

An ethnographic case study of 'inclusive' teaching-learning practices for students with mild learning difficulties in the mainstream classroom at public secondary schools in Cyprus: Listening to the perceptions of coordinators, teachers and students

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I, Panayiota Christodoulidou confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the implementation of 'inclusive' teaching and learning practices for the students with mild learning difficulties in the mainstream classroom at public secondary schools in Cyprus. It explored the experiences and perceptions of coordinators, teachers and students with mild learning difficulties about the current 'inclusive' teaching and learning practices and their understanding of the notion of inclusive education, which has informed their perceptions about the inclusive educational approaches.

The objectives of this study are concerned with the basic premise of inclusive education that the 'learning needs' of these students can be met effectively in the mainstream classroom, since the classroom adaptations needed are no more than good general teaching practices. Particularly, this study seeks to question the for-granted assumptions regarding the mainstream classroom practices and adaptations required for the students with learning difficulties. It also aimed to contribute to a better understanding of how these assumptions affected the design and the implementation of 'inclusive' teaching and learning practices.

To explore these objectives, an ethnographic case study was conducted at three public mainstream schools of Cyprus. Eleven teachers of Modern Greek and three coordinators were questioned and individually interviewed. Twenty-nine students with mild learning difficulties aged from twelve to fifteen years old, were also interviewed. The participants were also observed over a series of lessons in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. This made it possible to identify the effects of the teachers' assumption about the need for 'special' and 'distinct' pedagogy for the students with learning difficulties, on the consistency of their mainstream classroom adaptations and their expectations towards the learning of these students. By listening to students, it has unpicked the effects of the current 'inclusive' practices on the students' learning profile and it signaled their (further) stigmatization as being less academically able learners.

IMPACT STATEMENT

This study contributes additional material to preceding limited research evidence, concerning the perceptions of students with mild learning difficulties regarding the 'inclusive' teaching and learning mainstream classroom practices. Particularly, this is the first study to my knowledge exploring the perceptions of students with mild learning difficulties and of Modern Greek teachers regarding the current 'inclusive' educational approaches in public mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus.

The findings of this study are considered important for the improvement of the inclusive education policy and practices in public mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus. First, this study has signaled the Cypriot teachers' persistent sense that there is an existing 'distinct and special' educational pedagogy for the students with learning difficulties. This is related to the teachers' taken-for-granted assumption that supporting the learning needs of these target students in the resource room is more effective than solely in the mainstream classroom. Second, it has identified these students' (further) stigmatization as being less academically able learners, which was encouraged by their labelling and the partial withdrawal support in the resource room. This has also contributed to a better understanding of the maladaptive, attributional, motivational and behavioural reactions of these students in the (mainstream) classroom. Hence, it seems important for the policy-makers of the Ministry of Education in Cyprus (MOEC) to design inspiring teaching training programs that focus on deconstructing the labelling and special needs marginalizing stereotypes and encourage the development of (more) inclusive teachers' values and school cultures. The identified learning profile of the participant students can be used critically by the teachers and in general the educational practitioners, as well as by the parents. The teachers are in need to self-critique and self-reflect on their attitudes towards these students, in order to recognize the need for systematic teaching adaptations and to have higher expectations of these students' learning. The parents can gain a better understanding of their children's learning needs. Finally, this study gives the opportunity for these students' voice to be heard; taking into account their favourite classroom adaptations, further research can be done to generalize how effective they can be for increasing these students' active engagement in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. As a result, these students might become more motivated, strive harder and become more content.

From a scientific point of view, this study adds to the theoretical framework concerning the conceptualization and enactment of inclusive education in the mainstream schools. Considering the objectives of this study, it was important for the analysis to be based on ideas derived from the models of disabilities, theories of teaching and learning and of psychology. The outcomes related to the impact of stereotypes on students' learning identity and teachers' practicing profile do support the link between these theoretical paradigms. The on going problem in the conceptualization of inclusive education are the stereotypes and prejudices related to the notions of disability. Hence, this study offers insights for further research, which might suggest how to terminate the legitimization of discriminatory educational practices and policies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OVERVIEW

The discussion that follows sets out the rationale, aims and research questions of the study, and it also explains the principal terminology used. It describes the structure and context of the Cypriot educational system and the history and policies of 'special needs' education in Cyprus. It identifies the political, economic and social events of historical periods in Cyprus, affecting both the context of the Cypriot educational system and the development of 'special needs' policies. I explain the reasoning behind the policy of 'withdrawing' students with 'mild learning difficulties' from the mainstream classroom, and, finally, I set out the structure of the thesis as a whole.

1.2. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Inclusive education derives from a concept that recognizes the rights of all learners to have access to and participate in good quality education (UNESCO, 2015b). Inclusion is an ethos, process and set of educational goals which help to overcome the barriers which limit the equal chances of all learners in education (Ibid). Children with 'learning difficulties' are, and have long been, among the most marginalized and excluded groups of learners in educational systems worldwide (World Health Organization, 2011). The education of these students has historically been located in segregated settings rather than in mainstream ones. Hence global and local policies have developed across countries, aiming to enable every learner to participate and achieve in mainstream schools (UNESCO, 2015b; UNESCO, 2017). In the case of Cyprus, children diagnosed as having 'mild learning difficulties' are mainly educated in the mainstream classroom, taking the same mainstream curriculum and having tests and exams with their peers. At the same time these students are also required to be partially withdrawn from some lessons in the mainstream classroom to receive support in the resource room (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 2001). The purpose of partially withdrawing these students from the mainstream classroom is stated to be the need to meet their learning difficulties so they can achieve the aims of the mainstream curriculum (ibid).

As a secondary teacher of Greek language and literature at Cypriot schools, I have to teach students with mild learning difficulties in both the mainstream classroom and the

resource room. Therefore, this study emerged from my personal interest as an educational practitioner who has always wondered why the 'needs' of the children with learning difficulties are required to be supported outside mainstream classrooms. This is especially if the teachers have to teach a mixed-ability group of students in mainstream classrooms. This study therefore aimed to understand why we tend to 'partially exclude' these students from the mainstream classroom, while there is research evidence which suggests that 'special class' placement is not found to be academically and socially stronger for students with disabilities than the regular classroom (Brunch and Valeo, 1997; Thomas and Vaughan, 2004; Richmond et al., 2009). If the pedagogical skills needed for inclusive education are not appreciably different from those needed in general education (Jordan et al., 2009), and if in any classroom all the students will work at exactly the same academic level (Idol, 2006). Why are these students still required to be withdrawn from the mainstream classroom in order to receive additional support in the resource room?

On the other hand, inclusion in the mainstream classroom can be effective, if there are adequate resources, the teachers are well prepared and the classroom activities are well-planned (Zigmond and Baker, 1995; Staub et al., 1996; Farrell, 2000). Withdrawal for 'special' support can also have an integral place in effective inclusive education, if this is the best way to address the undeniable right of children to fully and equally participate in the learning process, and the necessity of professionals to contribute to their learning within the mainstream classroom (Barton, 1996). Hence, bearing in mind that implementing inclusion at mainstream schools does not necessarily mean the abolition of additional support for the students who need it (Corbett, 1996), I also wanted to explore how the students themselves felt about being withdrawn from their mainstream classroom to receive support in the resource room. From my teaching at secondary schools, I have observed that many students with mild learning difficulties do not want to attend the resource room to receive 'special tuition'.

Additionally, inclusive education is hard to promote in systems that marginalize some learners categorized on the basis of who they are and what they can and should learn (Florian, 2019). Thus, the withdrawal for 'special support' should not be the only form of differentiation or the only inclusive teaching practice used in the mainstream classroom (Corbett, 2001). In this sense, I wanted to further explore how students with mild learning difficulties perceived the implemented practice in mainstream Cypriot schools. Assuming that the learning difficulties of the students can also arise from aspects of the educational system itself, I wanted to explore how these students believe that their learning needs can

be (better) met in mainstream classrooms and schools. It has long been my belief that school communities do their very best to overcome whatever limits the presence, participation and achievements of all learners in mainstream settings (UNESCO, 2015a).

Bearing in mind the educational innovations which have begun in public mainstream schools in Cyprus over the last few years (MOEC, 2009), research has been undertaken in public mainstream primary schools in Cyprus for the improvement of the implemented 'inclusive' teaching and learning practices. It mainly explored teachers' perceptions, but very rarely student perceptions about the development and improvement of inclusive education. This is the first study to my knowledge to examine the perceptions of students with mild learning difficulties in public secondary mainstream schools in Cyprus. This study aims to listen to the perceptions of both the teachers and students with mild learning difficulties, because it recognizes that inclusive education is effective when supported by all parties involved, including teachers, students, parents and the broader community (Antonak and Livneh, 2000). In this sense, it should always be considered that any child who wishes to be in a mainstream classroom has the right to be there and the school must make that a reality, whereas when the child prefers to be somewhere other than in the mainstream classroom, an alternative kind of support should be available for him/her (Osgood, 2005). Similarly, the parents should put their child's interest first rather than their own and the teachers should decide whether they want to teach these children in their classroom or not (Booth and Ainscow, 2002).

1.3.AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research study aims to explore 'inclusive' mainstream classroom teaching and learning practices in Cypriot secondary schools, exploring how teachers tend to support the needs of students with mild learning difficulties in the mainstream classroom along with those of their classmates. Previous research suggests that teachers have rarely implemented inclusive teaching practices in the mainstream classroom. Teachers in public Cypriot primary schools have not implemented inclusive practices in their classroom, since there were no available core teaching materials for the whole classroom, with additional tasks for the 'able' and 'less able' students (UNESCO, 1997; Papademetriou and Charalampous, 2019) and because the teachers were inadequately trained regarding the 'needs' of the children categorized as having 'special needs' (Angelides et al., 2004; Ketse, 2008; Symeonidou, 2017). Similarly, in Greek schools, whose model of inclusive education has informed that implemented in Cypriot schools, the teachers continued to be in favour

of children with mild learning difficulties acquiring knowledge in the resource room (Nirmorakiotaki, 2009; Ntarachani, 2009). The majority of teachers who have implemented inclusive mainstream classroom practices mainly aimed to boost these students' confidence by increasing their participation in classroom activities, rather than helping them to overcome their learning difficulties in the mainstream classroom (ibid).

Aiming to explore 'inclusive' teaching and learning classroom practices, I felt it was necessary to explore teachers' perceptions and the experience of students with mild learning difficulties about the withdrawal model of 'inclusive education' in Cypriot public mainstream secondary schools. Exploring the teachers' perceptions would help to identify the ethos and beliefs that encourage or hinder the development of inclusive mainstream classroom practices. There is no single answer as to how the learning difficulties of students should be met in mainstream schools, since answers vary according to people's beliefs and the aims of different educational systems (Antonak and Livneh, 2000). An influential variable in enhancing or redesigning inclusive classroom practices is for the teachers to believe in inclusion and in students' abilities to learn (Antonak and Livneh, 2000; Arnaiz and Castejon, 2001; Kraayenoord et al., 2009; Florian, 2019). Otherwise, as White (2007) highlights, neither in-service education nor on-site support could change the thinking of teachers. The labels of 'special needs' education have also been identified as hindering the development of inclusive mainstream classroom practices by teachers (Vaughn et al., 1993; Ward et al., 1994; Corbett, 1996; Loreman and Deppeler, 2000; Efstathiou, 2003; Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007).

Furthermore, students with mild learning difficulties are also able to reflect constructively on their school experience and thus they can also provide invaluable insights for decision making in educational practice (Prunty et al., 2012). However, students' 'voice' tended to be ignored by policy-makers in the U.K., either because their answers were considered as invalid for the research (Farrell, 2000), or they were perceived to be incapable of making choices for their life and education (Davis and Watson, 2000). As a result, parents used to have a powerful voice that influenced the policies and the support provided in mainstream schools for their children (Farrell, 2000). Similarly, in the Cypriot educational system, the MOEC and the parents used to have powerful voices that influenced the policies and the support provided in public mainstream schools for the target students (British Council, 1983; Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 2001). Professionals have persuaded parents that they are fighting for their children's benefit, and the parents are happy with the 'special needs' provisions and the findings provided for their children (Phtiaka, 1999b).

With such an ethos, it is not surprising that although the practices used for the inclusion of students with 'special needs' in the mainstream are deemed not to be very effective, there are no critics against them (ibid). Hence, a central aim of the thesis is to give a prominent place to the students' voices.

Finally, aiming to explore 'inclusive' teaching and learning classroom practices, I felt it was also necessary to explore both teacher and student perceptions of how the learning needs of students with mild learning difficulties might be (better) met within the mainstream classroom. Listening to teachers' and students' voice is even more essential in inclusive educational policies, if inclusion is about identifying and addressing the barriers to learning for all (Messiou, 2018) and if the educational policy is to be grounded in reality (Fraser et al., 2004). Students can identify the teaching practices they like and which they consider to be helpful for their learning. Teachers' listening to student views and feedback can plan (more) effective personalised activities (Rose and Shevlin, 2004; Bourke and Loveridge, 2014; Cook-Sather, 2014). Similarly, from their experience, teachers can help to assess the effectiveness of the implemented practices and inform how the suggested policies can be improved (Azorin and Ainscow, 2020). In this sense, it is important to listen to both teacher and student perspectives, which can provide constructive insights for the development and improvement of inclusive education in public mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus.

These reflections on Cypriot mainstream secondary schools led to the development of three research questions, which are explored in the present thesis:

1. How are the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties being supported in the mainstream classroom of public secondary schools in Cyprus?
2. Can partial withdrawal from the mainstream classroom be considered 'inclusive' educational practice, and how is this practice seen in the eyes of teachers and students?
3. What changes might be necessary in order to best support the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties within mainstream classrooms in Cyprus?

1.4. TERMINOLOGY

I turn now to explain how I understand the terms that are central to my thesis: special needs, inclusion, inclusive education and integration. I also explain how they are used and understood in the context of Cyprus. I recognize that there are many definitions other than those I have chosen to employ, and ongoing debates about disparate interpretations. I cannot do justice to these here, but I am striving to make it clear how and why I have chosen to work with the definitions provided below.

‘Special needs’

‘Special needs’ is a notion used to describe a child with a ‘learning difficulty’ and/or disability who requires ‘special’ and /or additional support to that which is ordinarily available to and required by their peers of a similar age (Florian, 2019). In this sense, these children, who were excluded from mainstream schools, used to be educated in schools called ‘special schools’ (Armstrong, 2003). In general the term ‘learning difficulty’ refers to the problems some learners face with performing to the same standards as their peers of the same age (Florian, 2019). Although the classification and inclusion rate of children who are categorized as having ‘special needs’ is considerably different across the educational systems of each country, it has been identified as necessary in order to determine the resources, services and pedagogical adaptations that would facilitate these students’ learning in mainstream classrooms. This is the reason why even in countries that aimed to abandon disability categories, some process of classification still remains in place (ibid).

The term ‘special needs’ according to MOEC policy

The term ‘special needs’ refers to physical, mental, cognitive or emotional needs (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 1999). Recognizing the risk of stigmatization for children labelled as having special needs, the term ‘children with additional support needs’ has been suggested in the reform of legislation for special needs/ inclusive education in Cyprus (Koursoumba, 2019). All students with Down syndrome, Asperger’s syndrome, speech problems and mental retardation are identified as having ‘profound learning difficulties’, while students categorized as having behavioural and emotional problems and physical impairments are identified as having ‘sensory learning difficulties’. Students categorised as having learning abilities two or three years lower than the learning abilities

of the children of their age, are identified as having 'mild learning difficulties' (ibid). These students are identified mainly as having learning difficulties in reading, writing and mathematics (Statistics of MOEC, 2005).

'Inclusion'

'Inclusion' used to be considered as the struggle to remove all exclusionary pressures within society and education, in favour of people categorized as having 'disabilities' (UNESCO, 1990; Booth, 2003; Barton and Armstrong, 2007; UNESCO, 2015a) and it has gained momentum since the 1990s across different countries (European Council, 2003). Educating all children together in 'inclusive' schools is aimed at facilitating respectful interpersonal relationships which are the basis for a just and non-discriminatory society (UNESCO, 1990; Osgood, 2005; Felder, 2018; Ainscow et al., 2019; Florian, 2019; Krishler et al., 2019). The idea behind promoting 'inclusive' schools is that every learner matters equally and has the right to receive effective educational and lifelong learning opportunities (UNESCO, 2015a; UN Human Rights' Statement, 2017).

Similarly, the term 'inclusive education' refers to the pedagogical reform project of the educational systems across countries, which recognises the necessity for the children with 'special needs' to have access to an equal and efficient form of provision, flexible teaching strategies and an appropriate curriculum which is responsive to the needs of all learners (UNESCO, 1994; Booth and Ainscow, 2004; Armstrong et al., 2000; UNESCO, 2015a; UNESCO, 2017; UN Human Rights' Statement, 2017; Felder, 2018). However, central to the theories regarding inclusive education is the debate regarding how the problematic and contentious nature of the education of children with 'special needs' can be overcome, and thus how to assert their rights both to being present in mainstream schools and to participate in the learning process taking place in mainstream classrooms (Booth and Ainscow, 2004; Armstrong, 2003). This debate is further discussed in the literature review (see chapter 2).

'Integration'

'Integration' can be defined as the educational arrangements whereby the 'learning difficulties' of children perceived as having 'special needs' are met with minimum extra support and limited cost in mainstream schools (Barton and Tomlinson, 1984; Smith, 1998). This means that children, who are categorized as having 'special needs', need to

be adjusted to the existing structures of mainstream schools, rather than the mainstream learning process and activities adjusting to the needs of the students (Smith, 1998). Thus, professionals aimed at providing support which should be provided to children with 'special needs' in order to help them become adjusted to mainstream schooling (Zelaieta, 2004). Particularly, social integration aims for the children with 'special needs' to be adapted to the social life and activities of the community (DES, 1978,p.3). Locational integration is achieved by the spatial shifting of students with 'special needs' in the mainstream school and it is what inclusion was covertly found to express (Smith, 1998). Considered to be relevant to the context of this study, is functional integration, according to which children with 'special needs' attend the mainstream classroom and partly attend special units or resource rooms, in order to be provided with extra or individualized support (DES, 1978,p.3-4).

In the Cypriot educational system, inclusion continues to be seen and understood as interchangeable with the notion of functional integration. Inclusive education for students with 'special needs' continues to be promoted through a variety of withdrawal support methods within mainstream schools (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 2001). The difficulty the Cypriot educational system has with abandoning well-established segregated practices is also obvious in the reform of the special needs/ inclusive education policy (European Agency for special and inclusive education, 2019). Withdrawal classes are still suggested by the MOEC and parents in order to meet the 'additional' and 'special' needs of the labelled children in mainstream Cypriot schools (Parents' Association Report, 2019). In such a vein, it is also obvious that in the educational system of Cyprus, the notion of inclusion is still discussed in relation to the traditional terms of 'special needs' rather than in terms of human rights.

On the other hand, according to the beliefs and understanding of the researcher, inclusive education and integration are not synonymous concepts. Inclusive education is not a matter of place, but a matter of ethos. Educational practitioners should acknowledge that all learners could learn in their own way and at their own pace and be willing to support their learning and abilities in the mainstream classroom. The researcher's understanding of inclusion/ inclusive education is presented, since it seems that this has also informed the aims of the study, and it is acknowledged that this might have a greater impact and effect on the design of this research study and the data analysis.

1.5. THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF CYPRUS

It is important to bear in mind the structure and context of the education system of Cyprus, because it is the context in which this research project has taken place. The education system of Cyprus consists of primary education, secondary education (*gymnasio*) and lyceum (*Likio*). Primary education is compulsory and lasts for six years. Children from six to twelve years old are educated in primary schools, then from twelve to fifteen years old in secondary school and from fifteen to eighteen years old in the lyceum. Education is compulsory until the age of fifteen, until the completion of the gymnasium but usually children continue their education, attending either lyceums or technical and vocational schools (MOEC, 2003).

