986). Accordingly I not only kept my impressions and ideas to myself, but also did my best to keep my occasional public statements out of reach of the subjects of my research. The endeavour to preserve anonymity was successful most of the time, and when it wasn't, recordings were made of those times this failed, though it is hard to prove any effect it might have had on the subjects.

McIntyre (1980) makes the point that since meaning and purpose are almost without exception, attributed by the researcher to what is observed, the fewer the inferences the observer has to make about what is happening, the more accurate the account is likely to be. Moreover, the researcher need not assume s/he understands the full range of meanings which participants attribute to the events. When meanings are not shared by the researcher and the observed, this discrepancy needs to be considered.

For this reason interviews were conducted only after months of observations, so that those interactions observed could be discussed, and their fuller meaning negotiated. Likewise, the results of the textual analysis were presented to the principal of Tev school for her comments several months after the analysis had been completed. It is surely relevant to point out that a presentation of the findings to the whole teaching staff at Tev was made in January 1994, at the special request of the principal who had decided, following my research and findings, that she would like to introduce changes in her school.

As a product of the school system under examination, dealing with familiarity is another constraint the researcher needs to sensitize herself to. Gleaning enlightening concepts and conclusions from only too familiar data is an inherent difficulty in ethnography, acknowledged by theorists and practitioners alike (Atkinson, 1981; Delamont, 1981; Morgan, 1981; Edwards & Furlong, 1985; Davies, 1985; Crump, 1990).

In the case of Edwards and Furlong (1985) who conducted research in an obviously innovative school, they admitted having made the point of selecting

examples of teaching sufficiently unlike what we had practised ourselves or witnessed elsewhere to make... [us] regularly aware of having to work to understand what was going on.

Ibid., p.22

This intentional shunning from the regular was built into their theoretical model and justified

the obstinate familiarity of what is being observed has been a formidable difficulty in classroom research, leading too many observers to trade unreflectingly on what they already know.

Ibid., p.22

Galton and Delamont (1985) use impressively militant terminology to convey the gravity of what they call "the familiarity problem". After the event they realized they had not trained their ethnographers in the ORACLE project to "combat familiarity". The result was that some were not able to make detailed enough fieldnotes as they "found the struggle too hard" (Ibid., p.176). This is a difficulty elaborated by Delamont

elsewhere, where she states categorically that "many studies have failed to make the familiar strange" (Delamont, 1981).

The effect of the gender of the researcher and the researched is another constraint that the ethnographic model with its advocacy of direct contact with the subjects, imposes on the researcher.

Just as the ethnographer must distance her/himself from the events and data in order to be able to recognize the obvious, classify it appropriately, and then read it as if it were an unfamiliar culture, the effect of the sex of the researcher and that of the researched, is not to be ignored.

There is no denying that the participant observer has a gender identity, that might affect access, interactions, the point of view of the researcher, and likewise the expectations of the subjects of the research from the researcher.

Research situations in which the researcher is outnumbered by subjects of the other sex, are likely to draw comment. A male ethnographer who conducted research in a factory assembly department that consisted practically only of females (Morgan, 1981), reports that he was fully aware of those variables that distanced him from his subjects: gender, class, age and marital status. As he remarks, were he working in a different department, other latent characteristics would have come to the fore.

Research situations with both sexes create a different problem, as the researcher has to be aware of his/her greater familiarity with one of the sexes. Consequently, when researching subjects of both sexes, there might be a tendency to

comment only on the "different" treatment handed out by subjects of the other sex. But as Morgan states "the obvious deserves at least as much attention from the sociologist as the extraordinary. It is also more difficult to recognize" (Ibid., 88).

The paramountcy of "making the familiar strange" refers to same sex situations that occur in the process of the research too. The study of same sex groups, and the unexpected creation of single sex groups by the subjects of the researcher's sex in the process of the observations, pose questions concerning the hidden agenda, the possible bias caused by the subjects, and the effect of these subjects confiding in the researcher more than the members of the other sex.

The fact that some female teachers struck up conversations of rather an intimate nature should not go unrecorded and brushed off as a sign that they "naturally" felt at ease with me. At Tev, for example, the music teacher with whom I sat chatting in the staff room, disclosed she was suffering from especially heavy periods, with no prompting on my part. She later told me she was worried she might lose her position at the school. These are definitely most private items of information. At Hez my informal conversations with teachers in the staff room lead them to talk of their personal experience with sexual harassment as pupils. They also talked freely about their children, and problems related to organizing child care.

The unstated assumptions they were working on are significant as they reflect a certain gendered culture shared by females:

- I could be trusted.

- I was familiar with their dilemmas as mothers.
- I knew all about sexual harassment and would accept their word.
- I shared their experience as females in the school system, both as former pupils and as teachers.

Davies (1985) shows how the intimacy more likely in same sex situations is not all gain:

On the one hand, being the same sex may aid in familiarity and confidences...; on the other hand, however, I [female] might have lost out on the 'cultural stranger' role which is able to explore seemingly 'commonsense' explanations of the world, and which benefits from seeing unremarkable events as phenomena to be unpacked....A focus on gender itself is... a way of making the familiar strange.

Ibid., p.85

In a similar fashion, it is not to be taken for granted and therefore unmentioned on that male teachers treated me differently from females. It is a fact that not one male teacher initiated similarly personal accounts, or implied he and I shared experiences, either personal or professional. However, the extent to which this alienation caused them to feel ill at ease with me or affected their statements, is a matter for speculation only, as they obviously could not and would not elaborate on this point.

The feminist aspect of the gender of the researcher needs mentioning too. Taking account of gender means "taking account reflexively, of the gender of the researcher, as well as of the researched, and of the two in interaction" (Morgan, 1981, p.94).

This supports Roberts in her complaint, in the same collection of articles, that

feminists, in stressing the need for a reflexive sociology in which the sociologist takes her own experiences seriously and incorporates them into her work, expose themselves to challenges of a lack of objectivity from those of their male colleagues whose sociological insight does not enable them to see that their own work is affected in a similar way by their experiences and their view of the world as men.

Roberts, 1981, p.16

Oakley (1981) attaches much significance to the way in which research is conducted by women, and feminists in particular. Her description of the distinct manner in which women interview women, highlights the centrality of gendered interaction in the ethnographic research situation.

Critical alertness of the researcher is therefore crucial at all stages of the ethnographic study. The need to be aware of one's own ideological commitment and values both in the course of the research, and in the process of the analysis of the data (Crump, 1990), requires that the researcher monitor his/her performance, while conducting interviews (Measor, 1985, Scott, 1985). The reactions and input of the researcher are likewise to be recorded and taken into account in less structured conversations, and in observations.

This is the kind of control the ethnographer needs over the situation - control over her/himself. The danger of confusing that which has been seen or heard with the data the researcher expected or wanted to find, is connected with the issue of familiarity and self awareness.

The recognition of the manner in which the personality of the researcher, and the process s/he undergoes, determine the research design and even threaten its validity, need to be built into the data analysis. Hammersley (1984) summarizes the manner in which the ethnographer might "contaminate" the scene.

[1] the researcher always has some impact on the setting..., [2] the selectivity necessarily involved in research activity will shape the data and findings, and ... [3] researchers are by no means immune to the effects of interests and values

Ibid., p.41

Another constraint, that combines personal immersion in the subject matter, and theoretical issues, is the validation of generalizations. Silverman complains that ethnographers "whatever their theoretical presuppositions, share a common problem - they appear to lack a sound means of developing and validating generalisations" (Silverman, 1985, p.111). But the validation can be done through analytic induction by means of which the researcher tries to formulate generalizations that hold across all his data (Ibid., 112 where he also cites writers from the 1950s and 1970s and the more recent works of Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; and Mitchell, 1983).

Silverman agrees with Mitchell (1983) that "the logic of case studies is theoretically rather than statistically defined" (Silverman, p.113).

The analyst selects cases only because he believes they exhibit some general theoretical principle. His account's claim to validity depends entirely on demonstrating that the features he portrays in the case are representative not of a population but of this general principle. As Mitchell points out, the

aim is not to select a typical case, but a deviant or compelling case.

Ibid., 113-114

Whereas statistical analysis can reveal correlations but not causes, the analyst

can extrapolate from case studies to like situations by logical inference based on the demonstrated power of our theoretical model to account for initially negative instances. The claim, therefore, is not to representativeness but to faultless logic.

Ibid., p.114

Grounded theory as explained and recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967), offers a model for turning qualitative research into an innovative process of generation of theory. This approach, that rejects the validation of former research as a creative rationale for setting out on research, determined my own research model, as it best suited the exploratory nature of the study.

The last constraint to be noted is the researcher's need to establish a pattern of recording events that enables the temporal location of events and places them in a sequence of events.

Some manner of continuous recording has to be maintained, though not on a minute by minute system, an approach that has inaccuracies of its own as demonstrated by Croll (1986). Event recording makes possible the recording of events of too great complexity to allow an exact continuous record to be kept. In this study this method was employed, but was discontinued at

times when the taking down of dialogue verbatim, seemed most urgent.

As a rule, the collection of detailed descriptions of activities in classroom or in school that are too irregular to be categorized systematically, and the addition of extracts from verbal exchanges, require an original integrative viewpoint to generate such categories that will help make sense of such qualitative data.

The process of data collection

The relationship between theory and method and between data collection and data analysis, are key issues in methodology. Burgess (1984) offers no less than 15 guiding questions for the ethnographer who needs to structure a report on the formal and informal procedures of his or her research (Ibid., p.8). Indeed the uniquely pivotal position of the observer in the collection and analysis of qualitative data, makes the personal actions and reactions central to the emergence of the final research model. The numerous constraints that modify the researcher's conduct and in turn the actual research make the process itself a source of data, to be incorporated in the final analysis.

The research programme designed for this study, could not prepare me for all the events that came my way, and even less for the expressions of sexism no text book had ever taught me to look for. The total immersion in the life style of the schools visited, called for by the qualitative research methods, brought me into contact with many unpredicted experiences.

I had expected the time factor to be a significant variable, and indeed the months I spent enabled me to follow the curriculum, note changes in the weather, and its effect on

school activities, watch teachers introduce themselves and/or their new subjects, sense the weariness in the middle of the school year, attend the celebration of holidays, feel the tension before exams and the handing out of report cards, record preparations for graduation and perceive the pupils' concern about their future.

My visits to each school were spread over two to four months. I first visited Hez school and the Kibbutz school in December 1989, and attended regularly in January, February and March 1990. I then returned in April 1990 to the Kibbutz and in May to Hez to conduct interviews with teachers. In May and June I visited Tev school several times a week, until the school year ended. In January 1992, after writing up my findings, I returned there to hear the principal's reaction to my analysis of the report cards written by the staff, since the unique format had been devised and supervised by her.

I observed 104 formal lessons, watched another four hours of a special learning activity conducted out of doors for a whole age group at Hez, and attended an annual elaborate ceremony for the entire school at Tev. In addition I recorded the activities of pupils and staff, in recess, both indoors and out of doors, in the corridors and the school yard.

The random sampling of days and lessons, and my unannounced visits, enabled me to observe events that are admittedly not representative of the school routine. Thus I attended the celebration of the holiday of Shavuot at Tev, a special out of doors language activity at Hez, the coping of pupils with the absence of teachers, and the preparation of report cards at Tev. To exclude such days and extra curricular activities would misrepresent the totality of the experience of pupils at school,

and limit the range of interactions with teachers that the ethnographic model aims at.

The teachers and pupils were observed both in class, in recess and around the school. I spent many hours in the staff rooms, watching, listening and when possible conversing too. The process of interviewing the teachers was embarked upon only after I had completed the series of observations, and had, hopefully, established myself as a passive, non critical or judgemental observer.

Throughout my stay in the schools I made a conscious effort to appear neither threatening nor imposing. I adopted the style of dress characteristic of each of the schools in turn, tried to appear as non intrusive or alien as possible, and dissociated myself from the prime symbol of authority, i.e. the principal, as much as I possibly could.

My intention was to create the impression that I was accessible to pupils and staff alike, so that in addition to their implicit consent to my witnessing scenes, and overhearing conversations, they might feel free to approach me, ask me questions, and even invite me to join them in their informal groupings. Once the routine of my visits had been established, there was never any hint dropped by the subjects of my study concerning the abuse of their privacy or trust.

As part of my efforts to minimize the distraction caused by my presence in classrooms, my preference was to sit behind the pupils, facing the teacher. However, the majority of teachers at the Kibbutz school and at Tev, invited me to sit facing the class, somewhere to their side. While complying with their wishes, which I sometimes felt were to my disadvantage, I

registered this significant and unforeseen instruction, and endeavoured to incorporate it into the rest of the body of knowledge I was accumulating about the teachers. It could be interpreted as proof that these teachers were confident my presence had no impact on the pupils, or conversely, as a manipulation on the teachers' part to force me to face the class, rather than focus on them.

The teachers' motives were never disclosed, as I refrained from asking them questions that might make them self conscious, and perhaps put out by my presence.

Keeping my opinions to myself, and adopting a dissociated stand served also to ensure anonymity. On an occasion when a secretary at Hez and a female pupil mentioned they had seen my photograph in a popular youth magazine in which I had been interviewed about sexism in schools, I was concerned lest my research interests be divulged. An additional incident in which I felt exposed was when the principal at Tev introduced me in too familiar a fashion, telling the staff I had already published a handbook for teachers on sex equity in schools. The combination of the disclosure of my interests and expertise, together with the suggestion of a prior acquaintance with this principal, who is in fact a distant relative, caused me to fear I had lost my cover as an unbiased researcher.

Another source of data explored was the use of space by pupils and staff, the division between pupils' space and staff space, the distinct patterns of seating, and the assignment of responsibility for caring for the premises and the equipment, served to expose the codes of behaviour prevalent in each of the schools. Likewise, the study of the environment including the decorations in the classrooms and in the communal school areas,

the signs and the wording of instructions, provided information about the regulating norms.

The advantage of the ethnographic methodology over quantitative research methods in exposing such indicators of the culture under examination, that no preplanned research design could ever take into account, was repeatedly confirmed. The readiness it demanded of me to flow with the natural course of events at school, lead me to formerly untapped sources of relevant data. For example, although I had never at any point considered examining school documents, the eventual employment of methods of textual analysis, was a direct outcome of the pursuit of this approach.

The disclosure of valuable evidence of hidden sexism through a comparative analysis of the character descriptions written into the report cards at Tev school, is surely an innovative contribution. It brings into the open a well hidden means of conveying influential sex differentiated messages, that the data accumulated from the observations, and from interviews in all three schools, did not disclose.

Unlike the textual analysis of which the teachers were never informed, the teachers' and pupils' knowledge of my project and purpose depended on the staff of each school, and is of significance too. The precise focus of my observations and the true nature of my research questions were disclosed to the principals only. The research was not, however, 'open' to the staff or pupils, to use Burgess's term (1985, p.147). It was partly 'open' to the staff in the sense that they all knew I was a researcher interested in adolescents. It was completely 'closed' as regards my focussing on the interactions of teachers

and pupils, with gender as the major variable. Burgess expresses the fear that by confessing

to having engaged in 'closed' as well as 'open' research might well earn ...[the researcher] a place in the methodologists' 'chamber of horrors' where ...[s/he] will be subject to some 'torture'.

Ibid., p.158

However, he regards this as one of the built in difficulties in field research, alongside the need that rises periodically to refrain from telling the truth to preserve the delicate balance of the insider/outsider role played by the researcher.

In this study, informing the teachers of the researcher's interest in gendered interactions would have required the clarification of the terms that are unfamiliar to Hebrew speakers. Such an explanation might have triggered a process of argument or awareness that might have seriously contaminated the data. As for the report cards, the teachers at Tev have since had the opportunity to hear and discuss the findings, and have given consent to their publication.

The extent to which it was 'open' to pupils, depended on the decision of each teacher. On the level of the specific classroom, it was the prerogative of the teacher to introduce me in his/her own words, or not to introduce me or acknowledge my presence at all. Although at the onset it was suggested to the principals of the three schools that pupils could be told the same as the teachers about my presence, this approach was adopted in only two of the schools. By no influence or instruction of mine this recommendation was ignored in the

kibbutz school, with the outcome that pupils speculated whether I were an inspector or a teaching trainee.

It is remarkable that in the so called democratic kibbutz setting, the teachers denied the pupils an understanding of the situation they were placed in, i.e. the subjects of a research. The rationale of those teachers who chose to refrain from explaining my presence was not investigated, again so as not to put pressure on them, and make them unduly aware of my observation of their conduct. If their intent were to draw minimal attention to me, the curiosity aroused by the state of unclarity their pupils resented, defied their purpose. Another possibility is that they were in fact protecting themselves by hiding the fact that I was an outsider with different skills, and not a student there to learn from them how to teach. This last point is of particular relevance in the kibbutz school, where both the staff and the pupils are used to the presence of a regular stream of students from the kibbutz teacher training college, in the classrooms.

A retrospective study of interactions with pupils, initiated by the latter reveals that pupils in Hez approached me more than in other schools to ask me what I was doing, and there were times when I was addressed as if I were a representative of the staff. On one occasion I was positioned outside a classroom waiting for a teacher who was late for class, as I always made a point of not entering a room before the teacher, so s/he could refuse entry if s/he were so inclined. This time pupils approached me and asked if I knew whether the teacher were at school, and later, when she still had not appeared, whether I would teach them instead.

Since it was obvious, quite early in the process of observations, that the personal reactions, i.e. queries, feelings, responses and hesitations were all significant data, these were registered in the field notes and in a self analytical report of procedures and context, in the form of irregular entries in a field work journal. There was never any doubt in my mind that personal reactions of discomfort, boredom, confusion and isolation, mirrored a certain situation that other parties involved in the situation under observation, were most probably experiencing too. In retrospect, the more elaborate the notes about my personal involvement in a given situation, the more light it sheds on field notes written at the time. As Kirk and Miller (1986) rightly point out:

qualitative researchers commonly find their own earlier notes ambiguous or incomprehensible, because they have forgotten what it was they knew or felt when the notes were taken. Recording the questions that were asked contributes a great deal to the meaningfulness of the notes.

Ibid., p.55

A case in point is an experience from the early stages of the observations, at Hez school. I was attending a history lesson, noting the restlessness of pupils, and the general sense of disorder. I was getting somewhat confused as to what merited recording, as boys and girls alike were unattentive, and similarly mobile. At a certain point I changed my seat. I was sitting at a desk in the back row, and there was a vacant seat next to me, and as the window directly behind me was open, there was a draught on my back. Only after moving did it strike me that I had done the unmentionable for the observer: I had broken my self imposed rule to be "a fly on the wall", not reacting to any circumstances. In effect what I deduced from the experience

was that I had mirrored the pupils' restlessness and had joined them in their physical acting out of their protest. I too had expressed my boredom and distress, and had joined the pupils in sending the teacher a very powerful message of dissociation from the context and flow of her lesson.

This incident was a dramatic illustration of the need to be at all times aware of the power of the situation under scrutiny over me. The ease with which one might become, albeit unintentionally, a participant in the going ons, and consequently affect the subjects in unforeseeable manners, was a warning taken for the rest of the data collecting process.

Such a recording of the researcher's awareness of her personal reactions to a situation being observed, demonstrates the complexity of the role of the ethnographer, and the challenge of being both a participant and an outsider. Kirk and Miller (1986) describe this duality aptly:

As do other scientists, qualitative researchers do not report on studied objects, ... so much as they report on their interaction with the objects.

Ibid., p.71

Relevant to the process of data collection is the fact that the approach throughout was holistic in the sense that the schools observed were regarded as vehicles of socialization in which social constructs are transmitted in an uncontested fashion. This implies looking at everything, listening to everything, and attending all possible activities of subjects of observations. In the stage of processing it calls for incorporating all sorts of data, even if prior to the formulation of a theory it may be difficult to distinguish between data and noise (Kirk & Miller, 1986).

This is a much broader and inclusive view than Lutz conceived of when using the term 'holistic' to describe the approach of the ethnographer to understanding schooling (Lutz, 1986). Lutz refers to the social forces that determine the mode of operation of schools, and therefore insists on the need for

...a broader, holistic approach rooted in the cultural context in which school districts are constituted, school boards are elected, superintendents are hired and fired, schools are built and staffed, and in which teachers and pupils go about the business of schooling.

Ibid., p. 110.

Precisely because the school system in Israel is dissimilar from the one described by Lutz (e.g. there are no school boards elected or otherwise appointed), a redefinition of the term 'holistic' in the research design is called for.

Hargreaves (1985) calls organized education "a highly political affair" (Ibid., p.21), a description that is only slightly more extreme and definitive than the not unpopular notion that education is part of the broader social policy enterprise through which governments and other policy makers seek to produce change in social as well as educational outcomes or, alternatively to preserve the social and economic status quo. Finch (1985) takes this concept further and declares qualitative research as having significant potential for having an impact on social policy in education.

There is no doubt that schools do not operate in a vacuum, and that they are part of a hierarchical value system that effects them in numerous manners. Moreover, the educational system is itself an extension of a larger, centralistic system, especially in the Israeli case. The extent to which a specific

school may deviate from the national curriculum is slight, and when it wishes to innovate, it requires the approval of the authorities. Even Tev school, which is one of a kind, catering for pupils with specific interests and talents, is under constant surveillance and is the topic of ongoing public dispute for being selective, costly and striving primarily for excellence rather than for integration.

It is a fact that sexism proved most notable in extra-curricular activities in all three schools. This substantiates my argument that the school socializes not only through those messages predetermined by the authorities, but by means of unplanned and unchecked activities initiated by the staff, activities that convey those covert social constructs that are deeply ingrained in the wider culture, and barely controlled by the national curriculum and centralized instructions.

A final word concerning the control over the data should sum up the methodological approach. The method chosen was to put myself at the mercy of the schools, and endeavour to exercise minimal control over school life and the events witnessed and studied.

One of the variables that the ethnographer needs to consider in the recording and writing up of the data is the positioning of these phenomena on a scale of control of either the ethnographer or the subject (Agar, 1986). Both the form and the content might be controlled by either party, in various direct and indirect ways. Structured interviews for instance are controlled by the researcher, especially if s/he insists on strictly confining the interviewee to the predetermined issues only. At the other end of the range one could place literary

texts composed by the subject/s of the research, that are free of any influence of the researcher, who is obliged to accept them as a fait accompli.

At an early stage preference was given to situations characterized by the subject's control, based on the assumption that this might decrease to a minimum the contamination of the scene by the presence of the observer. The determination to minimize manipulation on my part and/or interference, demanded full concentration both on all the goings-on, and on any possible and unpredicted action or reaction on my part. Eventually it was totally in accordance with this rationale that the most valuable findings were gleaned from a source over which I had no control whatsoever, i.e. the report cards of the pupils at the Tev school junior high.

Chapter 6

UNCOVERING THE HIDDEN MESSAGES

Ultimately it is not possible to support one's belief in gender polarity (or "sex difference") without maintaining gender hierarchy (which in our culture is male supremacy). Clinging to "sex differences" is clinging to male supremacy.

Stoltenberg (1989), p.105.

Silence itself - the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers - is less the absolute limit of discourse, the other side from which it is separated by a strict boundary, than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within over-all strategies.... There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses.

Foucault (1976), p.27.

The hidden agenda in Israeli schools on sexuality, sex differences, sex roles and family life, is disclosed only by the close and critical analysis of various aspects of school life. The awareness of sexuality, alongside the avoidance of discourse on gender and power, produces a strategy of silence.

Most rewarding in this study is the analysis of language usage, in particular, the textual analysis of report cards, that provide the most illuminating instance of employment of gendered language. The documentary sources are much more revealing than

the oral interactions in classrooms, that were the focus of the observations throughout the school year, though these too, in less condensed a form, expose the process of sex differentiated treatment.

Next in importance are unstructured and semi-structured interviews of teachers, and the light they shed on male teachers' awareness of their female pupils' sexuality. Then come extra-curricular activities, such as school rituals, and their particular means of conveying the gendered ethos of each school. Other significant sources of information are out of the ordinary classroom situations, like the first meeting of pupils and teacher. Finally, other established foci of ethnographic studies of schools yield their own share of the hidden curriculum: use of space, time allocation, school landscape, disciplinary measures, staffroom talk, and the attitudes to the researcher.

At the outset it must be stated that not one teacher was overheard making an explicit reference in class to gender roles. But then as LaFrance (1991) puts it "in classrooms..., it is unusual to find blatant examples of sexism. It is not necessary to be actively sexist". All one needs is "to act in the customary, ordinary, usual and even polite manner"(p. 6).

Sanders (1989) describes a similar view, using more picturesque a style:

I find very few outright sexists in the schools,
very few people who truly believe girls should be
raised to be barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen.
What is far more common is unintended sexism that
arises from a failure of empathy

Ibid., pp.166-167

The improbability of witnessing manifest instances of sex discrimination is noted by Delamont (1980) too. The gender differentiation that is tolerated by a given society is mirrored in its school culture, and even amplified at times, but due to its acceptance, is effectively camouflaged.

Schools and the educational institutions today are enforcing a set of sex and gender roles which are more rigid than those current in the wider society.... The enforcement of these sex roles affects staff and pupils, yet is very rarely a conscious policy. There are taken-for-granted norms about male and female roles in schools which are hard to show in action, and even harder to eradicate.

Ibid., p.4

The state of affairs in Israel is characterized by a similar duality, and a considerable disparity between state policy and school practice. It is only the inclusive ethnographic methodology that exposes abundant evidence of subtle but pervasive means of conveying sexist messages, and perpetuating gendered behaviour. The onus of exposing and conceptualizing is still on the researcher, and in this case even the accumulated data was insufficient to convince the teachers observed that their practice was inequitable.

Ongoing observations of life at school disclose the conformity of the teachers, which, in turn, explains the non-existence of teachers' drive for change. No divergence of the teachers from mainstream Israeli norms, or hint of critique of prevailing social constructs, was ever noted. In fact, without exception, all those observed and interviewed reiterated the pro family, pro-natalist bias of the mainstream Israeli Jewish

society. The origins of this uniformity might call for a deeper study of the Israeli teacher population. For the purpose of this report on research, however, the adherence to traditional, nationalistic values, should be regarded a-priori as the social context within which the statements and manners of the teachers recorded here need to be read, whether the origins of this world view are fully explained or not.

Sexuality and school

The definition suggested by Sadker, Sadker & Shakeshaft (1987) for teachers' notion of sexuality, would suit Israeli teachers perfectly:

Sexuality, then is about gender expectations based upon the stereotype that when men and women are together the outcome is sexual.

Ibid., p.220

This statement implies conversely that "the sexual" occurs only between man and woman, another assumption Israeli teachers ascribe to.

This isn't surprising. Sex integration rarely occurs in American school systems. Starting in about the second grade, boys and girls move apart and segregate themselves along sex lines. Little is done to change this pattern of sex isolation and observations of classrooms and playgrounds find ample evidence of boys against girls spelling bees or athletic contests.

Ibid., p.220

Although both the voluntary and the institutionalized sex segregation and competition between sexes Sadker et al describe

is less pronounced in Israeli schools than in USA and the UK, the sexually loaded nature of co-educational situations is similar.

When males and females do come together again during late adolescence, it is for sexual or romantic reasons. Men and women have very little training or practice in working together as people, rather than representatives of another sex. It's not surprising, then, that sexuality (and particularly heterosexuality) gets in the way of easy working relationships between women and men.

Ibid., p.220.

The awareness voiced by the Israeli male teachers interviewed, of the inhibiting effect of the sexuality of their female pupils on the working relationship, proves this last point emphatically.

David (1986) in her analysis of the effect of the era of Thatcher and Reagan on the reinstating of the privacy of the conventional family in the UK and USA, aptly describes the Israeli scene too:

By glorifying the conventional family, and conventional motherhood within it, it is creating and recreating sexual inequalities. Schools, by relying on conventional families, further reinforce sexual inequalities.... In celebrating the 'biological ethic' they impose psychological burdens on mothers.