The educational system of Cyprus is highly performance and exam oriented. Students in secondary schools and lyceums are assessed by tests during the year and final exams, with number grades (from 0-20). Final exams test students on what they have learnt during the academic year. Students are examined in June and are allowed to resit their exams in September, but if they fail again, they stay at the same level (Schwartzman, 1990). In secondary schools, students are examined in mathematics, Modern Greek, history and physics (*ibid*). Within such a system, students with learning difficulties, because of their poor achievements, used to be isolated during the learning process of the mainstream classroom (Phtiaka, 2003). Teachers tended to spend less time supporting the students whose achievements would not be academically rewarded (*ibid*).

The educational system of Cyprus is also highly centralized (British Council, 1983). The curriculum is prepared by the MOEC and allocated to all schools (Schwartzman, 1990). The MOEC is also responsible for the allocation of financial resources to each school, the text-books provided free to students and teacher training (British Council, 1983). Similarly, all the special schools receive funding from the MOEC, and their function and practices are evaluated by MOEC inspectors of special needs education (MOEC, 1999). Even the teaching staff working at private special schools are selected from the list of registered teachers of the MOEC (*ibid*; Koumbalidou, 2013). Students with profound learning difficulties have been solely educated in special schools since 1999. Across the island, there are only seven public special schools and two private ones: the 'school for the deaf' (the children with hearing impairments) and the 'school for the blind' (children with visual impairments) (Koumbalidou, 2013). As a result of the limited teaching and financial resources allocated by the MOEC for the purpose of 'special needs' education, there were

limits on the training provided to teachers regarding how to design and implement practices for meeting the learning needs of all students in the mainstream classrooms of Cypriot schools (Angelides and Michailidou, 2007).

The lack of teacher training also hindered the development of practices to meet the learning needs of all students in the mainstream classrooms of Cypriot schools (Angelides and Michailidou, 2007). Secondary teachers have no initial training except for a few courses in pedagogical theory that they have to attend before joining the secondary teaching force (Symeonidou and Phtiaka, 2014). In-service training is provided to teachers, in order for them to become permanent at schools by the seventh year of their employment and in order to inform them of the current educational issues (Angelides and Michailidou, 2007). The in-service training in Cyprus has not been developed around structured practices and the MOEC does not have a stated policy on teacher education in relation to integration or inclusion (Symeonidou and Phtiaka, 2014). Until 2007, the pre-service training of secondary teachers consisted of an inclusive education course, which was provided on an elective basis, to those teachers who were interested and/or were involved in either teaching or supporting students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools (ibid; MOEC, 2013). In the following years, a few seminars were organized once a year (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2015) and on a voluntary basis either by the Cyprus Pedagogical Association, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institution, or the University of Cyprus (Phtiaka, 2003; Karagiorgi and Symeou, 2007; Bagianou, 2019), which also minimized the opportunity for the majority of teachers to attend them (Phtiaka, 2003; Epitropi Evropaikon Koinotiton, 2007).

From the above, it can be concluded that training on inclusive education has been reduced to a few seminars which focus on how to meet the needs of different impaired groups rather than on developing a good understanding of the nature and aims of inclusive education (Symeonidou and Phtiaka, 2014). The training seminars do not train teachers how to differentiate the mainstream classroom teaching materials, the aims of the mainstream curriculum and how to protect students from being marginalised or stigmatized (Damianidou, 2015; Bagianou, 2019). The need for better teacher training regarding inclusive education was also identified in the debate regarding the reform of the legislation for special needs / inclusive education (Koursoumba, 2019). This is particularly important for the secondary education sector, where there are no special educational needs requirements in order to be hired (Koumbalidou, 2013; Symeonidou and Phtiaka, 2014).

Additionally, it is important to mention that there was little room for reforming the aims of the mainstream curriculum, in order to address the learning needs of students with 'special needs' (Phtiaka, 2003). It was important for schools to create 'good Greeks' because there are two ethnic communities; the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot (Polydorou, 1995). It was therefore a priority for the Cypriot educational system to develop the Greek ethos and culture (Persianis, 1978; 1996). Even, after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the main aim of Cypriot education was to develop 'free thinking and democratic individuals' (MOEC, 2003), yet the term of democratization still did not refer to respecting the right of students with special needs to good quality education in mainstream schools.

In the 21st century the aims of the Cypriot educational system have changed to meet European standards (Statistics of MOEC, 2003). Education is aiming to develop respect for human rights and provide equal opportunities to all human beings regardless of their race, gender, age or ability (Tsiakkuros and Pashiardis, 2002). In this sense, a debate has begun about the changes that should be implemented in the Cypriot educational system (Ekipedeftiki Metarithmisi, 2009). In 2012, for the first year, an educational programme of consolidation (*'Empedosis'* in Greek) was piloted. Extra time was allocated to the curriculum of primary schools, to enable teachers to work on the 'learning difficulties' of the students in the mainstream classroom (MOEC, 2012a). Similarly at the gymnasium, the teaching hours of lessons were extended. Instead of forty teaching periods of forty minutes, each subject is provided for, by twenty teaching periods of eighty minutes (MOEC, 2012b). Thus, it aimed to promote critical thinking and to help students become independent learners by providing time for teachers to meet the learning difficulties of students in the mainstream classroom (ibid).

1.6. AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF 'SPECIAL NEEDS' EDUCATION IN CYPRUS

The history of 'special needs' education in Cyprus consists of four periods: **a)** the gradual establishment of special schools, **b)** unified legislation, **c)** integration and **d)** inclusion (Phtiaka, 2003). 'Special needs' education in Cyprus has been influenced by the British and Greek educational systems (Liasidou, 2008), although by comparison with these systems and those of other developed countries, 'special needs' education developed slowly and belatedly in Cyprus (Wearmouth, 2001).

The first stage of special needs education in Cyprus (1929-1979), started with the establishment of a 'special' school for children with 'visual impairments' (Phtiaka, 2003).

Before this year, there was no legal framework in Cyprus for 'special needs' education (Gavrielidou, 2011). 'Special schools' were gradually established all over the country, but were funded by family donations (Phtiaka, 2000). During the second stage (1979-1988), all the established schools followed the same policies and practices (Phtiaka, 2000). It was the first time that the state had decided to put 'special education' under central government control (Symeonidou, 2009). The students' needs were assessed by medical and quasi-medical experiments in order to place them in a suitable educational setting (Cyprus, 1979). According to this unified legislation, children were defined as being 'maladjusted', 'severely retarded', 'bodily impaired' and 'educationally retarded' (Phtiaka, 1997; Phtiaka, 2000; Symeonidou, 2009). The third stage (1988-1999), was defined by the declaration of the MOEC in 1988. Although this recognized the right of children with 'special needs' to be integrated into mainstream schools (Phtiaka, 2000), integrative practices were adopted informally (Symeonidou, 1998; Koupanou and Phtiaka, 2004). A further step towards integration was the report of Constandinides (1992). This recognized for the first time the human rights of children with 'special needs' to have an appropriate education and the rights of parents to be informed about the 'needs' of their children (Symeonidou, 1998).

The conflict between the new philosophy of the MOEC in 1995 and the previous legislation of 1979, as to whether or not students with 'special needs' should be educated in mainstream schools, came to an end with the legislation of 1999 (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 1999). The integration of children with 'special needs' into mainstream schools emerged following integration movements across Europe (Visser and Upton, 1993) and was forced through by parents, who wanted their children to have the same educational opportunities as in many other contexts (Phtiaka, 2000). Although the policy of integration was the backbone of inclusion, it also had an immense influence on the well embedded belief that students with 'special needs' or 'disabilities' were considered to be 'undesirable' in mainstream schools in Cyprus and the U.K.; their abilities seemed to be 'lower' than those expected by market-oriented societies (Tomlinson, 2001). Hence, this has also negatively affected the way inclusive education has been internalized and promoted in the educational system of Cyprus.

The social, political and economic factors that influence the development of 'special needs' education in Cyprus

The origins of 'special education' in Cyprus have been divided into four major periods: **a)** the Turkish occupation (1571-1878), **b)** the British administration (1878-1959), **c)** the

period of independence until the Turkish invasion (1960-1974) and **d)** the period after the Turkish invasion (1974) until today (2020).

The attitude of society towards people considered as having 'special needs' is shaped by dominant beliefs and circumstances. According to the beliefs of Ancient Greek society, people who are today described as having 'special needs' were seen as a burden on society, if they could not fight for their country physically (Persianis, 1996). Referring also to the well-known Greek philosophy that 'a healthy mind inhabits a healthy body', it is obvious how easily the 'unhealthy' or 'disabled' body was connected to an 'unhealthy' or disabled mind in Ancient Greek society (Phtiaka, 2003). In the case of Cyprus, the dominant beliefs of Christianity have influenced the way people understand and behave towards those with 'special needs'. According to the principles of Christianity, Cypriots are used to loving and caring for people 'with special needs' in the context of philanthropy and compassion (Phtiaka, 2003). Philanthropy and compassion formed the cultural values on which 'special needs' education, policies and practices were structured in the context of Cyprus.

Greek Cypriot mainstream schools aimed to cultivate a strong Greek-Orthodox ethos for their students, as a result of the enemies, who sought to de-Hellenize the island in order to ensure their dominance (Gavrielidou, 2011). This was one of the political barriers to the development of inclusive policies and practices in mainstream Cypriot schools. The Greek-Cypriot ethnic identity was threatened during the first three periods. During the period of Turkish occupation, the Greek-Orthodox Church had the responsibility for keeping alive the Greek ethos, culture and religious identity on the island (Georgiades, 1995). During the second period (1878-1959), the British administration aimed to rule the island through the educational system (Gavrielidou, 2011). It built schools and hospitals and formed school committees made up of Greek-Cypriots and a British supervisor (Kyriakou, 1996). During the third period (1960-1974), with respect to ethnicity, the emphasis of the educational system continued to be on the classics and humanities (Persianis, 1996). Cypriot schools started to follow the same aims of the mainstream curriculum and the same books as those used by Greek schools (Persianis, 1992). Central to the synthesis of the ethnic identity of Greek-Cypriots was the development of a uniform curriculum that appraised the categorisation of students according to their abilities (ibid). In this sense, an educational system with no acceptance of 'difference' was created (Phtiaka, 2007), which is still endemic today (Kofou, 2004; Phtiaka, 2010).

The involvement of the Greek –Orthodox Church in the educational system resulted in the needs of people categorized as having special needs being seen in terms of philanthropy and compassion. During the period of the Turkish occupation of Cyprus, the Greek-Orthodox Church was responsible for the funding and administration of Cypriot education (Maratheftis, 1992; Spyridakis, 1974). The students, who would today be considered as having ‘special needs’, were believed to be ‘uneducable’ and thus their education aimed only at their treatment and care (Georgiades, 1995). Therefore, the Church sowed the seeds of a charitable and medical model that directed the development of the future ‘special needs’ education system. These students were regarded with pity and their ‘differences’ with tolerance (Georgiades, 1995). They were perceived to be in need of ‘special’ support provided to them in particularly by the medical experts (Barton and Armstrong, 1999).

The medicalization of people now categorized as having ‘special needs’ informed and influenced to a substantial extent the development of segregated ‘special needs’ educational provisions within mainstream schools. During the British administration in the island, the provision of care for people ‘with special needs’ was provided in hospitals and separate places rather than in mainstream schools (Georgiades, 1995). The aims of ‘special schools’ were therapeutic rather than educative for the children considered as having ‘special needs’ (Gavrielidou, 2011). The constitutive element of this segregated education for children with ‘special needs’ was the powerful role of professionals who diagnosed what was needed for the students ‘needs’ (Phtiaka,2000). Therefore, this kind of support resulted in sympathy towards, but prejudice against, these people (Symeonidou, 2002), who were in need of medical care and treatments (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). It also enforced the idea of ‘others’ (Gavrielidou,2011), for the people categorized as having ‘special needs’, because their needs were internalised as being different from the ‘norm’ (Phtiaka, 2000). In this sense, the students labelled as having ‘special needs’ tended to be excluded from mainstream schools, since the developed labels highlighted the ‘difference’ of the students from what was considered to be ‘normal’ (Gavrielidou, 2011).

It is also striking that ‘special needs’, segregated education continued to flourish under the idea of charity, care and medicalization (Symeonidou, 2009), even in the period after the Turkish invasion. First, it was difficult for the government to afford to reconstruct schools, including ‘special’ schools, which were occupied by the Turkish troops, or to build new ones (Kyriakou,1996; Anastasiades, 1979). Second, the gradual move towards integrative and inclusive education in Cyprus should also be considered under the charity approach

(Phtiaka, 2007), because of the unwillingness of the government to implement costly policies for 'special needs' education (Symeonidou, 2009). Financially restricted provisions were suggested for children with 'special needs' in mainstream schools (Symeonidou, 2002; Symeonidou and Phtiaka, 2002). The reason for this was that inclusive education had been developed as a lower cost system in which students were educated in mainstream schools rather than in multiple 'special' schools (Barton and Tomlinson, 1984; Ainscow et al., 2019). Additionally, the state tended to organise charity events in order to share the budget needed for the provisioning and support of people categorized as having 'special needs'. The '*Radiomarathonios*' is a well-known, philanthropic fiesta, that is still organized with the support of the MOEC every year in Cyprus (Phtiaka, 1999a). Arguably, charity should be considered as a vested factor that influences the roots and development of 'special needs' education in Cyprus, since the idea of charity and care for people with 'special needs' was gradually developed in the consciousness of people (Oliver, 1990a).

To conclude, inclusive or 'special needs' political frameworks have been imported and assimilated within the education system of Cyprus, which has intensified with the internalizations of economic, political and cultural structures among the member states of the E.U.(Liasidou, 2008). However, the imported policies have failed to adjust to the social, economic, political and cultural characteristics of the Cypriot education system (Gavrielidou, 2011), which are fundamental requirements for policy development (Barnes and Mercer, 2005; Armstrong et al., 2010). The 'inclusive' policy was implemented in mainstream schools in Cyprus, suggesting less costly funding and supplies (Angelides and Mihailidou, 2007). Thus, the Cypriot educational system has remained resolutely fixed on traditional teaching methods and classroom practices that do not support the inclusion of students with 'learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom (Kofou, 2004; Liasidou, 2008; Angelides and Michailidou, 2007; Gavrielidou, 2011).

Towards inclusion: “the (partial) withdrawal support policy”

According to the 1999 law, children with 'special needs' have been included in their neighbourhood school, along with their peers (Phtiaka, 2000). The MOEC has developed a multi-layered placement to meet the children's individual 'needs' in the mainstream classroom and to help them achieve the aims of the mainstream curriculum (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 2001).

Firstly children 'with mild learning difficulties' are withdrawn from the mainstream classroom three to five times per week in order to receive support in the resource room. They are supported by their classroom teacher in groups of four according to their 'learning difficulties' and their age year group. The children are also helped in core classes such as Modern Greek, history, mathematics and physics, in which they are examined (MOEC, 2013). Teaching in the resource room is based on the core curriculum but it is differentiated according to the learning ability of each child (ibid). Teaching in the resource room also emphasizes supporting the students to pass successfully the tests and the final exams (ibid). This withdrawal support resembles the pattern of remedial interventions such as the support in special classes, direct instructions in helping the labelled students to develop basic academic skills and provision of a restricted curriculum, used in UK mainstream schools for a decade or so in the 1980s-1990s (Dyson et al., 1994). The terminology of '(partial) withdrawal support' is the literal translation of the Greek term that has been used in the official legislation informing the MOEC policy in 1999 (MOEC, 1999). This contradictory tendency of policy terminology is indicative of the attempt to resolve dilemmas created by the need to educate students 'with special needs' in mainstream classrooms.

Secondly, children with 'sensory learning difficulties' are withdrawn from the mainstream classroom three to five times per week in order to receive individualized support. In secondary schools, the children are mainly supported by their classroom teachers, whereas in primary schools they are supported by a 'special needs' educator. The children receive support in the core classes in which they are examined at the end of the year. Teachers differentiate the teaching material of the classroom, but further facilities are provided to children in response to their impairment. The majority of children mentioned in this category at mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus are those with visual or auditory impairment. To these children, 'special' resources and extra time are also provided during tests and exams (MOEC, 2013), and teaching assistants are hired in order to ensure and facilitate their participation in mainstream school and classroom activities (MOEC, 2014).

Thirdly, children 'with profound learning difficulties' attend 'special units' within mainstream schools. These students are supported socially and psychologically and are helped to develop practical skills for their daily life (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 1999). The teaching programme in 'special units' focuses on additional language and numeric tuition (European-Agency, 2007). The children are evaluated and examined in the same way as their classmates, however, with regards to the aims of their personal programme

(Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 1999). The children attend the program of the mainstream classroom only for optional courses such as music, gymnastics, art, and ICT (MOEC, 2013). After the enactment of the 1999 law, it was identified that most students with profound learning difficulties have chosen to be educated in special units rather than in special schools (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2012). According to the new law reform regulations, children with profound learning difficulties should mainly receive support in 'special units' within the mainstream schools (Koursoumba, 2019). The special schools would become 'Educational Support Centres', which would aim to facilitate the inclusion of their students in mainstream schools, by providing additional specialized (medical) support (ibid; European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2019).

In 2017, the MOEC initiated a debate about the reform of the 1999 law. In the proposal of the reform of this law, a multi-layered placement has been suggested that aims to meet the 'needs' of students with 'additional support needs' in mainstream classrooms and schools (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2019). Additional to the existing layered support, there is proposed as first **a)** the general support which is provided directly to every student, whenever there is a need for support as part of their daily school life and learning process. There is no need for a formal decision or diagnosis for a special needs statement. This kind of support refers to targeted intervention, co-teaching or to differentiated teaching and learning methods and educational materials (ibid); **b)** the support provided to students with mild learning difficulties is now called 'enhanced support' **c)** the support for the students with sensory and profound learning difficulties is now called 'specialized support'. Particularly, 'enhanced support' is provided upon the evaluation of the in-school coordination group and the regional committee, whereas 'specialized support' is provided by the evaluation and decision of the Assessment and Support Team of special needs professionals (ibid; MOEC, 2014). The support of students with mild learning difficulties refers to similar methods such as general support, but with increased intensity and multiple and/ or concurrent interventions, provided on the basis of a defined child education programme (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2019). Support for students with sensory and profound learning difficulties is still provided in special units and on the basis of a defined child education programme (ibid).

The current practices in mainstream schools in Cyprus are still defined by the regulations of the 1999 law. In line with current practices, if a child is deemed likely to have learning difficulties, either the parents or any member of the teaching staff have to inform the

Provisional Commission without delay (MOEC, 2008). Within two weeks, the commission has to decide about the composition of the primary multi-disciplinary team which will evaluate the child. The multi-disciplinary team consists of a 'special needs' educator, a psychologist, a pathologist and a social worker. Each member of the team evaluates the child separately, considering the history and the portfolio of the child provided to them by the committee. When the assessment process is completed, the committee informs the parents about its reasoned decision and what is required in order to meet the 'learning difficulties' of the child. The parents have the right to agree or disagree with the committee's decision (MOEC, 2013). The progress of the children is continuously recorded by the teachers and the school submits their annual progress to the regional committee at the end of each academic year. Before the transition of the children from primary to secondary school, the Provisional Commission discusses with the parents the to-date progress of their children and whether it is required to continue receiving support for their learning difficulties in the secondary school. The support continues to be provided to the children at secondary school if they wish and their parents agree (ibid).

Children are examined and evaluated in the same way as their peers, but more facilities are provided for them during the test and exams. Children are allowed to have more time during the examinations and breaks if it is required according to their 'special needs' statements. Tests are differentiated in order to be accessible for them (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 2001). The questions of the final exam papers are orally clarified and explained to them. For this reason, these students are examined in a separate class than that of their classmates. There are two supervisors in their class. The one is merely observing the process and the other is their teacher who clarifies and explains what is difficult for them. In the examination of Modern Greek language, in which the children are also examined and evaluated for their spelling, grammar and syntax, these mistakes are ignored during the marking of their paper (MOEC, 2013).

A timetable for the support in the resource room and the groups is organized at the beginning of each term and communicated to the regional committee of 'special needs' education of the MOEC. Any change regarding the timetable for support should always be communicated to the regional committee. The students should not withdraw from the core subjects that are examined. The students are usually withdrawn from the class of French, Ancient Greek and Ancient Greek literature (MOEC, 2013). Very rarely can the children be withdrawn from other optional classes if there are problems in the distribution of the teaching periods of the classroom teacher. However, it is required to be withdrawn from a

lesson which the 'special needs' advisory team of the school suggested and with which the parents agreed.

There is a strict policy for not losing the teaching time in the resource room, unless it is for joining school activities. If the lesson is lost for any other reason, the teacher has to compensate for the teaching hour. When the students attend the resource room for a replacement lesson, they have to be informed about the lesson, the learning material and the homework they missed in the mainstream classroom. When a class in the resource room is postponed, the student has to stay in the mainstream classroom, attending the lesson that he/she is usually withdrawn from but he/she attends this class as a 'listener', without being assessed (ibid). There is also a strict policy regarding the students' absence from the resource room classes. If a student has many absences, or he/she continually denies attending the resource room support, the principal informs the parents and the 'special needs' advisor of the school (MOEC, 2013).

There is an assistant head who is the coordinator of withdrawal support. The teachers working in withdrawal support should be the same as those who would teach the students in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. Both the coordinators and the teachers should be sensitive to the 'needs' of the students, be interested in the field of 'special needs'/ inclusive education and be trained and experienced in teaching students with 'mild learning difficulties' (MOEC, 2013). Particularly, the coordinator is responsible for the organization and evaluation of the withdrawal support programme. The coordinator observes and advises the teachers about their teaching and learning practices which are applied through the withdrawal support policy (ibid). On the other hand, teachers in the resource room are responsible for the differentiated material allocated to students (ibid). They are also responsible for recording the progress of the students during the terms and at the end of the year, keeping students' portfolios and being informed by, and collaborating with, the educational psychologist and special needs' advisory committee of the school (ibid). After the mainstream curriculum reform in 2010, all teachers are encouraged and expected to personalize their teaching activities according to the level and readiness of each student and to use different models of student evaluation in both the mainstream classroom and the resource room (Analytika Programmata gia ta Dimosia Sxolia tis Kipriakis Dimokratias, 2010; MOEC, 2013).

1.7. THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

In this first chapter I explained the rationale and aims of the thesis, presented the research questions, and introduced and explained the principal terminology. Finally, I described the Cypriot educational system, as well as the history and policies of special needs and inclusive education in Cyprus.

The second chapter, the literature review, discusses the notions of inclusion, impairment and disability, as well as the labels of special needs education in relation to the teaching and learning practices which have developed in mainstream classrooms to promote inclusion. It also explores the literature on the perceptions of mainstream teachers and students with learning difficulties regarding these practices. It highlights the importance of listening to teachers' and students' 'voice' regarding the reform of inclusive educational policies and it presents research evidence from Cyprus, where this case study took place.

The third chapter, the methodology, discusses the research approach and design of this study, explaining how the schools were selected, the sample chosen, and the data collection and analysis carried out. Finally, it discusses the ethical considerations and the limitations of this research approach.

The fourth chapter, the data presentation, presents the findings which are organised under four themes: **1)** the social attitudes and conceptions **2)** the impact of withdrawal support **3)** the teaching and learning process in the mainstream classroom and the resource room and **4)** the students' engagement in learning.

The fifth chapter, the data analysis and discussion, presents the analysis of the findings, which are discussed under the four themes introduced in chapter 4: Data presentation. The analysis of these themes is based on a range of theoretical resources, including psychological and 'disability' theories, as well as pedagogical models of teaching and learning.

The final and concluding chapter considers the original contributions of this study to knowledge. It appraises the value of the multidisciplinary theoretical framework used to interpret the results of the study. It raises the implications for policy and practice, sets out directions for future research in this context and the field of inclusive education and lastly presents the limitations of this study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. OVERVIEW

In this chapter, notions of inclusion, impairments and disability as well as the labels of special needs education are discussed in relation to teaching and learning practices which have developed in mainstream classrooms to promote inclusion. Research evidence from Cyprus, where this case study took place, is also presented. All these aspects can inform the perceptions of mainstream teachers and students with learning difficulties about inclusion, and can influence the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools.

First, I explore how the notion of inclusion is perceived in society and in formal education, and how it is interpreted in policy and practice. How the meanings, aims and values of inclusion are understood and applied vary according to different contexts and geographical places. Second, I explore concepts of disability, special needs and impairment, to examine not only how these concepts are elaborated in medical and social models of disabilities, but also how these models inform conceptualizations of inclusion. Third, I discuss how the labels which categorized students as having learning difficulties inform teachers' understanding of their students' learning needs and the practices used in mainstream classrooms to promote inclusive education. The labels used to describe the learning difficulties of students, often serve to encourage a perception of difference between these students and their peers. As a result, this language of difference which is commonly used in mainstream schools has a tendency to encourage teacher attitudes and practices that promote expectations of students with learning difficulties that are lower or more modest than the abilities of the students themselves. International examples and evidence from Cypriot culture and policies are presented which show how this group of students are labelled and otherwise referred to in their schools and the education system of Cyprus. Examples illustrate that while the language of difference may be used to show empathy and compassion towards students with learning difficulties, it can also form similarly low expectations amongst teachers towards this group of students.

Fourth, I looked critically at debates surrounding pedagogical practices which are specially designed for students with learning difficulties and contrast these with other pedagogical practices designed to encourage inclusive education in mainstream classrooms. I explore

how these pedagogical considerations inform teachers' understanding of inclusion and the aims and the design of their teaching and learning practices. I present examples of practices which support passive participation in mainstream classrooms and those aimed at enhancing the active participation of these students in the learning process. Fifth, I consider evidence of the perceptions of students with learning difficulties, and of their teachers regarding teaching and learning practices in mainstream schools. I also present evidence regarding the necessity of listening to students' and teachers' voice regarding the reform and implementation of inclusive teaching and learning practices. Students' and teachers' perceptions provide invaluable evidence of the development of inclusive education in mainstreaming, since there is not only one set of practices designed to promote inclusion. The chapter ends with a summary of research evidence from Cyprus showing how inclusion has been conceptualized and employed in mainstream schooling. I sum up important findings of previous research in Cyprus and in so doing highlight considerable gaps within this field of local literature, which this thesis begins to address.

Literature review methodology

There are numerous literature reviews on inclusive education, and associated teaching and learning practices. This thesis provided only a limited space in discussing issues related with the debate concerning the philosophy and the rhetoric of promoting inclusive education in the mainstream schools. It may not reflect the breadth of available evidence on this subject area, but the selected literature evidence helps in developing a quality review that supports the conceptual and contextual framework of this study. The broad body of selected evidence was searched and categorized under the following headings: *inclusive education, special needs, disabilities, teaching and learning practices for special needs and inclusive education, labels of special needs, differentiation, classroom adaptations, teachers and students' attitudes and perceptions regarding inclusion and inclusive education.*

In line with the purpose of this study, I report on available evidence put forward for the understandings of 'normality'/ 'normalisation' and of disability and how these have informed the design and the implementation of inclusive educational policies, and the support and services of students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools .I used evidence highlighting both the positive and negative contributions regarding the rights and needs of individuals labelled as having impairments and disabilities in society and learning difficulties in the field of education. Particularly, I explore evidence which is more related to

the education of students with mild learning difficulties, since the majority of students diagnosed as having learning difficulties in mainstream schools in Cyprus, are categorized as having mild learning difficulties.

Additionally, I report on recent and important empirical evidence which refers to the teachers' and students' understanding of inclusive education and their attitudes towards the inclusive educational approaches in the mainstream classroom. I selected and presented examples of inclusive educational practices from countries drawing on a long standing and broad research on inclusive education and which were found to have similarities with the case of Cyprus. I also used the most relevant available empirical evidence related to the local context of inclusive education in Cyprus, from 2001, the year of its implementation, up to the present day.

2.2. 'INCLUSION': A BRIEF CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW

The meaning of inclusion varies according to the culture and society in which it is promoted. Inclusion has also several dimensions. The idea of inclusion has been related to the need of individuals to participate in society and to be educated and employable (Clough and Corbett, 2000). Alternatively, the idea of inclusion can be related to the rights of people who suffer discrimination, whether on the grounds of age, gender, ability, motivation, social background, sex orientation, colour or economic status (Wilson, 2000). A third view of inclusion relates to the financial resources available to individuals and the societal levels that determine what is required to participate in social, educational and political activity. In each of these three cases, the group of people either included or excluded is a product of how people consider the rights and needs of others; how countries recognize rights of inclusion and promote these rights in their social, health and education systems (Clough and Corbett, 2000) and also of what a society deems as is necessary for individuals to be able to engage in valued forms of living (Wilson, 2000). This research focuses on how inclusion has been conceptualized and treated in education and in particular, how this applies to students categorized as having mild learning difficulties.

The principles and practices of inclusion are often justified in terms of human rights and their role in promoting social justice (Barton, 2012). Groups of individuals both formerly and currently are discriminated against because of their perceived strange appearance, or

behaviour (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). Slee (2008) adds that such groups of people were stigmatized as having special needs and socially disadvantaged since they were isolated from everyday life. Therefore, for these socially excluded groups of people, the idea of inclusion meant the promotion of equity, fairness, compassion, participation and respect for their human rights (Clough and Corbett, 2000). Human rights refer to recognition of the right to welfare of all citizens in society (ibid). Justice refers among other factors to free access in areas such as mainstream schools and to the equitable distribution of socially valued resources and the opportunities to use them (Armstrong et al., 2010).

A wider international and particularly European interest in promoting inclusive education arose in the early 1990s (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). The idea was to teach people how to live with one another in a wider non-discriminatory society (Barton, 2003), to defend the right of all children to gain access to the system of provision (Barton and Oliver, 1997) and to basic education in mainstream schools (Allan, 2003). The use of special schools for children categorized as having special needs was found to discriminate against the abilities of the target group of children and to be a discriminatory use of funds (Slee, 2011). The inclusive education commitment was initiated in the World Declaration of Education for all (UNESCO, 1990) and the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). These enactments, were aimed at promoting equity, participation, community, compassion and respect for 'diversity' (Ainscow et al., 2006), as well as ensuring a good quality of education and care for children with 'special needs' in their local mainstream schools (Booth and Ainscow, 2004; Carrington and Elkins, 2005). This vision of a worldwide movement for education for all was also reiterated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), which aimed to promote and guarantee the rights of people with disabilities to full participation in an inclusive educational system at all levels and lifelong learning. Similar to the UNESCO international Conference in 2008 (Ainscow et al., 2019), to the International Forum co-organised by UNESCO and the Ministry of Education of Columbia in September 2019 (Ainscow, 2020) and in the agenda of the Education 2030 Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2015a) there is still a need for a universal and collective commitment of all governments, stakeholders and schools to ensure that: "Every learner matters equally and deserves a good quality of education". For the same reason, in the U.K. the Children and Families Act 2014 (Norwich, 2019) and the SEN Code of Practice (DFE, 2011) highlighted the need to plan for provisions and adaptations to promote inclusive education in mainstream schools.

Inclusive education in mainstream schools was also supported on the basis of its perceived educational and socio-emotional benefits for all students (Ruijs and Peetsma, 2009). First, inclusive schools form the basis for a just and non-discriminatory society (Ainscow et al., 2019). All students in inclusive settings can benefit by improving their self-esteem and developing friendships and their understanding of, and empathy for, difference (Jones, 2007; Naraian, 2008). Second, all children can benefit academically when mainstream schools plan teaching practices that respond to their students' 'individual differences' (Ainscow et al., 2019). Students with diverse learning needs can benefit from adaptive practices in terms of communication, social skills and behaviour in inclusive settings (Fisher et al., 2002; Loreman et al., 2010). The peers of the target students also benefit academically when helping them through peer tutoring in mainstream classrooms (Loreman et al., 2010). The teachers could also benefit from working in an inclusive system, by developing appropriate skills and practices (ibid). Third, the target students were directed towards being educated in mainstream classrooms since it reduced the cost of maintaining both mainstream and special needs schools (Boyle and Topping, 2012; Ainscow et al., 2019). Overall, it seemed credible for these students to be educated in mainstream schools despite research evidence which suggested that students benefitted only socially (Farrell, 2000), or when special and mainstream placements appeared to be equally academically effective for students with or without learning difficulties (Boyle and Topping, 2012).

The problem with the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools, across countries such as the U.K., Greece and Cyprus is that it is promoted in the form of programmatic regularities (Strogilos and Avramidis, 2017), rather than in the form of redistribution of students' access to, and participation in, quality opportunities to learn and in terms of recognizing and valuing all students' differences in teaching and learning approaches (Waitoller and Artiles, 2013, p.322). Under this spectrum, the enactment of inclusive education seems to range from the mere placement of students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools to the implementation of mainstream classroom teaching and learning adaptations. Initially, inclusive education was meant to be the integration of labelled students into the physical spaces of mainstream schools (Waitoller and Subini, 2017; Strogilos and Avramidis, 2017). Inclusive learning environments tended to be interpreted as giving access to students with 'additional' educational needs compared to their peers (Finkelstein et al., 2019), within the existing school facilities (Zelaieta, 2004; Smyth et al., 2014). Hence, schools mainly focused on including them socially (Barton and Oliver, 1997; Thomas and Glenny, 2002 ; Zelaieta, 2004), rather than on increasing the

students' participation within the culture and curriculum of the mainstream school (Barton and Oliver, 1997; Mara and Mara, 2012 ; Strogilos and Avramidis, 2017). This was due to several reasons which suggested that mainstream schools were unprepared to meet the children's needs (Boyle and Topping, 2012). The focus of inclusive education shifted on the academic standards and how to increase the students' academic outcomes (McLaughlin and Jordan, 2005), whilst it was less clear whether the academic outcomes of students were better in mainstream or in special schools (Farrell, 2000). Less money was spent on teacher training for students with learning difficulties who were characterized as 'troublesome' and thought to detract from teaching towards high levels of achievement among mainstream students (Barton and Tomlinson, 1984). At the same time, mainstream teachers seemed unwilling to change their practices to more inclusive ones, meeting the needs of those students, whose performance was considered to be weak (Ainscow et al., 2012). Teaching and learning in special schools was perceived to be better designed to address the learners' medically diagnosed shortcomings (Makoelle, 2014) and thus teachers were led to believe that the learning difficulties of these students were better addressed in special schools (Clough and Corbett, 2000).

It is apparent that promoting inclusive education on the basis of social justice, participation and equal outcomes for students with learning difficulties, can not be easily achieved. The teaching methods used in mainstream classrooms are easily affected by ignorance of, and prejudice against, special needs education (McDonnell, 1992) and thus the implementation of inclusive education internationally is strongly related to cultural interpretations of disability (Stangvik, 2010). These interpretations negatively emphasize individual students' differences and especially their lower academic abilities (Arnesen et al., 2007). Although there was a broad agreement at the international level about what an inclusive learning environment should look like, it was difficult for this to be achieved in national and local school communities (Smyth et al., 2014). The enactment of inclusive educational practices appeared to be restricted by teachers' assumption that it is not always possible to meet the learning needs both of those considered to have 'learning difficulties' and of the majority of students in mainstream classrooms (Campbell, 2002). Under this spectrum, the idea of inclusion was originally achieved by transferring the students with 'special' learning difficulties to, and from, special and mainstream schools for support (Ainscow, 2000; Zelaieta, 2004), or by having them attend special classes within mainstream schools (Armstrong et al., 2000). Consequently, these students tended to be included by only being physically present in mainstream classrooms (Zelaieta, 2004; Göransson and Nilholm, 2014).

As the inclusive education debate moved on from discussions about the special location to discussions about the mainstream classroom adaptations (Waitoler and Subini, 2017), teachers tended to adopt practices which were used in special schools, in order to support these students' learning difficulties (Armstrong et al., 2000). However, in that way the teachers continued to assimilate these students into a normative way of schooling (Slee,2005) and to place the aims of inclusive educational practices within a special educational needs discourse (Göransson and Nilholm, 2014). For example, in France, the students were integrated either on an individual basis into mainstream classrooms with professionally trained teachers, or supported as a separate group of students in special classes in mainstream schools (Armstrong et al., 2000). Similarly, in other countries such as Sweden, Greece and Cyprus these students were filtered out and supported in small special needs groups which ran parallel to the teaching and learning in the mainstream classrooms (Pearson,2000; Vlachou, 2006). In the same pattern, in the Republic of Ireland, teachers allocated these students to homogeneous groups in terms of abilities (Norwich and Kelly, 2005) and students' personal deficits or impairments (McDonnell, 1992).

Moreover, reflecting on the beliefs and values according to which inclusive education has been developed in mainstream schools, it helps to understand how the notion of inclusion is conceptualized in practice (Ainscow, 2004). The inclusive values of equity and participation defined in the United Nation's global agenda (UNESCO, 1990;1994) were set out in national policies in order to be contextualized in each country (Booth, 1995). However, the practices suggested by the inclusive educational policies were more affected by the dominant politico-economic factors of the global market economy (Ball, 1994) and the local demands of each society (Armstrong et al., 2000), rather than by these inclusive values. For economic reasons, the notion of inclusion is conceptualized in terms of space and place in mainstream schools (Hemmingway and Armstrong, 2014). The notion of space refers to the social activities happening within the particular settings in which individuals or groups are placed, whilst pedagogical places tended to be developed within spaces designed specifically for 'able' or 'disabled' students (D'Alessio, 2014,p.44). Therefore, the needs of the labelled students have been supported in 'special' classes within mainstream schools by special needs professionals, who worked in mainstream schools (Slee, 2011),since these mechanics seemed to cost less, by fixing quickly the perceived 'deficit' of students (Slee, 1996; Corbett and Slee, 2000).

The dualities of 'normal' and 'special' operate as a major barrier and constraint regarding inclusion, since people are taught to act negatively towards imagined 'special' differences from norms. This contributes to why interpretations of the idea of inclusion lack clarity and lead to confusion regarding the aims of inclusive education (Campbell, 2002; Armstrong et al., 2010; Krischler et al., 2019). Although, 'normal', is distinctively defined by the norms and the culture of each society (ibid), the inclusive policies across countries resulted in being developed as part of the debates as to whether learning difficulties were the result of students' deficit or the educational context and type and quality of teaching received (Boyle and Topping, 2012). This is how the right of students with learning difficulties to participate in inclusive learning environments has often been narrowly interpreted to mean having access to existing facilities, rather than to school environments that aim to meet the learning and social needs of all the students (Smyth et al., 2014). This is also the reason why it appeared to be difficult for inclusive educational policies to persuade teachers to develop inclusive teaching practices, that would have facilitated and increased the participation of students with learning difficulties in the mainstream curriculum (Booth and Ainscow, 2002). Consequently, teachers did not differentiate their teaching and learning practices, because these policies failed, also persuading them that inclusive teaching practices can be beneficial for all learners in mainstream classrooms (Boyle and Topping, 2012). Additionally, inclusive policies largely failed to acknowledge these students' rights to be heard and actively involved in the decision and policy making process (McDonnell, 1992; Campbell, 2002; Ainscow and Messiou, 2018; Messiou and Ainscow, 2020).

To sum up, there was rhetorically implemented the persistent thesis of inclusive education that no child is uneducable and that every child deserves good quality education (Armstrong and Barton, 2000), even if the teachers have to deal with various 'dilemmas' concerning the notions of 'normal' and 'special' when they are planning inclusive teaching and learning practices. The conceptions of 'normal' underpin dilemmas whether the teachers in mainstream schools should use common teaching styles and a general curriculum or follow a differentiated curriculum and adopt particularly 'different', but similar practices to those used at special schools (Armstrong, 2003; Norwich, 2008). Similarly, teachers tend to wonder how curriculum requirements can be fulfilled, at the same time as meeting the individual needs of all students (Minow, 1990). The conceptions of 'special' suggest dilemmas whether the 'needs' of students with learning difficulties should be met in common learning opportunities in mainstream classrooms (Thomas and Loxley, 2001), or if these students should be supported individually or in groups outside mainstream classrooms (Norwich, 2008) and to what extent their participation in mainstream

classrooms may affect the learning of their peers (ibid). Another important dilemma concerns whether parents, educational practitioners and professionals or the target students themselves should choose what is to be learned (ibid).