Ibid., p.56

This conservative assumption that all youngsters aspire to marriage and parenthood, and look forward to the security of the

socially approved traditional family structure, is built into the Israeli school ethos in surreptitious ways.

1. Encouragement of marriage and parenting

Teachers' manifest satisfaction with the formation of couples in their classes in junior high school, derives from their view of heterosexual courting and bonding as a measure of maturity. When asked to point out gender differences in class conduct, several teachers chose to discuss dating. Yossi (m.), who teaches natural science at Tev school, talks about the 8th and 9th grade:

Yossi: Girls are more mature, more involved and concerned. Boys are more interested in basketball. Girls' maturity is expressed in all sorts of things, out of class too. When we were on an outing the girls got up [in the morning] without any problems. The boys complained. Boys are a bit more interested in girls than in the lesson. Girls, probably hide their interest. There are couples. There are G. [f.] and I. [m.] in 8a. In 9th grade there are no real couples, But D. [m.] is interested in M. [f.].

At this point Yossi ponders whether there are additional couples but eventually remarks that there are none.

A female history teacher at Tev school, on hearing of my research interest in the behaviour of adolescents, referred me to a 9th grade where there were several couples. She felt this proved the class was most relevant to my scientific pursuit.

The notable interest of the aforementioned teachers in their pupils' social-sexual life, gains deeper significance when viewed in the context of school traditions. Rituals, by their highlighting of significant issues, shed light on the value system of a given community. Accordingly, the following description of one of the yearly events conducted at Tev school, a ceremony devised and conducted by the principal, is a valuable source of data that confirms my hypothesis about the prevailing attitude to families.

As in the case of the outdoor special language activity conducted at Hez, described in a later chapter, this is an instance of an extra curricular activity, chosen by the principal for purposes of enrichment and the establishment of a school culture. These special projects provide insight into the real ethos of the schools under examination, and expose sexism that is more explicit than anything recorded in classrooms.

The Jewish harvest festival Pentacost, was the time of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where the newly born stock and first crops were offered to the priests in the holy temple. This tradition ended with the destruction of the temple, over 2000 years ago. In modern Israel the tradition has been replaced by a symbolic display of decorated baskets brought to school, containing seasonal fruits. Younger children, boys and girls alike, come to school that day wearing garlands of fresh flowers in their hair.

The ceremony I attended in May was most unusual, in line with the innovative character of Tev school. The unique programme is an authentic expression of the school ethos, as ceremonies are by their public and repetitive nature, powerful

vehicles of social values. In this case I witnessed a manifest and unique celebration of human fertility.

The celebration of creation and procreation in nature is taken literally here to include fauna, flora and human babies. First the regular fruit baskets were displayed, then pupils lead a procession of newly born animals from the adjoining zoological gardens, and finally babies born within the last year, to staff and to schoolchildren's families were introduced by their mothers.

The female staff paraded seven female babies and one male. After the ceremony two girls approached the principal to remind her that a male teacher had fathered a baby that year too. Ms B regretted having forgotten him, said he was on an outing, but added in an authoritarian tone that he should have known that babies were to have been brought and introduced. Whether she might have instructed this male teacher not to go on his trip, in order to be able to introduce his new born baby had she remembered, or else have expected him to instruct his wife to come to the school, is a matter for speculation.

The babies of the staff ranged from one month to twelve months old, and were paraded in front of the pupils who were gathered in an orderly fashion in the courtyard. The pupils applauded their teachers and seemed to regard this opportunity to know more about the personal lives of their teachers, as great fun.

After calling on each teacher in turn and introducing the babies, Ms B, forever smiling and enthusiastic, commented on the large number of female babies, and the single male:

See what a great choice of brides he has here!

Next, pupils were invited to approach with their mothers and new siblings, and introduce them to the school. The youngest was ten days old, and all were received with great enthusiasm. Throughout the ceremony I stood under a tree, among children and mothers. Nearby a mother nursed her baby, while her older daughter sat contentedly next to her.

Another noteworthy scene occurred when the younger school children brought cages with baby animals. The principal asked the names of the cage bearers, addressing them all in the feminine. When she realized one was a boy she apologized:

Eran! Forgive me. With the garland and the [long] hair I thought you were a beautiful girl.

In response to my query about the inclusion of babies in this traditional fertility rite, Ms B remarked that she had never devised similar rituals in the other schools she had headed. Her rationale was that the frequent visits of pupils of this special school to the zoological gardens, enabled the constant observation of the life cycle. Since the animal offspring they learnt about needed to be introduced and welcomed, it was only appropriate to rejoice in human procreation too.

Despite the clear statement about the centrality of family life contained in this ceremony, and the bias expressed in favour of larger families, the principal showed no awareness of this being included in the school ethos,.

Another member of the staff, whom I had never met before, contributed to the strong pro-natalist, pro-male messages of the day. On mingling among teachers in the staff room, later that morning, and noticing that the majority of the babies were

females, the school nurse exclaimed, using the slang term for genitalia "pipi":

What we're missing here are some more crooked pipis.

The disclosure of sex bias, and the amplification of traditional messages about sexuality and sex roles in the presence of the whole student body in this school ceremony, is analogous to the effect of another public event observed. The language activity conducted at Hez school, described in the next chapter, is the other extra-curricular yet formal activity attended by chance, and it too provided unexpected insight into those social constructs of teachers, that were elsewhere carefully concealed, while subtly built into daily school life.

The ritual and the ceremonial, as is generally recognized by anthropologists, are invaluable sources of information about social values and constructs. Even when the built-in connection is disowned by the organizers, as was the case at the Tev ceremony, the concepts behind the happenings are in effect true and undeniable reflections of the value system.

The manners in which such educational experiences confine pupils' concept of sexuality can be summed up in the words of Shilling (1991):

Patriarchal relations in sexuality refer both to the primacy given in our society to heterosexuality over other forms of sexuality, and the unequal position of women within heterosexual relationships. As a set of rules, the primary significance of heterosexuality has been to orientate women towards marriage as a desirable goal, and to 'discipline' women seen to step outside the boundaries of acceptable sexual

behaviour.

Ibid., p.29

Alternatives to the traditional family model were never presented in classroom discussions recorded. The school discourse is completely dissociated from the Israeli scene of the 1980s and early 1990s, where males and females are marrying at a later age, cohabitation is socially acceptable, unwed single mothers have their own official organization, the rate of divorce is rising steadily, and a growing number of children are raised in single parent families, or in new merged families.

None of these life patterns or family structures are presented as options, and adulthood is invariably regarded as synonymous with marriage and parenthood. The same attitudes are voiced in informal conversations, in the staff room and in classrooms. The absence of any trace of critique, let alone radicalism, is shared by the teachers in all three schools studied, regardless of the diverse ideological origins of each of the educational institutes.

A scene from an Art class demonstrates several of the points discussed here, and leads up to the next issue, homophobia.

Edna the art teacher dictates Rembrandt's biography:

Edna: Did I mention that his wife died?

Girl1: No, only that he married.

Girl2: He wasn't a homo.

Edna: Following this his mental state was very unstable of course.

Later:

Edna: He remarried.

Girl: He still loves the first one.

Edna: Sure he loves her.

Girl: This is a soap opera.

Girl: Did he have children that he needed a nanny?

Edna: He very much needed a family. The family support is one of the things that kept him going. Life ended for him the moment his son died. Because his wife died. It's like Begin*. Look what happened to him after his wife died, women in general ... [she leaves the sentence incomplete]

Girl: He [Begin] is alive.

Edna: He's alive, but what kind of life does he live.

Girl: He only leaves home for her memorial service.

Edna: Yes.

Girl: You love all the miserable and pathetic persons.

Edna: Yes.

Girl: And the homos.

Edna: Yes, they're all that sort.

Girl1: All the great persons were homos.

Girl2: But not all the homos are great.

*Menachem Begin, former Israeli prime minister, since deceased, who retired from public life following the death of his wife.

2. Homophobia

The tolerance of pupils' mocking references to homosexuals, as in the former instance, is another means of presenting a heterosexual union as the only conceivable relationship. No instances were recorded in which teachers raised the issue of sexual preferences, or felt at ease with comments on homosexuality in class. In fact their discomfort highlights the inability to include the issue in their discourse. In one case a teacher, after the event, denied that any reference had been

made. No such denial of other recorded classroom interactions was ever encountered in the course of my interviews. The incident is therefore of interest, and runs as follows:

Rami, a political science teacher (m.) is teaching an 11th grade at the Kibbutz school. He moves around a lot, and touches a boy in a friendly fashion.

Rami: I can do this to a boy. I do it to a girl, oy I get into trouble.

Later when asked to spell a certain name, he jokes that he can spell it in ancient Persian as he was born in Turkey. This draws out an immediate loud response.

Boy: Then you mustn't do that even to a boy!

Then a boy shouts out that in Turkey a man needs to protect his rear, for fear of the local guys. This draws laughter, and Rami waits for the merriment to subside. He ignores both the tone and the terms used, does not react to the allusion to Turks as homosexuals, and doesn't even reprimand the boy for the disruption caused.

Several weeks later, I approached Rami in the staff room, and sensed I needed to introduce myself again. I reminded him I had once sat in on one of his lessons, and he responded that I seemed "vaguely familiar". My intent was to use that incident as leverage for a discussion of attitudes to homosexuality in school. Rami refused to enter such a conversation. The repeated attempts on my behalf to draw him out were undertaken only because I had written testimony of his dismissal of the issue in class too.

J.A.E.: You remember, I'm observing the behaviour of teenagers. I've finished my observations now. I

recall that once, when I sat in your class, there was a reference to homosexuality.

Rami: My class? Political science?

J.A.E.: Yes, and it was in connection with Turkey.

Rami: You must be confusing me with someone else.

J.A.E.: No, but perhaps you didn't pay attention. Someone mentioned Turkey. It wasn't relevant to the subject matter. I think it was mentioned that someone had been born there and someone said something about homosexuality, and I'm curious whether the pupils talk about this subject.

Rami: I don't remember such a thing.

J.A.E.: It doesn't matter 'cause it wasn't connected to the subject matter. I'm just attentive to everything. For instance, in an Art class I heard pupils who looked at paintings say the artist must be a homosexual. Perhaps the art teacher doesn't remember it either. That's not the point. I'm interested in knowing if pupils talk about it, if they use the term to put down others.

Rami: I never heard, not even the word Cocksie [male in drag]. Not here.

J.A.E.: Then where?

Rami: I used to teach in special education. There heard all sorts of things. Here I've never heard, but I'm new. But make no mistake, they're no angels here.

At this point I reverted to an open ended question about gender differences in class. Rami responded at length, although he had nothing to say about gendered behaviour, or dissimilar

treatment of the sexes. He merely described what he called the lack of motivation of boys and girls alike in the kibbutz school, caused in his opinion by the protective nature of the cooperative that discouraged ambition and investment in oneself. The fact that he himself had in that same lesson referred to, expressed in my presence, his fear of being accused of sexual harassment if he touched a girl, had no bearing on his declarations.

The allusion to the Art class that was intended to reduce any anxiety Rami might suffer at the thought that he had been singled out for an unusual or unnatural occurrence, did not advance the conversation. By comparison, Edna the Art teacher seemed less threatened by the topic when it was raised in her class, and in fact was tolerant of the myriad of homophobic and sexist comments uttered in response to the medieval paintings displayed.

On a painting by Caravaggio

Girl: He's a homo.

Edna: Okay, so he's a homo. So what?

Girl: He painted a friend (m.) of his.

Edna: This is the period of the young men. What you call the homos. He describes all the characters in very effeminate manner. The poses are very effeminate.

The remark that the Italian painter Caravaggio painted effeminate looking males, and must have been a homosexual like other painters, was not ignored by this teacher, who was even prepared to reiterate the word "homo". However, by refraining from commenting on the tone of mockery and derision, she

permitted the continued disrespectful bantering, and enabled the following exchange that followed immediately.

Another painting is shown.

Edna: Someone at the side is nearly elevated.

Girl: He really was an elevator [slang for homosexual].

Edna smiles.

Other comments on the sexual identity or physical, sexual attributes of persons portrayed were totally ignored by Edna, in all her lessons I observed. It is worth noting that the reason for most interactions on paintings being with female pupils, was because the male pupils exhibited complete detachment from the lesson, even when the lesson was a review in preparation for the final test.

On a painting of Jesus in the arms of a female:

Girl1: See how beautiful (f.) he is.

Girl2: Very beautiful (f.).

3. Sexual harassment and verbal abuse in class

The lessons of the same Art teacher in which these disrespectful comments on members of both sexes were recorded, contained instances of behaviour that can be categorized as abusive and inappropriate in pupil - teacher, male - female interactions. Here are some more examples of verbal abuse:

On a painting of the nude Bat-Sheva, by Rembrandt:

Girl1: What beautiful breasts.

Girl2: What tits.

Then a boy reacts to the same painting:

Boy: Wow, to have such a belly and also to be without money!

A detail of a painting of a girl is shown:

Alon: Is that a girl? It's (f.) a grandmother. It's
(f.) a witch.

The permit granted by Edna to deride individuals in a sexist manner, was taken to include physical harassment of her own person too. Consequently, the regular combination of physical and verbal harassment in her lessons is no coincidence. The fact that the abuser is a male pupil, Alon, who constantly displays disruptive behaviour, has an extremely short span of concentration for a 17 year old, and is completely disconnected from the academic work conducted in class, indicates that he might be a pupil with special needs, but cannot of course legitimize his manner to his teacher.

This is a description of part of a lesson, in the 11th and 12th grade at the kibbutz school. The general sense of chaos and lack of interest in academic achievements, is typical of this school, and probably of kibbutz schools in general in contrast to other Israeli high schools. The origins of this laissez faire attitude being the emphasis on one's participation in communal activities, rather than on the advancement of the career of the individual, as explained by Rami and other teachers.

Pupils enter classroom, there are ten females and five males. Alon hugs the teacher and says he will sit in class, and if he disturbs she should send him out. Throughout the lesson Edna faces the girls and addresses them only. She reprimands the girls for being noisy, using a collective noun to address pupils, but looking only at the girls. Meanwhile Alon leaves the room in a clownish fashion, causing merriment. A boy stretches his legs on a chair near him, leaning back against the wall.

Another boy sits with his knees up. A girl with long hair plaits her hair.

Alon reenters noisily behind the teacher, making exaggerated strides. The boy who sits next to him puts his leg on the back of Alon's chair. Edna asks Alon to work the slide projector. He doesn't wait for instructions and changes slides quickly.

Edna: Hey, Alon!

Alon: We've seen too much of this.

Paintings are shown for the pupils to identify. Three boys don't even look. Alon gets into lots of trouble with the projector, going backwards, repeating paintings, thoroughly enjoying the reactions.

Edna: Alon, I don't know what will become of you.

A painting by Van Dyck is shown.

Alon: They didn't like girls then.

Edna asks him to leave. He says he was only talking about the painting. She lets him stay.

In her explanations Edna addresses girls by name and mentions this painting is for this pupil and that for the other, directing specific girls' attention to different details. She makes no demands on the boys. After some time she approaches the boy leaning against the wall, touches his head lightly twice with her projector pointer and asks what the matter is with him, and whether she's boring him.

Dori: It's not you.

Edna: You can say it is.

Dori asks for the painting with the stars. He refers to "The Night Watch", the slide of which is defective and has spots like stars.

Edna: Will this wake you up?

Edna turns the light on.

Edna: Dori and Alon. I suggest you make a social separation. It disturbs terribly, even if you're talking about the painting. It prevents you from falling asleep but disturbs me terribly.

(To the girls) You're very stormy today. Dalia, I have no energy for you today.

Dalia: To fly?

Edna: Yes.

Dalia rises, throws orange peels in the bin.

Dalia: It's the second class I've been thrown out of today.

Edna: Okay, then sit down.

Dalia throws orange segments to Dori and to a girl in front of her.

Edna: Alon! Put your legs down.

A girl holds five inflated balloons and rattles them.

Edna: I really feel sorry for myself. I have to be here till 8p.m. Let me get through this lesson easily.

Alon: Should I stay with you Edna?

Edna: (Laughing) Just not that. No it's not because of him. I need to be alone a bit, without children.

Alon enters again, hugs Edna from behind, one arm on her shoulder and the other round her neck. Edna tells him to leave. When he next leaves the room, he catches her from behind on his way out. She once again tells him to leave.

When she needs someone to operate the slide projector, she asks where Alon is, and then hands it over to another boy. Some time later Alon returns, skips all the way to his seat. Edna tells him to take the remote control of the slide projector. When he walks out in a demonstrative fashion a few minutes later she again asks specifically for a boy to take over.

Later Alon comments on a portrait of a madonna in a suggestive tone:

Alon: Look (f.) what a mouth. One can put it in the house and...

Edna: Who's the painter?

Girl: It's the one who is nearly a blue film.

Boy: Nearly a blue film? Benny Hill.

At this point the verbal exchange on Caravaggio and homosexuals, as quoted above, occurs. Alon, who enters and exits at regular intervals, stands at the door, and makes signs to a girl to the effect that she should not let it be known that he's there. Then he enters and takes hold of Edna's head from behind with both hands.

Edna: Alon, I'll hit you.

Girls stretch and yawn openly.

Edna: Guys, you're not concentrating any longer, but just another moment.

The ongoing assaults on her person, that evoke no more than a feeble verbal threat on her part, and total indifference on the part of the pupils, characterize Edna's tolerance of verbal and physical sexual abuse. There is no hint that she is aware that the accumulation of small incidents of unwelcome attention can do just as much damage to a woman in a classroom as the more physical kind (Sanders, 1989).

The prevalence of such behaviour in an art class might be triggered by the subject matter, i.e. the portrayal of females and males, some of them nude, that brings issues of sexual identity, sex roles and sex appropriate conduct, to the fore in a most concrete manner. On the other hand, the lack of boundaries tolerated by the teacher, is conducive to the permissive pattern and disrespectful attitude observed, irrespective of the materials suggested by the works of art. Indeed her reactions in my presence, conveyed her lenient stand on verbal and physical sexual harassment, in an unambiguous and powerful manner.

Opportunities to counter such messages, and engage in a discussion on sexuality and social constructs, are created by pupils, but stalled by staff, as in the case of talk of homosexuality. Another such incident was observed in one of Edna's lessons, when a girl entered with a picture she had drawn, and asked the teacher if the female figure looked too much like a slut. Edna's response was non committal, as she said that it depended on how the girl felt. Such an evasion of a value laden question, that might have originated in this adolescent girl's need to clarify a personal dilemma, testifies to the difficulty of teachers, even in the informal atmosphere of the kibbutz school, to relate to issues of sexual mores, and demeaning sexual portrayal.

To conclude, teachers who would rather avoid all discussions of matters sexual, turn a deaf ear to sexual innuendos, use of sexually abusive language, and unwanted sexual attention, and even to direct questions on aspects of sexuality. Pupils feel free to initiate such exchanges, but rarely succeed in drawing teachers into an interaction on these lines. The disregard for actual instances of sexual harassment is

consistent with this stand. Finally, the confusion between sexist and sexual is perpetuated by the teachers' refusal to consider a discussion of sex and sexuality in a social context, and the setting of boundaries for gendered interactions.

Chapter 7

TEACHERS SPEAK OUT - THE REVEALING INTERVIEWS

Research on hidden messages in schools views staff as a central source of data, even when dissociated from classroom situations. Their statements to the researcher are no less important than the practice s/he observes. In fact, the greater the disparity between the two modes of expressions, the greater the probability of the existence of a duality, hidden from the teacher, the pupils and/or the researcher.

The semi-structured dialogues and group conversations conducted in each of the three schools, towards the end of my stay, included questions about the nature of their interactions with male and female pupils. These questions were intended to elicit information about their biases, opinions about appropriate gendered behaviour, and any explanations or rationalizations they might offer for their practices. 33 teachers were interviewed, 11 males and 21 females, and samples of their statements are discussed in detail in this chapter. The data accumulated in this method also served as a measure of the teachers' awareness of those instances of differential treatment I had already noted in their interaction with pupils.

Two of my hypotheses concerning Israeli teachers and their notions of sex equity are substantiated by explicit statements made in the course of interviews conducted with the teachers. First, that Israeli teachers interpret sex equity as the differential treatment of pupils, in manners considered appropriate for each sex. Secondly, that the unchallenged centrality of families in the Israeli culture excludes a critique of the traditional sex roles from sociological,

psychological and educational discourse, and even most of the feminist oriented research.

The teachers' approval of their own gendered interactions is substantiated by records of talks with the male and female staff. The mainstream belief in the complementarity of the sexes supplies the rationale for the dissimilar attitudes and expectations discernible in the educational system.

The pro-family bias is exposed, for example, by teachers inferring that my observations of adolescent boys and girls, implies an interest in patterns of heterosexual pairing. By referring me to classes where they know of "couples", they disclose their confusion of sexism with sexuality, and specifically heterosexuality. This is a characteristic example of the difficulty of thinking in terms of gender, when all the Hebrew language offers is the word sex. It is worth recalling that the adolescents discussed are in junior high.

The constant references of male teachers to the sexuality of their female pupils as an inhibiting force, is the most significant finding of the interviews conducted with the teachers in the three schools studied. Although there are few male teachers (one at Hez, two at Tev and eight at Kibbutz), the topic was raised by all who were interviewed. The fact that the awareness of the influence of sexual tension on pupil - teacher interactions was voiced by males only, but by every one of the males without exception, validates the importance of the male point of view.

In an open fashion that has not been recorded in other studies of the patterns of interactions of teachers and pupils, these men talked of the care they take to keep a greater

distance, both literally and metaphorically from the girls, compared to the boys. The descriptions of their interactions both in the classroom and during recess, include their constant awareness of the potential danger built into any close contact with females. They claim they cannot hope to establish as open a relationship as with the boys, or to be as friendly. The physical contact they permit the boys, like approaching male teachers in the corridor and slapping them on the back, or their own readiness to touch, and put a hand on a male pupil's shoulder, is taboo when it comes to girls.

The hypothesis that an encounter between male and female is by definition sexual (Sadker, Sadker & Shakeshaft, 1987) is voiced by these male teachers. Furthermore, their concern indicates that the sexual content built into all male - female encounters is regarded by them as threatening. All the male teachers sound very self conscious when they discuss these issues. While they refrain from using such explicit terms as sexuality, or fear of accusation of sexual harassment, they convey a sense of unstated danger. They admit they are in a delicate situation, and most agree that the girls have to pay a price for the sexual tension present in their interactions.

The confessed awkwardness of male teachers in the presence of the girls, and the self imposed distancing, must be seen in the context of local social constructs. The personal space Israelis demand for themselves and grant others, is considerably less than the British, for example, are accustomed to. The permit to touch in a friendly, noncommittal manner is very common, with no sexual undertones suspected. Accordingly, the feelings expressed by the male teachers ring sincere, as they acknowledge the fact that their refrainment from touching a

group of pupils, females in this case, is indeed in this social atmosphere, a way of singling them out for less attention.

This unexpected discovery is especially significant in view of the absence of a history of discourse in the Israeli school system on issues of sexual harassment. Consequently, there is no reason to believe that the voluntary raising of the loaded issue of sexuality results from a defensive stand, namely the teachers' fear of being accused of abuse of power in sexual manners.

As of 1993, sexual harassment in schools is not a topic on the agenda of policy makers or educational practitioners in Israel. Accordingly, no official recommendations exist, such as the avoidance of the conference of a teacher with a single pupil in an empty classroom, or total abstention from physical touch. Few cases are brought to the public's attention, and systematic research on this issue has yet to be conducted. Accordingly, there is no way to estimate the extent of incidents of harassment, nor is there an incentive to raise the consciousness of the public and the school staff to the possibility of such occurrences.

Although the avoidance of the issue does not prove that teachers are totally ignorant of occasional accusations, it is feasible that most of the male teachers mentioned here, would not be on their guard when questioned about their modes of relating to female pupils. In fact the outspoken Israeli teachers might be considered dangerously naive. Likewise it stands to reason that the statements voiced by the Israeli teachers are less contaminated by social desirability than might be the case in cultures where the teachers are more familiar with the topic of my enquiry. This is undisputedly an instance

of research on virgin soil, and the unsuspecting frankness testifies to the reliability and authenticity of the views expressed in the course of the interviews.

In terms of the research questions of this study it is important to point out that despite their own sense of sexual tension, the males exhibit no greater comprehension of sexism than do the female teachers. Nevertheless, the fact that they volunteer the information that their different treatment results from their acknowledgement of the sexuality of the adolescent female pupils, is of great significance.

In the process of the interviews, utterances relating to sexuality were never requested by the interviewer, and in fact were not expected either. A careful analysis of the transcripts of the conversations reveals that they were triggered by those questions about the existence of differences in their treatment of male and female pupils, and their expectations from each sex. The lack of a term in Hebrew for "gendered interactions" (due to the inexistence of an equivalent for "gender" and for "interaction"), obliged me to clarify the issues at hand in an explicit and direct manner. Nowhere, however, did I introduce the concept of sexuality in my written or oral questions, or in any talks with teachers throughout my presence at the schools. The association of sex differences and gendered interaction with sexuality, and in particular the focus on female pupils, was invariably then the initiative of the teachers.

The statements were gathered in a number of methods: the interviews were sometimes structured, with the teachers filling in or relating to questionnaires (see appendix 4). At other times when circumstances in the staff room were conducive to a dialogue with a teacher, I made an effort to insert leading

questions into what started off as an informal conversation. In both research situations, there were times when the teachers conveyed their views to me in privacy, and others when the talks were conducted in group situations.

There is no evidence that the presence of female teachers inhibited the male teachers in any fashion, in those cases in which views were expressed in groups of male and female members of staff. Quotations from these exchanges manifest that males felt free to admit to their awkwardness with adolescent females, and state their preference for close contact, including physical proximity and touch, with their male pupils.

In view of the public avoidance of this issue, the frankness of the teachers (males only) is even more striking. Their eagerness to explain themselves might be attributed to the novelty of the topic, and the unexpected opportunity granted to them to be lead into introspection without the fear of a judgemental response. This then is the researcher's reward for studying new ground, since in another setting, the awareness of public concern might have caused these teachers to deny their response to the girls' sexuality. The teachers of the three schools under consideration were obviously not threatened by my questions, and exhibited no effort to dismiss any possible suspicion that they revealed interest of a sexual nature in their pupils.

The concern with sexual tension, or as one teacher described it "erotic tension", go hand in hand with a non critical view of traditional notions of sex differences. Together, these attitudes help perpetuate these Israeli teachers' idea of equality which means treating each sex in accordance with its so called inherent characteristics. The differential allowances made for males and females, is neither

denied nor argued against as the following statements illustrate.

Practically without exception, those teachers who were interviewed mentioned one common gender difference, and that related to conduct. Boys were described as causing more disturbances in class, and being generally more active. Several teachers talked of "inborn sex differences", with male energy being one of the prominent distinctive traits. Differences in achievements were denied, and in fact several teachers made a point of mentioning some successes of girls, perhaps assuming that this was not to be taken for granted.

The greater contribution of males to disruptions in class and the ongoing involvement of the teachers with such individuals was confirmed by my observations. However, not one teacher drew the connection between the disciplinary problems involving boys, and the ensuing differentiated reactions of the teachers, at the expense of the rest of the pupils. This repeated and exclusive reference to so overt a gender difference as conduct, with no thought given to its wider and more covert far reaching implications, is another authentic instance of denial of the subtler forms of gendered interactions, and the refraining from critique of well established social norms.

The dissociation of the cause from the effect, and the avoidance of discourse on the rewards of such gendered behaviours is at the core of the denial of hidden sexism. It casts all the responsibility on the pupils, and fails to invite an examination of the significance of teachers' differentiated responses to pupils' provocations, thus enabling these patterns to be perpetuated unhindered, indefinitely.