Overall, teachers and professionals, within educational systems where inclusive education is implemented, have to deal with the dilemma of how they should treat 'others' and specifically those students perceived as having learning difficulties and avoid excluding them from mainstream classrooms (Minow, 1990). Aimed at meeting the 'special' and 'additional' learning needs of a particular group of students against those of the majority of students in mainstream classrooms, this creates possible tensions between equality vs equity, choice vs equity and participation vs stigmatization (Norwich, 2019). For example, the common curriculum, that aims to promote equal provision and opportunities, is often unfair to 'vulnerable' groups of students since it does not meet their needs. Alternatively, a differentiated curriculum that follows student interests can be unfair if it is insufficiently challenging and lacks breadth and balance (Judge, 1981). In line with this, the general examinations seem to be unfair to the students with learning difficulties, if it is difficult to succeed in them, though differentiating the exams in favour of these students can be seen as unfair to the rest of mainstream students (ibid). Therefore, it is insufficient merely to place students with learning difficulties or disabilities in the same classrooms as their 'non-disabled' peers, in mainstream schools (Barton and Oliver, 1997). This is especially true if there would always be possible dilemmas regarding the design and implementation of inclusive teaching and learning practices, for a mixed-ability group of students in mainstream classrooms.

Fundamental to the understanding of inclusive education, is the language used when referring to the target group of students (Armstrong and Moore, 2004). A language of difference which consists of labels that emphasize 'different' and 'special' negatively (Corbett, 1996), were found to be used in school policies and practices regarding inclusion (Armstrong and Moore, 2004). Such terms when used in relation to students considered to be 'different', 'vulnerable or at risk' were found to affect the everyday interactions of teachers and students in mainstream schools (ibid). How the language of 'difference' has been formed and how it affects the development of inclusive education in mainstream schools is discussed in the following sections.

2.3. DEFINING DISABILITIES AND IMPAIRMENTS

The way in which the different characteristics of individuals are conceptualized and understood, defines the particular structures and practices of any society (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). Labels are used to present these different features as concerns (ibid). They are produced by society, teachers, professionals, schools and doctors, in the process of identifying the support and resources required to facilitate access by a child or adult to a mainstream school or social service (Macintyre, 2008). This labelling tends to describe the perceived needs of a child or adult, in term of their impairments or disabilities (Slee, 1996). Impairments are defined according to the pathological and physical deficiencies of individuals (ibid), while 'disabilities' is a socially and contextually constructed term that tends to define the inability of an individual to do what the 'normal' can do in a specific context (Barton and Armstrong, 1999).

The World Health Organization (1980) published the international classification of impairments, disabilities and handicaps (ICIDH). According to the ICIDH, impairment is defined as any temporary or permanent psychological, physiological or anatomical structure of function that is considered to be an abnormality. From this perspective disability is defined as any restriction or inability of a child or an adult to do something in a manner considered as 'normal'. Handicap is defined as the disadvantageous result, role or participation for a child or individual due to their impairment or disability in a specific environment. Thus, an individual can be disadvantaged in a social and cultural environment in which impairment resulted in being perceived as disability, because the individual is expected to participate in an activity within the range of perceived 'normality'. A competing definition of impairment and disability was published in 1981 according to what was initially proposed by the Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS). According to UPIAS (1976, pp.3-4) 'Impairment is the functional limitation within an individual caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment. Disability is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in 'normal' life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers'. The UPIAS' notion of 'disability' is parallel to the ICIDH idea of handicap and that of UPIAS' notion of 'impairment' is parallel to the ICIDH view of 'disability' (Bickerbach et al., 1999). Both 'disability' and 'impairment' are considered as limitations to the full participation of labelled individuals in society (ibid). According to both the ICIDH's and UPIAS' definitions, it is evident that 'impairments' and 'disability' can be differently defined and interpreted. This implies that contradictions may

arise in the implementation of labelling as well as in the various interpretations of their implementers.

In the field of education, children's difficulty in learning is considered the result of their 'impairment' which used to be classified interchangeably as their 'learning disability'. The term learning disabilities refers to children's difficulty in the development of one or more of the processes of speaking, reading, writing, or arithmetic operation or more general difficulty with other subjects of the school curriculum (Hammill et al., 1981). Multiple definitions of learning disabilities have been developed, recognizing the connection between individual functioning disorders and children's underachievement at school, or that students' learning disabilities can coexist with other handicapping conditions (ibid). For example, Kirk's (1962) definition suggested that learning disabilities resulted from mental retardation or emotional and behavioural disorders. The National Advisory Committee on Handicapped Children (NACHC, 1968) centered the problem of children's disabilities on psychological factors excluding disabilities resulting from hearing, visual, or motor handicaps and mental retardation or emotional disorders and environmental disadvantages. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 1967) defined learning disabilities as resulting from nervous system dysfunction. Similarly, the United States Office of Education (USOE, 1976), agreed that learning disabilities may result due to severe cerebral dysfunction that leads children to underachieve. Contrary to these definitions, the National Joint Committee of Learning Disability Definitions (NJCLD, 1988) and the Interagency Committee on Learning Disabilities, (1987) argued that learning disabilities can be caused by a heterogeneous group of disorders.

The main limitation of such definitions of learning disabilities' is their lack of clarity concerning the nature and the conditions of the learning disabilities, as well as the criteria of labelling (Kavale and Forness, 2000). The lack of clarity regarding the disorders in definitions leads to the assumption that learning disabilities can be referred to as cognitive deficits. The confusion means that problems with basic academic skills may also be attributed to disability among children with no pathological or genetic deficits (ibid). This situation resulted in increased numbers of students classified as having learning disabilities (Silver, 1990). Kass and Myklebust (1969) also reported that in schools the use of the term 'learning disabilities' resulted in students being considered as in need of special educational teaching for rehabilitation. Additionally, the need for diagnostic procedures has increased, especially if these definitions did not recognize that students' learning

disabilities may be resulting from cultural difference, or insufficient and inappropriate instruction at schools (Hammill et al., 1981).

Recognizing that disability results equally from individual impairment, limitations to activity and participation restrictions (World Health Organization, 1997) and according to the self-advocacy movement of those groups classified as having learning disabilities, the term of learning difficulty was introduced (People First, 2015). This term was selected by the target population in order to highlight the need for constant change in the learning support provision for labelled children at mainstream schools (ibid). The term people with learning difficulties highlights that 'people want to learn and to be taught how to do things' (Sutcliffe and Simons, 1993,p.23). However, these two terms, learning disabilities and people with learning difficulties were found often to be used interchangeably, describing the ability or inability of a child to learn in mainstream schools (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). Consequently, labelling the children as having learning difficulties tends to attribute mainly negative meanings to their 'needs' (Shakespeare, 1996). Hence, in promoting inclusive education, the role of language is complex and requires more than simply removing offensive labels.

The definitions of disability and impairments are also formed and influenced by physical, medical, socio-cultural and political factors. Disability is socially constructed; categories regarding the needs and abilities of individuals, who are perceived to be inferior due to their physical and cognitive characteristics, are created by non-impaired individuals and groups (Thomas, 2004). In this case when disability is defined according to individuals' biological body deficits (Nicholls and Gibson, 2010), this creates categories of people who are perceived to be unable to work, similar to people who are perceived by society as 'normal' but also as unable to act for themselves. Thus, these people are perceived as "objects of pity" and "welfare recipients" (Grue, 2016). It is also for this reason that the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (World Health Organization, 2001) focused on people's abilities, rather than their medically defined disability, in order to ensure their rights in the workforce. On the other hand, by labelling the needs of disabled people, this enables them to participate in places and groups, where their needs are not perceived as negatively different from those defined by the dominant values and behaviours of particular cultures and societies (Shakespeare, 1996; Armstrong, 2003). In this sense, the medical and social models of disability are subsequently explored, to give examples of how the needs of people came to be perceived negatively as 'special'.

The Medical Model of Disability

The medical model of disability has been dominant for over a hundred years, especially since the publication of the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps schema (World Health Organization, 1980), which was reviewed two decades later (World Health Organization, 2001). A constitutive element of the medical model was its reliance on eugenics and genetics to define impairments (Armstrong, 2003) which result primarily or solely on individual disability (Oliver, 1990b; Shakespeare, 1996). Disability, when seen as restrictions in performance of an activity as it is expected by human normality alongside the bodily and mental deficits of individuals, was seen as abnormality (Shakespeare, 1996; Foucault, 1997; Tremain, 2001; Terzi, 2004). From this perspective, individuals have been isolated from their communities (Swain et al., 1993) and the need for 'dividing practices' arose (Foucault, 1997). These practices which aimed at defining and scientifically classifying the individuals' impairments enabled manipulation of individuals in society (ibid). 'Technologies of normalization' such as medical interventions or rehabilitation (ibid; Slee, 2011) were used, aiming to cure individuals or adjust their behaviour to enable social inclusion (World Health Organization, 2001).

Being 'normal' was also a dominant criterion for the employment of individuals with disabilities in industrial and capitalist societies (Filkenstein, 1980). For example, in agricultural or small-scale industrial societies people considered as disabled were not excluded even if unable to participate fully in the production process; it was only in the late 19th and 20th centuries that these individuals were excluded from industrialized production (Ryan and Thomas, 1980). Terms such as 'able-bodied' and 'able-minded' were constructed in order that individuals were adjusted to employment in the highly restrictive capitalist economies (Oliver, 1990b). Medical professionals created systems of knowledge to define the extent of individuals' pathology and their limits to work productively (ibid). Individuals falsely believed that by defining their impairments as a variation to patterns of normality would enable them to enter the workplace (Filkenstein, 1980). However, individuals defined as having more serious impairment resulted in being regarded as really disabled and to be seen as passive citizens who were mere recipients of charities and humanitarian aid or caring policies (ibid.; Ryan and Thomas, 1980).

It is important to acknowledge that the medical model recognized the need for better medical care for these individuals which encouraged health care policy reform (World Health Organization, 2001). It encouraged the effective detection and treatment of people

with physical disabilities and helped in the development of medical training, facilities and specialities (Eliot and Armstrong, 2019). The medical model also resulted in recognizing the rights of children with impairments to a good quality of education, aimed not only at vocational training (Barton and Armstrong, 2007). Despite these positive aspects, the medical model has been criticized for its failure to stop the oppression of individuals by medicalization and the doctrine of specialist professionals at mainstream schools. First, individuals were oppressed by the medicalization of their disabilities that aimed to control effectively the allocation of resources for their social inclusion (Manning and Oliver, 1985). In practical terms, medical labels marginalized individuals through their segregation in institutions and hospitals which were controlled by a range of specialist professionals (Oliver, 1990e). Those with disabilities, due to medicalization, were made to see themselves as pitiful and 'unfortunate' individuals to whom disability occurred randomly and constituted a 'personal tragedy' (Oliver, 1990d). As a result, the medicalized techniques of control that continued to be imposed on individuals meant that they failed to challenge their internalized oppression which resulted in social prejudice and discrimination (Shakespeare, 1996). The medically labelled individuals continued to be socialized into thinking of themselves as 'inferior' compared to those perceived as 'normal', blaming themselves for their disabilities and feeling responsible for their 'bad' social and personal condition (ibid).

Secondly, the medical model of disability has also been widely criticized for its over reliance on professionals' diagnosis which failed to enable the social inclusion of individuals with disabilities. According to the medical model, medically labelled individuals were expected to adjust to fit the 'norms' of society and mainstream schools rather than change these environments to meet the needs of the target group of individuals (Oliver, 1990d; Pfeiffer, 2000). In the 1970s there was a tendency towards over medicalization (Conrand, 1992). According to medicalization, individuals' impairments were defined by medical terms, using medical language and medical interventions to effect cure or treatment (ibid). However, this over medicalization meant that interventions were used to cure disabilities that were not definitely caused by illness. Current recognition that disability may not always have been caused by or resulted from, illness highlights the inappropriateness of some interventions and the oppression faced by individuals (Oliver, 1990b). Additionally, by awarding greater validity to the opinion of doctors and other medical professionals regarding the 'needs' of those categorized as disabled (Brisenden, 1986), led to the imposition of medical, social and educational control over the disabled individuals (Oliver, 1990b).

In educational systems, the pervasiveness of the medical model resulted in students with disabilities being associated with 'needs' requiring control and compensation. This was the result of the negative images and cultural representation of individuals with disabilities, which reinforced segregated education (Shakespeare, 1996). These students were channelled into segregated education in order to be provided with services deemed appropriate to their specific impairments (Conrad, 1992). Under such circumstances, the notion of disability continued in mainstream schools to be regarded as a deviation from 'normality' (Oliver, 1990d). Even, in the twentieth century, when these students started to be educated in mainstream schools, doctors continued to be involved in the diagnosis, cure, rehabilitation and therapy of their disabilities, as well as in the process of defining the special education provisions and approving the necessary financial resources (Oliver, 1990d). The notion of disability in mainstream education also contributed to individual students being held responsible for their own poor achievement. Furthermore, 'disability' was regarded as an excuse for the resistance of teachers to adopt inclusive practices (Corbett, 1996). Subsequently students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools continued to be conceptualized in the same way as their learning disabilities, especially with regards to those who had been previously labelled as having mental impairments (Aspis, 2010). Support in mainstream schools continued to be provided for them on the basis of their medicalized needs within the framework of the ubiquitous medical model (Conrad, 1992; Goodley, 1998). The medical model, however, was not without detractors as shown by the growth of the social model of disability.

The Social Model of Disability

The social model of disability was conceptualized by 'disabled' people themselves and developed and supported by the 'Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation' (UPIAS, 1976) and academic research (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001). In this context the term 'disabled people' was preferred to 'people with disabilities' (ibid). The social model of disability considered the limits and the conditions of oppression experienced by 'disabled' people within the structure of society (Oliver, 1990e). It recognized the responsibility of society to remove the functional barriers found in places, buildings, transportation and other forms of services (Shakespeare, 2013). At the same time, the model also aimed to address the social issues of marginalization, oppression and discrimination constructed by cultural ideas of disability (Terzi, 2004). For this reason, the social model aimed to provide appropriate services that supported and ensured that the 'needs' of those categorized as 'disabled' were fully taken into account (Oliver, 1990e).

The social model helped to set out a clear agenda of what was necessary in order to enable those people considered as disabled to be socially included (Shakespeare, 2013).

The social model also changed the perception of how people were categorized as disabled by society and helped disabled people to improve their self-esteem (Shakespeare, 2013). These disabled people were encouraged to stop feeling sorry for themselves because of the stigma experienced from being 'different' and 'inferior' to the norms (Shakespeare, 1996). Disabled people were empowered to fight for their rights (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001), when realizing that their social marginalization was not the result of their failure, neither was it caused by their incapacity or their impairments (Shakespeare, 1996). In the same way, the social model challenged non-disabled people to accept that the incapacity of those labelled as disabled was based on restrictions placed by the dominant order of society, and thus, it also encouraged them to recognize their own responsibility to fight against these restrictions (ibid; Berghs et al., 2019).

The social model brought new insights to understandings of disability, though the model was not without criticism. The biggest criticism of the social model was that it overlooked how the nature of impairments had the capacity to disable people by marginalizing and excluding them (Abberley, 1987; Pinder, 1995). Impairments cause some restrictions to individuals' activities, which would remain whatever social arrangements are made (Thomas, 2004). A debate began between the proponents of the medical views of disability within the social model and those who supported the social origins of disability. Abberley (1987), Williams (1999), Bury (2000) and Shakespeare and Watson (2001), are the leading writers who recognized that impairment and illness have direct dis-abling effects and limitations on the social activities of people. In opposition, notable writers such as Oliver (1996c), Filkenstein (2001) and Thomas (1999) clearly associated disability with the social causes of restrictions. Both Oliver and Thomas additionally acknowledged that impairment and illness can impose restrictions on people's functioning, however, they rejected that non-socially imposed restrictions can disable people in terms of participating in social activities. Similarly, it is important to recognize that a significant contribution to this debate came from the feminist critique of the social model in particular, how the effects of impairments on the disabled people's life tended to be underplayed in order to build a strong argument that the disabled people are pressurized by socially constructed restrictions (Morris, 1996). By doing this, they tended to neglect the social relational nature of impairments and illness (Owens, 2014). Impairments and illness may become a disability, when the individuals experiencing instructional oppression, are perceived to be

'inferior' to non-impaired individuals and their needs to be negatively 'different' from what the sociocultural stereotypes suggest to be 'normality'(ibid). Hence, disabled people continued to be discriminated against as a result of receiving personal assistance and resources. The fact that these provisions continued to be required in order to enable them to be included in a specific social context, has confirmed in peoples' consciousness that the disabled people are unable to act for themselves (Abberley, 1987). Particularly, it was difficult for the social model to deconstruct the oppression experienced by disabled people who were in need of personalized support, because their restrictions on participating in social activities were underpinned by their individual impairments (ibid).

Besides the restrictions imposed by over socializing the disabling effects of impairments, the social model of disability was also blamed for focusing on the barriers used to discriminate against the expense of providing the extra and personalized resources required for the inclusion and participation of disabled people in every form of life (Thomas and Glenny, 2002). The social model purposely refused to define oneself by 'impairment' or 'disability', as it was argued that by retaining many forms of impairment, disabled people would still feel oppressed (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001). Identifying the personal impairments of disabled people seemed to have even more negative implications for their personal identity and psychological well-being (ibid). However, by denying engagement with the embodied experience of physically impaired individuals, this seems to have negatively affected the disabled people's identity (Owens, 2014). The consequences of the socially imposed restrictions on people with cognitive and physical impairments remained unacknowledged and undifferentiated (ibid). The differences between people with physical impairments and those with learning difficulties were ignored in order to be avoided reinforcing the oppression caused by the medicalized definitions of people's disabilities (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001; Owens, 2014). Additionally, labelling the individual impairments was avoided because it was maintained that, even if all social barriers were dismantled, there would always be some people who would experience some limitations because of their individual 'impairments' (French, 1993). These critiques of the social model underlined the reality that disabled people continued to be oppressed, while being expected to overcome socially constructed barriers in order to have access to services that were designed for the needs of 'normality'.

The disabling effects of students' impairments tended to be invisible in the social model which emphasized the socially constructed limits of disability (Shakespeare, 1996; Barton and Oliver, 1997). The social model of disability was also open to criticism for arguing that

an individual's impairment should be normalized, to the extent that the concept of providing personalizing support was rejected. This argument was based on the view that disabled people who wished to be treated as 'normal' in the sense of average social functioning activities, tried hard to keep their impairments invisible (Davis, 2005). Subsequently disabled people were oppressed when they tried to keep quiet their need for assistance as well as when they tried to convince others of their need for more personalized and specialized treatment and support (ibid). This complex situation describes the case of disabled students attending mainstream schools. While the education of disabled students in mainstream schools, attracted support resources, these were not necessarily allocated to them according to their personal impairments (Terzi, 2005). Furthermore, it can be argued that these students who were allocated and used the resources which sought to adjust their impairments were also oppressed since the existing school organizations into which they entered widely shared and recognized only their own internalized version of 'normality' (Tremain, 2005).

As far as it concerns the students with learning difficulties, it was found that their needs continued to be neglected by the social modelists (Chappell et al., 2001). In mainstream schools, the support services continued to be allocated to them in accordance with what their labels of special needs education suggested as necessary for their presumed 'deficiencies' (Dumbleton, 1998). Similarly, the support provided to these students continued to be based on the 'paternalized' notion of empowerment, according to which others should help, care for and act on behalf of these students (Goodley, 1998). Consequently, the mainstream teachers continued to believe that these students were incapable of acting for themselves, since their needs continued to be perceived as similar to those with physical and sensory impairments (Chappell et al., 2001). In this sense the supporters of self-advocacy and of the social model failed to transform the existing mechanics of support to be more effective in meeting the needs and difficulties for learning of this particular group of students (ibid).

To summarize, both the medical and social models of disability aimed at promoting the rights of people with disabilities, namely to access society and schools, though they tended to do so in different ways. The medical model aimed to provide access to disabled people by focusing on expert diagnoses which aim to provide remedial treatment to 'fix' the individuals' deficits (Eliot and Armstrong, 2019). On the other hand, the social model focused on dismantling the environmental restrictions and breaking down the sociocultural stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination against the disabled people (Thomas, 2004). It

is obvious that there is a tendency within the social model of disability to deny that disability has resulted from individuals' physical impairments and to insist that restrictions are entirely socially created (ibid). While acknowledging that both models aim to support the needs of disabled people, it is my argument that both models fail to remove the very barriers of oppression faced by disabled people. Within the medical model, the people with disabilities are perceived to be the 'objects' of experts' diagnoses. Doctors look for symptoms and signs of illness and how they can resolve the 'abnormalities' that these cause disabled individuals (Siebers, 2019). The body tends to be perceived as an 'object' that is regulated by the political, normative and discursive regimes imposed on it by the more powerful and non-impaired individuals (Shilling, 2012). The social model on the other hand tended to consider the 'body' as discrete and separate from the self. It therefore continues to objectify disabled people, when it focuses on dismantling environmental restrictions for the non-able bodied (Thomas, 2004). The reason for this is that the social model continues to objectify their needs by seeing them solely as welfare recipients, rather than as able subjects with "different" needs who also have rights to access and participate in society.

Moreover, these models of disability also failed to remove the very barriers of oppression faced by students labelled as having learning difficulties in mainstream schools. Particularly, the labelled students continue to be oppressed as a result of the two major pedagogical implications that have been informed by the models of disability and that seem to promote inclusive education. The first, underpinned by the medical model, is the use of medical professionals, such as psychologists and special needs educators, who are perceived to be 'experts' in meeting the educational needs of the labelled students. The labels, which highlight the medical deficits of the students, make the teachers wary about teaching these students and to make them perceive these students as being in need of segregation from their peers in mainstream schooling in order to receive specialized support. The second, underpinned by the social model, is a dependency on the allocation of specialized resources to schools. The school's interest in raising standards increases the labelling of students' learning difficulties by medical professionals. However, the labels focus mainly on the resources needed to 'fix' the medical deficits of the labelled students, rather than on how the teaching and learning practices can be reformed to meet the students' needs. Consequently, the labelled students are perceived as being 'unable' to learn, and their needs are perceived negatively as 'special' within the teachers' and non-disabled students' consciousness. In view of these shortcomings, I argue that both models of disability fail to deconstruct the stereotypes of special needs education. Although the

social model tends to be more sensitive to the needs of disabled people, it also fails to deconstruct all the environmental restrictions that oppress them in mainstream schools. In this sense, both models should be seen as being composed of culturally constructed values that contribute to the learning difficulties of students who are perceived negatively as 'special' by the policy-makers of inclusive education and by mainstream teachers.

Culturally, the norms and ideas of human function, intelligence and competence have been internalized within the notions of impairments and disability (Shakespeare, 1994). Thus, it is not enough to understand the social embodiment of disabled people in terms of materialistic barriers (providing 'extra' services/ resources for their needs, or ensuring their access to physical and institutional structures; it is more about changing the marginalizing attitudes and perceptions against them (Berghs et al., 2019). From recent evidence, there is still apparent need to support the rights of disabled people against the cutting, marketization and privatization of services, which has tended to happen during the periods of economic crisis in the welfare societies of developing countries (ibid). This illustrates that the removal of barriers and the additional change towards disability is not only a matter of medical and social modelling, but more a matter of justice, equality and respect for human rights, which should be established as equitable norms in societies (Berghs et al., 2017). However, the socio-cultural notions of 'normality' and 'otherness' are those which have materialized in policies and school practices that argue for the inclusion of disabled people/students. The following sections present how teachers' understanding of the 'needs' of their labelled students has been informed by culture and the policies of special needs or inclusive education.

Culture and Disability

Social research studies show that health, well-being and ability are conceptualized conspicuously differently among cultures (Barnes and Mercer, 2005). A higher level of impairment is often reported in wealthier countries (ibid), where impairments and disabilities are presented within the dominant discourses of subjection and incapacity to learn and produce (Miles, 1995). Labels such as 'cripple, lame, dumb, mad, feeble, idiot, imbecile and moron', that were used in Western societies during the 19th and early 20th centuries (ibid), were indicative of the cultural stereotypes of 'otherness', that formed prejudices regarding disabled people (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001) and which resulted in these people being excluded from places, services and sources (Shakespeare, 1994).

In Judeo Christian societies, the roots of understanding disabilities were also grounded in Biblical references (Clapton, 1996). In Western Judeo-Christian society, bodily disability was considered a sign of 'witchcraft' or God's displeasure, or as angelic figures bringing blessings for others (ibid). Thus the dominant cultural bases and responses to those contemporarily described as disabled in Western societies were linked to notions of sin, impurity, unwholeness, undesirability, weakness, care, compassion, healing and burden (ibid). Parents used to feel guilt and shame about their disabled children who lived in isolation, hidden away or oppressed, within families (Miles, 1995). Similarly, in pre-industrial Eastern nomadic and agrarian societies not only were the disabled people perceived as 'monsters', but some were ostracized or exposed to exorcisms and purging rituals(ibid).

Obsession with the excluded and marginal disabled people led to the creation of major characters in a large number of books, such as in Greek and Victorian novels, which climax in the region of ancient times or the Middle Ages (Kelpis, 2006). For the purpose of this thesis, especially interesting are those examples referenced from Ancient and modern Greek literature. In ancient Greek literature the notion of disability was reinforced as a form of punishment. A well-known example tells of the ancient Spartans who killed or abandoned every child that was born with 'impairment' at Keadas (Kelpis, 2006). An exception to this cultural response of disability was found in the ancient city of Thiva, where the 'disabled' instead of being abandoned, were sold for slaves (ibid). In the ancient tragedy by Sophocles, the 'visual impairment' of Oedipus was evaluated as a punishment for his bad actions. Consequently, disability was also used as a punishment to restore evil (Semertzidou, 2010).

In the literature there are also examples portraying the people considered as 'disabled' as superheroes. Regarding Ancient Greek mythology and poetry, disabled people have a strong metaphysical element (Kelpis, 2006). Homer in his works used the people's 'visual problem' as a prophet who had the special abilities of prophecy due to their impairment (ibid). According to other examples of heroes with disabilities that can be seen in Greek literature, those disabled people are used as a source of social recreation and amusement for the public (ibid). It is unsurprising that disabled people in Ancient Greek novels were laughed at and presented as musicians, singers, dancers or clowns for the amusement of the public. A great example of this can be considered in the case of poet Tyrtaios (ibid). In modern Greek literature, the most distinctive character with disability is the Beggar by Andreas Karkavitsa, who self-harms to cause himself his disability and his exploits to earn

his living, but he is mocked by his fate (Semertzidou, 2010). Also in Karagiozis shadow theatre in Greece, in the late 19th century, the individuals with disabilities were mocked in a perpetual and permanent way (Skanda, 1980).

To conclude, these portrayals of people labelled as disabled in literature are arguably representations of the cultural context and stereotypes. The fact that these portrayals presented people with disabilities either as pathetic victims or superheroes highlighted the prejudice and oppression against them, formulated the notions of exclusion and 'otherness' regarding these students and attached the stigma of 'special' to their needs in mainstream schools. These cultural images of disability are rendered stereotypes in societies that are influenced mainly negatively. In the case of Cyprus, although a lack of respect towards disabled people was still apparent and they were laughed at, there never seems to have been a period when disabled people were tortured (Gavrielidou, 2011). However, prejudice and inappropriate language as a result of the cultural representation of special needs in Cypriot society are still obvious, when the terminology is used by some referring to the needs of these people or standing next to disabled people, not knowing how to behave, being afraid of impairment and ignorant of disability (Symeonidou, 2002).

Disability and the Policies of Special Needs and Inclusive Education

Policies lay the foundations for the ideological climate within which the language of 'difference' and oppression is created, services are provided and professional practices are carried out in schools and in society (Oliver, 1990b). Notions of both impairment and disability have tended to be used interchangeably in policy documents since the 20th century. In such policy documents the students' incapacities have tended to be highlighted and thus they were found to create dependency for the students considered to have learning difficulties (Oliver, 1990e).

Dependency is created when the policies consider the 'needs' of people under the spectrum of 'care' and 'looking after' them (Oliver, 1990e). For example, the Educational Acts of 1944 and 1981 constructed the language of 'difference' enforced by the labels of special needs education. These labels were used to define the 'different' provisions required for the special needs of the children at U.K. schools. Similarly, the education law of 1979 in Cyprus, legitimized the labels of special needs education according to which it defined what was needed for the children categorized as having learning difficulties, to enable their placement in a suitable educational setting (Government of Cyprus, 1979).

The way the needs of the labelled people were portrayed in policies resulted in the support, that aimed to be enforced, to be seen as a 'different' type of care for the labelled people (Gavrielidou, 2011) and thus there was highlighted the need for these students to be initially educated in special rather than in mainstream schools.

Policies failed to empower the participation of target students at mainstream schools, since the implemented policies have been mainly geared to do things for, and on behalf of, the people perceived as having special needs (Oliver, 1990e). Services at U.K. schools are delivered in similar ways, enriching the role of the professionals as the only ones who know how to deal with the 'needs' of these students (ibid). The language used by the Cypriot policy documents, the professionals and the Cypriot parents in their attempt to ensure the rights of their children through the legitimized process, conveyed that the children with learning difficulties are the passive recipients of 'care' and in need of 'special' support and protection (Symeonidou, 2009). Therefore, in Cyprus, the labelled people were also dependent on the professionals and their rights for equality and participation in mainstream schools which were entombed in the role of the professionals (Gavrielidou, 2011). In the policy-making process, the right of these students to express their opinion on a legal framework was infringed (ibid). The services and provisions for these students' needs were allocated to schools on the premise that the problem to be addressed was within the child. The child's deficits were required to be 'normalized' in order to meet the standards of the mainstream learning curriculum (Armstrong, 2007). This is evidence of the ongoing influence of a medical model of disability on the implemented policies that aimed to ensure the participation of these students in mainstream schools.

Under this spectrum, the policies of special needs/ inclusive education and the language used in international policy documents during the 20th century, aimed at being reformed, in order to empower and assure the participation and inclusion of these students in mainstream schools (Oliver, 1990e). In the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Council of Europe, 1998) the right of all children to be educated was identified and it also recognized the rights of parents to ensure the education of their children according to their religion and philosophical convictions. In accordance with this, the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO,1994) and the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (2006) highlighted the right of children to be educated in mainstream schools and the states' responsibility to ensure and facilitate their full and equal participation in mainstreaming. In spite of adopting less offensive language towards the 'needs' and disabilities of these students in policy

documents, it was difficult to deconstruct the cultural stereotypes according to which these students' learning needs have been internalized. The language used in these policies did not guarantee the acknowledgement of these students' right to inclusive education in mainstream schools. These students' needs were still practically regarded as being subject to the decision-making regimes of professionals (Rioux, 2002) and the students as being in need of remedial, special needs educational provision (Corbett, 1996).

During the 21st century, policies developed in the U.K., for example, the Index for Inclusion (CSIE, 2000), the Green Paper (cited in Dyson and Milward, 2000,p.2) and Excellence for All Children (DFEE, 1997, cited in Lorenz, 2002,p.4), recognized the right of students with learning difficulties to be educated in mainstream classrooms. Additionally, international policy documents such as the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2016), the UN Human Rights Statement (2017) and the Agenda of Education 2030 Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2015a), they recognized the need for the structures of schooling, the context and the teaching method approaches to be changed in order to respond to the needs of these students. Although there are still challenges to be overcome at the local and national level in the transformation of educational systems into more inclusive learning environments, it is obvious that the policies are now informed by the social model of disability. In developing policies it is recognized that the students' difficulties arise from aspects of the educational systems. Therefore, policies aimed to empower the participation of these students in mainstream schools by focusing on changing the form of teaching, the learning environments and the ways in which the students' progress is supported and evaluated in mainstream schools and classrooms (UNESCO, 2015b).

2.4. THE LANGUAGE OF 'DIFFERENCE' IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

One of the principal aims of education is to address the problem of poverty and social exclusion (Barnes and Mercer, 2005) of a group of people such as the students with learning difficulties. However, the language of 'difference' used in the field of education to define their learning needs affected negatively the implications of educational equity and quality in mainstream schools (Boyle, 2007). In Foucault's (1988) and Liggett's (1978) thinking, language is used to categorize individuals according to their abilities in the hierarchical dominance of social life, however, these produced definitions which may lead to the exclusion of those with the lower abilities from the systems of social life. In this respect, the language of 'difference' which is also constructed according to a plethora of

interconnected social, cultural, medical and political dynamics involved in 'normalizing' society, played a dominant role in defining the labels and the expectations of the others at mainstream schools towards students with learning difficulties (Riddick, 2000). For this reason, it is not surprising that the rights of the labelled students have been oppressed, when they have been initially included in mainstream schools, since their learning needs were not addressed by the dominant teaching and learning practices (Foucault, 1988).

Furthermore, it is important to highlight, that labelling the needs of the students is neither inherently good nor bad, but depends on how these labels are used and of the power of those who used them (Leyens et al., 1994). According to the deficit mode of thinking, labels determine certain biological traits of children which differ from those of the 'norm' (Green et al., 2005). In this respect, labelling may produce stereotyping, which is the judgement that the individual 'differences' are negative and undesirable characteristics compared to what the society considers as 'normal' (Becker, 1963; Green et al., 2005; Sowards, 2015). Consequently, labelling the students as having learning disability, suggests that these students do not have the ability to learn (Gold and Richards, 2012) and thus their right to access the mainstream curriculum has been restricted. In terms of inclusive education, labelling is the process under which individuals are classified in to specified groups which are considered to have the same 'biological differences' (Artiles, 2011), for instructional purposes (Thomson, 2012). It is argued that by labelling the students as having learning disabilities would allow personalized teaching practices to be developed (Gold and Richards, 2012) and targeted educational provisions to be allocated (Lauchlan and Boyle, 2007) to address their educational needs in mainstream classrooms.

One of the main positive implications of labelling the students as having special needs is that it allows for diagnosis and appropriate treatment which is helpful for the teachers in order to know how to adapt their teaching practices (Riddick, 2000). Labels increase the teachers' awareness and understanding towards their students' learning needs (Gus, 2000) and provide comfort to children and families by explaining their learning difficulties (Duhaney and Salend, 2010). According to a qualitative study undertaken in USA, it found that labelling helped these students to make sense of their academic difficulties and to explain to others the nature of their difficulties by using their official labels, without being stigmatised (Barga, 1996). This study also identified that even the students with profound learning difficulties, by using their official labels to inform their teachers and classmates, the more they informed them, the more positive view of their 'difficulties', their teachers and classmates used to have (ibid). Secondly, students can receive extra support that

aimed to help them succeed academically in schools (Blum and Bakken, 2010). Particularly, an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) can be developed to target their 'specialized needs' (Kauffman, 1999), students can receive additional specialised support to 'a learning support room'/resource room and they have access to assistive technological resources (Blum and Bakken, 2010). For the students who have visual or auditory impairment, or learn more slowly than others (Clements, 2001) they can receive assisting services that would not be possible without being labelled (Duhaney and Salend, 2010). Therefore, the labelling process can be used in promoting inclusive education, if labels are used in respect to the students' learning needs and aimed at supporting them as equal to their peers (UNESCO, 1994).

On the other hand, the labelling was found to have a more deleterious effect on students, when their learning needs are negatively stereotyped. The 'needs' of the students with learning difficulties are negatively stereotyped, when labels were, and are still, used as the mechanics for maintaining the boundaries between what is considered as 'normal', as 'abnormal' or as deviant in mainstream schools (Corbett, 1996). As a result, these students can be considered as in need of 'experts' of special needs education to teach them in mainstream schools (ibid). In such a spectrum, as Clements (2001) argued, students with learning difficulties were set in segregated special schools or they were, and are still, set apart from their peers in mainstreaming in order to receive 'specialised' support. Considering the learning needs of these students in terms of disability, their labels were, and are still used to define the resources required to 'fix', or 'ameliorate' the 'deficit' of the labelled students according to the norms in mainstream schools (Armstrong, 2003). Considering the learning needs of these students as 'special', their needs were, and are still, used to be in need of being adapted to meet the aims of the mainstream curriculum, rather than as necessary for the teaching and learning practices and the mainstream curriculum to be reformed (Allan, 2003). As a result, the mainstream teachers can be made to feel insecure dealing with the learning difficulties of their students (Corbett, 1996) and to believe that 'special' training is an important variable in order to promote inclusive classroom practices (Vaughn et al, 1993; Loreman and Deppeler, 2000; Richards, 2010).

More specifically, labelling the students in terms of impairments or learning disability can result in the teachers believing these students as being less able than the 'normal' (Bernberg et al., 2006). Additionally, labelling can make the teachers reluctant to explore further the students' abilities (Boyle, 2014), especially if they have failed to acknowledge that the students with the same labels can be different from one another (Kelly and

Norwich, 2004; Lauchlan and Boyle, 2014; 2020). In line with this, many teachers identified to have lower expectations from these students in most subjects in the mainstream curriculum (Macintyre, 2008) and to be unwilling to differentiate their teaching practices in the mainstream classrooms (Loreman and Depeler, 2000). Many teachers tended to give them more inferior classroom tasks than to their classmates and to less encourage and support their learning compared to those perceived as the 'smart ones' (Agbenyega and Klibthong, 2014). As far as it concerns the students with learning difficulties, this resulted in having lower self-esteem and their peers to be negatively affected towards them (Dillon, 2001; Riddick, 2000). The students with lower self-esteem often demonstrate withdrawal problems and other mood behaviours that affect their participation in school activities (Arishi et al., 2017,p.11).The classmates of these students, who perceived themselves as higher achievers tended to ridicule and tease these students who have internalized themselves as being underachievers (ibid). Finally, a label may induce stigma when the focus is on the label (Kelly and Norwich, 2004), rather than on the individual 'learning needs' of the students (Boyle, 2007). As a result of their stigmatization, students can experience status loss and discrimination (Green et al., 2005); For example, by withdrawing the students from the mainstream classroom to receive additional support, this can lead their classmates to perceive them as being inferior or less able than themselves (Arishi,et al., 2017). As a result of their labelled identity, the students can be marginalized or rejected by others in the mainstream schools (Goffman, 1963).

In accordance with the above considerations, it is important to highlight that the students with learning difficulties can be easily stigmatised due to their poor performance, or because they lagged behind, even if their learning difficulties are not officially labelled (Riddick, 2000).The reason for this is that stigmatization can take place in the absence of formal labels or it can precede labelling (ibid). However, the students with learning difficulties are commonly stigmatized in mainstream schools, when the 'special needs' labels are attached to them automatically and unquestionably (O'Brien and Dennis, 2001). Students tended to be easily and generally labelled as in need of special needs education in order for a large amount of special needs resources to be allocated to their schools to help them increase their attainments (O'Brien and Dennis, 2001; Boyle, 2007). This labelling process tended also to be encouraged by the parents who wanted to ensure at any cost the funding and extra help for their children to do and understand their homework (Archer and Green, 1996; Gillman et al., 2010; Boyle, 2007). Consequently, the learning difficulties of students continued to be ranked negatively as 'special' and defined

negatively as 'different' according to the stereotypes constructed on the basis of individual pathology.

Interrogating the theoretical concepts related to the 'Language of Difference'

Labelling tended to reproduce negative stereotypes regarding the learning difficulties of these students in mainstreaming and affected both the way the students saw themselves and the teachers saw their students' difficulties. These consequences of stereotyping were identified as being linked with various psychological theories, such as the theory of stigma, of academic self-concept and academic self-efficacy and of academic self-esteem.