Ultimately, socialization and its effects was a non issue in the talks with the teachers. Sex differences are understood to mean externalized dissimilarities, either physiological with their implications of sexual relationships, or else glaringly distinct patterns of behaviour. The power of teachers to introduce more flexible standards, expectations or attitudes, with an eye to opening new options to both sexes, never comes up in conversations. The onus of change is on the children, who are consistently described as taking the lead.

Excerpts from dialogues with teachers illustrate the male point of view.

David is 30 years old, has a BA in sociology and psychology. He teaches these subjects at the Kibbutz, and this is his first year as a teacher. I approach him in the staff room, where he is talking to another male teacher (Reuven), and both consent to fill in the questionnaire. We then engage in an informal conversation, elaborating on the issues raised by the formal questions.

J.A.E.: As a male teacher, how is the difference in your attitude to each sex expressed?

David: I understand a male pupil better because he's of my sex. I experienced being a male pupil, I never experienced being a female pupil.

J.A.E.: How is this expressed?

David: I know when I can demand more, when there is more chance not to know. I understand much better how much can be demanded from a boy. I prefer teaching girls, they're sort of sweet. I could be a much better teacher for boys only. I would feel much freer with them. If there's

girl who's indifferent or very closed, then if it's a boy I'm more at ease to interfere, to ask, to interrogate what the problems are, it could be an invasion of privacy.

J.A.E.: That means that girls are discriminated against because you don't find out what their problems are.

David: What if the problem has something to do with women? For the female teacher it's easier. It's obvious that girls can be discriminated against. Boys can be discriminated against too but less by a male teacher. The individual differences carry much more weight, especially in this school. There are individual relations between teachers and pupils. There are female pupils with whom I have relationships out of class too that are much closer than with male pupils, because of the nature of the chemistry.

Several phrases reveal that David is fully aware of the girls being pleasurable sex objects for him as a man. He admits he finds them sweet and sexually attractive, and there is 'sexual chemistry' between him and them. The sexual tension that obliges him not be too free with them, and his fear of their 'women's problems' do not detract from his preference for teaching girls. As a professional, however, he realizes his work would acquire a superior quality with males, meaning perhaps that he is confident he would be neither sexually aroused nor emotionally involved. The most important point here is the distinction he draws between the greater enjoyment with females, and the superior teaching of males, that proves his own awareness that his preference for girls is not to their advantage academically.

In response to written questions David lists the following as observed sex differences in the classroom:

David: Boys have answers and expressions that are much briefer and often more to the point. I estimate that girls invest more.

As for the likelihood of teachers behaving differently to male and female pupils, David answers that in a coeducational setting, both sexes lose out, because of a certain tension with the other sex.

David: Yes, but it's possible that the differences in treatment are of a teacher to a pupil of the opposite sex. And it doesn't matter if it's a boy or a girl.

The assumption that an encounter with a teacher or pupil of the opposite sex, is by definition sexual, and that gendered treatment is the consequence, demonstrates both the homophobia, and the lack of a concept of sexism as distinct from sexuality, in Israeli discourse.

David's description of the ways in which teachers might discriminate between the sexes refers once again to the coeducational setting.

David: Mainly in underestimating the potential of a certain sex where it is in the minority, for example boys in literature and girls in maths.

Finally, when asked whether there might be instances of unintended sex discrimination in schools, he states emphatically: "Of course it's possible. We are full of assumptions a-priori about the 'roles' of the woman and the man".

Reuven is a 37 year old Physical Education teacher, who has three years of teaching experience. He teaches in single sex groups, and in the kibbutz high school he teaches boys only. In the past he taught girls in primary school. He expects to find differences in the behaviour of his pupils:

Reuven: The girls are quieter and more disciplined than the boys. The girls accept the material learnt with understanding and silence. The boys are stormy, they 'want' their own material, they are less disciplined and less calm.

Reuven admits that boys demand, by their noisiness, that lesson content be directed towards their interests (Stanworth, 1981; Shilling, 1991). However, this domination is not viewed as having discriminatory effects. The reason he offers for the undeniable gendered treatment of PE teachers, is a biological account. His tone is confident, and it is obvious that he assumes his unclarified assertions are self evident:

Reuven: In my subject the behaviour must be different. The language is a bit different, the teaching methods are different and the actual learning is different. The demands of the bodies of both sexes are different!

No connection is made by Reuven between the boys' tactical domination, the physiological differences, and the possibility of there being any sex discrimination in school. When asked about the manner in which it might be practiced he declares briefly and defiantly "No such thing". On possible measures to ensure equal opportunities he retorts ambiguously "No such fear". Elsewhere he dismisses the possibility of unintended sex discrimination with a laconic "No".

Having put his sentiments in writing he continues airing his views to me. First he describes instances of gendered behaviours: when boys enter the gymnasium they are in a state of disquiet, they take a ball at once and commence their activity. He approves of this and states "this is good", to clarify his preference. Like David, he does not hide the fact that he can do better work with boys. The girls, on the other hand, enter quietly and are inactive, and so he is dissatisfied and biased even before the lesson starts.

Reuven then proceeds to reiterate his demand that the physical education be adapted to what he calls 'the biological ability'. His transition from descriptions of social behaviour to a discussion of physical ability, is consistent with his belief in inherent sex differences and their behavioral outcomes. He simply insists "It's obvious that the behaviour of the sexes is different because they are different".

The notion that single sex groups and dissimilar curricula are a 'natural' necessity for physical education is upheld by PE teachers at Hez school too. In their statements, however, the emphasis is on the gendered goal they designate for each sex, more than on the dissimilar abilities. They insist that the boys need to work towards the standards of fitness required by the military, whereas girls have to work on their posture. Whereas the first is a goal of national import, the goal the girls are to aspire to reflects certain measures of sex appeal, shared by female and male teachers.

The conversations with the PE teachers, Reuven at Kibbutz and the teachers at Hez, are exemplary instances of the striking confusion of physiological attributes, social constructs, gendered expectations and traditional sex roles. Theories of

socialization and the acquisition of gendered behaviour, are never taken into account, probably because the speakers are uninformed.

Another male teacher who is obviously sexually aroused by the presence of girls, is Shalom, a 43 year old biology teacher at the Kibbutz, with a BA in agriculture. Although he believes he is unique ("it's a very individual matter"), his rationalization for his preference for the company of girls sounds much like David's. He too calls girls 'sweet', and explains that since they behave 'like women', courting is built into the relationship.

Once again, the full implications of a male teacher's acknowledged sexual preference, his greater involvement with female pupils, and his response to the girls' women-like seductiveness ('courting'), are disregarded, since Shalom considers them to be 'natural'.

Shalom: I have anti to the company of males. It's the army. I find it very difficult to be in a room full of men. It's a very individual matter. Girls behave like women - smiles, tenderness, there's courting. A male teacher who isn't sensitive or who wears black glasses, it's not natural that it should not be expressed. There are pupils you prefer, the girls are good, sweet, smiley. When I go through exam papers, the first I check are the pupils you prefer. If the grade is no good you are disappointed. Perhaps there's more disappointment from girls, it doesn't mean I'd alter the grade.

J.A.E.: Maybe there's more anger.

Shalom: Possibly.

When asked to describe teachers' differential treatment he refers again to the emotional attachment to girls, and contrasts it with the more task oriented relationship with boys. The bottom line is again that male teachers prefer female pupils, the reason being an initial warmth and tolerance that males have for their female pupils. Although sexuality is not mentioned explicitly, the terminology sounds grounded in courting rites.

Shalom: Depends if the teacher is male or female. A male teacher has more patience for girls, perhaps a warmer attitude. With boys it takes longer to establish a relationship in the first half year. Boys keep a distance from the teacher for longer. Perhaps the girls feel better, and then there's more motivation and willingness. There is a preference of male teachers for female pupils.

Shalom is somewhat more explicit about the heterosexual attraction of teachers and pupils, in his reference to 'the way of the world'. Having admitted there are differences in his attitude to boys and girls, he generalizes and declares: "There always is. Because school isn't disconnected from society".

Shalom describes an incident in a ninth grade when he taught reproduction, and dwells on the extent of the ease of each of the sexes with issues of sexuality. The girls showed greater interest and knew more. The boys were more embarrassed. It was obvious that the girls were in control. The boys blushed and sat aside. They were afraid to ask questions. In this case the class was divided by sex. When they grow up, Shalom

explains, it's different. In eleventh grade the pupils are beyond this stage. They are all mature persons. Were he to teach reproduction to that age group, there would be no differences between the responses of the boys and the girls.

Arnon is a biology teacher too, 35 years old (M.Sc biology) and one of the teachers whose lessons I observed regularly. When asked to fill in a questionnaire together with several other teachers who happen to be in the science staff room, he is the most reluctant to respond, explaining that he doesn't know the answers. He turns down my suggestion that he state that on the form, and says it calls for further consideration. Although it cannot be substantiated, my speculation is that my presence in his classes prior to this meeting might have put him on guard or made him feel more vulnerable than others.

In all three of the eight open questions he chooses to respond to, he supports my contention concerning these teacher's concept of equal opportunities. He acknowledges gender differences and expresses his view that since the dissimilarities are so pronounced, "differential treatment is recommended so that both sexes derive the maximum from their studies".

Arnon's description of the dissimilarities is representative of the attitude expressed by the majority of the teachers interviewed for this study, and scores of other Israeli teachers I questioned on these issues in other settings. It is characterized by an acknowledgement of observable gender differences, but does not extend to include hidden sexism too. In other words, the contribution of the teachers to the perpetuation of gendered behaviour is overlooked or else denied.

Arnon: The boys are more inquisitive - curious mainly in manual activities. They don't always hear the instructions and carry out, independently, all sorts of ideas. Also a part of the girls are like that, but quantitatively (between the boys and the girls) such behaviour always appears more by the boys.

The covert manners of conveying sexist messages are never mentioned by teachers, probably because they are successfully hidden from the teachers themselves too. In accordance with this deterministic view Arnon does not dismiss the option of positive discrimination, and suggests it be employed to compensate each sex for what comes naturally to the other:

Arnon: Girls - the encouragement of enquiry and creative curiosity. Boys - encouragement of tidiness and accuracy.

The disciplinary difficulties created by male pupils, tend to blind the teachers to any other gendered behaviours exhibited in their classes. Ranny, a 48 year old maths teacher (B.A. Maths and Hebrew language) who has been teaching for five years can think of only one difference he might expect, and insists this is the only difference he has ever observed:

Ranny: In the younger age groups - more restlessness among the boys.

Despite his awareness of the habit of boys to cross boundaries, he rejects the suggestion that each sex elicits dissimilar responses from the teachers. Still denying the emotional involvement male teachers experience with female pupils, that makes them more lenient and less demanding, he contradicts himself when he insists that he doesn't know whether

teachers treat boys and girls differently, but he is aware that "male teachers are likely to give in more to girls". His own difficulty to admit to the influence of females comes through in his reserved declaration "Girls are softer, and I would add that it doesn't apply to me".

The frankness of David and Shalom, who admit they are aware of their own different feelings towards male and female pupils, is not shared by Ranny who insists that this sexual attraction does not apply to him. Avoiding the personal level of interaction, he declares that the provision of equal opportunities requires that more **men** (his emphasis) be encouraged to enter the teaching profession. He refrains from explaining the connection between non sexist education and the presence of male teachers. His response to the question regarding the possible existence of unconscious and unintentional sex discrimination at school, reflects his caution: "Of course it's possible. As for the means - any attempt at hypothesising on my part is no more than speculation".

The sixth teacher to participate in this group discussion in the science teachers' staff room is the exception in more ways than one. Yehudit is the only woman in the room, at 66 she is considerably older than the rest, and far more experienced (she writes "20+ years in teaching"). In a staff of university graduates, she alone is a graduate of a teacher training college. Her initial response to the questionnaire is judgemental: "This is a racist and chauvinist questionnaire". Compared with the reaction of other interviewees, hers is uniquely and suprisingly emotional. Her statements sound charged, and defensive.

Yehudit too confuses sexism with sexuality, and talks of the dangers of sexual tension and attraction. However, her unique contribution is in her reference to the ways in which this sexual tension engulfs female teachers too. Her phrasing of the ways in which sex discrimination might occur sounds considerably value laden: "There is the danger of the creation of erotic tension".

She rejects the idea of positive discrimination with an emphatic "No", and believes that the only measure that need be taken to ensure equal opportunities is that all subjects be open to all.

Since unconscious discrimination is attributed by her only to 'people with prejudice', it follows that she dissociates the danger of 'erotic tension' from inequitable treatment, although the male teachers admit it exists. This is particularly surprising considering that in the informal conversation conducted in the group, Yehudit clarifies that she refers specifically to the sexual attraction of male teachers to girls.

Yehudit: Sexual tension is more noticeable from teachers
(m) because men have sex on their brain.

Since she adds that the kibbutz school is one of the only schools with male teachers, I use her lead to check for the effect of the "erotic tension" on female teachers:

J.A.E.: If your assumption is true, then in schools
where there are only female teachers there is no
discrimination.

Yehudit: True, but there are probably older teachers (f)
that feel tension with pretty girls out of
jealousy.

Shalom: If she's young and pretty the pupils (f) might express anti. From the boys it draws out more motivation to study. I remember it from my own experience.

Yehudit objects to this analysis of the effect of the female teacher on her pupils, and refuses to enter a discussion of the effect of same sex interaction. The suggestion that there is sexual jealousy might be too threatening, especially since Yehudit is the oldest female teacher around.

True to the pattern set by other teachers, when Yehudit is urged to recall differences she observed in her long career she comments on behaviours rather than on attitudes. She talks of girls showing reluctance to use laboratory equipment, but amends her statement immediately saying that nowadays the girls in the junior high are less so, and that she expects them to use the equipment more when they are in high school. Her rationale is significant:

Yehudit: Because they start at home to use a toaster oven and television and get more used to electric devices.

Her estimate of the effect of the greater exposure of girls to appliances is obviously unacceptable to a female laboratory worker who happens to walk in and overhear this declaration. However, her protest "but what about the differences in taking apart and assembling?" is totally ignored by the teacher.

Another group situation in which male and female teachers expressed their views and conveyed their gender bias, occurred at Hez. It is of particular interest since the teachers involved teach the only subject that the national curriculum obliges to

teach in single sex groups. I joined three female and one male Physical Education teachers who were sitting in the staff room, and encouraged them to talk about their pupils.

The girls were described as lazy. A male teacher said they demanded a mental effort on the part of the teacher in order to get them moving. One of the female teachers expressed the same kind of alienation from her own sex as the computer teacher at the same school. She explained that her female school friends had been just as bad, but she had been different, as she was an athlete.

The female teachers explained that it is natural for boys to be out of doors in the afternoons, while the girls stay at home and play indoors. The dissimilar world picture they visualized as 'natural' for each sex, enabled them to describe all these facts in a non critical tone.

Girls, I was told, come to PE classes unwillingly, and do not want to wear the gym outfit as it spoils their dressing plans for that day. Families were accused of being supportive of this lack of interest in sports, as they sent notes to teachers whenever the daughters menstruated and did not feel like exercising. Boys, on the other hand, are called aggressive, and are not too shy to sweat. The girls are reluctant to become sweaty and feel sticky all day (the school has no showers, as is the case in practically all schools in Israel).

In response to my query whether female and male pupils should be required to study according to the same curriculum, and acquire skills and experience in similar sports, is a unanimous "No". They insist that the curriculum is tailored to fit the 'natural' future roles: boys need to prepare for their

service in the military, while girls need to improve their posture.

My observations of the pupils in PE classes at this school, testify that the lesser importance attached by the teachers to sports for girls, is not challenged by the female pupils. They are content to sit and chat, dance or throw balls sporadically, and with no serious intent. The female teachers who work with the girls work in small groups, and leave most of the girls to occupy themselves. The leisurely pastimes they choose when unattended in the school yard, demonstrates that the girls have internalized the message that no physical exertion or sportive performance is expected of them.

Conclusions to be drawn from talks with teachers

The interviews and informal conversations reveal a great similarity, if not uniformity, in the expressions and attitudes of the teachers of the three schools. In view of the fact that the three schools differ considerably in population, intent, organization and location, to mention only the more obvious dissimilarities, this suggests that the teachers are representative of Israeli mainstream culture.

The candid statements collected in this manner lead to several conclusions that are further substantiated and exemplified in the study of other sources of data examined in the course of this study, i.e. classroom interactions, extra-curricular activities and report cards. The following list summarizes the conclusions to be drawn from the talks I conducted with teachers, as regards their concept of gender and education.

1) Israeli teachers' association of sex of pupil is invariably with sexuality, never with sexism, or any notion of gender.

2) The male teachers display a distinct awareness of their modification of their own behaviour to suit the unwritten codes as regards sexual behaviour. As a group they are on their guard. The readiness of male teachers to admit to their awareness of the girls' sexuality raises queries as to the nature of the concern it represents:

a. fear of accusation of sexual harassment.

b. an expression of their confusion as regards the appropriate response to the budding sexuality of their female pupils.

3) The preoccupation with sexual tension reveals that all the male teachers interviewed expressed an expectation for heterosexual relations.

4) The absence of any parallel comment of female teachers on sexual tension with their male pupils suggests that gendered interaction is associated with sexual tension of a particular kind. Even if differences between the treatment of male and female teachers to pupils are not easily observable, their rationale is clearly distinct.

Chapter 8

HIDDEN GENDERED MESSAGES IN CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS

The contribution of pupils and teachers to gendered interactions

The question of what comes first, sex differences in student behaviours, or inequality in teacher treatment, is raised by researchers of gendered interactions in classrooms. Good, Sikes & Brophy (1973) claim that their data suggests that teachers are primarily reactive to the differential problems that boys and girls present. Brophy (1985) reiterates this conclusion explaining that the differences between boys and girls in patterns of interaction with their teachers are due to the differences in behaviour of the boys and girls themselves, and the effects of this behaviour on the teachers is a better substantiated explanation than the suggestion of any consistent tendency to treat the two sexes differently. Shilling (1991) describes the tactics used by males to determine the content of lessons, whereas LaFrance (1991) avoids a conclusive stand, yet defines the central research question as the extent to which gender discrepancies are created and/or sustained by interactions in the classroom.

The issue of causality remains unresolved, and is examined in this ethnographic study too. Classroom scenes illustrate the difficulty of separating the input of the pupils from that of the teachers. The dominant impression is one of clearly defined expectations of each of the parties from the other, and a tendency to comply with these expectations.

In a whole year of observations, I recorded only one instance of a pupil's resistance to sex discrimination. A female

in grade 11, in a chemistry lesson at Kibbutz school, grew increasingly frustrated. Finally she told the male teacher out loud that he was showing preference to the male pupils, by asking the boys more times than her. She insisted that she knew the answers, whereas the males just wanted to hear themselves talk. The teacher, taken aback by her outspoken accusation, objected to what he called her disturbance, and eventually sent her out of class. To an observer's eyes the boys were indeed successful at arresting the teacher's attention by constant talk, disguised indeed as involvement, yet often no more than uncensored and unformulated 'thinking aloud'. For those present in class, this was a clear demonstration of the price to be paid by females for resistance to the male hegemony.

Apart from the above cited exception, the rule in the schools is a denial of inequitable treatment. The rewards of compliance ensure the reinforcement and perpetuation of the privileged status of males. A case study from Hez school illustrates the actions taken by boys as individuals and as a group to dictate the rules.

Documentation of boys' manners of dominating the mixed classroom is basic to all studies of gendered interaction in schools. Some of the tactics employed by male pupils are obvious (e.g. disruptive noisiness), others are subtler (e.g. use of space and equipment). In either case they usually involve stepping over the boundaries which necessitate teachers invoking disciplinary measures (e.g. Stanworth, 1981; Shilling, 1991). Consequently, the demand of the male pupils that lesson content be directed towards their interests, cannot be ignored. Teachers realize very quickly that their survival, let alone their success, necessitates the satisfaction of the most vocal and

powerful group, who are also most in their minds (Ben Tsvi-Mayer, et al, 1989), even at the expense of the silent others.

Science classes and science labs in particular have traditionally been viewed as masculine territory. This message was reiterated most forcibly in the chemistry lab at Kibbutz, when the angry female pupil was taught her place in a painful way. Kelly (1985) singles out science as a vehicle through which masculinity is reproduced. The space is dominated by boys (see also Shilling, 1991), and teachers refrain from modifying the power balance.

The significance of the case study from Hez computer classes stems from the fact that a researcher was privileged to record a first encounter of teacher and pupils. This uncommon opportunity makes the interactions most valuable, even if they sound atypical. First because perhaps they are simply typical of first meetings, which could not be observed elsewhere, and second because of their lasting effect on the lessons to come.

Ethnographic research models take into account the improbability of attending the initial encounters of teachers with their pupils. The demand of the person under observation that first s/he be given the opportunity to establish a working relationship with the class, prior to the inclusion of an outsider, is considered legitimate, and accordingly respected. Whether teachers' fears of the effect of the presence of researchers on the interactions are real or imagined, most teachers are inclined to regard it as sufficient grounds to defer such requests.

This reluctance was encountered in my research too. However, without any prior planning, I enjoyed the unique

experience of observing a teacher's first sessions with no less than three 8th grades. The visit was initiated by the deputy head, herself the head maths teacher, who suggested computer lessons might be of interest to me.

The curriculum at Hez for 8th graders includes one term of two weekly hours on computers, with the second round of 8th graders starting their course at the end of January. The deputy head, whom I happened to talk to on that same day, was involved with the logistics of the change. She lead me straight to the computer class teacher, and the latter, full of self confidence, consented to my observing her lessons, probably feeling considerably more at ease than with the first classes she had met back in September. That day I spent all six hours of the school day in the computer classroom, observing the dynamics of introductory sessions.

The importance of the first meeting cannot be overestimated. An unstated contract is drawn up with the new group of pupils, and the scene is set for future interactions and negotiations. This is the opportunity for all parties involved to become acquainted, voice expectations, clarify values, establish rules, identify role players, choose sides, claim territory, and demonstrate routine procedures.

The classes observed, provided striking examples of the cyclical model of sex differentiated behaviour on the part of pupils, that draws out sex differentiated responses of the teacher, that in turn lead to additional sex differentiated pupil behaviour. Although teacher attention might theoretically be considered a classroom resource to be evenly distributed to all, the case described supports Lockheed's claim (1985) that

equality of treatment would be an inappropriate teacher response to differential student behaviour.

The following description of proceedings was chosen first of all for the manifestation of several manners of differential treatment, e.g. allocation of space and time, and disciplinary standards enforced. Second, it offers expressions of stereotypical attitudes concerning the former experience of males and females with computers. Third, it demonstrates how permission is granted to use sexually abusive language. Fourth it exposes the kind of interaction with males in science classes that causes females to perceive the physical sciences as more masculine (Vockell & Lobonc, 1981).

The computer classroom at Hez has personal computers around the room, and a big empty space in the centre. The teacher Tzipi, is wearing a long skirt with a high slit, boots, and an outdoor jacket over her blouse. My commentary in the following script has been kept to a minimum, in order to let the narrative speak for itself.

The pupils enter and seat themselves in a circle, each sex on a separate side.

Tzipi: What's this, a synagogue here? (points) Boys, girls? Where's the curtain [i.e. partition, J.A.E.]?

Two girls come in late.

Boy: Girls are there (points).

There are nine boys and nine girls. Tzipi reads out their names, trying to become acquainted. The boys are very noisy, and also touch each other constantly. The girls are quiet. Tzipi turns to the boys and remarks that she is not used to such

behaviour. Two boys yell at her, she demands self discipline and self control. She speaks and the boys interfere. The girls are absolutely silent. Tzipi turns her head in the direction of the boys, it seems this is due to the noise. She waits for silence. I register 22 outbursts of boys, and only one disciplinary comment of the teacher to a boy. There are no utterances of girls, nor addresses to them by Tzipi.

Tzipi: I find myself talking to one group because the girls are quiet so far.

Boy: Soon the girls will talk and say "I don't understand, I don't understand".

Tzipi ignores the insult and starts a round, asking the pupils to state their names, indicate what they know about computers, and define their expectations from the course. She turns to where the boys are, and devotes sufficient time to enable the majority of the interactions with the males to contain all the information she asked for at the outset. They present a wide range of interests and activities, and Tzipi reacts and asks for details. The most significant responses of Tzipi are as follows.

Tomer has studied Basic. Tzipi knows him as she saw him come to the computer room occasionally in the past. Gabby knows Basic and he types assignments.

Tzipi: You are preparing yourself for the future. Very good. In two years time everyone will need to do that.

Daniel studied computers at school, Basic and Logo. Tzipi interrogates him, to glean more information about his expertise.

The boys disturb so much that Tzipi sits with her arms folded, waiting. After a while the boys continue their introductions. Shalom plays computer games. Itzik, who is obviously the most disruptive pupil, has a PC, works on a word processor, is putting in a cookery book. The teacher has a long dialogue with him.

Tzipi: What for?

Itzik: My mother...it can be very interesting to compare recipes, ingredients, cholesterol.

Tzipi asks him to explain what a word processor is. More males join in. She turns to Gabby, Tomer responds instead, Tzipi praises him although she didn't call on him, then Gabby explains more. Tzipi goes back to Itzik, saying she wants to hear more about his work on the cookery book.

Throughout this substantive part of the lesson, all the interactions are with the boys. Then a girl says something. Tzipi says she remembers her. A boy talks, and this leads Tzipi to inquire how many of the pupils present took the extra curricular computer course offered at Hez to 7th or 9th graders. It seems most of them did, and many girls raise their hands. I make a note that from the disproportionate time devoted to the former experience of the boys, I wouldn't have thought so many of the girls had prior knowledge of computers. Their silence has created the impression they actually have nothing to say about computers.

Tzipi: What is interesting about computers is that the teachers (f.) learn together with their pupils. I too shall be delighted to learn from you.

Tzipi continues the round, still addressing boys only. She enables each of them to describe their past experience. Ravid learnt Basic and Logo at school. Yaniv plays computer games at friends' homes. Eyal has a PC, is learning touch typing, and offers the opinion that it's not so boring, and always useful. This pleases the teacher, who presents him as a model for the rest of the class.

Tzipi: What Eyal is doing is a wonderful thing at your age. Six hours are enough for you to acquire a skill like swimming.

The teacher talks at length of the importance of typing, and Eyal tells the class he spends two hours a day at his PC.

Tzipi: You have plenty of patience.

Eyal, encouraged, proceeds to inform the teacher that he also writes programmes for games. Next, Ronny says he has a PC, on which he plays the odd game and learns. He adds proudly that he likes copying protected programmes. This draws a personal admission from Tzipi.

Tzipi: I wrote two programmes that are on the market, and I wouldn't like anyone to copy them.

The lesson is practically over, when the time comes for the turn of the first girl in the circle. When she starts talking the boys make so much noise that it is impossible to hear.

Maya tells the class she plays computer games at friends' homes. Tzipi's reaction is unlike anything said to any of the males.

Tzipi: Do you put the disk in on your own, and switch on the computer?

Adi learnt computers at school. Tzipi does not refer to her voluntary participation in the afternoon course, instead she enquires about her social life, and advocates friendship.

Tzipi: You seated yourselves together. Oh, have I stepped on a sore spot? Are you not on speaking terms? Okay, so I touched a sore spot. Usually in this classroom we make peace.

This promise of peace seems most inappropriate for the male population that is noisily competing for Tzipi's attention. Boys disturb and Tzipi has to stop.

Tzipi: (to the boys) I'm waiting for you to muster inner discipline.

Liat has a PC, learnt at school. Sigal plays at friends' homes. The teacher repeats the question she asked the girl before her.

Tzipi: Do you insert the disk and everything by yourself?