'Stigma' is an attribute that is deeply discrediting and that reduces the bearer from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one' (Goffman, 1963, p.3). Stafford and Scott (1986) propose that 'stigma' is a characteristic of a person that separates him/her from other people. Crocker et al. (1998) suggest that individuals are stigmatized due to some characteristics that devalue them in a particular social context, whereas Jones et al.(1984) defined stigma as the relationship between an undesirable characteristic and a stereotype. According to Link and Phelan (2001) stigma arises when labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss and discrimination are experienced all together in a powerful situation that allows these elements of stigma to unfold. Goffman (1963) also recognized that the people stigmatized result in a 'spoiled identity' fear of failing or being rejected by the normal. However, for the purpose of this study, the framework proposed by Link and Phelan (2001) is chosen, because it focuses on both the concepts of stigma and discrimination and their effects on stigmatized people.

According to Link and Phelan (2001), the concept of stigma resulted from four components: firstly people are distinguished and labelled for their human 'differences' and labels are used to describe the social selection of human 'differences'. Labels varied in time and place and are determined by cultural values. Secondly, the labelled people are linked with negative stereotypes due to the dominant cultural beliefs. Stereotypes are the socially undesirable characteristics that may be presented automatically and precociously and these become the rationale for believing the labelled people are 'different' from those considered as 'normal'. Thirdly, the labelled people who are seen as 'different' resulted in being separated by, and from, the 'normal ones'. Fourthly, this also became the rationale for the labelled people to experience direct and indirect forms of discrimination. By direct forms of discrimination the labelled people resulted in experiencing rejection, separation

and exclusion. Indirect discrimination arises when the people experience a status loss. Individuals' placement in a status hierarchy is lowered when they are both negatively stereotyped and labelled. On the one hand the people who do not carry the stigma (the stigmatizers) have resulted in having lower expectations from those who are stigmatized because their status has been reduced in the eyes of the stigmatizers. In this sense, it is important to highlight that the extent of stigma experienced by the people varied according to the power and the position of the stigmatizers. On the other hand, the lower status itself becomes the basis for the people's discrimination. The people who carry the stigma have internalized the cultural stereotype regarding their difficulties and accept their lower placement in the status hierarchy. They acknowledged the devaluation of the people with the same undesirable characteristics as them and thus they resulted in expecting to be personally rejected. Steele and Aronson (1995) introduced the concept of 'stereotype threat', which is also suggesting that a person can be stigmatized either because he/she is valued according to a specific stereotype or he/she who has already internalized the negative stereotype tend to confirm it through his/her own behavior. This resulted in them being afraid of challenging the structural forms of discrimination (Link and Phelan, 2001), such as being withdrawn from the lessons they liked in order to receive support in the resource room.

The notion of self-concept refers to how individuals construct themselves, what skills they believe that they have and are capable of, what they believe that others expect from them, how they evaluate their abilities in comparison to others and how they judge they are viewed by others (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). Self-efficacy refers to what the individuals believe they can succeed in, despite what skills and abilities they may actually have (Bandura, 1986). Skaalvik (1997) identified that individuals determine their self-concept identity by comparing themselves with the others in society. Both Skaalvik (1997) and Bandura(1986) identified that self-concept and self-efficacy beliefs are affected by the individuals' prior success and failures, their mastery in particular domains and the positive evaluative feedback of the significant others. Individuals' self-concept beliefs are also affected by their pre-existing high self-esteem regarding what they can do (Skaalvik, 1997). Particularly, the terms of academic self-concept and academic self –efficacy are used to define the individuals' beliefs regarding their competence in academic domains. Academic self-concept refers to what the students' know and how they feel about themselves in achievement situations (Wingfield and Karpathian, 1991). Academic self-efficacy refers to the individuals' conviction that they can successfully achieve their academic tasks (Schunk, 1991).

What is important to be noted is that academic self-concept and academic self-efficacy beliefs might not be easily separable, despite the few differences they have (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). Especially, the cognitive academic self-concept factors are identified as difficult to distinguish from those of self-efficacy factors (Skaalvik and Rankin, 1996). According to Bong and Skaalvik (2003) the main differences of these two concepts are: Academic self-concept is a staple perception regarding the students capabilities that is past oriented, whereas academic self-efficacy is related to specific tasks and focuses on the future oriented students' expectations towards their academic outcomes. Academic self-concept better predicts affective reactions such as anxiety, whereas self-efficacy better predicts cognitive capabilities and academic performance. Positive academic self-concept motivates students' engagement in learning (ibid), while students with negative academic self-concept tend to be easily demotivated (Wingfield and Karpathian, 1991). Academic self-concept is mainly affected by the teachers' evaluations (Skaalvik and Rankin, 1996), whereas self-efficacy is a more self-regulated evaluation (Wolters and Pintrich, 1998) and is affected by the students' persistence and performance (Bandura, et al., 1999). Both academic self-concept and academic self-efficacy beliefs are strengthened through the students' comparison of their evaluations of academic capabilities with those of their classmates and with their own in different academic domains (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003).

Having in mind that positive academic self-concept gives rise to affective/motivational students' reactions, it is important to be noted that the students have stronger motivational reactions when they are compared with similar others (Festinger, 1954). Similarly, as Marsh (1987) noted, students can be affected evaluating themselves as less capable in comparison to the higher achieving students. As far as it concerns the students with learning difficulties, it was identified that they tended to have negative academic self-concept and being less motivated to learn (Núñez et al., 2005). They also resulted in having low achievement expectations and low persistence at school tasks (Núñez et al., 1995). They tended also to misbehave in the classroom to conceal their learning difficulties from the others (Convington, 1998). By hiding their difficulties from the others they aimed at improving the chances of being socially accepted and received favourable feedback from their teachers and classmates (Núñez et al., 2005). Students also resulted in experiencing a strong sense of learned helplessness (Chapman, 1988), due to their unrealistic assessment of their abilities (Montague and Van Garderen, 2003; Stone and May, 2002); Considering themselves of being less able than the 'normal ones', they feel that they would fail, despite how much they would try (Smiley and Dweck, 1994). It is for

this reason that the students with learning difficulties tended to relate their success to external variables such as luck or the others' help (Núñez et al., 2005), rather than to their abilities and to their effort (Smiley and Dweck, 1994). Additionally, it was also found that this maladaptive attributional profile tended to be enforced on the students with learning difficulties, due to their teachers' instructional adaptations (Schuh, 2003), which are still produced on the premise of students' labels and deficits rather than their potential (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011).

According to Rosenberg et al. (1995), the term of self-esteem refers to an individual's positive or negative attitude towards the self. This form of individual's attitude is named as the global self-esteem, which is related to an individual's psychological well-being and it is peripherally related to the feelings of self-worth. Academic self-esteem refers to affective and cognitive components of self-attitudes that are related to specific behaviour or performance. Therefore the educators have to improve first the students' academic self-esteem in order to help them improve their school performance (ibid). However, having in mind that academic self-esteem is informed and influenced by the students' academic self-concept, the teachers have first to enhance higher beliefs of their students regarding what they can do (Marsh and Martin, 2011). Higher academic achievements can increase the students' academic self-esteem, but focusing on increasing solely the students' achievements without fostering their self-beliefs in their abilities/capabilities, can lead to temporary higher students' academic self-esteem (ibid). The students, who have lower academic self-esteem but higher global self-esteem, are ready for more academically oriented interventions, whereas students who have also lower global self-esteem require interventions in groups or individually to foster as well higher self-worth beliefs (Elbaum and Vaughn, 2003).

It is also important to be noted that there is evidence which demonstrates that the special educational placement can reinforce the aforementioned maladaptive attributional students' learning profile in the mainstream classroom (Bakker and Bosman, 2003). At the same time it can help these students to improve or to have more positive academic self-esteem, compared to these students who do not receive any sufficient remedial support in the mainstream classroom (Morvitz and Motta, 1992). Teachers can increase their students' academic self-esteem and motivate them for learning by teaching them systematically strategies that would help them to master and succeed in specific tasks (Elbaum and Vaughn, 2003). Teachers can help their students by giving them extra information and prompts how to correct their mistakes, by explaining to them the process

to reach the correct answers and the reason why this is the correct answer , by praising them for their correct answers and by avoiding comparing their performance with those of their classmates. It is more effective for the teachers to compare students' current performances with their previous ones (Margolis and McCabe, 2006).

These theoretical ideas along with the models of disabilities, which are discussed under section 2.3 and the pedagogical approaches, which tend to promote the aims of inclusive education (see section 2.5) are selected for the purpose of my data analysis. This range of multi-disciplinary theoretical concepts and models are purposefully chosen, despite such a range opening me up to charges of eclecticism. In explanation, my research questions and objectives were intentionally broad and my aim was to provide a holistic description, to achieve a better understanding of the consequences of the labelling and stereotyping process on the learning attributional profile of the labelled students, their beliefs in their self-worth and the others' beliefs about their learning 'capabilities' as well as on the teachers' and students' attitudes towards mainstream classroom adaptations. Therefore, by using multiple theoretical perspectives to analyse the data, this allows deeper exploration of the knowledge made possible by one approach and thus contribute to promoting quality in research (Flick, 2009). However, being aware of combining different methods and theories (Fielding and Fielding, 2004, in Flick, 2004,p.181), I chose theoretical concepts and models that share an understanding of the consequences of 'normality'/ 'normalisation' process and the stereotypes regarding disability on the design and the implementation of inclusive educational approaches in mainstream schools.

2.5.PEDAGOGY FOR INCLUSION

In terms of inclusive education which presupposes the participation of all learners in the learning process of mainstream classrooms, a debate has emerged as to whether a 'different' pedagogy is required to be developed in mainstream classrooms by encompassing the philosophy of special needs education or if the common teaching practices have to become more intensive and explicit. In such considerations it is important to clearly define the term of pedagogy. Pedagogy refers to what is necessary for one to know, the curriculum and what skills are required in the teaching and learning process (Alexander, 2004). The aims and the objectives of a curriculum are concrete elements set up by the stakeholders of each educational system (Lewis and Norwich, 2005). Decisions and actions taken in classroom settings in order to achieve learning are the variable elements encompassed by pedagogy (ibid). Therefore, the interpretation of pedagogy is

more important to mainly focus on the teachers' decisions about how learning should be motivated, assessed and planned and how the knowledge that constitutes the curriculum should be explored and understood (Alexander, 2004). It is also important to acknowledge that these pedagogical decisions are referred to and defined according to the children's characteristics of development and learning (ibid).

In brief, common pedagogical decisions about learning are mainly informed by the cognitive and social constructivist theories. Cognitive theory suggests teacher-centred methods. Students learn by reproducing the knowledge transmitted to them by their teachers (Pritchard, 2009), which is very common in traditional educational systems such as in Cyprus. Teacher-centred methods offer learners less choice over their learning materials, because the teachers are, or are usually considered to be more knowledgeable than the learners (Makoelle, 2014). A contrasting process of developing knowledge is the learner-centred methods, which are suggested by social constructivist theory. Teachers aim to facilitate students to produce their own learning. They facilitate their students to pass from the cognitive comfort zone to the zone of proximal development. This is the zone where the students build new learning by using their prior learning experiences and applying them to learning activities and problems that are slightly more difficult than what they are used to and have done before (Armstrong and Tsokova, 2019). Learners are not passive recipients of knowledge; teachers aim to help students scaffold new knowledge (ibid). The scaffolding process suggests that learning may occur in three stages: **(a)** receiving new knowledge, **(b)** giving meaning to this knowledge and **(c)** rebuilding it through interactions with others (Makoelle, 2014). Constructing knowledge means that the students aim to solve a problem through questioning, hypothesizing and grouping ideas together through their prior experiences and active participation (Pritchard, 2009; Armstrong and Tsokova, 2019). Students are active participate in learning in different ways, such as by seeing, listening and doing things, by working collaboratively, or by studying alone (Pitchard, 2009). Contrary to cognitive theory, the basic principles of social constructivism are that the teachers guide rather than instruct the learners' reception of knowledge, and that students' progress is measured rather than their' performance (Greenham, 2019). However, it is particularly important to mention that mainstream teachers tend to interpret the pedagogical needs of students with learning difficulties very differently compared to those of their peers. The peculiarity in pedagogical decisions concerning these students is how these decisions are formed either in favour of, or against their 'needs'(Norwich, 1996). The pedagogical needs of these students can be identified as specific and distinct for a group of learners, or unique to individual learners (ibid). In the

first instance the specific needs of these students are detected as being 'different' from the common needs and the teacher assumes them to be negative, since it is required that they be prioritized in the classroom along with their peers' needs. In the second instance, teachers acknowledge that the needs of all learners are 'unique' and they tend to equally prioritize the common and the individual needs by designing sufficiently flexible practices (ibid).

On a pedagogical level, various typologies are formed according to what extent the pedagogic needs of students with learning difficulties have informed the pedagogic aims at mainstream schools. The pedagogies for inclusion, connective pedagogy and pedagogy for special needs stem from this parameter. Pedagogy for inclusion aims at making learning available to all students and involves them in the activities of mainstream classrooms (Florian, 2010). Inclusive pedagogy is a process through which the learners are actively and constantly engaged in learning (Nilholm and Alm, 2010). It is also defined as the teacher's skills, specialist knowledge and commitment to responding to the individual learning needs of all the students in mainstream classrooms (Florian and Black – Hawkins, 2011; Ahmed, 2012; Florian, 2014; Florian, 2019). Yet, for this to be so, the aims of the mainstream curriculum should be that enriched and differentiated classroom activities should be available in order to enable all students to meet and exceed their potential (Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Greenham, 2019). However, these differentiated practices should not be based on categories of learning and especially not on those negatively defined by the labelling of special needs, otherwise these students will be negatively stigmatized regarding what they can and should learn and what they can potentially achieve (Florian, 2014; Florian, 2019).

Connective pedagogy is a synonymous term of the pedagogy for inclusion, which was suggested by Corbett (2001). This terminology also highlights the necessity for students with learning difficulties to follow the mainstream curriculum and at the same time to be taught in the mainstream classroom, along with their non-labelled peers (Corbett and Norwich, 1999). Teachers can draw from different sources of teaching practices, either explicit or distinct that seem suitable to make the learning experience meaningful for all learners (Corbett, 1996). Teachers aim for students' active participation in mainstream classrooms, by recognizing the variation in students' learning styles and creating flexible activities associated with as many learning styles as possible (Liasidou, 2012). Therefore to implement the connective or pedagogy for inclusion in mainstream schools, there is

required a long term and strategic planning of funding and teacher training should be developed (Corbett, 2001).

Conversely, pedagogy for special needs education has been promoted according to the deficit position which suggests that the 'fault' is within the learner rather than within the pedagogical settings (Makoelle, 2014). In this sense, the needs of students with special needs or disabilities seem to be negatively 'different' from those of the average learners in mainstream classrooms (Florian, 2009). This premise is based on the notion that schooling systems are ordinarily designed to meet the needs of most learners, and consequently the few learners categorized as being at the tail end of the normal distribution are perceived to be in need of 'additional' and uniquely tailored practices (Florian, 2019). It is also suggested that distinct provisions are required to be provided to these students not only in terms of classroom practices, but also in relation to the aims of the curriculum, the setting for learning such as remedial teaching in the resource room and time availability (Lewis and Norwich, 2005).

As was expected, the general aim of mainstream schools, to promote high academic outcomes in order to be positioned highly in the ranking list, has also affected the design of the aforementioned typologies of pedagogy. This is in parallel to their aim to safeguard the inclusion of students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). Recognizing that the practices of special needs education were found to be successful or potentially effective in improving the academic outcomes of these students (Kavale, 2007), the approaches of these practices tended to be reproduced in those developed by the pedagogy for inclusion (Norwich, 2008). Even the differentiated practices of the mainstream curriculum tended to reproduce the marginalization of students with learning difficulties (ibid). This was when the differentiated practices tended to be assumed to be 'different' or 'additional' to the classroom practices (Florian, 2010) and when they were necessarily taught in a setting outside the mainstream classroom (Corbett and Norwich, 1999).

Summing up, it is important to highlight that research suggests there is no evidence of the use of a diverse repertoire of teaching approaches and learning strategies for students considered to have learning difficulties or disabilities (Corbett and Norwich, 1999; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2010; Liasidou, 2012). The lack of such empirical evidence can lead to doubts about whether a separate, distinct pedagogy for these students actually exists, or whether mainstream teachers erroneously believe such a pedagogy to be

necessary for effectively promoting the learning of these students, whose 'needs' are internalized as 'special' educational needs, in mainstream classrooms (ibid). This can be assumed to be the result of the persistent sense that special education means 'special' pedagogy (Lewis and Norwich, 2005).

The teaching and learning environment

As Loreman and Deppeler (2000) argued, students with learning difficulties also need educational support beyond that offered by the programme of a mainstream school, namely, they need educational assistance offered by a special teacher or a member of school personnel (e.g. an educational psychologist or a speech and language therapist) trained to offer them specialized support. Such specialized educational assistance should be offered by teachers to students with learning difficulties, in addition to the teaching of students with learning difficulties in mainstream classrooms (ibid). However, it is critical how teachers conceptualize the educational needs of students with learning difficulties, as this results in how they address issues of inclusion in mainstream classrooms (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011). In cases where mainstream teachers continue to perceive the learning difficulties of their students as special and in need of a pedagogy for special needs, they continue to work with what exists and can work for most learners alongside them, providing something 'additional' or 'differentiated' for those learners who are identified as having learning difficulties (ibid). By contrast, teachers who are in favour of a pedagogy for inclusion, aim to extend what is available for learning and to provide sufficient learning resources and opportunities for everyone to be involved in learning in mainstream classrooms (ibid). From these perspectives, it is apparent that such teaching practices have been developed to ensure the placement of students with learning difficulties in mainstream classrooms and to encourage their active participation in the learning process of their classrooms. However, in the first instance, the participation of these students is understood to have merely occurred by ensuring the physical placement of these students in mainstream classrooms.

As Boyle and Topping (2012) argued, it was difficult for teachers to develop inclusive teaching and learning practices in the mainstream classroom, if they had assumed that it was more difficult to adjust the aims of the curriculum to the needs of the students with learning difficulties. In this sense, individualized support aimed to be allocated to students diagnosed as having learning difficulties in the resource room, to hide the difficulty for teachers to reconcile the individual goals of students to the aims of the general curriculum

(Goodman and Bond, 1993). Individual educational plans (IEPs) were developed for the remedial teaching of these students in the resource room, since they were found to be effective in meeting the students' individual needs (Isaksson et al., 2007) and in helping them improve their academic performance in mainstream classrooms (Pawley and Tennant, 2008). Additionally, in the large-size classes of primary and secondary state schools, teachers assume that they do not have the time for individualized support and extra tasks for the students with learning difficulties (Avramidis et al, 2000; Westwood and Graham, 2003). It is also assumed that these students learn more slowly than their peers and that they need more time for practice and repetition in order to consolidate learning and to do the assessment tasks required by the curriculum (Lewis and Norwich, 2005). Therefore it is assumed that by supporting the needs of these students in mainstream classrooms, these students would receive an inferior quality of education than their peers, would be negatively stigmatised and their self-esteem would be possibly damaged (Loreman et al., 2010). Teachers also maintain that the learning of their classmates would be also negatively influenced (Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007). Teachers assumed that the teaching and learning process would be continuously disrupted by these students who would probably misbehave in order to hide their learning difficulties (Barton and Armstrong, 1999).

The practices which were suggested either by the pedagogy of inclusion or connective pedagogy, seem impractical and as a source of frustration for most teachers (Liasidou, 2012). However, there is also evidence which suggests that with such pedagogical strategies the individualised educational goals for these students can be both targeted in the course of teaching related to the mainstream curriculum (Loreman et al., 2010) and achieved effectively in mainstream classrooms (Jung, 2007). Teachers can consider the individual learning goals of students with learning difficulties, at the same time as they are planning the working material and activities of their classroom (Loreman et al., 2010). Assuming that teachers may not have enough time due to their heavy teaching responsibilities, it is not necessary to plan differentiated activities for these students in every lesson in the unit where they taught (ibid). It is also identified that the learning and the outcomes of the student peers cannot be affected negatively, when teachers use different practices, technologies and resources that aim to help all students to learn (Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Dyson and Kaplan, 2007). In such cases, the peer learning of the students with learning difficulties cannot be affected negatively, even when their teachers have to spend more time in supporting the targeted students (Richards and Armstrong, 2011).

At other times the teachers' beliefs in the possible disturbing behaviour of the target students seem to have been founded on myths (Loreman et al., 2010). Research evidence suggests that disruptive students have more time to disrupt and delay the beginning of the lesson during, and due to, the transitions from mainstream classrooms to the resource room and vice versa (Mitchell, 2014). Teachers' understanding of the learning difficulties of their target students is formed and affected according to the preconceived social and cultural attitudes related to the labelling of these students in terms of special educational needs and their difficulties in learning as disturbing in mainstream classrooms (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). Therefore, teachers have been made to feel anxious to teach these students and unqualified to manage their possibly disturbing behaviour in mainstream classrooms (ibid).

To sum up, providing withdrawal specialized assistance or remedial teaching for the students with learning difficulties is one of the many options available to ensure the inclusion of these students in mainstream classrooms. However, it is important to note that this should not be the only practice available in mainstreaming since then it would become restrictive towards the process of promoting teaching and learning practices according to the uniqueness of every student and their pre-existing knowledge (Richards and Armstrong, 2011). Other practices, which take place within the mainstream classrooms, have been also developed to support the placement and the participation of these students in the learning process of mainstream classrooms and they are subsequently discussed.

Curriculum and inclusion

The pedagogical strategies developed to promote inclusive education in mainstream classrooms rest also on the recognition of the needs of the students with learning difficulties, like every student, to access the aims and objectives of the mainstream curriculum (Richards and Armstrong, 2011). The access of students with learning difficulties in the mainstream curriculum has been restricted due to the preconceived understanding of their needs as in need of a distinct special pedagogy (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). However, acknowledging that the learning difficulties of these students may also arise or be exacerbated due to the inflexible teaching practices of the curriculum (ibid), there were formed adaptations and modifications of the mainstream curriculum to meet the difficulties in mainstream classrooms (Tennant, 2007).

An immediate and easy response of many educational systems towards the adaptations of the mainstream curriculum was the employment of support staff or differently of teaching assistants (TAs) (Cremin et al., 2005). However, the case of TAs is not an over-wide used practice, but can often be found within the mainstream schools of England (McVittie, 2005). The implementation of TAs in mainstream schools of England resulted from the Bullock Report and Warnock reports which recommended more in class support for the students categorised as having learning difficulties (Lorenz, 1996). TAs initially were used in order to enable all the learners and especially the students with learning difficulties to achieve the standards suggested by the mainstream curriculum (Arnaiz and Castejon, 2001; Lloyd, 2008). TAs are noted for their high level of job satisfaction and they are important as classroom auxiliaries (Anderson and Finney, 2008), however, they are mainly criticised for their presence in the classroom alongside the target students (Cremin et al., 2005).

TAs can be useful in developing inclusive classroom practices within mainstream classrooms by ensuring active participation in the lesson not only of the students considered as having learning difficulties (Ainscow, 2000), but also of all students (Forlin, 2001). The quality of teaching in the mainstream classroom can improve when the teachers provide clear guidance to the TAs and involve them in their teaching planning (Richards and Armstrong, 2011). Rose (2000) identified that the classroom teacher can have the overall responsibility for the whole class learning by switching roles with the TAs during a session. Therefore, the TAs can be both involved in supporting all the students deemed to have learning difficulties and the classroom teachers can be more involved with the individual needs of their target students in mainstream classrooms (ibid). However, TAs are criticized because their presence in mainstream classrooms alongside these students, is negatively stigmatising their learning difficulties (O' Rouke and Haughton, 2008; Blatchford et al, 2009). TAs were also criticised for isolating these students from their classmates and their teachers. This culminated in these students working only with their TAs in the mainstream classroom and their classroom teachers usually delegating their responsibility to the TAs (ibid). TAs are also criticized for helping these students to improve their achievements but they do not teach them how to learn (Papageorgiou et al., 2008). They do not promote understanding and improvement in the skills of their target students because they merely give them the answers (Blatchford et al., 2009).

Overall, TAs were used in order to merely ensure the physical participation of the students with learning difficulties in mainstream classrooms. However, in inclusive classrooms, the

students with learning difficulties should participate in the same activities as their classmates but which also incorporate their participation in the learning process. To do so, there can be developed activities that incorporate the personal interest of these students and examples from everyday life; activities that aim for the students to be involved in critical and problem solving tasks and to learn to use self- monitoring and self- correcting practices (Loreman et al., 2010). This would promote and construct knowledge that would be delivered to a wider range of learners in the classroom and the teaching materials and activities suggested by the curriculum are required to be differentiated (Mitchell, 2014).

Teaching and learning methods

This section discusses the instructional strategies and differentiated teaching and learning methods that can be used in mainstream classrooms to enhance the active participation of all the students in learning and which allow the teachers to support the students with learning difficulties to achieve their individual learning goals and the aims of the mainstream curriculum (Briggs, 2004).

Differentiation is used to help the students become independent learners and at the same time is considered as essential in a mixed ability-classroom since it saves time for the teacher in order to assist all the students in mainstream classrooms (Rapp and Arndt, 2012). The teaching materials can be differentiated in context, in the level of difficulty, in quantity and at the level of the outcomes (ibid). When teachers promote differentiated activities, they can use equally auditory, visual and kinaesthetic mechanisms in order to promote learning for the students with learning difficulties (Briggs, 2004). Research found that in such lessons the students with learning difficulties can achieve more and there are lower incidences of disruptive behaviour (ibid).When they are planning a differentiated lesson, teachers can use various sources relevant to their teaching subject and they should consider their students' likes-dislikes, their strengths and challenges in learning and their behaviour (Rapp and Arndt, 2012).

Nevertheless by differentiating activities for the students with learning difficulties, there is a risk of these students being marginalised and negatively stigmatised within mainstream classrooms, if they are always placed to work in equal ability, rather than, mixed-ability based groups (Corbett, 2001; Mitchell, 2014). Differentiation is a demanding process requiring careful consideration of the individual differences in learning styles and careful planning of classroom activities (Moran and Abbott, 2006). Differentiated material can

easily go in the wrong direction from planning (Rapp and Arndt, 2012), because when the staff is not experienced and committed to the differentiation process, it is unlikely they will promote good quality differentiated activities (ibid). For these reasons differentiation is considered by many teachers as an extremely intimidating process (ibid). The misunderstanding about the process of differentiation is that teachers are recommended to have many variations of a lesson, but it is not required to have as many variations as the students' number in the classroom (Corbett, 2001; Rapp and Arndt, 2012). It is also misunderstood that by withdrawing one or more students from the mainstream classroom in order to engage them in a different learning activity, this constitutes a form of segregation rather than of inclusion. Withdrawal support can be seen as inclusive if it is used as an alternative and additional to the inclusive teaching classroom practices (Corbett, 2001).

Giving direct instructions in the mainstream classroom, teachers aim for the active participation of the students in learning resulting also in fewer students with learning difficulties being withdrawn from a lesson and thus fewer students being stigmatized by their peers (Briggs, 2004). It was identified that the students with mild learning difficulties can learn more effectively when their teachers use direct instructions in the classroom (King and Sear, 1997). Giving direct instructions involves the teachers introducing the lesson and describing the strategies they use by giving additional demonstrations and using a step by step approach to promote the students' learning and understanding (Loreman et al., 2010). Instructions can also be addressed by asking frequent questions of different levels of complexity (ibid). However, there is a tendency to use didactic directed instructions, according to which teachers guide students to identify only the important information that should be based on their knowledge about the topic. Didactic directed instructions are used in the traditionally based educational systems whereas teachers focus on promoting high achievements for their students and also since these were identified as working effectively for large groups of students in mainstream classrooms (Vlachou, 2006).

Direct instructions can be effective, if they are given systematically, at a brisk pace, not very slow, not very fast, and they are explicit (Mitchell, 2014). Teachers can use objects and symbols that help their students to understand easily the topic (Briggs, 2004) and they can often repeat the key elements and provide clues in order to facilitate the students' response (Loreman et al., 2010). It is also important for teachers to allow sufficient time for students to actively respond to these instructions and also time to review and practise what

they have taught (Mitchell, 2014). Usually, teachers wait less than a second for the students' response and immediately after their answers, they ask the next question (ibid). The frequency of questioning, the length and the correction of the students' responses have resulted in no response from the students with learning difficulties or the 'I do not know' answers (ibid). It is important for the teaching and learning time to be organised in order to give sufficient and balanced individual and whole group instructions in mainstream classrooms (Loreman et al., 2010). Time can be saved if the teaching material is well prepared in advance of the lesson, if there is a limited transition time between lessons or activities and if there are established routines.

Organising teaching and learning for inclusion

In the teaching process of an inclusive classroom, it is important to keep a positive and motivating classroom environment with high and reasonable expectations for all students (Mitchell, 2014). It is important for teachers to promote the self-esteem of their students with learning difficulties by emphasising the areas they perform at a higher level (Norwich and Kelly, 2005), by giving them continual positive feedback, rewards and praise (Loreman et al., 2010) and by encouraging their students to finish what they started working collaboratively with their classmates (Briggs, 2004).

It was found that when the students work in groups or in pairs in mainstream classrooms, their self-esteem can be improved and all students despite their learning difficulties are encouraged to promote a positive attitude towards academic tasks (Loreman et al., 2010). As far as it concerns the students with mild learning difficulties, the participation of these students can increase particularly when they work in pairs or in small groups (Briggs, 2004); the students can participate more actively if they become more active listeners and they learn how to paraphrase other's ideas (Loreman et al., 2010); they have the chance to receive immediate support, feedback and encouragement from their classmates (ibid). It is also extremely beneficial for these students to work in mixed-ability groups rather than in identical ability groups (Briggs, 2004). In a mixed-ability group, the students with learning difficulties are challenged to develop their speaking, listening and thinking skills while their peers benefit from understanding what they learn and they become able to explain it in a simpler way to the others (ibid).

It was also identified that the ways of organising how the students are seated is also important for promoting an inclusive classroom environment but also to promote the

learning and the active participation of all the students. Students with learning difficulties are considered as better to be seated close to a good role model and away from distractions and desks should be free from extraneous materials (Mohir, 1995). Traditionally students are seated in rows of tables or desks, facing the teacher who provides the instructions and this seat organisation is more common in the secondary school classroom (ibid). The advantage of this seating plan is that all students face the teacher and the teachers are able to check that all the students are engaged in learning (McNamara and Waugh, 1993). However, students seating in this way can easily become passive recipients of knowledge (Woolfolk, 2001). A classroom which is set up in a traditional seating model, is especially a disadvantage for the students with various learning difficulties (ibid). These students are usually restricted to sit at the front, since it is assumed that under the continuous watchful gaze of the teacher, these students are more focused on learning, but at the same time students are isolated from the group of their peers. Students can interact only with the students sitting directly next to them, for socializing and support during the learning process of mainstream classrooms (ibid). The seat rows selected by the teachers contradicted to these students' selection. The students with learning difficulties commonly selected to sit on the back-row because they have lower academic self-esteem, they are disinterested and demotivated in participating in classroom activities. Therefore, students preferred sitting on the back rows because they can disengage without being detected by their teachers (Burda and Brooks, 1996).

Students' and teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning practices

By acknowledging that there are different types of learners, teachers are required to make constant and multiple decisions and adaptations about how to engage the students in learning and how to respond to their learning styles and learning difficulties each time that they appeared (Florian, 2008). It also recognised that the teachers' inclusive values can illuminate their practices as inclusive (Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012). According to a research undertaken in two Scottish primary schools in 2009, exploring the inclusive practices of classroom teachers, it was found that a teaching strategy was conceptualised as inclusive according to how it was used rather than by the nature of the strategy itself (ibid). Where there was research evidence on the design and the use of pedagogical approaches for inclusive education, a trend was also found which highlighted that teachers can work towards inclusive education in their own classroom and despite the restrictive structures of schooling, the constraints of the curriculum and the systems of assessment (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011, p.207). Teachers, who believe that all learners can

learn, can strategically plan their teaching practices to meet the difficulties their students will encounter in learning, without pre-determining the extent to which the students can engage in the lesson (Florian, 2014). It may be concluded that in the process of promoting inclusive teaching and learning practices, it is important to listen and acknowledge the voice and the experience of the teachers and the students with learning difficulties. For this reason, this section discusses the understanding of mainstream teachers and students with learning difficulties about inclusion and their experience of the teaching and learning process in mainstream classrooms. The students' voice in research regarding their educational experiences is virtually absent, even if they are well aware of the teaching practices and can describe them sensitively and consistently (Weinstein, 2004). For this reason, students' perceptions are presented first.

Research findings identified how the students' perceptions can be varied according to their experience of inclusive education, their understanding of their learning difficulties and their teachers' expectations for their learning. Briggs (2004) reported that students feel included in the mainstream classroom when their teachers are friendly with them, they spend time for them and they give them advice and demonstrate that they like them. It was also found that students generally like their teachers to have high expectations for their learning (Weinstein, 2004). However, in case of students with learning difficulties, research evidence suggested that these students felt they were treated differently by their teachers compared to the high achievers (ibid). Some students said that high achievers were more favoured by their teachers and they have more often positive feedback, while some others rejected that their teachers worked with the 'smart' students in the mainstream classroom, since they assumed that the 'smart' ones could work by themselves (ibid). A research about students with mild learning difficulties suggested that these students could identify their difficulties in learning subjects in mainstream classrooms and that they had either positive, negative or neutral/'not bothered' feelings about their learning difficulties (Norwich and Kelly, 2005). It was not surprising that some students expressed negative or mixed feelings about receiving specialised help in their classroom, considering the stigma that was attached to it (ibid).

Research undertaken by the Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers (Alliance Action, 2006) reported the perceptions of students with learning difficulties about the teachers' practices and adaptations in mainstream classrooms. This research presented the results of twenty studies conducted in the U.S. regarding the opinions of more than 4600 students with learning difficulties, aged from kindergarten to grade year twelve and

which covers a period of twenty two years (ibid). In this research, students highlighted that they felt included when their teachers encouraged and supported their active participation in the learning process of mainstream classrooms. For this reason the findings showed that the majority of students liked teachers to make adaptations in order to help them in mainstream classrooms, though they noted that their teachers applied infrequently such adaptations. They found adaptations extremely helpful if they were done to help them understand what was difficult in their textbooks and additionally when their teachers give them organised directions for their assignments. At the same time it is interesting how these students have internalised the low expectations of their teachers and thus they are made to believe that they are in need of distinctive teaching practices.

Accordingly to these research findings, students recognised that not every child can learn in the same way or at the same speed. Consequently, they underlined that they were really in favour when teachers explained the concept and assignments clearly, or taught the same material in different ways and slowed down instructions for them. They expected to have extra time for classroom activities in order to finish them in mainstream classrooms. They really enjoyed having a choice about their assignments and they expected the activities to be creative and easy, allowing them to be involved actively. By contrast to the previously noted research of Norwich and Kelly (2005), these students did not bother about their learning difficulties being identified in the classroom, thus they did not have any hesitation in asking for help either from their teachers or classmates or both and they were not bothered about working in pairs, in groups, alone or as a whole class. However, having in mind their low self-esteem, it was not surprising that these students preferred their teachers to put them in groups and especially in small groups. Finally, mainstream schools' expectations for high achievements made students see grades as a proof of their achievements. Thus they would like to be evaluated not only for their attainment but also for their effort to complete their assignments. To achieve in their assignments, they asked to know beforehand the grade criteria, the aims they have to achieve and the time for completion. To achieve in their homework exercises, they mentioned that they like their teachers to give them small amounts of homework and to give their homework exercises at the beginning of the lesson. They also preferred their teachers to help them starting homework exercises from the classroom, by giving them examples and explanations and feedback about their answers.

There is little accompanying research evidence regarding student perceptions about the educational practices of the resource room, since students with learning difficulties were

required to be educated in mainstream classrooms and with the mainstream curriculum. Klinger et al. (1998) reported the findings of a research taking place in U.S. regarding the perceptions of students with learning difficulties about teaching and learning in mainstream classrooms and the resource room. It was found that these students mainly preferred to be supported individually in the resource room because their exercises were easier and they could do activities which were impossible in mainstream classrooms and thus they had more free time (ibid). Students, who left their class to attend the resource room, missed the contents of the curriculum. Consequently it was found that these students when they return to their classroom after the resource room tuition, felt frustrated because they did not know what to do (ibid). On the other hand, there were students who found the activities in the resource room boring and they highlighted how important it was for them to be included in mainstream classrooms; they believed that they could learn more in mainstream classrooms, even if they had to try harder and they expected their teachers to help them doing their classroom activities (ibid). These research findings reveal the anxiety of students with learning difficulties to avoid being stigmatised because of their learning difficulties which continued to be perceived in terms of disability to learn. In the same way, it can be argued that the students' desire to be educated in mainstream classrooms is based on their endeavour for their learning needs to be perceived as close to the stereotypes of 'normality'.

Research was also conducted comparing students' achievements, behaviours and expectations in mainstream classrooms and the resource room. Weinstein (2004) found that when these students were being educated solely in mainstream classrooms, they were better accepted by their peers and their teachers rated fewer behavioural problems than those students whose difficulties were supported in the resource room. However, what is noteworthy is that there was no clear evidence suggesting that these students were isolated in mainstream classrooms because they attended the resource room (ibid). Additional evidence suggested that these students had higher self-esteem and were better accepted by their classmates in mainstream classrooms only if their classroom teachers believe in inclusion and for the need to adjust teaching practices to be inclusive (Jordan and Stanovich, 2001). Regarding the students' achievements, there was no evidence suggesting that these students academically benefited either in mainstream classrooms or the resource room (Weinstein, 2004). For these reasons, if students can equally benefit or be at risk of discrimination against them in both the resource room and in mainstream classrooms, it was suggested as beneficial to have a combination of practices used in both forms of support (ibid). According to this empirical evidence, it also revealed the low

expectations of teachers in mainstream schools of the labelled students and the concept of overlooking the learning needs of these students in order to promote social inclusion or higher achievements in mainstream schools.

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the adaptations and the pedagogical approaches that they can use to meet the learning difficulties of all the students in mainstream classrooms were formed by their schools' attitude towards inclusion (Rapp and Arndt, 2012). At schools which believed that all students can learn, teachers are encouraged and supported to promote inclusive practices (ibid). At schools which believed that some if not all the students can learn, then the mainstream classroom practices remain unchanged and integrative special needs oriented support practices are encouraged and cultivated in order to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties and to help them access the mainstream curriculum (ibid). Additionally, teachers' attitudes and preparation towards inclusion are also affected by their inclusive values (ibid). For example, those teachers and practitioners who do not believe in inclusion, suggest that these students should receive support in the resource room, since it is difficult for their teachers to support them more than two or three hours inside the classroom every week (Arnaiz and Castejon, 2001). Teachers believe that such support helped the students to achieve higher grades and they were facilitated to pass their school examinations (Papageorgiou et al., 2008). Conversely, those teachers who are in favour of inclusion consider the withdrawal support in the resource room as a short term solution, since it tends only to improve students' achievements rather than meeting their learning difficulties (Sanchez and Mejia, 2008). They believe that withdrawal support is less effective than the support provided in the classroom, especially when the support teachers are less experienced than the classroom teachers (ibid). Students could be stigmatized because withdrawal support tends to highlight the students' learning difficulties in relation to the aims of the mainstream curriculum (Giles, 2005).