Boy: Where do you insert the disk, in the front or the behind?

This pupil's harassment of the female pupil causes merriment on the male side of the classroom, but Tzipi ignores it. She is now obviously pressed for time, and there are still five more girls to be introduced. She no longer asks questions, or otherwise shows a personal interest in the rest of the new pupils. She does her best to go round the class quickly. The boys take up time and succeed in drawing additional responses from her, by mimicking the girls:

Boy 1: I don't have a PC.

Boy 2: I go to my uncles, and put in my disks.

Tzipi waits for silence, making no direct comment on the ridiculing of the girls. The round continues with each girl getting less and less attention from the teacher. The next girl, Hila, learnt a year at school, hasn't got a PC at home, plays computer games.

Tzipi: (to boys) It makes it very difficult for me to give her my attention. (to Hila) Is there any game you like in particular?

Boys interfere and shout. Tzipi waits for silence, forgoing the girl's answer. Although this should be the girl's turn Tzipi addresses the boys yet again, in an attempt to overcome the disciplinary problem.

Tzipi: Do you know what this reminds me of? Sometimes there are films about animals, and there's a season when the deer fight over the hearts of the females and then each tries to be a greater peacock than the other.

The boys' react vocally, they roll in their seats, laughing and slapping each other merrily. Tzipi makes a stern face, and complains that they're taking up time. Boys yell at the girl next in turn to get on with it. Tzipi again appeals to the boys to resort to their inner discipline. I make a note to myself that this is an inadequate request, since these boys have obviously chosen to externalize their feelings, attitudes and desires.

The next pupil Osnat has no PC, but learnt at school. Tzipi moves on immediately, allowing for no further interaction. The same pattern is adopted with the next two girls. Pessy learnt

last year. No comment from teacher. Orly has no PC, played once.

Tzipi: Were you attracted?

Boy: I'm attracted to something. Try me.

This is the second instance in which a boy tags on to one of the questions directed at girls only in order to make an explicitly sexual comment. This time too Tzipi does not react. This is also the second time Tzipi introduces terms related to friendship and emotional attachments, and as in the former instance, the emotions are attributed to a female.

The short time left, and the limited span of attention of the males, is now clearly at the expense of the quiet girls. The teacher doesn't even pause to ask the next girl's name, who merely states that she plays computer games. Like the last few girls, who at least had the opportunity to say their names, this one utters one sentence only.

Thus ends the introductory stage of this first encounter. Although there is an equal number of males and females in this class, the allocation of time and teacher's attention, demonstrate perfectly the manners employed by the males to determine the content of the lesson, and to force the teacher to respond in a sex differentiated manner throughout.

At this point Tzipi wants the pupils to commence a new activity. A boy stands up, and Tzipi again addresses the boys.

Tzipi: We're continuing with the film on animals. The male takes his territory with the aid of his scent. He defines his boundaries so that no one invade. In order to prevent occupying space I will decide who sits where.

Itzik raises his hand, Tzipi tells him to stop interrupting her train of thought. Boys disturb when she tells the class to take out notebooks. Her head is turned mainly in the direction of the boys. Tzipi next gives a riddle to encourage the pupils to embark on creative thinking. Disturbances and commotion continue, and two boys are instructed to report to the office. Tzipi soon changes her mind and tells them to remain standing outside the classroom. Meanwhile two other boys shout out that they have the answer, but Tzipi is now occupied with letting in the two she sent out. She stops again and again, declaring she won't continue with the riddle.

More boys than girls approach her with their answers, which are not necessarily correct in all cases. It seems it is their need for attention, even when it involves taking risks, that makes them hurry to show their work. Eventually five out of the 18 pupils get it right, and Tzipi declares she now has great expectations from this group.

In the third part of the session, the pupils sit at the computers. Several of the verbal exchanges in this part of the lesson are worth quoting, as are the patterns of behaviour.

The moment the teacher announces that they have solved enough riddles, the boys jump up with the intent of getting to the PCs. The girls make no move. Tzipi talks to the boys about the waste of time, making all sorts of comments on their conduct. She tells them for the second time that she also teaches teachers. I note that this is her way of presenting herself as a qualified professional, and/or an instructor who is worthy of their respect. I also doubt whether a male teacher would have resorted to his CV in order to establish himself as an authority to 14 year olds.

At this point the principal enters the classroom. She sees me and asks me if I also take notes of one teacher disturbing another. This causes everyone to turn and look at me. Next the principal announces that she will be giving Tzipi an additional computer, formerly used in the office. Tzipi gives her a kiss. I note that this is as gendered an interaction as female teachers might possibly model. The male response is immediate, and the teacher's comment sounds irrelevant:

Eyal (m): I want too.

Tzipi: I think you're the loser with your disturbances.

Boys continue to demand attention in devious manners, and even their games arouse her interest.

Tzipi: (to boy) Later you will explain to me the aerodynamic laws of your [paper] airplane.

Other boy: I can explain it now.

After further disorder, during which she chooses to sit and wait, she returns to the issue of seating.

Tzipi: The first thing I'm doing is of course to mix the boys and the girls. You're [sitting] like in synagogue.

Eyal: I've become religious.

Tzipi creates mixed groups. Two girls ask to be with a certain boy, boys shout out names of boys they want to be with. After they work for some time she expresses her discontent:

Tzipi: I hope you mature during the week. There are those who think they have to tell jokes all the time.

The lesson draws to an end, the teacher switches off the computers and the pupils resume their former seating arrangements, in a circle, clearly divided by sex. Tzipi tells

the class she has a good feeling about this class. She makes a point of saying the same to me on our way out.

Tzipi: What do you think of the disturbances? It was awfully difficult but I have a good feeling about this class.

The pattern is repeated the very same day when Tzipi meets another 8th grade for the first time. These pupils behave differently, they do not sit in sex segregated groups, and are generally attentive. Discipline is hardly an issue, yet in the initial round, boys still get more teacher time than girls. The teacher is consistent in her gendered addresses, talking to girls only of inserting ones disks on ones own as a rewarding achievement, and reserving for them all references to emotions.

Yael says she has no knowledge of computers but there is a PC at home.

Tzipi: Do you know how to insert a disk? That's a lot. What does it feel like to be near all those who think they know? Are you optimistic?

Orit too says she doesn't know a thing about computers, and there isn't one at home. She once played a computer game.

Tzipi: You will help everyone insert the disks.

As the introductory round continues a girl who obviously knows nothing about computers asks a question. Boys laugh at her question.

Tzipi: Don't worry. There are pupils who after becoming excited about computers improve in other subjects.

A close reading of the girls' responses reveals that whereas some might have less experience with computers, and this

too is not really substantiated, they are no less competent. However, their passivity suggests the danger of Tzipi's attitude. As Greenberg-Lake (1991) phrase it "young women find people, including their teachers, believing that females cannot do the things they believe they can. The result is girls' lower self esteem" (p.11). The manner in which they refrain from demanding their time does not necessarily represent their fear of appearing intellectually inferior, but more likely their acceptance of an inferior status.

Later that day Tzipi is required to stand in for another teacher and to work with a group of 8th graders who have already completed their computer studies. This lesson provided me with the opportunity to observe Tzipi in a routine situation, unlike the former part of the day that consisted of a repetition of the introductory process. Here too several situations and verbal exchanges highlight the pattern observed in the lessons described above.

The lesson starts with two boys hitting each other, and another two calling a girl "cunt". Tzipi is in class drinking tea and does not react. Pupils seat themselves at the computers and play games or work, except for two girls who sit on the floor reading and talking, totally disengaged from the work on the computers. When they ask to be permitted to leave, Tzipi consents. Later, however, when two boys announce they are bored, and ask to be excused, Tzipi insists they remain in class. Although they do not settle down to work, they wander from one group to another, and observe what is being done on the computers. The sex differentiated treatment of pupils who have no initial interest in the lesson, is again to the obvious disadvantage of the girls, and is reminiscent of scenes observed at Kibbutz. Moreover the class too gets the message that

computers, and perhaps studies in general, are of less importance to girls.

The pupils' mode of work deserves mention too. As a rule, in those cases when a single pupil sits at a computer, that person is invariably a male. In the mixed groups (usually consisting of three pupils), the boys often have more access to the keyboard than the girls. In the single sex groups boys fight more among themselves, whereas girls engage in more cooperative work, taking turns more readily.

The exemplary nature of the gendered interactions in the computer class is to be attributed first and foremost to the special situation, i.e. this being the first meeting of the group with the teacher. The boys invest their energy in manipulating the teacher to conduct the lesson according to their interests, and establishing their unquestioned domination. Their success is a clever move in an introductory session, as it sets the rules for the rest of the course.

The computer lessons illustrate the extent to which gender discrepancies might be sustained by the interaction in the classroom, rather than created by it (see LaFrance's query, 1991). However, the blatant preferential treatment of the males, and the total disregard for the interests and achievements of the females in the subject, call for an additional explanation. No other teacher, in any other lesson, was ever observed taking so sexist a stand, yet so atypical an instance is not completely out of context, considering other milder scenes observed.

This teacher's own ambivalence about her identity as a female computer science teacher, which is both a personal and a political issue, seems to be at the root of her extraordinary compliance with the rules set by the males.

Tzipi is a striking instance of a female teacher who persists in distancing, and at times practically dissociating herself from her female pupils. She refrains from presenting herself as a role model for those girls who have an inclination for science or computers, by denying the possibility of girls sharing her interest in computers, by leaving them out of the conversations, and by excusing them from her class, rather than encouraging their participation. Her consistent display of greater enthusiasm for the boys' interests and pastimes, her constant appeal to their powers of reasoning despite their highly disruptive behaviour, and her tolerance of their abusive manners of putting down females, convey most emphatically and unequivocally the prominence she grants the males.

Certain assumptions concerning gender appropriate behaviours are evident in her interactions. First, that the number of science experiences for boys exceeds that for girls (Kahle & Lakes, 1981). This could explain why she expects the experience of the boys to be more varied, and instrumental to their studies and personal development. Second, that only females make emotional investments in their relationships, and in their choice of activities. Males are addressed as if they were invariably task oriented. Tzipi directs them to a goal oriented outlook by informing them that their use of computers is vital to their future careers, as in her reference to the importance of using word processors. Females on the other hand, are asked condescending questions, and granted dubious praise,

as when she expresses wonder at the girls inserting disks unassisted.

The passive stand adopted by the female pupils is typical, and indicative of the internalization of the social constructs taught so deviously in schools too. Even in face of the most extreme provocation on the part of the boys, and the severest indifference on the part of Tzipi, these females who have been socialized to tolerate male domination, rather than complain, keep to themselves, and voice no objection. The uniform reaction of the females to the coalition established between the teacher and the males, suggests that for them silence is the only possible form of resistance. They have found their way to computers in the past and they work in a cooperative manner in class. They do not expend energy on confronting those who belittle and underestimate them, but try to get on with their work.

Even if the situation described here is the exception, the messages conveyed here in a condensed and explicit manner are not unlike the general tone recorded in the schools observed. The full inventory of the gendered preconceptions and practices detectable in the aforementioned incident run as follows:

- 1) girls and boys inhabit two distinct worlds
- 2) computers are not part of a girl's world, but are central to a boy's in the present and in the future
- 3) resources need not be divided equally between males and females
- 4) teachers are more curious about male pupils than about females, i.e. boys are more interesting

- 5) boys need not fear punishment for disrupting order in class
- 6) sexist comments, and sexual harassment of teacher and girls are permissible
- 7) teachers, even female, do not necessarily protect female pupils
- 8) girls need assistance and encouragement
- 10) girls should consider taking on servile and unappreciated roles e.g. inserting disks for others
- 11) girls who show temporary lack of interest in studies are excused, but boys are not
- 12) boys are expected to possess inner discipline and control, even if they do not display these resources
- 13) boys are at all times like animals, following their instincts and fighting over females
- 14) boys are entitled to take the advantageous position (e.g. at the computer) at all times

The contribution of pupils and teachers to gendered classroom interactions, are shown to originate from underlying conventions and assumptions, that influence the situations in many ways. The internalization of the norms shared by pupils and teachers alike, is demonstrated by the apparent understanding and accepting of the codes of gendered behaviour by all parties involved. Interactions are both culture based and culture biased, and therefore their hidden meanings are practically imperceptible to the persons involved.

Chapter 9

ASPECTS OF INEQUITABLE USE OF LANGUAGE

The transformations a hearer has to make of another's utterance in any context, to understand the intended meaning of the utterance, are based on cultural knowledge of person, role and context.

Adelman, 1981, p.80.

The necessity of relating linguistic units to be analyzed, to the sociolinguistic structures in which they are located, is appreciated by several educational researchers (Adelman, 1981; Atkinson, 1981; Stubbs, 1981; Silverman, 1985). Talk does not consist of isolated words or random utterances, nor do written passages. The structure, the organization and articulation are at least as significant as the words. The full awareness of the metamessage calls for a consideration of all variables contributing to the exchange (Tennan, 1986). The substantiation of a theory on hidden gendered messages, generated from a close study of interactions in schools of different cultures, requires the sort of incorporation that only qualitative methodology can offer.

The language of the interactions I observed is Hebrew, which is sex biased compared to English, the language of the research on classroom interactions I had read. In order to bridge the cultural and linguistic gap, insight into the deeper levels of meaning of such language usage is called for. This requires the native speaker to 'make the familiar strange', and decode the utterances in a manner that lays bare the social constructs they are based on.

A language like Hebrew that relies on the generic 'he' or 'man' to refer to both men and women, defies all attempts to isolate the content from the form. Utterances directed at mixed audiences can make females feel peripheral, as a result of language that makes males the central players in many human activities (LaFrance, 1991).

Stating that teachers are a mirror of the society they belong to could explain why the subtle use of language to convey hidden gendered messages, is the norm of one and all. This argument is substantiated by evidence to be brought to the effect that some of the severest instances of injustice to females through language usage, were recorded from language teachers, who might have been expected to make a conscious effort to set an example of careful and accurate phrasing.

Any attempt at explaining, let alone excusing the inaccuracies to be discussed, requires a clarification of the structure of Hebrew. Yet in effect, the matter is basically a socio-linguistic and cultural issue. The consistent pattern of these accepted inaccuracies, that allows for the priority of the masculine gender over the feminine gender, even in cases where the use of the feminine gender is called for, adds another dimension to the ethnographic approach, and exposes another subtle form of sex discrimination.

Relevant effects of the gendered nature of Hebrew

The gendered conjugations of verbs and adjectives in the Hebrew language, and the absence of a neuter gender, mean that every utterance contains a reference to the sex of the person addressed or described. At the same time, however, the use of the generic 'he' to refer to males and females, even without such a modification in the language that might acknowledge the

presence of the latter, makes most statements in Hebrew sound as if they were intended primarily, if not exclusively, for males. A common example of the slighting of females is the situation in which there is a sole male in the company of any number of females. The masculine form is to be used, as it is considered inclusive, with no regard for the proportion of persons of the linguistically dominant sex, present in the audience.

So strong is the habit of using the masculine address, that persons addressing females only, even females in the company of females, need at times to unlearn the habit, and make a conscious effort to use the feminine gender. The permissible, common omission of recognition of the presence of females, is rarely challenged.

The sex bias that is built into such a language usage, is not a topic of discourse for teachers and professionals in the educational establishment. In fact those responsible for devising ways of writing textbooks in a more neutral fashion (Fradkin, 1986), still need to enlighten teachers of the significance of their manipulation of the language.

The ease with which females are made invisible through approved language usage, can be further illustrated by one of the innovations introduced for the purpose of simplifying modern Hebrew to the convenience of its users, who are practically all first generation, at the most second generation speakers of the language. The Hebrew Language Academy has officially declared two conjugations in the feminine gender disposable. According to this recent ruling, the plural imperative and plural future in the masculine gender, are officially correct usage whether used to address males only, males and females, or females only. Although there is a plural imperative in feminine gender, and a

plural future feminine conjugation, forms that as a schoolgirl I was still obliged to memorize and use, they have now become obsolete.

The role of social constructs in the evolutionary processes of a language, is discernable in this denial of females' basic rights to respectable inclusion in discourse. The lack of respect for females has a three tiered structure here:

1. The lack of concern for accuracy in language usage when referring to females, or when a feminine conjugation is called for.
2. The lack of interest in, and easy riddance of a form designed exclusively for females.
3. The incorporation of females under a generic 'he', and the consequent dependence on the conjugation originally designated as masculine.

My observations prove that it is the exceptional teacher who goes to the effort of phrasing questions or instructions in such a way that they explicitly include males and females.

The extent of this gross injustice, and its entrenchment in the culture, is best illustrated in situations in which the persons addressed are all female. A notable split is here observed between the speaker's concept, according to which males always have preference, and the specific reality i.e. an all female audience. A case in point is a literature class at the kibbutz, on a day when no boys are present. Even the rule that the presence of even one male, calls for the use of the masculine gender, does not apply here.

The teacher, a language teacher herself, uses the masculine form consistently. The 14 girls present refrain from any

objection although they are treated as if they were invisible. The following quotes illustrate the point:

Teacher asks question and adds a request "only someone who knows" (masculine).

Teacher asks "Is there anyone here (masculine) who has (m) a question concerning what has to be submitted?"

Throughout the teacher - pupil interactions observed, questions like "who will operate (m.) the VCR" or "who knows (m.) the answer", convey an unambiguous, and socially acceptable message about sex roles.

At the other end of the spectrum, it was at the kibbutz again that I observed the only teacher who made a point of phrasing his question in a manner that specifically acknowledged the presence of both sexes. His solution, which is acceptable but usually dismissed as cumbersome, involves the stating of two forms each, both of the verb in the imperative, and of the noun in the possessive form:

"Phrase (m) or phrase (f) all the arguments that come to your mind (m)/ your mind (f) in favour of a national solution to the problem of the Jewish nation not in Israel in 1881-1904."

No neuter nouns exist in Hebrew, not even nouns describing the performer of an action, or a professional person. Again, the masculine form is used, so the impression is that in fact all professionals or doers are males. In practice, the exception to the rule is in the case of those activities or professions where the expectation is that the person be female, and hence the common usage of the feminine gender to describe secretary, nursery school teacher, nurse, child minder, dental assistant, and house keeper, to mention just a few.

The exclusive resort to the masculine, conveys covert expectations of sex roles. In particular, the referral to persons of different occupations or roles in gendered nouns, is a severe, and discriminatory usage. Apart from the role models presented, and the world picture they create, this aspect of language usage has a direct influence on the scene set in the educational context too. The common practice of parents and the media, to refer to teachers constantly in the feminine (MOROT), excludes the possibility of there being any male teachers (MORIM), and indirectly, whether intentionally or not, confirms the views of those who regard it as an inappropriate profession for men. At the same time, the educational establishment (ministry, school staff, teacher training) consistently uses the feminine form only when talking of a school counselor (YOETZET), whereas the masculine noun (YOETZ) is reserved for other fields, like a medical or financial consultant.

A culture that condones the omission of the feminine gender from much of its discourse, makes the study of the use of sexist language an extremely complex issue. Speakers and writers alike, rebuke accusations of sexism on the grounds that they are using approved language. The uncriticized internalization of this norm is a reflection of deeply entrenched social constructs, and it is these that need to be modified, prior to any widespread change in verbal expression.

Another loaded instance of language usage is the common practice of teachers observed to call on 'girls', but never use the parallel group address 'boys'. This collective approach is employed either for disciplinary comments, or work related interactions. This grouping suggests that what they share as a gender, is more noticeable than their individuality. Assuming there is no reason to accuse the teachers of belittling the

females intentionally, this mode of address surely reflects the lack of distinction between female pupils in the teacher's mind, and most likely also the rigid expectations from females as a group.

Such references to female pupils in a non specific manner, as 'girls', is obviously connected, if not caused by, the fact noticed in several classes, of teachers being better acquainted with the names of boys than of girls (BenTzvi- Mayer, Hertz-Lazerowitz & Safir, 1989). Accordingly, the constant avoidance of the similarly impersonal collective noun 'boys', might suggest that the teachers need no excuse to refrain from naming the individual males.

Teachers at the kibbutz, and there only, address the class in its entirety from time to time. Their way of addressing the class is to call the pupils CHEVRE, an inclusive term meaning friends or comrades, that reiterates the kibbutz socialist tradition. The importance of the option such a genderless noun offers, is highlighted by the manner in which one teacher (f) insists on calling her mixed group CHAVERIM (m), as if referring to male comrades or friends. Although grammatically the masculine noun refers to females too, this is an instance of a teacher ignoring the existing option of an alternative, neuter inclusive term (CHEVRE), and resorting to the masculine gender.

The subtle ways in which language can be employed selectively, to convey approval or disapproval, encouragement or disinterest, expectations and confidence, and the extent of the speaker's interest in the addressee, and his or her world, has been demonstrated through the analysis of the written texts. Verbal exchanges in class reveal similar patterns, though not as intensively in the regular course of events. Once again it is an

extra-curricular activity that highlights the ongoing procedure.

Hidden messages in special language related activity

Another valuable and unusual resource for the examination of the extent of the aforementioned sexist practices, came my way, unexpectedly, at Hez school. This was a specially designed extra-curricular event that most blatantly exposed the gendered messages, as was the case at the harvest celebration at Tev. On my arrival one morning, I found several classes in the school inner courtyard, involved in an special activity, devoted specifically to Hebrew language study.

The series of riddles, group activities, role plays and quizzes, conducted by a male professional, who had been assigned to engage all 8th and 9th graders in pleasurable and challenging language learning activities, was an extraordinary opportunity to observe the norms of the land being transmitted through the norms of the language usage. The event demonstrates most emphatically the disparity between usage that is linguistically normative, and the gendered messages incorporated into such usage, and is therefore described here at length.

The reason for the event, and its subject matter, was the 100th anniversary of the revival of the Hebrew language. This was the national focal point of that schoolyear. The activity was conducted by an entrepreneur, who introduced himself to me as the organizer of varied events for schools, trade unions, and social groups. He sells complete happenings to different target populations, and arrives equipped with electronic equipment for sound, materials for creative work, like coloured paper and paste, and handouts of the various learning activities he uses.

In this case the activity involved first all seven classes of 8th grade, and later that morning the six classes of 9th grade. The entire programme, down to the phrasing of the instructions, was identical, for both age groups. The importance of this last fact cannot be overestimated, as it offered the unique opportunity of observing the same "master of ceremonies" put on his show twice under identical conditions i.e. same day, same school, same physical conditions and same population, that differed in age (one year) only. In addition to making possible the accumulation of double the amount of qualitative data that same morning, it enabled the comparison of the speaker's patterns of speech in both rounds. Consequently, it is feasible to draw substantiated conclusions, rather than view the records merely as incidental expressions.

When one considers that the whole programme was obviously well rehearsed, and as he later informed me, in great demand and frequently repeated, one can safely assume that this instance is representative of his style, manner and language elsewhere. Indeed, when conducting other mass activities, he might not be expected to be so meticulous in his use of language. However, considering that this extra-curricular activity was financed by the school, for the purpose of enriching the pupils' language, and offering pleasing ways of learning, the subtle insertion of hidden gendered messages proves once again the general laxity as regards sexism in education.

An analysis of the verbal exchanges within the context of this specific situation, the persons involved in the organization, and the audience it is intended for, illustrates both the ease with which sexist comments and gendered addresses are voiced by staff or their representatives, and the reaction of the pupils to these normative practices. It also contributes

substantiation to the theory that sexism in Israeli schools is most rampant in such activities, practices and exchanges that do not derive from the official national curriculum. Where teachers have the liberty to devise projects (report cards) or rituals (harvest celebration), and employ special staff for particular events (this language activity), their insensitivity to gendered messages has the most damaging effects.

The main findings:

There was only one case in which the instructions were sex fair, and the verbs and pronouns were repeated twice, first in the masculine form and then in the feminine. However, in the same breath he nullified the equitable effect by adding sexist comments, that were intended as clues to assist the pupils in solving the riddle. In fact it is the most explicit expression of the speaker's opinion of female pupils. Moreover, since the pattern was repeated twice, as the following quotation demonstrates, this was no chance comment or spontaneous thought on the part of the speaker.

The activity calls for the defining of terms. The organizer offers clues. the word mentioned here is LESUTAH, an uncommon and archaic word meaning a short jacket for women.

To eighth graders, organizer reads from notes:

When the dentist (m) tells you (m) or you (f) to remove the LESUTAH before he extracts your (f) tooth, what does he refer to? Because the word ends with [the syllable] AH, it is feminine. What do girls love? Clothes. So it's a kind of garment that women wear. How come that CHULTZAH [shirt] ends with AH too, and boys and girls wear it? No reason. LESUTAH is a woman's overcoat.

To ninth graders

If you (m) are told (m) or you (f) to remove the LESUTAH it's because someone (m) wants to extract a tooth. That's all. The fact that there is an AH at the end is a sign that it belongs to the feminine gender. What do girls love usually apart from boys? Articles of clothing, garments.

In addition to such explicit stereotypical comments, the organizer's use of language and assignment of roles exposes his adherence to the traditional split. According to this convention, there is a split between body and brain, with the brain as usual not being attributed to the female.

In an activity in the form of charades, the organizer's specific request for volunteers of a certain sex, reflects his stereotypical association of males with cognitive skills, and females with the body that has physical beauty, but inferior skills. He calls on a male to be the 'linguist', a cerebral, theoretical and scholastic occupation, in contrast with the female who is needed as a 'model', whose sole tool is her body, which needs to be presentable, but can be totally dissociated from her mind.

The activity involves one pupil giving a verbal clue, while another acts a short scene to demonstrate the meaning. The groups of pupils have to identify the term. In this case the reactions of the pupils are no less significant than the speaker's sex differentiated assignment of roles.

8th grade: The organizer explains the rules:

The assignment is called the linguist (m) and the model (f). They need to prepare a sketch. Two or three models

(f) are permitted too, and they will present what the linguist (m) says (m).

Pupils whistle.

The linguist (m) says words of greeting. One (m) of each group prepares (m) a greeting in flowery Hebrew. He too must be decorated. He will also be tested for his language. The greeter (m)! Take (m) a sign and come (m) here quickly.

Several girls approach.

The greeter (m)! Where's the greeter (m.)?

The linguists stand in a line, four females and three males.

Teacher (f):Model (m) or model (f) is okay. It doesn't matter.

There can also be two models(f).

The insistence on the sex distinction between the 'brainy' role of linguist and the 'physical' role of model is repeated in the later performance too.

By consistently phrasing his instructions in a gendered manner, the speaker made it absolutely clear which of the sexes he had a-priori designated each task for. So insistent was he, that in the rare cases in which the participants opted for flexibility of sex roles, and appointed persons of the other sex, the change was neither acknowledged and approved of, in explicit comments, nor did it modify his language usage.

9th grade

Choose a head of each group. In a minute I'll call on him to get instructions. In a minute the head of the group comes (m.) to me and gets (m.) instructions [four boys and two girls approach]. The greeter (m.) prepares a greeting. The question mark prepares (m.) an interrogative sentence for the class. The linguist (m.)

reads his text from here. The model (f.) will model. It's possible to have two or three models (f.). If a group wants more than one linguist (m.) it can be arranged in advance.

The organizer turns to the readers of the greetings, four males and three females.

Come here (m.) with the sign. One by one he will greet all present. You receive each greeter (m.) with applause.

In both age groups, girls followed the instructions phrased in the masculine gender, with no comment, just as the rules of the language require. Thus a disparity between language usage and reality is established. As the number of female participants in roles assigned to males grows, the language became increasingly inappropriate, especially when the masculine singular form is used to address a female, already within the organizer's sight (e.g. come [m.] here with the sign). The complacency and obedience of the girls was never ruffled, nor did any of the teachers present voice an objection.

The task of the 'linguists' was to read a riddle, and the 'models' were supposed to offer clues by acting certain parts. The girls who were either chosen by their classmates to be 'linguists', or else appointed themselves, made no attempt to pretend they were males, yet were persistently addressed as if they were. No verbal suggestion was ever made that the linguists could be females, not even by the form teachers who were present, whose main goal should have been to get the maximal number of their pupils involved in these learning activities. The voluntary participation of girls in this activity in the brainy role reserved for males, did not suffice to change the

organizer's rigid split. It is evident that it did not concern the teachers either, for they tolerated the statements that insisted on distinct sex roles throughout, even when the pupils presented an alternative.

The sex differentiated responses of male and female pupils to the invitation to assume the part of a 'linguist' (m) or 'model' (f), highlight the risks involved in confronting these constructs by initiating changes in sex roles. The adolescents show awareness of the social constructs, and accordingly each sex responds differently, and takes different liberties.

The willingness of girls to assume the role of the 'linguist', that was designated for males only, demonstrates the internalization of the language code, according to which females are excluded from discourse by constant resort to the masculine form. They seem to accept it uncritically as referring to them too, a fact that raises questions about the extent to which they are aware of the discrimination and disrespect involved.

Moreover, their participation suggests that the female pupils adopt a role assigned explicitly for males, with greater readiness than demonstrated by the organizer, or even by the female staff of Hez school, who never objected to the reiterated rigidity in assignment of roles.

Last but not least, it demonstrates the ease with which some females encroached on this territory, that was delineated as male only, with no fear for repercussions on their femininity.

Lest the impression remain that pupils in general exhibited greater flexibility as regards sex roles than the adults

present, the case of the male pupil who chose to be a 'female model', points at the complexity of the issue at hand.

A superficial reading of the transcript renders the information that the role of the model, unlike that of the linguist, was defined as slightly more flexible. The option that the model be a male or a female, was mentioned indeed, not by the organizer himself, who evidently had his own concept of propriety, but as a comment, by a female teacher present at the activity of the eighth graders. It is hardly a matter for speculation whether the fact that the same was never said about the linguist, has anything to do with the definition of this role. The intellectual task was described solely in the masculine form, implying the boundaries of male territory. The pride in the physical merits of a person's body, on the other hand, though initially reserved for females only, can be extended to include select males.

In the single case (out of a total of 13 participating classes) in which a boy chose to be the model, he chose to preserve the definition of the role that was feminine. This involved dressing up as a well endowed woman, in an elaborate costume. He wore make-up, a bra, high boots, and a mini skirt, and a cardboard crown to which crepe paper was attached, as if it were a trail. He swayed his hips as he walked, and got lots of laughs. This was no less than a caricature.

The 'sex change' went beyond the apparel, and included the adoption of an affected posture and exaggerated gestures, obviously associated with a seductive female. Later on, when the official programme was over, and the pupils were dancing in big circles to music, this same boy performed for all, in the centre of the circle, swaying his hips and getting regular applause.

When the dancing ended and the pupils resumed their sitting positions on the concrete playground, he danced and swayed in front of his classmates, as if performing a belly dance, adding the motions of the conductor of a choir. Throughout his act, he fumbled with the bra he was wearing to hold up his generously padded bust, to the delight of his audience.

By refraining from simply assuming the role of a male model, and proving that a boy could do it as well as a girl, which is what all the girl 'linguists' did in a matter of fact way, this boy's exceptional behaviour raises significant and thought provoking issues. The contrast between the ease with which a female might be prepared to enter a so-called masculine field, versus the awkwardness and risk to the self image of a male who crosses the traditional boundaries, reinforced in this case by the language, might explain why the boy had to turn the act itself into an elaborate joke.

Taking the feminine sex role seriously might have negative social repercussions for a 14 year old school boy in the Israeli society, as in others. Whether the boy's motive in putting on his singular act was to satisfy his desire to play the role of the 'model' in this activity, to use the opportunity to pose as a female, or to draw attention to himself, is immaterial. The fact remains that this particular conduct was viewed with indulgence. If to judge by the hearty applause, this appealed to the pupils who were thrilled by this ridicule of women.

The uncalled for rigidity in assignment of sex roles, and its probably unexpected outcome, testify to the extraordinary power of covert messages. The sexist messages set the stage for the sexist behaviour. In fact, I would argue, the distinct responses of members of each sex were actually appropriate, in

view of the social constructs of the pupils' culture, and the wider implications of the use of gendered language.

This observation of naturally occurring, albeit infrequent data, grants access to a set of moral realities firmly located in the cultural world under examination (Silverman, 1985). Although it might seem to be impressionistic and having anecdotal quality, when seen on a continuum of nine months of ethnographic research, it can safely be read as typical and representative of findings generated from the rest. The concentrated and ceremonial format of the activity, much like the ritual at Tev, conveys the essence of the gendered point of view of Israeli educators. The conclusion is once again that although the system as a whole is infested with subtle forms of sex bias, it is the well thought out activities devised by teachers that contain the most definable hidden gendered messages.

Chapter 10

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS - THE EXPOSURE OF HIDDEN MESSAGES IN REPORT
CARDS

A commitment to an ethnographic approach, obligates the researcher to be constantly on the alert for unforeseen and unpredictable sources of data that might prove relevant. Such flexibility is required due to the fact that in much qualitative research the research problems undergo several respecifications during the period of study. Silverman (1985) notes two possible sources of change in direction. First, during research access to certain areas may cease, while others may open. Second, there might be increasing dissatisfaction with the research question being posed.

The advantage of the shift in focus to unplanned sources is described by Glaser and Strauss (1967). They insist that the sources of data be selected in the process of the research, as a condition for the generation of a new theory. Working according to a preplanned model or research design, merely reflects the constraints of questions that more often than not reflect the limits of knowledge in a given field. At the most it enables the verification or validation of a former theory. Given the inbuilt limitations of the initial research questions phrased at the onset of any study, the deviation from the original questions can signify the real breakthrough.

In the course of the field work, the ethnographer needs to relate such events, practices or manners never formerly considered noteworthy of examination. Pursuing this new direction may lead to the discovery of meaningful aspects of the life and nature of the subject of the study, or to insight into

phenomena already recorded. The value of such data can be estimated when placed in the appropriate methodological context, and analyzed with the aid of suitable measures.

Close to the completion of my observations at Tev school in June, I felt my original research design being hindered by the teachers, who were no longer as obliging as they had been until that particular moment in time. The rush to complete the writing of reports, overshadowed any other activities I had noted in the staff room on my former visits, and so adherence to the natural flow of events required that I too immerse myself in the main concern of the teachers. This is a true instance of what Silverman (1985) describes as changing access to areas of study. My readiness to shift my interests and to delve into what had become their most central occupation, namely the preparation of the evaluations of their pupils, introduced me to an extraordinarily rich and untapped source of data.

The issue of gender and assessment, and the effect of verbal evaluative feedback and different types of exams on the performance of boys and girls, has been studied for over two decades. However, the possibility of regarding pupils' school report cards as documentary evidence, has not been raised in research on interaction patterns of teachers and pupils. Studies on evaluative feedback and gender differences refer to classroom verbal interactions only (Dweck et al, 1978; Eccles Blumenfeld, 1985; Roberts & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1989; Worrall, Worrall & Meldrum, 1988). Likewise, the recent wave of literature on ethnography in education contains no reference to such research, which evidently does not exist (Hammersley, 1980; Spender, 1982; Delamont, 1983; Burgess, 1985; Agar, 1986; Croll, 1986; Woods, 1986; Campbell, 1989; Klein, 1990). Even literature on factors affecting the aspirations of boys and girls, ignores

written feedback (e.g. Marini, 1978; Danziger, 1983; Romm, 1987; Greenberg- Lake, 1991). This then is the contribution of this study to qualitative research methods employed in gender studies for the exposure of hidden sexism.

The multiple levels of examination this material lends itself to, and the variety of theoretical disciplines in the context of which this data can be discussed, suggest that more such research on this neglected source could be of great value. Access need not be too problematic, though gatekeepers need to be identified, and necessary negotiations conducted.

In view of the light it throws on the covert modes of interaction of teachers and pupils, it deserves a central position in gender studies. To conclude, although in the planning of my original research model I did not envisage the systematic analysis of documents written by the teachers, after the event, this section of my study is the more innovative both in theory and in practice.

Report cards

The significance of report cards lies in the fact that a teacher's explicit instructions, suggestions or recommendations, grant the pupil, at least a theoretical chance, of working towards the fulfillment of the teacher's expectations, and to the securing of fuller approval.

The written evaluation and feedback, serve as valuable guidelines both for pupils and their families to act upon. A teacher may choose to present this guidance explicitly, as advice that is offered in a supportive tone, or in the form of demands stated in an unambiguously authoritative manner. A more devious way of pointing at the correct path to success, is by

stressing the unsatisfactory practices that affect academic performance, attitudes, study habits, discipline or social behaviour. The expression of disapproval, and the naming of difficulties, deficiencies or misdeeds, assumes the pupil's intention to improve in the future. From the recipient's point of view, criticism that is not accompanied by clear guidance, might increase one's sense of helplessness. In other words, the pupil's benefit is a function of the particularity, clarity, explicitness and diversity of the recommendations. The more specific the instructions, the clearer it is where the pupil needs to direct the energy for change, if s/he so wishes.

The extent of the guidance given to a pupil is a significant measure of several levels of the teacher's interaction with the pupil. It might be a form of acknowledgement and reward, a validation of the child's world, and a definition of its boundaries, and in addition, an expression of concern for the well being of the pupil, and readiness to invest in the child's future. Consequently, guidance that is gendered, discloses dissimilar attitudes to the girls and boys, in their present and future roles.

The sex differentiated nature of the evaluative feedback that pupils get from their teachers, and the gendered nature of its effect, has been widely examined in the context of classroom interactions. The issues raised are relevant to written evaluations too.

Most educational research on the effect of teacher expectancy, has focused on establishing relations between pupil - teacher interaction patterns to pupils' academic performance. The reference is invariably to classroom interaction, not to the dramatic dialogue enacted in written evaluations (Dweck,

Davidson et al, 1978; Danziger, 1983; Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985; Koestner, Zuckerman & Koestner, 1987; Kelly, 1988; Roberts & Nolen- Hoeksema, 1989).

Parsons, Kackzala & Meece (1982), based on Dweck et al (1978) predict that

the percentage of total criticism directed at academic content of ones work will be negatively related to both self-concept of ability and expectations for future performance, while the percentage of total praise directed at the academic content of ones work will be positively related to both ones self concept of ability and ones expectation.

Parsons et al, 1982, p. 324

The general principles of reinforcement predict that frequency of praise, and assurance of being correct, should be positively related to self concepts of ability and vice versa. The opposite view expressed by Parsons et al (1982), could well apply to the power of written responses on a pupil's performance too.

it may be the subjective meaning of the feedback that is more critical. If students are engaging in attributional analyses, then they should interpret teacher feedback in terms of the possible hidden messages regarding the teacher's expectations for them. Consequently, frequency of being called upon, criticism for incorrect answers, sustaining feedback following an incorrect response, and lack of praise for correct response may all convey the message that the teacher expects one both to participate and do well.

Ibid, p.324

Dweck et al (1978) studied the different nature of evaluation of the sexes, and found that teachers were overall far more critical of boys in classroom. As a result, their familiarity with the notion of failure, enables boys to more easily attribute negative feedback to the attitude of the teachers, and as irrelevant to the intellectual quality of their performance. In contrast, teachers are overall largely positive in their assessment of girls, they use negative feedback in a highly specific manner for girls' intellectual failures, and they do not emphasize motivation as a determinant of girls' failures as they do in the case of boys. This creates the impression that the failure of girls relates to some inherent deficiency, the kind of personal criticism that is more painful, and therefore more difficult to disregard.

The practice of using more negative feedback for boys than for girls, is true of the reports examined too. However, although the immediate effect cannot be observed, as in the classroom situation, one can expect a similar outcome when conveyed in writing. The multitude of criticism loses its disheartening effect on boys, whereas the few disapproving comments to girls, have a more discouraging impact.

Roberts and Nolen-Hoeksema (1989) following Koestner, Zuckerman and Koestner (1987), distinguish between competence feedback that they call 'normative', and feedback they call 'person praise'. As for the impact on females, Roberts and Nolen (1989) claim that females are more influenced than males by evaluative feedback. Males show more selective responding, allowing positive feedback to influence them more than negative feedback. Like Dweck et al (1978), they find that feedback is likely to promote more negative self evaluation in girls. It

might even undermine their feelings of personal competence for goal achievement, and lead to self deprecatory reactions.

The research on factors affecting aspirations of boys and girls (Marini, 1978; Danziger, 1983; Romm, 1987; Greenberg-Lake, 1991), and on the gendered nature of teachers' feedback and its sex differentiated effects (Dweck, Davidson et al, 1978; Kelly, 1988; Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985; Roberts & Nolen-Hoeksama, 1989; Greenberg- Lake, 1991), highlights the centrality of feedback in the formation of a pupil's sense of competence, or alternatively, learned helplessness. It also supports the need for more research into the effect of written feedback.

Of greatest relevance to this study is the conclusion drawn by Kelly (1988) from her meta-analytic review of interactions. Boys receive both a higher proportion of their criticism for their behaviour, and a greater amount of work-related criticism. Therefore, she argues, given that academic criticism carries a message of high expectations, this suggests that teachers may be providing a better learning environment for boys, even though they criticize their behaviour.

The nature of the report cards at Tev

Detailed and descriptive written evaluations that include reference to a pupil's personality traits, classwork, interest in studies, and social life, are not the standard practice in Israeli junior high schools. The use of this approach, with the personal, supportive and friendly voice it usually evokes, is reserved for the lower classes of primary school, where pupils are judged by their effort, interest, and involvement, as much as by their measurable achievements.

Junior high schools herald a transition from the more child centred, neighbourly, protecting, encouraging and enabling atmosphere, of the early years of schooling, to a heterogeneous, task oriented, competitive institute, that in turn is to prepare pupils for the serious business of high school. Grades carry more weight, while pupil-teacher interactions become more impersonal. Teachers have trouble remembering the names of all their pupils, as most of them teach many classes, that might have up to 42 pupils in each. In two of the three schools observed, teachers asked children their names in class, even though the school year was well into the second term, and they had already evaluated the pupils' work at the end of the first term. The fact that the unfamiliar pupils were more often girls than boys, confirms the finding that Israeli teachers think more of male pupils than of females (BenTsvi-Mayer et al, 1989).

As the distance between pupils and teachers increases, the latter admit to a lack of any clear impression of, or reliable recollection of the individual's performance in class, and therefore rely more heavily on written work for their assessments. Grades are expressed in numbers or their equivalent, with the scale explained in the report card, with the measure varying from school to school.

The child-centred, non-competitive and non-hierarchical and anti- authoritarian ideology that pervades all pedagogical practices at Tev, is expressed in the form and content of the evaluations the teachers write at the end of the term. The absence of an accurate grading system, and the resort to a more descriptive genre, suggest the perpetuation of the less judgemental, softer, and more personal attitude, usually reserved for younger children. The reports consist of two parts. First subject teachers refer to the accomplishment of specific

tasks, progress made, interest shown and learning skills demonstrated. Categories are ticked off in relevant scales for some subjects, and for others a few words are written in the appropriate boxes.

The section of greatest value and interest, and the one that lends itself most readily to a textual analysis, is the last part of the report card, a section that uses no scales, boxes or other predesigned format. At this point the final word is left to the form teacher, whose task it is to write a general, fairly detailed evaluation. In a seemingly unstructured passage, the teacher covers a whole range of aspects of the pupil's performance, in what appears to be a made-to-measure message. These passages vary in length, depending on each teacher's individual style, from an average of 26 words per pupil, in one class, up to 64 in another.

The report cards at Tev, although far removed from the standard list of grades customarily used in Israeli schools, are unlike the profiles, or records of achievement promoted in the British educational system. Though they seem to bear some resemblance - the narrative form, and their aspiration to holism - they are significantly different. The emphasis of records of achievement is on teacher - pupil negotiations and on adaptation to employers' needs. At Tev, on the other hand, the format is supposed to convey a personalized message, composed by the teachers alone. Some teachers requested that pupils contribute their self assesment, but most pupils ignored the assignment, probably because of the difficulty, and the self disclosure involved.

A close analysis of the report cards exposes the difficulty the staff encounter too when expected to compose a personal

address in an unstructured passage. The critique of profiles and records of achievement by Stronach (1989), who dismisses the value of this innovative method of assessment, and in particular the self assessment required at times of pupils, is most applicable to the pitfalls built into the report cards at Tev.

At the heart of the pupil centredness of profiling and reviewing lies an educational paradox: by constructing the student centred, holistic and personalized profile, we de-individualize the learners by asking each of them at the same time to conform to a stereotype, and to be themselves. In that sense, perhaps, there is no alienation more subtle than self-assessment.

Ibid., p. 170

When read en masse by a researcher, these documents shed more light on the teachers who compose them than on the youngsters they describe. Accordingly, the intent is not to monitor the accuracy of the evaluations, nor the appropriateness of each description. The purpose is to reveal teachers' attitudes to the male and female pupils, by exposing any existing hidden infrastructure in these free prose passages. Once the focus is moved, from addressee to addressor, patterns emerge that expose hidden messages, and gender bias comes to the fore.

In their summations, the form teachers do not confine themselves to comments on academic performance, nor are they instructed to. In fact, their evaluations are no less than personality descriptions. They contain statements that refer to the pupils' actions, saying "you do". In addition, most judge these actions too, or draw definitive conclusions, using adjectival phrases and proclaiming "you are". As such, the

analogy with the resort of psychologists to the use of sex stereotypes in personality descriptions and in diagnostic statements, as demonstrated in recent research, adds another dimension to the analysis of these documents.

Studies in psychology have reported on the tendency of professionals to diagnose disorders merely on the basis of behaviours described, applying ostensibly similar criteria, but drawing conclusions that reveal sex differentiation (e.g. Chesler, 1989; Ford & Widiger, 1989). The sex bias discloses certain unstated expectations and assumptions that are associated with the disorders under discussion. The subtle connection between personality descriptions and sexism in psychological texts, that are allegedly based on the integration of data gathered through scientific psychological tests, observations or interviews with patients, discloses the weight of biased input.

The analysis of report cards reveals that this insidious inclusion of social constructs into the reading of data, and the consequential differential evaluation of individuals, is practised by teachers too. Moreover, the application of dissimilar standards and curative measures to males and females by therapists, is parallel to the disparate forecasts made by teachers to the boys and girls they assess.

The manner in which behaviours are categorized differently, diverse conclusions drawn and dissimilar recommendations made, even by psychologists who react to written reports (Ford & Widiger, 1989), confirm the complaint that there is no identical definition of mental health for both sexes (Chesler, 1989). The internalization of the traditional sex roles, by persons in the diagnostic and therapeutic professions, results in the

legitimization of criticizing one sex for adopting certain behavioural patterns acceptable from the other. The disparity between the model of the ideal female and the ideal male is thus exposed.

The rejection of this resort to double standards in the evaluation of the functioning and behaviour of females and males, explains the preferential position granted to the androgynous personality since the late 1970s (Bem, 1981). The imbalance that placed more of the undesirable, immature or unhealthy traits under the heading 'feminine' than 'masculine', was one of the reasons for the call for change. The deficiency in the list of commendable 'masculine' traits of nurturing and emotional expressiveness, was another.

The criteria of judgement and assessment that are employed by teachers, like those of the psychologists, customarily express the expectations of society from the individual. Their standards, criticism and recommendations are presented as worthy of attention, as befits the voice of the establishment. Their use of documents, as in examinations, reports, or messages to parents, is devised to bring about changes, to influence, to justify and to legitimize. Much of the teachers' power is invested on them by their dependents, i.e. their pupils, who depend on them to familiarize them with the norms of the educational system, that mirror the norms of society. Accordingly, the approval of the teacher is as sought after by the pupil and the pupil's family, as is that of the therapist by the patient.

The uniquely influential position of teachers on the validation of a pupil's self image and self esteem, is built into the system. When it comes to planning ones academic course,

a teacher's opinion might be decisive (Dweck, Davidson et al, 1978; Greenberg-Lake, 1991). The expectations a pupil grasps from teachers, might determine his or her present and future, as indeed teachers intend their messages to.

The origins of the research questions

In accordance with my research design of interviewing teachers only after having visited the school regularly for several weeks, I planned to spend the last month of the school year (June 1989), conducting interviews with teachers at Tev school. I had already indicated to several teachers that I looked forward to having lengthy conversations with them, in which I hoped to hear how they felt about teaching teenagers.

In this school, for the first time, my plan was unexpectedly aborted. Teachers were unavailable for interviews. They spent less time in the staff room during breaks, and on those occasions when they were to be found there, they impressed me as being involved in unusually animated discussions with their colleagues. At other times they were occupied writing in what at the time I could describe merely as a pile of A4 ring binders. My frustration increased as the days passed without my task being accomplished, especially since the end of the school year was looming closer.

It took several days of acute disappointment and growing concern about my deadline for completing my observations and interviews, to realize that in fact I was mirroring the growing tension and concern of the teachers, caused by the approach of their deadline. In accordance with the methodological commitment, I endeavoured to experience the end of the academic year from the teachers' point of view. To do so I had to become

involved in their prime interests, that were no longer located in the classrooms.

On my next visit I took action to reveal the attraction of those ring binders. At an opportune moment, when the staff room was empty, I examined the pile. There was a binder for each class, and they contained forms for the teachers to write their evaluations in, three pages per pupil, later to be copied into each pupil's report card. The forms were identical for all grades, covering all subjects taught at school, but the teachers entered only those items that were relevant to the curriculum of each grade.

In search of data that could be of special interest, I chose to read the evaluations of a ninth grade I had observed. My reading at this stage was not directed as yet by any research questions, and was merely an investigation into a hitherto unknown source of data. However, my acquaintance with the pupils in this class, accelerated the transition from non directive perusal to critical and analytical reading.

The disparity between written descriptions and my recollection of the performance of several of the pupils in class, was striking. For example, a male pupil I remembered as being outstanding in his responses in class, got a much milder and cooler evaluation than a female who had struck me as being just as remarkable. The difference in tone, even more than in content, struck me as a gross injustice, and aroused my curiosity. The research question I then formulated was whether there were a pattern, according to which pupils were addressed, assessed and described, that was sex related. For this purpose it was necessary to read the comments made by the form teacher

about all the pupils of that class, and this is how the critical reading began.

Even in this preliminary stage of textual analysis, the teachers' statements revealed certain linguistic patterns, the repetition of which created a sense of detachment, and a vision of automatic writing. This repetitiousness was intriguing as it surely contradicted the goal of providing the pupil with a personal message written by the form teacher.

This was no longer a task to be completed when the staff room just happened to be empty of teachers. I approached Ms B the principal to request permission to see all the reports. Ms B's interest was immediately aroused, and she herself stated she was anxious to learn as much as possible about her own staff from my study of the evaluations they had composed. Her own use of these reports as a means of observing the work of the teachers came as no surprise, as I had already figured out that she herself checked every binder and commented on several teachers' prose and judgement, as there were several amendments made in a different hand. Thus it came about that I was granted access to this material, primarily because the principal believed she could benefit from my analysis, although no promise was made by me to disclose anything or everything.

An interview with the principal, on the completion of my analysis (January 1992), enabled a process of triangulation (Croll, 1986), namely the description of the phenomena from more than one perspective, and the confirmation of data gathered through other techniques. The conclusion drawn from the discourse analysis that the messages are hidden from the writers themselves, is confirmed by her total unawareness of the sex bias in the gendered evaluations and descriptions, in the same

texts she had read and commented on. The effect of her realization made her act two years later, and in January 1994 I presented the methodology and findings to the staff at her request.

At the time, her immediate response to the major findings, was to invalidate my research methods. She insisted I was disregarding the 'objective' truth, and expressed her confidence in the judgement of her staff in their evaluations of their pupils. To her credit it must be noted that later in our conversation she discontinued her resistance, and expressed bewilderment at the unconscious bias conveyed through the format she had considered infallible. In fact she showed an interest in learning more about gendered interactions.

In the process of collecting the data, permission was granted to copy whatever I chose from the binders but not to photocopy. I was to refrain from carrying out my work in the staff room, to avoid the impression that I was supervising the staff, much as the Head did. This condition was in accordance with my needs since I still intended to conduct interviews, and wanted to retain my position as a non-critical observer. Ms B manifested her support for my new project by inviting me to sit in her own room, out of sight of teachers, while she proceeded at her own desk with her work.

Shortly after, someone entered her room, the door of which was regularly left open, and I was instructed to leave. However, she showed concern by seeing me out, and finding another room, one used mainly as a store room, on the other side of the secretary's office.

From that day onwards, I spent another five mornings at school, locating the binders of all six classes of the junior high, checking to see that the class teachers had already filled in the section I had chosen to analyze, and copying those passages. Although it slowed down the process, the binders were taken and returned only when the staff room was empty.

The low profile I laboured to keep at school throughout my research was spoiled at this point, in a manner that was not to my liking. This situation exhibited once again the strong support offered by the principal. The binder of a ninth grade I had observed for several weeks, was missing from the staff room. Having painstakingly recorded this teacher's verbal and physical interactions with his pupils, his written comments were of particular interest.

The incident occurred in the last week of June, when only grades 1 through 6 attend school, since junior high and high schools start their summer vacation a week earlier. Although the 7th, 8th and 9th grades had already received their report cards, the teachers of the junior high were still at school. Once again I turned to Ms B for help, and she proceeded to conduct a search of her own in the staff room, to no avail. Her next move came as a complete surprise, for she operated the microphone at her desk, and summoned the class teacher to her, on the school announcement system. His response was hasty, and his reward was a reprimand for not returning the binder to its place, after taking it home to complete the writing there. He was instructed to return it for my use, and the two of us were requested to negotiate a convenient date. As was to be expected, the principal's authoritative intervention was effective, and on the appointed day the binder was in place.

This interaction with the teacher demonstrates the position of power of Ms B, in contrast to her claim that the school is run in a non-hierarchical style, and that she is the friend of teachers and pupils alike. The contradiction between the mode of organization she states she believes in and the actual mode of operation, suggests other hidden messages that she is unaware of.

Since this teacher was still to be interviewed, I was apprehensive lest Ms B's overbearing manner of handling the situation be counter-productive, as it could not but attribute a threatening assurance of support from the Head that I had kept hidden throughout my presence. The fact that no explanation was offered for her demand, nor any questions put forth by the teacher, suggested that my role had indeed been redefined as an extension of the principal, working on her behalf, and possibly even at her request.

Undoubtedly, the interventions of Ms B, and her constant interest and support, defined my position, vis a vis the teachers, in a manner unlike that in the other two schools. Whether this protectorship prevented her staff from expressing their sentiments to me sincerely, cannot be established. In retrospect, however, access to the documents was worth such a possible disadvantage.

Methodology of textual analysis

The advantage of using documents for educational research are threefold, and apply to the analysis of teachers' written feedback to their pupils too. First of all the documents are accessible, secondly, they are not distorted by the researcher, or affected by her presence, and thirdly they embody a complex interaction with school practices. In retrospect, their analysis

indicates that they amplify and highlight sex differentiated practices and policies, that are otherwise concealed in most arenas of Israeli school life.

The nature of the documents, and the research questions posed, determine the appropriate mode of analysis. Quantitative methodology is employed both as an initial stage, and as an auxiliary tool for the deeper discourse analysis. The texts under consideration are first measured for length, and only next for linguistic patterns and content.

The ethnographic researcher is obliged to obtain some understanding of the social, cultural and historical setting of the situation under study. Burgess (1985c) adds that when documents are studied, the researcher needs to consider the circumstances in which the documents were produced. The context in the case of these particular documents is the school ideology and policy. This includes the adoption of a non-hierarchical tone in all teacher-pupil interactions, and a special investment in the individual's potential, rather than in measurable achievements.

An important aspect of the setting is the teachers' knowledge that their compositions will be read not only by pupils and parents, but by the principal too. In view of the need to satisfy all these readers, one might safely assume that this task is taken very seriously, and that teachers choose their words carefully. These passages are no less than premeditated and screened expressions, over which teachers have greater control than over their spontaneous interactions in class, in the staff room or during interviews.

On a scale of control over sources of data, to use Agar's (1986) measures, this is surely an instance of data the production of which is totally and exclusively in the power of the teachers, with no possibility of 'contamination' by the researcher. The researcher's task is to choose such tools as will enable the generation of further research questions.

The measures used for these documents are 'low inference measures' (Croll, 1986), because they reduce the role of observer judgement to a minimum, and enable the unambiguous coding of utterances according to clear rules and criteria.

The form teachers' descriptive and evaluative comments in the report cards of all 194 pupils of all six classes of the junior high at Tev school, were studied (see table 1 for figures). Diversity in styles adopted by teachers in their comments to pupils is to be expected, as is the idiosyncratic, repetitious use of certain clusters of words, or set phrases. However, the fact that the teachers at Tev share an inequitable response to the performance of their female and male pupils, confirms the existence of a hidden agenda, and proves that the teachers have internalized a surprisingly similar sexist code.

The passages analyzed are worded as a direct address to the pupil. They incorporate references to specific areas of study, but in particular deal with those aspects of the pupil's general conduct, attitude to studies and to classmates, that a form teacher is expected to be more familiar with than subject teachers. The passage contains at times suggestions and recommendations for the future, and at times even an explicit statement of expectations from the pupil. The comments made to the pupils of the graduating class are more likely than the

others to have this touch of prophecy, in the guise of words of parting.

	TEACHER	PUPILS		
GRADE	F/M	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
7a	f	15	24	39
7b	f	14	23	37
8a	f	13	22	35
8b	f	17	18	35
9a	m	11	11	22
9b	f	11	15	26
TOTAL		81	113	194

table 1

the staff and student body of Tev junior high school

The documents examined are then reduced to their linguistic and contextual elements. The categorization of these elements creates meaningful units of comparison, and a specially devised mode of quantification, enables the testing of the hypothesis that girls and boys are addressed differently. Finally, the nature of such a sex bias can be defined in terms of the quantitative and qualitative data.

The assessments are broken down into units that represent the various criteria for evaluating a pupil's work and skills. Linguistic elements that convey the writer's tone are defined too. The modes of address are checked for the hidden messages they might convey, and the inequitable treatment they might perpetuate. Once the close reading discloses that some teachers

tend to repeat themselves, uttering what I have called set phrases, the resort to this mode is regarded as another measure of the teacher's attitude.

The integration of the qualitative methodology and the discourse analysis leads to the generation of a theory about the employment of reports as a means of socialization. The dissimilar expectations are manifested by the gendered criteria for evaluation, the scope of references to aspects of a pupil's life, the investment in the phrasing of made-to-measure descriptions, versus the resort to set phrases, the teacher's contribution to the planning of each pupil's future, and certain characteristics of tone. The correlation of these variables with the sex of the pupil addressed, provides an accurate picture of the hidden agenda these documents convey.

The first stage in the study is the comparison of the length of the passages. The figures per class and per sex are then compared in order to check for hidden patterns (table 2). The vast range is later examined for correlation with dissimilarities in content. The conspicuous differences detected raise queries about teachers' considerations in choosing to communicate with their pupils in such a nonuniform fashion. In particular the messages to those pupils who are at either end of the scale, deserve closer analysis.

A case in point is the teacher of 7b, who needs only 28 words to convey her message to one of her male pupils, but no less than 80 to address another (see table 2). The short passage is a factual, complimentary summary of Amit's school year, whereas in the long one, the teacher presents Benny with a list of complaints, and a reminder of failings. She twice uses the phrase "it's a pity", in order to express her disappointment,

and makes a point of assuring him that she is convinced that if he were less indifferent and more disciplined, his achievements would be much greater (see appendix 5 for full passages).

	RANGE		MEAN		MEAN
	F	M	F	M	CLASS
7a	37-69	33-63	51.5	46.1	48.23
7b	33-56	28-80	46.5	52.3	50.13
8a	25-44	29-62	35	39.2	37.65
8b	29-48	22-66	36.9	38.16	37.57
9a	50-92	41-71	67.4	60.8	64.13
9b	19-42	12-37	28	24.5	26

table 2

number of words used by each teacher in address to pupil, according to sex, and in comparison to class mean.

These two passages reflect the polar dissimilarity between the extent of information a teacher accumulates about a disruptive, non-conforming or problematic pupil, who manipulates the teacher into more interactions, as compared to the obedient, well behaved child. This pattern in teacher's comments indicates that just as the unruly child forces the teacher to respond more frequently and fully to his/her needs or whims, in verbal interactions in class, so the written evaluations are dissimilar responses to behaviour differences of boys and girls. Since the teachers themselves complained of the greater frequency of disciplinary problems of male pupils, this response of the teachers to the behavioural patterns of the boys, should come as no surprise. It can be viewed merely as another indication of the power the boys have over them.

For purposes of analysis, the teachers' summaries are broken up into utterances of different kinds, that evolve from a close reading of the texts. To ensure an accurate comparison of these brief utterances, the data is classified initially under six major headings, and then divided among sixty seven sub-categories (see appendix 6). Items are ticked off each time a reference is made, and this process results in a chart delineating the particular foci and emphases of each teacher, the most commonly used criteria and the resort to set phrases. The listing is separate for pupils of each sex, which makes any dissimilarity in the patterns immediately manifest. The parts that refer to a pupil's academic performance are never judged for accuracy or appropriateness in this research model, as was explained formerly.

Since the summaries are written in the individual style of each teacher, they first need to be translated into units that are comparable, and quantifiable. Of the six major headings employed to disclose different modes of relating to a pupil, four cover those aspects of a pupil's performance and conduct that teachers most commonly criticize. Comments on these topics are usually stated explicitly in an evaluative fashion. The four categories are: 1) academic performance 2) learning habits 3) conduct 4) social skills

These categories, however, do not disclose the more in direct references to the abilities and character traits of pupils, nor do they contain the teacher's tone. Two other categories serve to expose those traces of the writer's personal touch that communicate the teacher's views and feelings about the pupil's personality and prospects. Informal observations, friendly remarks, reflections on a pupil's potential, adjectives used, and sentiments such as disappointment, appreciation, or

sorrow on parting, are grouped under the last two headings: 5) recommendations 6) tone.

Hidden messages coming to light

A close reading of the evaluations of the pupils of 7a and 7b, reveals vast asymmetry in the quantity of detailed instructions directed at girls and boys. The utterances referring to changes suggested explicitly or implicitly, are checked first for range and emphases, and next for sentence structure and particularity.

To start with, a larger proportion of girls (40%) than boys in 7a (20.8%), while not praised highly, are not told to change a thing, but neither are they described as perfection itself. A close look at the sort of feedback and the changes recommended, raises issues similar to those reported on in research on gendered oral interactions in classrooms. In this class, two girls are told to change in one respect each: one is told to improve her academic work, and the other - to contribute more to the social life of the class, a set phrase that the teacher of 7a uses repeatedly for girls more than for boys.

When more than one change is required, academic feedback is still not always included. The emphasis is clearly on the non intellectual aspects, on establishing ones role in society. Five girls are told to improve in two fields: two girls are told to improve their academic work and to contribute more to social life; one is told to participate more in class and to contribute more to social life; one is to be tidier and more efficient in her management of time, and one is told to improve her academic work, and to dare to ask questions. This is mainly 'person praise' that is not likely to empower and augment feelings of

personal competence for goal achievement (Roberts & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1989).

There is a consistent pattern of abstention from 'normative' feedback that describes competence. In four of the five cases in which females are advised to change in two respects, one of the comments is related to her interaction with classmates: three were told they could contribute more to the social life, and one was instructed to be more daring in asking questions. The lack of attention to the girls' academic achievements, implies that the teacher herself does not expect much. This is in accordance with the findings of Dweck et al (1978), that girls generally get more feedback on conduct and non intellectual aspects, rather than on the intellectual quality of their work.

Only two girls are told to change in three ways each, and all comments relate to non intellectual capacities. One is to work on tidiness, management of time and the submission of complete assignments; the second is to increase her participation in discussions, and her contribution to social life, and in addition to have confidence in her ability.

Boys, on the other hand, are recipients of more detailed, demanding and specific criticism. Indeed, an examination of the recommendations made to the boys reveals a much more diversified picture. To start with, more boys get feedback both on work related and on non intellectual aspects of their school life. Of the 24 boys in 7a, only five are not told to change. Of the eight told to improve in one field, four are referred to their academic work, two are told to be neater, and the other two - to play a more active role in class or social life. Of the four

males told to improve in two ways, no less than three receive academic feedback

The difference in the expectation of change is apparant, not only in the categories of activities the feedback relates to, but also in sheer quantity. Unlike the girls who are told, at the most, of three necessary changes, three boys are told to change in three ways, another three boys in four ways, and one in no less than six ways. Again the combinations uncover the teacher's readiness to go into detail and to elaborate on such aspects as looking after copybooks, seriousness, carelessness, being late to class, attitude to studies, accuracy in phrasing and chatting in class.

The dissimilarity between the range of behaviours, activities and achievements the teacher refers to when addressing boys and girls, can be nothing but an expression of the teacher's sex bias, as classroom observations do not substantiate the sex differences implied by the evaluations. By granting differentiated acknowledgement to the achievements of the girls and boys, and by giving boys more elaborate feedback, teachers contribute to the perpetuation of inequity in the system.

The teacher helps the boys become aware of the multiple levels on which they operate, and the effects of their diversified activities. The abundance of detail testifies that the boys are noticed, and their varied experiences are acknowledged and validated. Concern is shown for their future, and they are assisted in accomodating to the merciless demands of the system. The girls receive no such impression, and their world picture seems limited to social skills. The same teacher adopts a protecting, lenient tone to the girls. Very little

effort is made to interfere in their lives, and only the most minimal directives are offered to modify their performance at school, let alone help prepare them for a productive future. One wonders whether the inequitable amount of guidance reflects the teacher's lack of familiarity with the girls, her feelings about the relative unimportance of ambitions and achievements for females, or else her assumption that any advice she could offer would be superfluous (see appendix 7).

An analysis of the structure of the comments made by the teacher, exposes the differential attitude to the change expected. The extent of negative feedback, and emphasis on effort, rather than on intellectual capacity, is clearly gendered as in the findings of Dweck et al (1978).

Where insufficient academic achievements are concerned, the limited feedback to the girls is most notable. Only 26.6% of the 15 girls are told to improve in their studies, three of them in maths and the fourth in no specific subject, and in all four cases the teacher recommends harder work. Boys get the message very differently. No less than 50% of the boys (12) need to make progress in their studies, and five of them are criticised for their unsatisfactory work, a manner of speech never used for girls. It remains for speculation whether she is afraid of upsetting the girls with her criticism, while feeling confident the boys could cope with her straightforward and well meant expressions of disapproval, as suggested by Koestner, Zuckerman & Koestner (1987), Kelly (1988), and Roberts & Nolen-Hoeksema (1989).

The academic feedback to boys is common practice - boys need to improve in no less than six specific subjects, some of them in more than one each. The lack of such feedback to girls,

some of whom could do with some improvement in their academic work, indicates the teacher's selective mode of guidance. She has chosen not to burden them with such demands, thus underlining her general message that whatever they are or do is good enough, which is another way of telling them not to aspire for more.

The fact that contribution to the social life of the class, is viewed as equally important for pupils of both sexes, is probably due to the ideology of this school, the full name of which includes a reference to 'society'. Whenever this aspect of school life is referred to, the feedback of the teacher of 7a is invariably phrased in negative terms, using her rather obscure cluster: "you didn't contribute from your ability and skills to the social organization of the class". This applies to all females and to most males.

The pattern is repeated in form 7b, in an uncanny manner that proves it originates from similar social constructs. Girls again draw from their teacher considerably fewer reactions, thus giving ground to the nagging suspicion, that they hardly arouse her interest or concern.

The call for change is here too the most reliable measure of gendered messages. Whereas only 28.5% of the girls are told of more than two aspects (maximum four) of their school life that require a change, the majority of the boys (56.5%), are criticised on more than two aspects, up to a maximum of eight.

The gendered asymmetry is the same as in the comments for 7a. Of the 23 males, two are not to change, and one is told to work on one aspect only; seven are instructed to make two changes each; five are required to make three changes; and four

need four changes. At this point the gap is at its greatest, since the remaining 17.2% of the boys receive negative feedback on more than four aspects of their school life, up to a maximum of eight.

Criticism of conduct is reserved for boys only (39%), who are literally instructed in interpersonal relations and social skills: four are advised to listen to their friends, and another three to be friendly. Again there is no parallel for girls, suggesting perhaps that they have already internalized certain modes of 'caring' behaviour.

A difference in feedback that bears no relevance to the class situation, relates to participation. Five boys, but only one girl, are told to contribute more to the discussions in class, whereas my observations did not find that the girls dominated the discussions in 7b. The conclusion is once again, that the girls are not encouraged to invest more in their studies, or to be more prominent and vocal in class.

Interest in classwork is a variable used to measure the work of 100% of the males, but only 78% of the females. Insofar as girls are addressed on this issue, they are praised for taking an interest in the classwork. The boys, on the other hand, are urged to show clearer evidence of their interest in the classwork. This might be an expression of the teacher's own effort to make the lesson content appeal to the boys, and her concern lest she fails.

Alertness is a term reserved for females only. Rather than instruct girls too to show an interest, two are told to be more alert. Both pupils concerned are praised lavishly and told that they show interest, and are given credit for using their

potential. This ostensible contradiction raises queries concerning the meaning of this teacher's comments. If the pupil is not alert, one wonders how she produces such good work and merits such praise. An alternative explanation might be that the term alertness is a euphemism for 'a more active role', which this teacher cannot bring herself to instruct her female pupils to adopt. Whatever the motive, this sounds like a mild form of criticism, cushioned by supportive phrases, which is the closest this teacher dare come in reprimanding a female.

The momentous number of categories used for one sex only, and the inequality implied by the vast dissimilarity in their range and substance, places the teacher of 7b on a higher plane of discriminatory practices than that of 7a. Other terms that she uses exclusively for females are "mature" (14%), "painstaking" (14%) and "understanding" (7%). Boys, on the other hand are told to "use scholastic potential" (52%), "change habits" (34%), and "behave appropriately" (34%). Only they are described as "disappointing" (21%), "profound" (13%), and "liked" (13%). Knowledge, concentration, self control, thoroughness, love, and academic success are measures applied to boys only (see appendix 8).

The general impression one gets from reading the teacher's comments to all her female pupils is that they are, on the whole, very satisfactory and well behaved. Even if this group of girls happened indeed to be exemplary, a fact that is not confirmed by my observations, a few words of advice and instruction could have made them aware of ways in which they might surpass themselves. The relative scarcity of specific criticism and the ensuing directives, leads to the conclusion that this teacher too adopts a protective, non demanding attitude to the girls, an attitude that denies them of their

share of detailed feedback, and professional advice. There is little the girls can learn about themselves from this form teacher.

Moving from context to form, the analysis of the sentence structure exposes sex differentiation in the tone adopted by the teacher. Those changes that are required of the females, are conveyed explicitly in the form of instructions or recommendations. In keeping with the protective attitude, the statements are simplistic in their straightforwardness.

The boys, by contrast, receive a comparatively disproportionate amount of criticism, and expressions of disapproval, and the necessary changes are there by implication only. The numerous negative statements used to describe the boys' performance and conduct, create a feeling of constant discontent and severe judgement, that the boys are evidently expected to cope with, in school as elsewhere. Unlike the lenient approach she takes to the girls, the teacher of 7b makes no attempt to protect the boys by softening the blow of her harsh critique (see appendix 5).

The teacher's reliance on personal praise, suggests a measure of disregard for the desire and need of the female pupil and her parents, to receive an accurate picture of the pupil's competence and potential. When the content and the language are matched, it becomes apparent that since the teacher tends to shun from negative feedback and specific areas of discontent, the girl's individuality is hardly responded to, and a greater part of their address is constituted of the writer's own set phrases. Consequently, the message is not merely less personal than the one the boys get, but more obscure too.

This teacher's favourite clusters are problematic in linguistic analysis. In the original Hebrew they sound awkward, bombastic and abstract, and in particular far removed from the language of a pupil of the 7th grade. The need to translate them accurately into English for the purposes of this report, exposes most definitively, the lack of coherence of these phrases. For example: "you don't contribute sufficiently to the social organization of the class", or "you must work systematically and consistently".

The teacher's resort to highfalutin language, in her string of impersonal abstractions, places the teacher in a patronizing stand. Although the meaningless phrases are repeated in the comments to pupils of both sexes, their greater centrality in the girls' reports make them a gender issue.

Moving from grade 7 to grade 8, to the point at which pupils stand on the threshold of their graduating class, the research tools employed for the generation of a theory about hidden messages in report cards, are further validated.

Again, the requirement for change is the variable that exposes the inequitable response to the pupils' needs most emphatically and unequivocally (appendix 7). The similarity of patterns between the form teachers of 8a and 8b is striking, as is their extreme alienation from the girls. The consistent refraining of these two from suggesting that any girl in 8th grade change in more than one way (see column `2+'), is beyond ones expectations since the other four teachers instruct at least 45% of their female pupils to change in at least two ways.

No less than 76.9% of the girls in 8a are praised lavishly by their teacher, and no change or improvement is ever suggested. A comparison made by the girls and/or their parents, would dampen their pride as the impression created is that this is trivial praise to achieve. It obviously doesn't require much on the part of a girl in 8a to merit such superlatives. Her pleasantness, docility, commitment, tidiness and demeanour are appreciated, but once these aspects of subordinate performance have been listed, nothing is added to convey a sense of individuation. Consequently the girls as a group seem uncannily alike, and the comments they receive - easily interchangeable.

The changes that are required of the three remaining female pupils, do not follow from any competence feedback. The tone is devoid of criticism, and instead contains an emotive appeal that implies that the girl is responsible for her teacher's happiness, as befits the traditional role of the female as caregiver. Each girl has one change required each, and since they are so few and so brief, they can be examined closely:

girl1 - Try to avoid chattering!

girl2 - Lately you are more passive and it seems you are finding it difficult to concentrate. Pay attention to this and make a greater effort in the future.

girl3 - You show an interest in the goings-on in the lessons and I will be happy if you participate more.

Since the teacher's evaluation of girl3 is so generously complimentary, her only recommendation seems to have no other justification other than pleasing an adult in an authoritative position. The entire passage runs as follows:

Orna - you are a good and industrious pupil. Your work is serious and thorough and you are very responsible for your independent studies. You show an interest in the goings-on in the lessons and I will be happy if you participate more. Socially you contribute to the class as a positive factor and help happily when you are asked to. You have a pleasing manner and are polite.

The vast gap between writer and reader can be illustrated easily through this text. What may at first reading seem like an offhand, friendly recommendation, actually conveys a subtle suggestion that the girl is still not 'good', 'positive' and 'pleasing' enough.

The comment made to girl1 concerning her conduct in class deserves a close analysis too, especially since criticism of a girl's conduct in class is so rare in the report cards under examination. The teacher's ambivalence about criticising a female is expressed most emphatically in the contradiction between the syntax and the lexis. The urgency and centrality of the issue implied in the double emphasis on the noun 'chattering!', is undermined by the choice of the verb 'try'. In contrast with the phrase 'make an effort' used by the same teacher, an instruction that communicates appreciation of the work to be invested, and the difficulty involved, 'try' conveys detachment and disinterest.

The evaluations written by the teacher of 8a lend themselves particularly to content analysis. The use of measures of assessment are gendered in a manner that is evocative of the social constructs acted upon in the school and Israeli society at large. The 22 boys of 8a enjoy a larger measure of diversity

in the teacher's feedback, and consequently, a clearer acknowledgement of their individuality. Only 36.3% are beyond reproach, whereas no less than 76.9% of the girls were given no guidance, which might be taken to mean they cannot or need not improve their performance. As in the other classes, the negative feedback boys get, correlates with the number of changes required. Three boys are told of one aspect each, which is the most girls in this class are ever guided to. Two are told of two changes, and another 9 of four or five each.

A symbolic embodiment of the consistent reference of form teachers to so many more aspects in a male pupil's life, may lie in the denouncement of five boys for wasting their potential. The merciless criticism broadcasts the great expectations the teacher has for these talented boys, while the exasperation voiced, suggests the teacher's personal interest in their general welfare and development.

These are the statements reserved for males only in 8a:

- boy1 - You are the best example of potential that is mostly unrealized.
- boy2 - You are a pupil with high abilities who does not fully make use of them.
- boy3 - This term you did not put your abilities to full use.
- boy4 - You are the best example of great and wasted abilities.
- boy5 - It is hard to evaluate you due to the sharp contrast between your ability and your performance.

The teachers of 8a and 8b, are characterized by their reliance on idiosyncratic clusters of words, which in the case of these two classes, constitute a major part of the paragraph devoted to each pupil. When these are used for one sex only, the vast dissimilarities in the expectations from males and females are highlighted.

In addition, the use of certain evaluative categories, all not work related, to one sex only, demonstrates the dissimilar standards for evaluating appropriate behaviour. Single sex criteria used by the teacher of 8a for girls only, are thoroughness (35%) and aesthetics (7%), and these usually appear in fixed clusters of words. Boys only, on the other hand, are assessed on the basis of their readiness to volunteer (23%), their contribution to class (23%), products (18%) and self control (14%).

Although the categories used disproportionately on the basis of sex vary from class to class, the very prevalence of gendered measurements testifies to the tendency of the teachers to adopt different standards for evaluation. This in turn emanates from the unlike life plans envisioned for females and males, that require distinct sex typed behaviours of the pupils even in their adolescence.

The particular brand of subtle sexism of the teacher of 8a is further exposed through the examination of the social meaning of those categories used to describe both sexes, but in which the gender differences are the greatest. The quantitative analysis reveals that more females than males are likely to receive feedback on a list of personal traits: seriousness (f. 77%, m. 45%), politeness (f. 54%, m. 9%), pleasant manner (f. 54%, m. 14%), mature approach (f. 38%, m. 4%), and industriousness (f. 30%, m. 4%).

By means of the qualitative approach the social constructs that determine the topics covered in the reports come to light. For example, politeness and a pleasant manner, aspects that half the girls are judged by, are measures that allude to interpersonal skills. More specifically, they can be characterized as

containing a hint of appropriate subordination. The scarcity of feedback on these non intellectual facets to boys means they are of secondary importance for them. Maturity is not expected of boys either, nor even industriousness, which raises questions concerning the deeper meaning of maturity, and whether it too might be a term to be associated with obedience and docility.

Of all the categories used for both sexes, the boys get more comments expressing encouragement (m. 23%, f. 7%), or relating to changes in conduct (m. 18%, f. 7%), and learning habits (m. 27%, f. 7%). Moreover, the changes required of boys in behaviour and in learning habits are throughout, far more personalized than the repetitive comments to girls on their politeness. The significant disparity in the frequency of resort to these last criteria proves, in a measurable method, the teacher's tendency to criticize the boys, and at the same time, to show more concern for their future.

The teacher of 8b belongs even higher on the scale of sex differentiation, if only on the basis of her use of requests for change. In fact the female recipients in her class might feel degraded if they were to compare notes. Judging by the wording and the nature of her requests for change, the investment made by this teacher in assuring her female pupils of her personal acquaintance with them, and interest in their development, seems minimal. The practically indistinguishable addresses share a highly emotive appeal, rather than practical and goal oriented.

Of the six girls (35.2%) of 8b who are told to change, four are described as being alike in their inactivity in class, and one suspects, in their invisibility too. The need to modify their performance is presented as another case of pleasing the teacher, and no reason is offered other than the fact that the

person in authority so wishes. The following quotes illustrate the protective and teacher-centred manner in which the message is transmitted. It is important to note that the language is as awkward and bombastic in Hebrew as the literal translation into English is.

girl1 - I still lack your participation in the debates in class, and that's a pity!

girl2 - I still lack your participation in the debates in class and the expression of your opinions and knowledge.

girl3 - I still lack your opinions and knowledge in the debates in class.

girl4 - I still lack more activity on your part in the debates in class.

The significance that the girl's assertiveness and ability to express herself might have on her future, is not clarified to the pupil or her parents. While the teacher may believe she is being gentle in her emotional appeal to these girls whose scholastic performance suggests they are more knowledgeable than they dare or care to exhibit, she is denying them a sense of the urgency or great necessity for change, that could be of benefit to them.

The other two girls are recommended to continue in their efforts to improve their behaviour. No trace of criticism is to be detected, nor any disapproval. The ideal behaviour is described as restrained, non spontaneous, and mature, three epithets that in this context might mean the same. Again, the significant minimalistic use of language through the employment of identical statements, suggests an impersonal, uninvolved attitude, and testifies to the teacher's negligible investment in the girls' present and future life.

girl5 - There is a noticable and prominent improvement in your ability to restrain yourself, the acceptance of personal responsibility and the character of your behaviour. I hope and encourage you to be consistent in this and to give thought to the continuation of restrained and mature behaviour.

girl6 - I can bear witness to the improvement in the ability to restrain yourself and hold back [i.e. postponement of satisfaction]. Please continue to be consistent in this.

The teacher of 8b is no exception, and as in the texts of the other teachers, the restrictedness of the vocabulary used to describe the females, evokes the narrowness of the world conveyed through the statements. The persistent lack of diversity in the expectations communicated to girls, shared by this teacher too, is striking. The fact that the central issues for girls are self restraint, denial of satisfaction ('holding back') and an appropriate, non critical and pleasing measure of self expression in class, is most revealing. Not one of the 17 girls was instructed, encouraged or requested to improve academic achievements, learning habits or attitude to studies.

The inequitable messages subtly conveyed through the written comments, recall a more direct statement made by this teacher when we were first introduced. Her remark, on the occasion of one of my visits to Tev, suggests that her automatic response to the notion of gender is to think of heterosexual pairing off, which she presents as being equated with appropriate behaviour.

In response to her query concerning the topic of my research, I answered, as I did to others, that it was related to

the behaviour of adolescent male and female pupils, in this stage of their schooling (junior high). Her immediate suggestion was that I refrain from visiting 8a and concentrate on 8b (her class), as there were already some couples there, and so I would have something to see. This automatic association of the sexes with heterosexual coupling, testifies to her envisioning of her adolescent pupils in their future familial sex roles. No opinions on academic performance or conduct were offered, and instead a very specific and loaded external measure of development and probably even of social success, was introduced.

The fact that the only frame of reference in which this teacher places sex differences is in the context of coupling, might explain at least part of the differences in expectations. The avoidance of any reference to her pupils' intellectual development, academic skills, achievements, or conduct in class, and the assumption that I share her interests, disclose the limited context in which gender issues are viewed.

The greater variety of changes requested of boys, the higher percentage of pupils in this group instructed to make improvements (males 61.1% females 35.2%), and the existence of a substantial sub-group told of at least two necessary changes (16.6% vs 0% girls), confirms the suspicion of sex inequity. Once again the feeling is that this teacher invests more in males than in females, and likewise expects males to invest in themselves more than she cares to ask a female to.

Responsibility, working to schedule, thoroughness, concentration and independent study, are aspects of the performance of pupils that males only are required to improve. Terms used to describe girls only, are: you study well (41%),

sense of justice (23%), aesthetic (18%), and disappointing (12%). Once again single sex instructions and epithets disclose gendered expectations. The negative feedback in the expression of disappointment, contained in the emotive phrase 'a pity', rather than the straightforward criticism of those boys who are below par, suggests a different unstated contract between female pupils and the teacher.

Vast asymmetry in resort to certain measures, accentuates the sex differences in the standards employed to evaluate the pupils of 8b. More girls than boys get feedback on achievements (f. 29%, m. 5%), effort (f. 23%, m. 5%), ability (f. 35%, m. 5%), mature approach (f. 47%, m. 22%), readiness to help (f. 35%, m. 16%), good friendship (f. 53%, m. 33%), pleasant manner (f. 29%, m. 16%), and appreciation by teacher (f. 41%, m. 22%). The disparity is most emphasized in references to intellect and potential.

Work related behaviours that promote academic goals are pointed out to boys more than to girls. Boys receive more references to thoroughness (m. 22%, f. 6%), knowledge (m. 55%, f. 23%), understanding (m. 16%, f. 6%), keeping to timetable (m. 28%, f. 12%), expressing opinions (m. 33%, f. 12%), appropriate behaviour (m. 22% f. 12%), and caring about school work (m. 33%, f. 18%).

Moving on to the graduating classes an additional dimension can be studied: the nature of the parting words before a career choice is made by the pupils. As the case of 9a proves, this is indeed a relevant pursuit.

Of all the report cards examined, the comments of the form teacher of 9a are the most resistant to categorization. This

teacher, happens to be the only male form teacher in Tev junior high, but there is no evidence to prove that the distinctive style depends on the sex of the writer.

Whatever the reason may be, including the possible effect of the relatively small number of pupils, this teacher is unparalleled in his avoidance of fixed clusters of words in the detailed observations that practically defy generalizations. A quantitative analysis shows that he uses considerably more words to describe his pupils than any other teacher, an impressive average of 64.13 (see table 2), with notable preference given to the girls (range f. 50-92 words, m. 41-71).

When the number of changes required is the variable employed to test for hidden sexism, the teacher of 9a is in a category of his own (appendix 7). This is the only instance in which many more girls than boys are told of necessary changes (f. 72.7%, m. 45.4%), and the disparity is considerable in comparison with other teachers. This finding is surely connected with his practice of writing at greater length, on the average, about girls, hence the two numerical idiosyncrasies produce significant contextual singularity.

The uniqueness is obliterated, however, when the proportion of pupils in each category of change is examined. As in the other cases, the distribution according to sex, shows a tendency to require more changes per boy. In this case, the boys come to the fore when the changes required are three or more (m.36.3%, f. 27.2%).

In keeping with this teacher's tendency to relate very personally to each pupil, the changes required are varied and specific for both girls and boys, and do not adhere to the

narrower, gendered patterns of some of the other teachers. Hence pupils of both sexes are told to improve their attitude to studies, their academic achievements, written assignments, and learning habits.

Due to the lack of uniformity in his addresses to pupils, his striving for accuracy in each of his descriptions, and the small number of pupils (11 girls and 11 boys), many terms are used for one sex only, but for no more than one pupil of each (six for girls only and five for boys only). Notwithstanding, there are some categories that are used for one sex only, in significant proportions. Girls only (36%) are told that they are loved. Boys only get feedback on detailed work (45%), overcoming difficulties (36%), expressing opinions (27%), and control (18%).

Great differences in prevalence of use of certain categories for each sex reveal dissimilar foci. More males than females have explicit references to changes (m. 64%, f. 36%), to contribution to class (m. 64%, f. 36%), and to systematic work (m. 54%, f. 27%). Girls get more non intellectual feedback, regarding their thorough approach (f. 81%, m. 27%), future social success (f. 72%, m. 45%), participation in debates (f. 64%, m. 45%), seriousness (f. 45%, m. 27%), consistency (f. 36%, m. 9%), and willingness to help (f. 27%, m. 9%). Finally, more girls than boys are encouraged (f. 27%, m. 9%), and told to continue in the same way (f. 72%, m. 36%).

Whereas the numerical values are more complex this time, and the conclusions more elusive, the comments of the teacher of 9a still need to be put through the contextual and linguistic checks used for others, to test for gendered messages. Indeed his divergence from the general pattern has already been

established, but it remains to be seen whether his texts are veritably clear of sexism, or whether differential messages still come through, in other guises.

The special brand of inequity of this teacher is exposed when the research question relates to his predictions of the pupils' future. It is at this point that a subtle but very marked differentiation emerges. Practically all the girls (81%) receive assurance concerning their future acceptability and success. Boys, on the other hand, are not as generously encouraged, and fewer (54%) get any references to their future.

Whereas the frequency of predictive statements to girls might suggest greater concern, the textual analysis of these statements manifests a stereotyped vision of the measures of future success. Once again it is the discourse analysis through which the sexist attitudes are seen in their true colours. The content of the prediction is determined by the sex of the pupil: females are told they will be loved wherever they go, unlike the males who are told they will be an asset to any group they join.

Since this forecasting is a most singular expression of gender bias and inequitable expectations, it is worth taking a close look at those final sentences in the teacher's comments, that relate to the pupil's future.

To females:

1. You are capable of participating in the activities of any group and contributing to it in the future too.
2. You will surely find your place also in any new society you reach.
3. There is no doubt that you are capable of contributing in the future too to societies you will be in.

4. You will surely continue being a good and pleasant friend in any new setting you reach.
5. You will surely continue in your seriousness and quiet to be a sought after friend and classmate.
6. You will surely continue to be a loved friend and classmate also in the new settings you reach.
7. Thanks to your energy and good spirits you will surely be accepted in this way also in the new settings you reach.
8. If you know how to use this ability [in social systems and organizations] in the future both you and your friends will benefit.
9. There is no doubt that in your ability to debate and to work you will be able to contribute a lot also to new groups you belong to in the future.

To males:

1. You will undoubtedly be an asset to any setting you reach.
2. It is to be hoped that you will know how to bestow your good spirits and your energy also on the new places you reach.
3. It seems that you feel good in class and it is to be hoped that you continue in this way and find your place also in the new places you reach.
4. With your ability to debate and your good work you will surely contribute also to the future classes you are in.
5. If you know how to continue and express these talents of yours [great creative and dramatic talents] you will be an asset to any place you reach.
6. There is no doubt that with your variety of talents you are capable of making a substantial contribution to any group you are a member of in the future too.

The vocabulary in these phrases is a gender issue as in its exclusiveness it exposes multiple levels of differentiation. The

use of positive and warm words describing social acceptability and friendship for females vs. the more pragmatic terminology 'contribution', 'asset' and 'places' for males, sets the two sexes miles apart: girls will develop their social skills while boys go places.

To conclude, the teacher of 9a retains his individual style throughout his writing, but he does not deviate from the general pattern of hidden sexist messages in the report cards, even in his idiosyncratic ways. He merely adds a new dimension. Since he alone chose to include words of parting systematically in his evaluation, his comments on this issue cannot be compared to others here examined. However, the nature of his comments illustrates the manner in which such assumedly well intended wishes can perpetuate traditional sex roles. This is a unique manner of defining the different world picture this teacher envisions for his class: the girls will be wanted as friends whereas the boys will be appreciated in 'places', for their particular talents.

The teacher of 9b is unique in a different way. She is the only teacher to have more girls than boys in the category of 3+ changes (appendix 7). Although one might expect this to reflect the greater interaction of this teacher with her female pupils, greater concern for their future and an acknowledgement of their many facets, other figures in that same table contradict this supposition. In effect, her written comments adhere to the pattern of the majority of the teachers, by offering disproportionately more guidance regarding necessary changes to males than to females (f. 54.5%, m. 80%).

It is indeed unusual to find most of the males clustered under the heading of one change only, but at the same time it is

in perfect accordance with the pattern of all teachers to find that the last category, in this case of six changes, is reserved for boys only.

Another peculiarity of this teacher is the briefness of her comments. Her passages are far shorter than the others', with a surprisingly low mean of 26 words, and a range of 19-42 for girls, and 12-37 for boys (table 2). The brevity can be either the cause or the effect of the exclusion of any thoughts or sentiments concerning the pupils' future, or any manner of words of parting. The only exception is one boy, to whom she recommends: "continue with this activity [you care about the cultivation of your class and its surroundings] in the future too".

The combination of the minimalistic evaluation and personality description, alongside the consistent evasion of the fact that these pupils are on the threshold of a crucial stage in their education and personal development, suggests a certain disengagement on the part of the writer. The involved reader, be it pupil or parent, who feels entitled to more appreciation and guidance, might conceivably experience a sense of insult and deprivation due to this distant manner.

From the point of view of the researcher who has access to all of the reports of 9b, the personal insult does not apply. What does come through is the identically remote tone adopted for females and males in this respect. This unwavering stand negates the possibility of inferring the writer's views concerning the future social roles of the pupils from her words of partings, as was the case in 9a.

While the consistent denial of the imminent parting bears testimony to the teacher's remoteness from pupils of either sex, her social constructs and gendered messages come across loud and clear in her requests for change. Once again this proves to be a reliable measure of the breadth of the teacher's acquaintance with the pupils of each sex, and her readiness to invest in personalized guidance.

When one change only is mentioned (f. 1, m. 7), it is practically always (f. 1, m. 5) phrased as "it's a pity you didn't contribute more to the class and school activities". The two girls who were told of two changes each had the very same statement included too, and the second change, in both cases was worded: "it's a pity you don't participate more in class". The constant repetition of these clusters of words, invariably accompanied by the somewhat indifferent observation "it's a pity", characterizes this teacher's address to girls in particular.

The picture is no different when a greater number of changes is called for. In contrast to the nonuniform, personalized list of the necessary improvements granted to those boys who need to change in several ways, every one of the three girls who is told to change in four ways, has the identical text in her report. This uncalled for uniformity in feedback that the teacher reserves for girls only, reflects a disparity in her investment in boys and girls. It might even represent disregard for their individual welfare and future development.

The identical feedback to girls who need to change in four ways reads as follows:

You must take more responsibility for your studying both at home and in class. You are capable of much more. You

are accepted by your classmates. It's a pity you didn't take more initiative in the class and school activities.

The full list of changes required of the girls:

1. you must take more responsibility for your studies at home
2. you must take more responsibility for your studies in class
3. you are capable of much more
4. it's a pity you didn't take more initiative in the class and school activities

The sentence structure of the changes required is varied:

statements 1 and 2 are explicit instructions, statement 3 is a noncommittal observation, whereas statement 4 is a negative statement

A comparison with the comments made to those boys who are told to change in four ways, highlights the gendered nature of the evaluation.

boy1 - You must take more responsibility for your studies, you are definitely capable of much more. You take an active part in the debates in class and contribute a lot to the lessons. It's a pity you were not sufficiently organized and tidy. You are active, you contribute and initiate in all activities of the class and school.

Although the first two improvements required of this boys sound reminiscent of the comments made to the three girls, the wording is more detailed and consequently more supportive. Instead of being told that he is accepted by his classmates, a statement that describes the pupil as a passive recipient of sympathy, the boy receives a relatively elaborate description of his stronger points, that must surely be based on the teacher's observation of his performance.

boy2 - It's a pity you didn't try as hard as in the first term. It is obvious that you disregarded the work in class and at home and indeed this is reflected in your achievements. It's a pity you didn't contribute more to the activities of the class and school.

While the negative feedback is indeed severe, it has the advantage of integrating different aspects of the pupil's life. The teacher also notes boy2's inappropriate attitude to school, and this gives the reader the feeling that this boy has gained the teacher's attention, which cannot be said for the insipid passage written for all three girls. This painful but helpful, and in all cases, personalized reward for boys, is thus reinforced by this teacher once again.

In conclusion, this correlation between the recognition of a pupil's individualistic behaviours, and the voicing of criticism of some of these practices or their outcomes, is a gender issue. Girls in Tev school are rarely criticised in their report cards, and the banalities said about most of them in similar phrases, leaves the researcher who reads them all, with a discomfoting feeling of their invisibility. This correlation highlights the dividing line which arbitrarily and possibly unconsciously, keeps the worlds of the two sexes apart.

Additional quantitative aspects and their implications to qualitative research

The 67 items used in this study (see appendix 6) that evolved from a close reading of all the 194 passages, illustrate the varied criterion for selecting relevant material for the summation of a pupil's year at school. A comparison of the usage (table 3) reveals a wide range, and a closer look exposes gendered choices. For example, only two teachers, both of grade

8, touched upon the issue of aesthetics, and commented on the looks of their pupils' notebooks, and in the case of both teachers these comments were made solely to girls (3 in one class and 1 in the other). Although the number of girls to hear statements on this topic is small, the total avoidance of this criterion when evaluating the work of boys, is significant.

GRADE	CATEGORIES
7a	59.7%
7b	62.6%
8a	71.6%
8b	77.6%
9a	70.1%
9b	55.2%

table 3

range of use of categories per teacher

The numerical values represent the breadth and depth of each teacher's perception of the pupils, and his or her readiness or ability to relate to multiple aspects. Whereas one teacher (9b) limits herself to a minimal number of 37 measures, another (8b) considers no less than 52 different ways of evaluating, describing and relating to pupils. It would seem that the range of criteria is indicative of the extent of the investment of the teachers in the interactions, as is the diversity in the number of the words in the passages (table 2).

The six headings under which the 67 categories are grouped, reflect both the contents and stylistic elements, hence creating a certain amount of overlapping. A phrase might be classified

both for its reference to a pupil's performance or skills (groups A - D), and for the information it offers of the teacher's sentiments towards the pupil (group F). For example the set phrase 'good pupil' appears under 'academic performance' (group A), but is also as an instance of praise under the heading 'tone' (group F).

The classification and quantification of utterances of different sorts, is merely a methodological device utilized to highlight certain dissimilarities in the teachers' statements. The enumeration of categories used by teachers is merely a stage in the disclosure of the hidden message. In the final count it is the nature of the criteria used by teachers that is far more enlightening than their quantity.

An analysis of the categories employed by each teacher reveals sex differences. For example, a teacher might refrain from talking to girls of their powers of comprehension, or neglect to praise boys, though girls get their share (8a and 9b). The teacher of 9b gives no feedback to girls about learning habits, and actually mentions 10 fewer aspects from group B than she does for boys.

While the avoidance of certain categories for both sexes may be an indication of disregard for that aspect of the pupils' classroom work (e.g. 7a, 8a and 9b: no mention of mastery), or social life (e.g. 7a and 7b: no mention of caring), or else a reflection of that teacher's individual style e.g. refraining from encouraging (8a, 8b and 9a), the use of a category for only one sex carries a different message. A criterion once used is a criterion a teacher has considered as noteworthy when referring to a pupil's work. Accordingly, the larger the number of criteria a teacher chooses to apply to one sex only, the greater

the chances of there being an underlying differentiation in standards and expectations.

Teachers differ in their selection of measures, though the similarities are greater than the dissimilarities. The range of their dialogue with their pupils (table 7) is only a preliminary stage in the examination of the range for each sex. In nearly all six classes, more criteria are left out of the assessment of girls, in all categories, than of boys. This substantiates my hypothesis that the teachers interact less with girls even in writing, probably because they have less information about them.

A comparison of the number of categories relevant to the report cards of only one sex in a given class, with the total number applicable to the reading of all reports of that teacher (table 3), gives the percentage of categories from which pupils of that sex are excluded by a certain writer (table 4).

The picture that emerges from this balancing is that girls are at a distinct disadvantage. Of the six teachers studied, only two (8b and 9a) refer to more aspects when describing girls. Moreover, even in these two instances, where the girls seem to receive a more comprehensive address than the boys (8b and 9a), the gap here in the treatment of the sexes (3-4%) is by far smaller than in all the cases where the boys have an advantage, both in percentage and even more distinctly, in the absolute numbers (e.g. 7a).

The combination of the quantification with the content analysis, grants insight into the context, within which the phrases attain their particular meaning. Only then is the metamessage of the teachers to their pupils exposed.

GRADE	FEMALES	MALES
7a	25%	5%
7b	28%	7%
8a	25%	8%
8b	9%	13%
9a	14%	17%
9b	45%	13%

table 4

categories from which one of the sexes is excluded, as a percentage of the number of categories used by that teacher

The analysis of the frequency of the use of the 67 criteria listed in appendix 6, checked first for the number of teachers to use each of them (appendix 9), then for the applicability of each criteria either to both sexes or to a single sex, lead up finally to a comparison of the distribution by percentage for females and for males in the same class. A scanning of the numerical values reached (appendix 8) reveals vast asymmetry in treatment of females and males.

The gendered nature of the evaluations is the only explanation for the teachers' use of only 14.9% of the categories for an equal percentage of males as females in a class. The significance of this figure becomes even clearer when one checks further, and finds that not one category is ever used this way by more than one teacher, making the total number of cases 10.

The richness of the addresses to boys, in contrast with the more limited vision of the girls' present and future, is

validated in this last instance of quantitative analysis. Not only is the relative infrequency of cases in which the same category is used equally for females and males suggestive of a sex bias, but the larger number of categories used exclusively for one of the sexes, is most disturbing. 21 categories are applicable to girls only, and used 28 times, whereas no less than 36 measures are relevant to boys only, and are detectable in the evaluations in no fewer than 60 instances.

In conclusion, as far as the individual pupil is concerned, the attitudes and the hidden messages are camouflaged by the information. After all, one reads report cards, usually in a state of great anxiety, in order to verify ones own self appraisal, or else to gain insight, with the aid of someone else's eyes. The distinction between the message that is information conveyed by the meaning of words, and the metamessage that is communicated about relationships (Tannen 1986) is indeed hard to follow when one is as deeply involved in the interaction as pupils are in the specific situation.

The ultimate impression created by the report cards studied is that the hidden patterns, most likely unknown to the writers themselves, add extra dimensions to the seemingly straightforward content analysis. It requires the examination of a person who is in the position to accumulate data that includes both form and content, without being involved in the interactions, to shed light on the metamessage. Once the subtle undertones are detected it becomes obvious that the attitudes expressed are not really individualized. They are in fact gendered throughout, in the fashion of the most traditional stereotypical constructs.

Chapter 11

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

This study is about the means by which the Israeli educational system, that is officially committed to a policy of equal opportunities, operates as a socializing agent that perpetuates traditional sex roles. The ethnographic research substantiates my argument that sex differentiated practices and messages are an integral part of the school culture, yet not easily visible.

While much of the educational research on gendered interactions is quantitative, this study refrained from such pursuits as counting verbal interactions in classrooms, and instead employed qualitative methodology in an attempt to discover the subtler, uncountable modes of sex differentiation. Various research tools were employed in order to test the official statement that the education in Israel is non sexist, and to gain insight into any possible hidden agenda.

The research model included the close study of four sources of data:

1. classroom interactions
2. extra-curricular activities
3. teachers' statements
4. documents

The varied sources required appropriate research tools. Information concerning verbal teacher - pupil classroom interactions, and the structure and content of extra-curricular activities, was gathered in the course of the observations. The teachers' statements were heard in structured and unstructured interviews, either in private or in group settings. The fourth

source, the documents, were subjected to textual analysis that referred to structure and to content.

The data collected must of necessity be read within the specific cultural context, and with reference to those social constructs that not only generate the practices and utterances, but also explain their deeper meanings and wider implications. Hence for example, the teachers' stated sex differentiated expectations, alongside their insistence on their commitment to equality, should not be read as contradictory statements of the individual speaker, but rather as a reflection of the ambivalence of the present day Jewish Israeli culture as regards the status and the situation of women.

The major social forces affecting women's status need to be kept in mind when analyzing the data. In the Israeli society where a Western liberal oriented legislative system has, over the past 46 years, passed a canon of laws regarding women that is progressive by contemporary UK and USA standards, the concept of sexism is hardly a topic of discourse. Feminism is derided and presented as an unnecessary and inappropriate import from the USA, feminist groups are marginalized and the only respectable feminist thinkers and influential activists are liberals. Radical critique of the power system, of the homophobic culture, and of the military machismo that extends to civilian life, is strongly dismissed by the mainstream culture, on the grounds that the aforementioned liberal legislation, testifies to a commitment to equal opportunities, and that the enforcement depends on women alone.

An equally powerful socializing agent and constraining influence, alongside the state legal system, is the Jewish tradition, and in particular the Rabbinical law. The family unit

is regarded as sacred, and crucial to the perpetuation of the faith and the survival of the nation. The responsibility for the linkage between the past and the future is laid on the woman in her domestic, parental and familial roles, and she is lavishly praised for fulfilling these duties. On the other hand, she is at a disadvantage in matters of family law, where she is to a great extent at the mercy of her male owner, the term in Hebrew for husband.

In addition, the ingrained sense of history, and especially of persecution, that permeates both the Jewish tradition and modern Israeli culture, promotes a pro-natalist bias as a response to ongoing threats of genocide, and recent experiences of bereavement. The connection, on both the personal and the national level, between procreation and survival, makes marriage, childbirth and parenting, central issues for males and females alike. Consequently, the present scene for women represents a conflict between the emotionally loaded tradition seeped attitudes to women and the stated commitment to equality.

The result is an ambivalent and inherently contradictory treatment of females in Israeli Jewish society, including within the educational system. This delicate balance is preserved, albeit precariously, despite the public exposure to foreign media and European and American culture. The recent wave of feminism of the late 1960s and the 1970s, that inspired some feminist statements in Israel too (Bat-Oren, 1975; Hazleton, 1978; Aloni, 1976), failed to create an influential critical voice, as the state was involved in two major wars in that decade, and the resulting resurgence of issues of survival and nationalism.

The data substantiates my argument that the Israeli school system, that is operated, funded and controlled by the state, serves as an extremely potent socializing agent that guarantees the perpetuation of these complex social constructs. In many ways it promotes uncontested traditional concepts of sex roles and a gendered division of labour. It presents marriage and procreation as the goal of the individual and the community, with clearly defined realms of responsibility for the females in this setup. The gender divisions are never threatened, as 'masculine' men and 'feminine' women are expected to function in a complementary fashion. Large areas of difference in their personal traits and their life patterns are considered normal, and are therefore uncontested.

The teacher training system does not include sexism in the educational discourse, or raise related issues such as the acquisition of gendered behaviour, let alone issues of differentiated school practice. Neither the teachers, nor teacher trainees express a radical stand, or criticism of the establishment. The well organized unions of teachers contest the low pay, but matters of ideological content, such as equality, sexual harassment or discrimination, are not on the agenda. It should therefore come as no surprise that there are no grass-roots organizations of female teachers expressing discontent with the perpetuation of inequity in schools, or suggesting anti-sexist measures.

The consequence, I argue, is that the extent of unawareness of gendered messages and expectations on the part of the school staff, is a true reflection of the avoidance of discourse on these issues in the general public. Teachers' lack of familiarity with the notion and measurements of sexism, their

insensitivity to the effect of sexual harassment, and the repetitive use of sex stereotypes in school, place the school system very firmly in the mainstream culture, and defy even the mildest demand for change, from within or outside the system.

The interviews and the talks with the teachers, excerpts of which are quoted in chapter 6, reveal consistent uniformity. The absence of any explicit critique, or even a non committal reference to inequitable practices and expectations, substantiate the argument that these teachers are representative of the mainstream culture, that approves of gendered expectations.

The teachers' statements suggest that the hidden sexism recorded in the schools studied, does not contradict the teachers' stated intent. However, they would insist that their practice should not be termed sexist, but rather sex appropriate. Accordingly, when asked to express their views on gender and education, teachers more often than not respond by offering statements about sex and sexuality, with no reference to social constructs. Their inability to expound on the topic, reflects the nonexistence of discourse on this issue, a state of affairs that is perpetuated by the lack of a word in Hebrew for gender, and the non neuter nature of the Hebrew language.

On the question of sex equity, two major arguments are advanced by teachers. First that Israel is famous for its equal treatment of the sexes, and second that since they believe in the complementarity of the sexes, they cannot deny their consequential interdependence, and need for distinct roles (see chapters 4 and 7). Nevertheless they insist they expect the same level of academic performance from girls and boys.

The connection between the prevalence of these popular beliefs, that were expressed repeatedly by members of the staff of the schools under observation, and the insensitivity recorded to subtle forms of sex discrimination, to sexual harassment and homophobia in schools, is surely no coincidence.

Since sex typed behaviours are not explicitly encouraged at school, it was necessary to expose covert patterns of discrimination. Classroom observations enabled the recording of significant verbal exchanges, and several critical incidents are described in detail in chapters 6, 8, and 9. The assignment of traditional sex roles was found to be even more pronounced out of class, in extra curricular activities devised by each school, such as school ceremonies (chapter 6), and special events (chapter 9). Hence it is the occasional deviation from the dictates of the state curriculum, that illustrate most effectively how each of the schools, despite its egalitarian ethos, conveys traditional messages about sex roles.

Specially tailored school documents, are an additional means of expressing a school culture. An innovative school like Tev, that devises a unique form of a report card, declares its rejection of the authority of the establishment. However, the unusual structure, another instance of deviation from the dictates of the centralized educational system, does not ensure a different voice (see chapter 10). Gendered evaluations and personality descriptions are incorporated consistently into the passages composed by the teachers.

The detection of gendered messages in this fourth source of data, adds substance to the argument that the underlying social constructs override the most liberal ideology, and result in differential treatment.

The review of literature on gender and education in Hebrew reflects the silence on this issue. It is true that more research on Israel has been written up in English than in Hebrew, but in addition to it being inaccessible to most of the Israeli population, it is still extremely meager when it comes to girls or gender and education. The same applies to educational initiatives designed to ensure sex equity. The lack of awareness of the need to change attitudes and practices, makes the promotion of such programmes far more difficult than in countries where sexism is a familiar term, and hidden agendas are acknowledged.

Gendered aspects of school life that are as good as untouched by Israeli educational researchers, are classroom interactions, the school environment and culture, and teachers' reflections about the situations they find themselves in with their pupils of each sex. The sole aspect of sexism in Israeli schooling that has been dealt with repeatedly by academics, though not by teachers, is the prevalence of sex stereotyping in Israeli textbooks (Maon, 1974; Abrahami-Einat, 1989; Mahler, 1991). Accordingly, this study searched for other means by which sexist messages are conveyed at school, with the intent of offering a more comprehensive description of the socializing powers, and generating a theory about the Israeli system.

The consistent refusal of teachers and pupils interviewed to grapple with the concept of hidden sex discrimination, is symptomatic of the general avoidance of discourse on gender and education, rather than indicative of their inability to conceive of undercurrents at work in the classroom. The difficulty then is not personal but political. The significant lack of appropriate terms in Hebrew for such discourse, such as 'gender', 'sex fair' 'equity' or 'girl friendly', and the

extremely limited use of the Hebrew equivalent for 'sexism', make any presentation of the data to an Israeli audience problematic.

Although Israel is proud of its Western orientation, and is the regular host of scientific conferences of international repute, gender is an issue that is only just beginning to merit discussion, if not gatherings. The first and so far only local seminar on gender and education, was held in Tel-Aviv in May 1993 by the Israel Women's Network. In preparation for the day this writer, in her capacity as chairwoman of the educational committee of the Women's Network, approached various departments of the ministry of education, asking for reports on their activities in the past, possible dilemmas in the present, and programmes for the future, to ensure sex equity. The session that was to be devoted to the stand of the ministry was never held, as there was practically no material to present. The responses indicated that the establishment does not acknowledge gender as an issue.

The search for a distinctive pattern in Israeli socialization can open vistas to additional research elsewhere. As is so often the case, the very fact that certain research questions were never asked before, raises queries concerning the motives for ignoring certain fields of study, and likewise avoiding a close examination of unfamiliar sources of data. These questions are relevant also in countries where more research has been conducted than in Israel.

Finally, the choice of the ethnographic methodology, the avoidance of the restrictions of a pre-planned design, the employment of a variety of research tools in accordance with the requirements of the sorts of data collected, are rewarded by the

discovery of uncharted land. When the provision of equal opportunities is the state policy, but does not reflect or match the dominant culture, sexism goes underground, and is hard to detect. This then is the story of Israeli education.

APPENDIX 1

Guidelines for reducing sexism in schools

Note that many publications are joint projects and no credit is given to specified authors

UK

Adams, C. & Arnot, M. (1986) Investigating Gender in Secondary Schools A Series of In-Service Workshops for ILEA Teachers. ILEA.

A Guide to Equal Treatment of the Sexes in Careers Materials (undated) EOC, UK.

Al Khalifa, E., Hall, V. & McMahon, A. (1993) Equal Opportunities in School Management. NDCEMP, University of Bristol.

Burton, L. (Ed.) (1986) Girls Into Maths Can Go. HOLT Education, UK.

Do You Provide Equal Educational Opportunities? (undated) EOC, UK.

Eddowes, M. (1983) Humble pi: the mathematics education of girls. Longman for Schools Council.

Equal opportunities for girls and boys A Report of the ILEA Inspectorate (1982), ILEA.

Equal opportunities for girls and boys in education; a curriculum framework for teacher education with guidelines for

action. (1987) Report prepared by ATEE and presented to the commission of the European Communities, Brussels.

Harman, H. (1978) Sex Discrimination in Schools...And How to Fight It NCCL, UK.

Implementing the ILEA's Anti-Sexist Policy, A guide for schools. 1985, ILEA.

Implementing the ILEA's Anti-Sexist Policy, A guide for colleges of further education. 1985, ILEA.

Primary Matters, some approaches to equal opportunities in primary schools. 1986, ILEA.

Secondary Issues? some approaches to equal opportunities in secondary schools. 1986, ILEA.

Taking Your Chances equal opportunities in the curriculum. (undated) EOC, UK.

Towards Equality for Girls and Boys (1991) NUT guidelines on countering sexism in schools.

Watts, A.G. & Kant, L. (1986) A Working Start: guidance strategies for girls and young women. SCDC Longman, London.

Widening Opportunities for Young Women Within YTS A Resource Guide for Sponsors Staff Training. 1983 MSC, UK.

USA

Beyond Title IX: PEER's State-by-State Guide to Women's Equity Laws (1987) NOW Legal Defense & Education Fund, Washington, D.C.

Bornstein, R. (undated) Sexism in Education. Non-Sexist Teacher Education Project. US Department of Education.

Cracking the Glass Slipper: PEER's guide to ending sex bias in your schools. 1979, Washington.

Derman-Sparks, L. & the A.B.C. Task Force, (1989) Anti-Bias Curriculum Tools for EMPOWERING Young Children National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington, D.C.

Do's and Don'ts for Non-Sexist Language (1988) Honolulu County Commission on the Status of Women.

Facing The Future (1980) Women's Educational Equity Act Program of the US Department of Education.

Guidelines for the Creative Use of Biased Materials in a Non-Biased Way (undated) Maryland vocational curriculum research and development center.

Hergert, L., Rose R., Jarvis J. & Thompson C. (1983) Profile of an Equitable School The NETWORK, Massachusetts.

Klein, S.S. (Ed.), (1985) Handbook for Achieving Sex Equity through Education John Hopkins University

New Pioneers A program to expand sex role expectations in elementary and secondary education Reflections and recommendations. (1980) North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Women's Educational Act Program, US Dept. of Health, Education & Welfare.

Poll, C. (undated) Equity Education Curriculum Guide. New York City Public Schools, Office of Equal Opportunity Sex Desegregation Program.

Poll, C. (undated) Sex Equity Education Resource Guide. New York City Public Schools, Sex Desegregation Program.

Programs to Combat Stereotyping in Career Choice (1980) American Institutes for Research, California.

Sanders, J. (1987) Do your female students say "No, thanks" to the computer? Women's Action Alliance, N.Y.

Sanders, J. (1989) Does your daughter say "No, thanks" to the computer? Women's Action Alliance, N.Y.

Sprung, B. (1975) Non-Sexist Education for Young Children Women's Action Alliance, Citation Press, N.Y.

Strauss, M.J. (1987) Recommended Resources for use in developing programs to achieve sex equity in mathematics, science, & technology. Maryland State Department of Education.

ISRAEL

Abrahami-Einat, J. (1987) "Choosing Teaching Aids to End Sex Stereotyping". Paper presented at Third International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Dublin.

Abrahami-Einat, J. (1988) "Teacher Training, Educational Interventions and Resources". Paper presented at International Conference Private Woman - Public Work, Haifa, Israel.

Abrahami-Einat, J. (1989) She and He in the Classroom Teachers' Handbook (Hebrew) Modan, Israel.

APPENDIX 2

Teaching packs or classroom activities

The following is not intended as an exhaustive list, merely as an indication of the variety of projects devised

UK

Adams, C. & Walkerdine, V. (1986) Investigating Gender in the Primary School, Activity - Based Insrt Material for Primary Teachers. ILEA.

Confronting Gender Bias: A Resource Book. (1984) GASP, Newham In Service Education Centre.

Coussins, J. (1981) Taking Liberties A teaching pack for boys and girls on equal rights. Virago, London.

Dyer, R. (1979) The Dumb Blonde Stereotype documentation for classroom materials. BFI Education, UK.

Horton, N., Turner, S. & Whitton, S. (1982) Anti-Sexist Teaching Strategies in the Primary School. CUES, London.

Myers, K. (1987) Genderwatch! Self-assessment schedules for use in schools. SCDC publications, London.

Myers, K. (1992) Genderwatch! After the Education Reform Act Cambridge Univesity Press

OU & ILEA (1986) Girls Into Mathematics Cambridge University Press.

Redknap, C., Richards, E., Richardson, R. & Winterbourne, S. (Eds.), (1983) Doing Things in and about the Home Photographs and activities about work, play and equality. Trentham Books, UK.

Selling Pictures (undated) A teaching pack about representation and stereotyping BFI Education Image Project. Unit 2, London.

Shapiro, J., Kramer, S. & Hunerberg, C. (1981) Equal Their Chances Prentice Hall, N.J.

Spindler-Brown, A. (1983) Women's Studies a resource pack. WEA Berks, Bucks & Oxon District, NEC & EOC

Szirom, T. & Dyson, S. (1986) Greater Expectations A source book for working with girls and young women. Slavin, H. (Ed. of British edition). LDA, London

Thompson, J.L. (1986) All Right For Some the problem of sexism. Hutchinson, London.

Thorn, L. (undated) Some Girls A training resource on working with young women. Birmingham.

Walker, D. (1986) Gender Equality an effective resource for today's classroom LDA, UK.

USA

A Model for Gender-Fair Counseling: Activity Guide (1989) Indiana Commission on Vocational and Technical Education.

A Women's Place is in the Curriculum A Multicultural Approach to teaching women's history. Training Conference, N.Y.U. 9-11 July 1990.

Classroom Activities to Combat Stereotyping in Career Choice (1980) American Institutes for Research, California.

Deason, M.G. & Bolyard, K.L. (1988) Gender-Fair Career Counseling Strategies. Purdue University.

Gipson, R.A. & Bolyard, K.L. (1988) Working For Change: Planning a Gender Equity Workshop. Purdue University.

Grayson, D.A. & Martin, M.D. (1990) GESA Facilitator - Gender/Ethnic Expectations and Student Achievement. Graymill Foundation, Iowa

Kaseberg, A., Kreinberg, N. & Downie, D. (1980) Use EQUALS to promote the participation of women in mathematics. University of California.

Maryland Women's History Week, Resource Packet. The Maryland State Department of Education, yearly publication, e.g. 1984, 1986, 1989, 1990, 1991.

Non-Traditional Career Options (1991) Maryland State Department of Vocational Technical Education.

Project T.R.E.E. (1980) Maximizing Young Children's Potential US Department of Health, Education & Welfare.

Sanders, J.S. (1986) The Neuter Computer. Neal-Schuman, N.Y.

Shaffer, S.M., (1989) Screening Educational Equity: A Filmography. The Mid-Atlantic Equity Center, Washington D.C.

Spaces - Solving Problems of Access to Careers in Engineering and Science. (1982) University of California.

Venture Beyond Stereotypes a workbook for teachers concerned about sex-role stereotyping. (undated) Women's Educational Equity Act Program. US Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Videotape Guides, Indiana Commission on Vocational and Technical Education, e.g.:

Choices - Viewer's Guide 1989

Your Choice - Your Future - A Viewer's Guide, undated.

Inequity: A Subtle Disaster - A viewer's Guide, undated.

EIRE

Did your granny have a hammer??? A history of the Irish Suffrage Movement 1876-1933. (1985) Attic Press, Dublin.

ISRAEL

Abrahami-Einat, J. (1989) She and He in The Classroom Pupils' Activity book. (Hebrew) Modan, Israel.

BentSvi-Mayer, S. Ben-Zeev, A., & Abrahami-Einat, J. (1984) Trapped in Pink and Blue: Girls and Boys in Society. Haifa University, (Hebrew).

Fox, T. (1985) Fair Play for Boys and Girls Towards Equal Opportunity. Haifa University, Israel.

APPENDIX 3

Reports on special projects

This is not an exhaustive list, merely an indication of the variety of projects carried out, and reported on.

UK

Askew, S. & Ross, C. (undated) Anti-Sexist Work with Boys. EOC funded project, UK.

Changing Attitudes. (undated) Enfield LEA, Schools Council.

Cornbleet, A. & Sanders, S. (1982) Developing Anti-Sexist Initiatives (DASI) Project report, ILEA.

Conference Report: Challenging Sexism in Primary Education. 1982 CUES, London.

Conference Report: Day Conference on Equal Opportunities. Acland Burghley School, 6.9.1982.

Conference Report: Equal Opportunities. Battersea County School, 15.7.1982.

Conference Report: Equal Opportunities. Haverstock School, 28.4.1981.

Conference Report: Equal Opportunities Across the Curriculum. WedG, London, 1981.

Conference Report: Equal Opportunities in the Early Years of School. Sir William Houghton Residential Centre, Avery Hill. 20-22.6.1986.

Gender and the Secondary School Curriculum. EOC Research Bulletin, no.6 Spring 1982

Everly, B. (undated) We Can Do It Now! a report on some good practices in science and in craft, design and technology in schools. EOC, UK, no date.

Jamieson, I. & Tasker, M. (1986) Final Evaluation Report of the SCDC/EOC Equal Opportunities in Education Development Pilot Project in the London Borough of Merton. EOC.

Luxton, R. (1985) The Participation and Performance of the Girls on the Hertfordshire TVEI Project: an interim statement. Hertfordshire County Council.

Luxton, R. (1986) Girls and the TVEI Some Issues Arising from the Hertfordshire Project.

Milmann, V. (1983) Sex Stereotyping in Schools: The Role and Responsibilities of the Teacher. Observations from Council of Europe seminar, 1982. ILEA.

Millman, V. (1984) Teaching Technology to Girls. Elm Bank Teachers' Centre, Coventry.

McGill, L. (1986) First Reflections Equal Opportunities in the Early Years. ILEA.

Naidu, S. & Adams C. (1987) Single Sex Teaching in Mixed Schools a discussion document and case studies. ILEA.

Reducing Sex Differentiation in School. Newsletters 1982-1983. Schools Council Sex Differentiation Project (Activity 14), London.

USA

Gordon, B.J.A. (1983) Impact of a Law: Ten Years of Title IX in Maryland. Maryland Commission for Women.

Ross, E. (1989) Let's Begin With Us A Regional Equity Conference Training Manual Ysleta Equity Program, Texas.

ISRAEL

Shamai, S. (1992) Gender Stereotypes Change: Intervention Program through Teacher Training Program. Unpublished.

APPENDIX 4

Questionnaire for teachers

Education:

Years in teaching profession:

Year of birth:

Country of birth:

1. What are the differences you expect to see between the behaviour of the boys and the girls in class?
2. What differences between the behaviour of boys and girls in the class have you observed in the course of your work as teacher?
3. Are you of the opinion that teachers behave differently to boys and girls? If so, how?
4. Would you accept the generalization that boys and girls behave in manners that oblige teachers to relate differently to each sex?
5. What are the ways in which teachers might discriminate between boys and girls in school?
6. If the achievements of boys and girls in certain subjects are dissimilar, is it appropriate to practice positive discrimination and to give additional help to the sex that has lower achievements?
7. If you believe there is a fear of sex discrimination in schools, what are the measures that should be taken to provide equal opportunities?

8. Is unintended sex discrimination in schools possible? If so, in what ways?

The following table contains a list of qualities and behaviours that are common in school life. Please indicate whom you would expect it from by putting an x in the appropriate box.

	girls	mainly	boys	mainly	boys
	only	girls	& girls	boys	only
			equally		
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					

1. quiet and good behaviour
2. moving furniture when necessary
3. cheekiness to teacher
4. interest in mathematics
5. disturbances in class
6. contribution to the lesson
7. violence towards pupils
8. the best conduct in the schoolyard
9. curiosity
10. operating electric appliances
11. tidiness and cleanliness in copybook
12. leading the class
13. annoying the teacher
14. decorating the classroom
15. success in mathematics

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX 5

Report cards

Samples of passages written by teachers in report cards. The following are some samples of the data used for the analysis in this section. The teachers' comments to male and female pupils are presented in the original Hebrew and in my own literal translation into English. The texts are then analyzed for content, with the unit of comparison being the requirement for change. Next the sentence structure is examined, and the manner in which the need for change is expressed is defined. The content and mode of address expose the gender bias.

Grade 7a

The girl with most changes required (3):

גילי - נסמסטר זה השתדלת לגלות אחריות בלמידתך העצמאית וביחסך לספרים ולמחברות, אולם עדין עליך להמשיך ולהשתדל בנושא זה. הקפידי על סדר ונקיון והשתדלי להגיש תוצרים מלאים ובזמן! את מגלה ענין בנושאים הנלמדים ואף משתתפת באופן פעיל בדיוני הכתה. את אהודה מאד על חבריך ותרמת רבות מיכולתך ומכישוריך לפעילויות החברתיות שבכתה.

Gilly - this term you made an effort to show responsibility in your independent studies and in your treatment of your books and notebooks, but you still need to continue to make an effort in this subject. Pay attention to order and cleanliness and make an effort to submit completed assignments on time! You show an interest in the subjects studied and even take an active part in the class discussions. You are liked very much by your friends and you contributed a lot of your ability and skills to the social activities in the class.

The changes required:

1. you need to continue to make an effort in this subject (in the independent studies or in the treatment of her books and notebooks?)
2. pay attention to order and cleanliness
3. make an effort to submit completed assignments on time!

Sentence structure:

1. explicit instruction
2. explicit instruction
3. recommendation

A girl with two changes required:

אורנית - על פי רב גילית עניין בנושאים הנלמדים במהלך השנה. את יודעת לעבוד באופן עצמאי אולם עליך ללמוד לעבוד על תוצרים להגשה במשך זמן רב ולא לדחות מטלות שונות לרגע האחרון. את מגלה יחס חיובי לחבריך בכתה ומשתדלת לתרום מיכולתך ומכשוריך למען הכתה. עליך להקפיד על סדר במחברותיך.

Ornit - most of the time you showed an interest in the subjects studied throughout the year. You know how to work independently but you must learn to work on products for submission over period of time and not to put off various assignments till the last moment. You show a positive attitude to your classmates and make an effort to contribute to the class from your ability and skills. You must pay attention to tidiness in your notebooks.

The changes required:

1. you must learn to work on products over a period of time
2. you must pay attention to tidiness

Sentence structure:

1. explicit instruction

2. explicit instruction

The boy with most changes required (6)

שלומי - במהלך השנה היו עליות וירידות בהשיגך על פי רב גילית ענין בנושאים השונים אולם לא הקפדת על מחברות מסודרות. רתיעתך מכתובה שוטפת במחברות ומהגשת עבודות בכתב מונעת ממך להגיש תוצרים מלאים וחבל. אתה יודע לעבוד באופן עצמאי אך עליך לגלות רצינות והתמדה בכך. יחסך לחבריך בכתה חיובי וניכר כי אתה אהוד. חבל שלא תרמת יותר משישוריך ומיכולתך למען הכתה. השתדל השתדל לשפר השיגך בערבית.

Shlommy - in the course of the year there were ups and downs in your achievements usually you showed an interest in the various subjects but you didn't pay attention to tidiness in your notebooks. Your reluctance to write regularly in your notebooks and to submit written assignments prevents you from submitting complete products, and that's a pity. You know how to work independently but you must show seriousness and conscientiousness in it. Your attitude to your classmates is positive and it is obvious that you are liked. It's a pity you didn't contribute more of your skills and ability to the class. Make an effort to improve your achievements in Arabic.

The changes required:

1. you didn't pay attention to tidiness
2. your reluctance to write
3. your reluctance to submit written assignments
4. you must show seriousness and conscientiousness in your independent work
5. it's a pity you didn't contribute more to the class
6. make an effort to improve in Arabic

Sentence structure:

1. negative statement
2. negative statement
3. negative statement
4. explicit instruction
5. negative statement
6. recommendation

Grade 7b.

The girl with most changes required (4).

תמי - את ממשיכה לגלות עניין בנושאים הנלמדים נכחה. במחצית זו נצלת את יכולתך ללמוד באופן עצמאי שיטתי ועקבי אך עדין את יכולה לנצלה יותר. במקרים רבים תוצריך השתפרו אך עליך להמשיך ולשאוף ליותר. את ממשיכה לגלות יחס חברי אל בני כדתך אך עדין אינך תורמת ויוזמת יותר. השתדלי לגלות יותר ערנות בהשתתפות בשעורים שכן ביכולתך לתרום לדיונים.

Tammy - you continue to show an interest in the subjects studied in class. This term you made use of your ability to study in an independent, systematic and consistent manner but you could still use it more. In many cases your products improved but you must continue and aspire for more. You continue to show a friendly attitude to your classmates but you still don't contribute or initiate more. Make an effort to show more alertness in your participation in lessons as you have the ability to contribute to the discussions.

The changes required of the girl:

1. you could use your potential more;
2. continue to aspire for more;

3. you still don't contribute or initiate to social life;
4. make an effort to show more alertness in your participation in lessons;

Sentence structure:

1. non committed suggestion
2. explicit instruction
3. negative statement
4. explicit recommendation

The boy with most changes required (8).

בני - אתה מגלה ענין מועט בנושאים הנלמדים בכתה. לימודך העצמאי לא השתפר לאורך כל שנת הלימודים ואף חלה ירידה באופן בו אתה מתיחס למטלות האישיות המוטלות עליך. אתה ממעט לגלות עקביות ושיטתיות ותוצריך אינם מלאים באופן קבוע ואינך עומד בלוח הזמנים שנקבע. חבל שאינך מודע יותר לחשיבות הלמידה האישית בכתה ולהשפעתה על ידיעותיך ותוצריך. יחסך לבני כותך חברי אך התנהגותך עדיין אינה נאותה בזמן השעורים והדיונים וחבל כי אתה מסוגל להם. השתדל לשפר את אופן למידתך, כך שתגיע למלוא יכולתך.

Benny - you show little interest in the subjects studied in class. Your independent studies did not improve throughout the school year and there was even a regression in the way you treat the personal assignments you are given. You hardly show consistency and systematism and your products are not regularly complete and you don't keep to the timetable that was fixed. It's a pity you are not more aware of the importance of the individual study in class and its effect on your knowledge and your products. Your attitude to your classmates is friendly but your behaviour is still not appropriate during lessons and discussions and it's a pity as you are capable of them (sic.). Make an effort to improve the manner of your studies, so that you reach your full potential.

The changes required of the boy:

1. you show little interest in the subjects studied;
2. your independent studies did not improve;
3. there was a regression in the way you treat personal assignments;
4. you hardly show consistency and systematism;
5. your products are not regularly complete;
6. you don't keep to the timetable;
7. you are not aware of the importance of the individual study in class;
8. your behaviour is not appropriate during lessons and discussions;
9. make an effort to improve the manner of your studies;

Sentence structure:

1. negative statement
2. negative statement
3. negative statement
4. negative statement
5. negative statement
6. negative statement
7. negative statement
8. negative statement
9. general recommendation;

APPENDIX 6

Categories for quantifying data from report cards

A. Academic performance

1. products (assignments)
2. achievements
3. set phrase: "studies well"
4. knowledge
5. mastery
6. understanding
7. change

B. Learning habits

1. thoroughness
2. profundity
3. working on schedule
4. consistency
5. systematicness
6. industriousness
7. independent study
8. responsibility
9. perseverance
10. change
11. effort
12. participation in discussion
13. expression of opinion
14. attentiveness
15. contribution to discussion
16. cognitive ability
17. academic ability
18. tidiness
19. aesthetics

C. Conduct

1. politeness
2. niceness
3. composure
4. self control
5. appropriate behaviour
6. disturbance
7. sensitivity
8. maturity
9. sense of justice
10. seriousness
11. concentration
12. resoluteness

D. Social skills

1. social contribution
2. involvement
3. initiative
4. readiness to contribute to class
5. willingness to help
6. caring
7. friendliness
8. awareness of needs
9. set phrase: "good friend"
10. likability
11. acceptability
12. lovability

E. Recommendations

1. improve conduct
 2. improve studies
 3. change learning habits
 4. increase contribution to class
-

5. increase participation
6. make other changes

F. Tone

1. set phrase: "good pupil"
2. appreciation
3. praise
4. reprimand
5. disappointment
6. set phrase: "a pity"
7. encouragement
- 8 set phrase: "keep going"
9. reference to social potential
10. reference to academic potential
11. wishing success

APPENDIX 7

Changes required

Distribution of changes required of each pupil in the report cards, according to class and sex.

Grade 7a

	FEMALES	MALES
no. of changes per pupil:		
1	13.3%	37.5%
2	33.3%	12.5%
3	13.3%	16.6%
4	0	8.3%
5	0	0
6	0	4.1%
pupils told to change	60%	79.1%

Grade 7b

	FEMALES	MALES
no. of changes per pupil:		
1	28.5%	4.3%
2	35.7%	30.4%
3	21.4%	21.7%
4	7.1%	17.3%
5	0	4.3%
6	0	8.6%
7	0	0
8	0	4.3%
pupils told to change	92.8%	91.3%

Grade 8a

	FEMALES	MALES
1	3%	13.6%

2	0	9%
3	0	22.7%
4	0	18.1%
pupils told to change	3%	63.6%

Grade 8b

	FEMALES	MALES
no. of changes per pupil:		
1	5.2%	44.4%
2	0	0
3	0	11.1%
4	0	5%
pupils told to change	5.2%	61.1%

Grade 9a

	FEMALES	MALES
no. of changes per pupil:		
1	9%	0
2	36.3%	9%
3	18.1%	0
4	9%	27.2%
5	0	9%
pupils told to change	72.7%	45.4%

Grade 9b

	FEMALES	MALES
no. of changes per pupil:		
1	9%	46.6%
2	18.1%	6.6%
3	0	6.6%
4	27.2%	13.3%

5	0	0
6	0	6.6%
pupils told to change	54.5%	80%

Changes required (%)

grade	total		2+		3+	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
7a	60	79.1	46.6	41.6	13.3	29.1
7b	92.8	91.3	64.2	86.9	28.5	56.5
8a	23	63.6	0	50	0	40.9
8b	35.2	61.1	0	16.6	0	16.6
9a	72.7	45.4	63.6	45.4	27.2	36.3
9b	54.5	80	45.4	33.3	27.2	26.6

APPENDIX 8

Use of categories by sex

Distribution of resort to various categories to evaluate each sex. Numbers indicate teachers

	F>M	M>F	F=M	ONLY F	ONLY M
A. Academic performance					
1. products (assignments)	3	1	1		1
2. achievements	3	3			
3. set phrase: "studies well"	2		1	1	
4. knowledge	1	1	1	1	
5. mastery	1				2
6. understanding	2	1		3	
7. change	2	1			3
B. Learning habits					
1. thoroughness	2	1		1	2
2. profundity	2				1
3. working on schedule	2	2			2
4. consistency	2	1			2
5. systematicness		3			
6. industriousness	1				
7. independent study	3				2
8. responsibility	5		1		
9. perseverance	2		1	1	2
10. change	2	2			2
11. effort	4	1			1
12. participation in discussion	3	3			
13. expression of opinion		3			1
14. attentiveness	2	2			1

15. contribution to discussion	1	1			1
16. cognitive ability	1	1	1		
17. academic ability	1				1
18. tidiness	1				2
19. aesthetics				2	

	F>M	M>F	F=M	F	M
--	-----	-----	-----	---	---

C. Conduct

1. politeness	1				
2. niceness	2				
3. composure		2		1	
4. self control	1				3
5. appropriate behaviour		2			2
6. disturbance	1				
7. sensitivity	1				
8. maturity	3			2	
9. sense of justice				1	
10. seriousness	4	1			1
11. concentration	1	1		1	1
12. resoluteness				2	

D. Social skills

1. social contribution	4	1			
2. involvement	2	2			
3. initiative	2				2
4. readiness to contribute to class		2			
5. willingness to help	4				
6. caring	1	1			2
7. friendliness	1	4		1	
8. awareness of needs	1				1
9. set phrase: "good friend"	1				1
10. likability	1	3			1

11. acceptability	1	2		1	
12. lovability				1	
	F>M	M>F	F=M	F	M

E. Recommendations

1. improve conduct		3			1
2. improve studies		2		1	
3. change learning habits	1	3	1		1
4. increase contribution to class					
	1	1			2
5. increase participation	3	1		1	
6. make other changes	1	1			

F. Tone

1. set phrase: "good pupil"	1				
2. appreciation	3	1	1		
3. praise	2		1	2	
4. reprimand		1			5
5. disappointment				2	2
6. set phrase: "a pity"	1	2		1	1
7. encouragement	1	2		1	1
8. set phrase: "keep going"	3	1			1
9. reference to social potential					
	2	1			2
10. reference to academic potential					
	1		1		3
11. wishing success		1		1	1
TOTAL	100	64	10	28	60
	F>M	M>F	F=M	F	M

APPENDIX 9

Use of categories per teacher

Distribution of resort to various categories. The numbers indicate how many teachers these items were relevant for.

A. Academic performance

1. products (assignments)	6
2. achievements	6
3. set phrase: "studies well"	4
4. knowledge	4
5. mastery	3
6. understanding	6
7. change	6

B. Learning habits

1. thoroughness	6
2. profundity	3
3. working on schedule	6
4. consistency	5
5. systematicness	3
6. industriousness	1
7. independent study	5
8. responsibility	6
9. perseverance	6
10. change	6
11. effort	6
12. participation in discussion	6
13. expression of opinion	4
14. attentiveness	5
15. contribution to discussion	3
16. cognitive ability	3
17. academic ability	2

- 18. tidiness 3
- 19. aesthetics 2

C. Conduct

- 1. politeness 1
- 2. niceness 2
- 3. composure 3
- 4. self control 4
- 5. appropriate behaviour 3
- 6. disturbance 1
- 7. sensitivity 1
- 8. maturity 5
- 9. sense of justice 1
- 10. seriousness 6
- 11. concentration 4
- 12. resoluteness 2

D. Social skills

- 1. social contribution 5
- 2. involvement 4
- 3. initiative 4
- 4. readiness to contribute to class 2
- 5. willingness to help 4
- 6. caring 4
- 7. friendliness 6
- 8. awareness of needs 2
- 9. set phrase: "good friend" 2
- 10. likability 5
- 11. acceptability 4
- 12. lovability 1

E. Recommendations

- 1. improve conduct 4

2. improve studies	3
3. change learning habits	6
4. increase contribution to class	4
5. increase participation	5
6. make other changes	2

F. Tone

1. set phrase: "good pupil"	1
2. appreciation	5
3. praise	5
4. reprimand	6
5. disappointment	4
6. set phrase: "a pity"	5
7. encouragement	5
8 set phrase: "keep going"	5
9. reference to social potential	6
10. reference to academic potential	5
11. wishing success	3

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