The implementation of the practices usually used in mainstream classrooms, is affected by the teachers' interpretations of the notion of learning difficulties (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011). When learning difficulties are conceptualised negatively, focusing on the deficit of these students, teachers emphasise what they could or could not do for them, due to their lack of specialised training (ibid). Recognising the learning difficulties of these students in mainstream classrooms and the need for facilitating their learning, there are teachers who support the use of TAs in mainstream classrooms, whereas other teachers believe that these students could work on easier exercises in the resource room, without

being negatively stigmatised (O' Rourke and Haughton, 2006). Teachers believe on withdrawing these children from mainstream classrooms, since students are not missing out important classes or their favourite subjects (Vlachou, 2006) and because teachers are unaware how to differentiate the teaching and learning methods in mainstream classrooms (Loreman and Deppeler, 2000). In such a vein, teachers suggest that they do not have time for differentiations (Pearce and Forlin, 2005), since teachers are under pressure to cover the context materials required by the curriculum and needed for the students' examinations (Westwood and Graham, 2003). Furthermore, the subject teachers were found to be unwilling to differentiate their classroom activities (Tennant, 2007), unless they had greater access to already differentiated activities of the curriculum (Konza, 2008). The main reason could be attributed to teachers who considered is not worth spending extra time planning activities for students whose achievements would not be rewarded for all their efforts (ibid). Consequently, in the case of students with mild learning difficulties the teachers' time and effort usually remain on the level of instructional tolerance (ibid). Secondly, teachers' willingness was found to be based on the difficulty in balancing in mainstream classrooms, managing challenging behaviours and addressing the individual educational needs of these students (ibid).

Synopsizing research evidence, there are highlighted the barriers of promoting inclusive education in mainstream schools and more specifically teaching and learning practices that encourage the participation of students with learning difficulties in the learning process of mainstream classrooms. Barriers were constructed according to the negative stereotypes of the labelling of students with learning difficulties and the way or their ability to learn. These stereotypes have affected inclusive ethos in mainstream schools and the inclusive values of students and teachers. In such terms, the aims of inclusive education culminated in being the social inclusion of students with learning difficulties in mainstream classrooms and the increase of students' achievements in mainstream schools. Aligned with the above considerations, the following section discussed how the aforementioned stereotypes have formed the development of inclusive education for students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools of Cyprus and the implementation of pedagogical practices for inclusion.

Students' and teachers' voice regarding the implementation of inclusive education

According to the educational policies, inclusive thinking can be promoted by establishing the equal right of every learner to education. Inclusive teaching practices can be developed by building a common understanding among stakeholders, teachers and students of how inclusive and equitable systems work. In this sense, teachers are responsible for guiding and facilitating the learning of their students and for encouraging their students' active participation in lessons (UNESCO, 2015a). Accepting that inclusion is about identifying and addressing the barriers to learning, this also underlines the importance of listening to the students' and teachers' voice (Messiou, 2018). The term of 'voice' refers to the teachers' perspectives and opinions, as well as the students' thoughts and emotions, which need to be legitimized in order to ensure their active role in the promotion of inclusive education (Cook-Sather, 2007; Messiou, 2019). The need to listen to 'voices' in relation to inclusive education has been gaining ground over the last few years (Vlachou, 1997; Ainscow et al., 1999; Alan, 1999; Penrose et al., 2001; Rose and Shevlin, 2004). This is why the idea of engaging with the 'voice' of students and teachers has tended to be missing from many important policy documents such as the international Salamanca Statement (Messiou, 2019). Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that there is still a lot to be done to move beyond rhetoric, and to take action to apply what the teachers and students have suggested (Messiou, 2018).

Historically, teachers, school leaders, curriculum developers and policy makers used to have the more powerful voices (Bourke, 2016), while students used to have the most unfamiliar 'voice' in the field of education (Messiou, 2018). It took time to acknowledge that students are competent social actors in their own right (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008; Nelson, 2015; Mayes, 2016a; 2016b). Students are able to speak about their education, since their perspectives are derived from their particular experiences as students, which no adult can have (Rudduck et al., 1996; Pollard and Triggs, 2000; Flutter and Rudduck, 2004). First, students were seen as incapable of voicing their opinions, because they were assumed as 'vulnerable', incomplete beings and as in need of adults to protect them (Hargreaves, 1996; Mannion, 2007) and to decide on their behalf (Mannion, 2007). This is also the reason why many student voice initiatives are flawed at the outset in their constructions of childhood, either considering the students as young people who have nothing to contribute or as unable to sufficiently understand the educational reforms (Pearce and Wood, 2019). Secondly many student voice initiatives are flawed at the outset in their constructions of sustaining power relations that tended to privilege teachers' rather

than students' voice (Leach and Crisp, 2016). Teachers exert coercive power through the educational institutions, because they are expected to exert an expert and authoritative voice regarding the educative discourse of the school (Bragg, 2007; Lundy, 2007; Robinson, 2011; Anderson, 2015). Therefore, students need their teachers to relinquish power in order for their voice to be heard in the educational decision-making process (Mitra, 2008).

Student voice can be useful for effective school improvement and reform (Bragg, 2007; Anderson, 2015; Nelson, 2015). Students' voice can help to assess the effectiveness of teaching at schools (Fielding, 2001; MacBeath et al., 2001; Rudduck and Fielding, 2006; Rudduck, 2007). Students' views and feedback can help teachers to plan effective personalized activities (Rose and Shevlin, 2004; Bourke and Loveridge, 2014; Cook-Sather, 2014). The students' voice has been construed as a form of expertise that can develop teachers' teaching skills (Rudduck, 2006; Flutter, 2007; Cook-Satler, 2011). By listening to students' voice, teachers could improve things in their practices that would have remained unnoticed (Messiou, 2019). Additionally, student feedback can help teachers to recover some of their vocational and professional beliefs and values regarding students who used to be marginalized in mainstream schools (Chua, 2009). Students' views can help teachers to develop more student-centred classroom activities (Hargreaves, 2004; Messiou, 2018). Involving students in the designing of classroom activities, motivates the students' participation in the lessons, as well as raising their attainments (Rose et al., 1999; Czernawski and Kidd, 2011; Messiou et al., 2014). It can improve student behaviour in the lesson and encourage closer student-teacher relationships (Rose et al., 1999). Finally, students can also inform the decision-making regarding the reform of the educational policies (Cook-Sather, 2010; Mitra and Serriere, 2012). Particularly, a European project took place in schools in England, Portugal and Spain from 2011-2014, exploring strategies for teachers' development, and a second one took place in schools in Austria, Denmark, England, Portugal and Spain from 2017-2020, exploring the inclusive responses to students' diversity, highlighting how student voice can help in the reform of school practices to become more inclusive (Messiou, 2019). Increasing the sense of inclusion, increases the participation of students with learning difficulties in lessons and improves their skills of cooperation and their academic confidence (Keddie, 2015).

Teachers' voice continues to be neglected both in literature and in policy-making, though they are still more powerful than the marginalized voice of students (Gozali et al., 2017).

However, the voice of researchers and policy-makers continues to be the most dominant (Hargreaves, 1996; Ingersoll, 2007), despite teachers' voice being able to influence the students' learning outcomes and the process of teaching and learning (Hanushek, 2011; Gyrko, 2012). Defining the term teacher voice as the teachers' views and experience on educational policy and practice (Frost, 2008) and as the role they play in school restructuring and reform (Hargreaves, 1996), it is obvious that their professional knowledge is important for particular contextualized learning situations in the classrooms (Navarro, 1992). Teachers have the professional knowledge to respond in problem solving efforts related to issues of pedagogy and curriculum, lesson plans and units of study, student progress, assessment and achievement, classroom management, professional development and administrative concerns (Gyrko, 2012).

Moreover, teachers' voice appears to be the successful key for policy formation and implementation (Frost, 2008; Binder, 2012; Lefstein and Perath, 2014). Teachers can suggest what works in practice, connecting their practices with existing knowledge and with what is suggested by policy (Azorin and Ainscow, 2020). This is also the reason why teachers' development should primarily take place in the classroom, where teaching practices are developed. Teachers can help to develop a common language of practice which will allow them to reflect on their practices, thinking and actions and how to improve the plan for inclusion in their school settings (ibid). By involving teachers in the policy-making process, they also become better implementers of policy, since this increases their sense of ownership and responsibility for the outcomes (Heneveld, 2007; Bangs and Frost, 2012). Being involved in decision making erodes their resistance, increases their trust in policy-makers (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2011) and creates a stronger overall inclusive school climate (Kahlenberg and Potter, 2015). Teachers' experiences can also inform their training regarding how they can respond effectively to the learning needs of their students with learning difficulties (Messiou and Ainscow, 2015). Higher levels of teachers' voice have been associated with increased student achievement, as well as fewer reports of student misbehaviour (Ingersoll, 2007; Gyrko, 2012; Kahlenberg and Potter, 2015).

As far as it concerns the students' voice, there are some concerns regarding how students' voices fail to enhance the status and positioning of students in schooling power relations (Mayes et al., 2017; Nelson, 2017). Students tend to be seen as a source of data (Fielding, 2012), which aims to control the quality of the teaching practices (Herriot, 2013). In this sense, students are the assessors of teaching effectiveness (Keddie, 2015; Lingard et al., 2017; Charteris and Smardon, 2019), providing information for the improvement of school

practices without being actively engaged in a dialogue with those participating in decision-making (Fielding, 2004; Lodge, 2005). It is very rare for students to be invited as partners in policy, governance and curriculum decision-making (Charteris and Smardon, 2019). They are mainly passive informants and consumers, providing feedback on the quality of provisions and services at the school (ibid). However, if it is needed to personalise pedagogy, curriculum and assessment to students' needs, it is important to acknowledge them as 'experts' in their own learning, and thus as authoritative decision makers (ibid). This means that teachers should enable their students to make pedagogical and governance decisions, by giving space for their voice to be heard, and they should be prepared to reflect upon and honour the choices of their students (ibid).

Bearing in mind that schools, which are market oriented, tend to perceive their students as 'consumers' of knowledge, they seem to be more interested in asking their students if they are satisfied with the school services and provisions. Students are rarely asked about pedagogical reforms (Thomson, 2011). For the same reason, students' views concerning the improvement of school practices are mainly related to student performance (Smyth, 2012; Brasof, 2015). In many contexts, teachers are under pressure to raise their students' results in standardized assessments (Ball, 2003), while teachers are significantly less tolerant of students with particular learning or behavioural needs (Rustique-Forester, 2005). These reinforced existing categories of 'problematic' students who must take individual responsibility for lowering the standardised assessments of their schooling (Braggs, 2007). Thus, in practice the voice of the low performing students are further marginalised in the decision making process (Rustique-Forester, 2005; Rudduck, 2006; Nelson, 2015). Additionally, it is easier to silence the students' voice who are challenging the status quo of schools (MacBeath, 2006, Taylor and Robinson, 2009; Cook-Sather, 2014; Ainscow and Messiou, 2018; Messiou and Ainscow, 2020), or contradicting to the teachers' granted assumptions (Messiou, 2019). Students, who are less privileged, less confident and less engaged in lessons, tend to be less talkative, since they feared the repercussions of threatening their teachers' authority (Pearce and Wood, 2019). At the same time, teachers tend to tokenize these students' views against those who are perceived as 'good, gifted and talented' (Rudduck, 2007; Arnot and Reay, 2007; Thomson, 2011). Finally, it is also observed that there is little follow up to the student voice (Thomson, 2011), since it takes time for teachers to respond effectively to students' suggestions (Messiou, 2019). Teachers tended to be involved in a period of discomfort, especially when they aim to combine their traditional teacher-centred practices with what

the students have suggested as being effective for meeting their diverse learning needs in the mainstream classroom (ibid).

The case of Cyprus

After the implementation of the law of 1999 by MOEC, various researches about the development of inclusive education have taken place at public mainstream primary and secondary schools in Cyprus (Phtiaka, 2003; Angelides et al., 2009; Symeonidou, 2002; 2018; Charalampous and Papademetriou, 2018). The empirical evidence pointed out how the needs of the students with learning difficulties were understood by the mainstream teachers and it highlighted the barriers of developing pedagogical practices which promote the learning of all the students despite their difficulties in mainstream classrooms.

Firstly, it identified that the needs of the students labelled as having special needs and disabilities were considered with empathy and compassion by the teachers in mainstream primary schools of Cyprus (Symeonidou, 2002). The learning difficulties of these students, considered as in need of special resources were defined according to the diagnosis of the medical model and they are allocated to schools by MOEC and supported by the funding from the Radiomathon, the biggest annual charity that is organized in Cyprus (Phtiaka, 2003; Symeonidou, 2018). However, Phtiaka (1999b) reported that although the aim of Radiomathon was to support financially the people with disabilities and special needs in schools, it also resulted in raising the social conscience to offer money for them. The idea of inclusive education was delayed from development at mainstream schools due to the priority of the Cypriot educational system to promote the Greek identity of being Cypriot through the Greek Orthodox church and Greek history and civilization, that arose after the Turkish invasion of the island in 1974 (Liasidou, 2008). In such a vein, Liasidou (2008) also pointed out that even though inclusive education was implemented at mainstream schools, the Cypriot educational system failed initially to acknowledge the human rights of the people with special needs and disabilities to equality and participation in mainstreaming. This might also be a reason why the philosophy of inclusive education is not reflected adequately in the mainstream curriculum. The rights of disabled people are usually omitted or silenced when designing the aims of the mainstream curriculum. There are only incidental references regarding how teachers can help disabled people to meet the aims of the curriculum (Symeonidou and Mavrou, 2014). Additionally, the current policies on inclusion mainly focus on the traditional mechanisms of identifying the 'special needs' of

students, rather than on supporting them to meet the aims of the curriculum (Strogilos et al., 2017). In this way, the needs of students with special needs are seen as 'surplus' and against those of their non-disabled peers (ibid).

Secondly, in the process of promoting inclusive education in Cypriot mainstream schools, there was also identified the dominant position of the professionals of special needs education, who also made the parents and students accept unquestionably the negative labels of special needs (Liasidou, 2006; Angelides et al., 2009). What is also interesting is that the 'specialist' professionals were found to claim permanency and favourable conditions for their career advancement in mainstream schools, even though they are considered as inhibiting the restructuring of education towards inclusion (Liasidou, 2006). The special needs professionals were found to persuade teachers to be afraid of the labels of special needs education and were made to believe that they were required to have 'specialist' training in order to teach these students (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Angelides and Michailidou, 2007; Symeonidou, 2017). Additionally, the labels of special needs education made teachers internalize the idea that the labelled students were less academically able, and this inevitably impeded the development of mainstream classroom adaptations (Mamas, 2013) and also eliminated the participation of these students in the learning process of mainstream classrooms (Mamas, 2012).

Thirdly, the research findings from the Cypriot primary schools suggested that initially teachers believed it difficult to develop teaching and learning practices for inclusive education, due to the fact that all the textbooks and the resources are delivered to schools by the MOEC (Angelides, 2004). Similarly, the teachers at the Cypriot mainstream secondary schools were also found to believe it as restrictive to promote inclusive teaching and learning strategies in mainstream classrooms due to the inflexibility of the traditional textbooks and the inflexibility of the curriculum (Kofou, 2004). Additionally, it was found that teachers are mainly focused on promoting the social inclusion of the children labelled as having special needs, due to the lack of specialised training (Kofou, 2004; Koutrouba et al, 2006). More specifically, the majority of teachers in Cyprus were found to believe that they were inadequately trained to teach these students (Angelides et al., 2004) and they highlighted the need to be provided with, and to participate in, an appropriate training and professional course on special needs education (Koutrouba et al., 2006; Nicolaidou et al., 2006). In line with this, teachers also criticised as inadequate the compulsory module which was added to their initial training and which aims to make them more effective in teaching these students in the mainstream classroom (Symeonidou, 2002). It also

identified that a limited number of seminars regarding special needs and inclusive education are organised in Cyprus and thus it was found that the majority of mainstream teachers have never attended any of these (Angelides et al., 2004). Teachers also lacked training regarding how to adapt more student-centre practices, such as how to incorporate differentiated materials (Strogilos et al., 2017) and ICT in relation to an inclusive education (Mavrou, 2012). This was also the reason why Greek primary teachers assumed that they lacked training in co-teaching and collaborating with teaching assistants in mainstream classrooms (Strogilos et al., 2017).

Finally, it was established that the teachers in Cypriot mainstream primary schools did not differentiate their teaching materials, since they considered them as an additional burden and that these practices are extremely difficult to develop and hard to be implemented in mainstreaming schools (Vlachou, 1997; Angelides et al., 2004). The participant teachers confessed that they hesitated to adapt their teaching practices because they believe that the academic performance of others in the classroom would be lowered because of the attention that teachers would pay to the children with learning difficulties (Angelides et al., 2004). Teachers also tended to consider it difficult to differentiate their teaching practices due to the large number of students in the classroom and the pressure to cover the materials required by the curriculum (Strogilos et al., 2017). Additionally, from the research undertaken in Cypriot primary schools, it was also identified that the development of differentiated instructions in the mainstream classroom was hindered by the institutional framework related to the provision of special education in Cyprus (Charalampous and Papademetriou, 2018). Students with special needs tended to be withdrawn from their classes in order to receive support (Mamas, 2013). By contrast, in the limited cases where teachers differentiated their practices, they did so according to their personal experience and their practices which aimed for students with learning difficulties to be socializing in the classroom (Angelides and Michailidou, 2007). Few teachers appeared to understand differentiation as a context-oriented approach, which would have facilitated these students in accessing the mainstream curriculum (Angelides and Michailidou, 2007; Strogilos et al., 2017). Angelides et al. (2004) reported that, in general, little support was provided to either able or less able students in mainstream classrooms, since there was no differentiated material available to the teachers. In accordance with this, from research undertaken in a primary school, almost half of the participant teachers confirmed that they could not effectively teach the target students in the mainstream classroom because of the lack of resources (Koutrouba et al., 2006).

To sum up, most research in the field of inclusive education has taken place in mainstream primary schools in Cyprus. Limited research was found which involved students with learning difficulties and especially those with mild learning difficulties or their classmates. In cases where students with learning difficulties participated in the research, they were asked about socializing in the mainstream school and their relationships with their classmates and teachers. Their classmates, when interviewed, explained what they believe about the learning difficulties of these students and whether they had developed friendships with them (Koutrouba et al., 2006; Nicolaidou et al., 2006). Particularly, in research undertaken in Cypriot primary schools by Mamas (2013), it was found that these students felt marginalized as a result of their withdrawal support, though their teachers tended to describe this practice as being inclusive. Students with learning difficulties were rarely asked about their experience of the teaching and learning process in the mainstream classroom and the resource room, and what they liked their teachers to do in order to meet their needs and to involve them in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. A research undertaken in Cypriot primary schools (Papademetriou and Charalampous, 2019) indicated that differentiated teaching was minimal. Pupils tended to ask their teachers to write down the worksheet responses so that all the students would have time to complete their exercises, without feeling stressed, because they found it difficult. Pupils also suggested that they liked to have extra resources in the classroom with the basic elements of the theory and grammar rules which had to be taught in each lesson. Mainstream teachers were not or were rarely asked what they believed about various practices identified in the literature as being ideal for promoting the learning of all students in the mainstream classroom. They were not asked to propose practices that they already used or may use in future to promote inclusive education in their classrooms. Therefore, these are some of the issues that this current research study aims to contribute to the field of inclusive education in Cyprus.

2.6.SUMMARY

In this literature review I explored the complexity of promoting and developing inclusive education at mainstream schools. Even though, inclusive education theoretically has been developed to assure the equity and participation of students with learning difficulties in mainstreaming, in practice it has resulted in meaning the integration of the target population in mainstream schools (Florian, 2019). Teachers in the majority did not change their teaching and learning practices to meet the needs of all students in the learning process of the mainstream classroom, since the learning difficulties of the students

continued to be defined in terms of what these students are able or disabled to do (Waitoller and Subini, 2017). Therefore, the educational difficulties of these students continued to be perceived by the practitioners as 'special' or as 'additional' in mainstream schools (Finkelstein et al., 2019). In contrasting cases where the teachers have changed their practices to be more inclusive, there was identified a tendency among the teachers to simply reproduce the practices of segregated special needs education (Smyth et al., 2014). Even in those cases, the pedagogical strategies for inclusion tend to be perceived as additional to the common classroom practices and thus, teachers were found not to use adaptations systematically (Florian, 2008).

Teachers tend to see 'dilemmas' in the implementation of such teaching and learning methods for inclusion (Norwich, 2008; 2019). 'Dilemmas which are found, can vary according to the teachers' inclusive values and their beliefs in the learning of these students (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011). Despite the teachers' dilemmas, I have presented empirical evidence, which claims that the teaching and learning methods used to meet the learning needs of all students in mainstream classrooms are not significantly different from traditional ones (Florian and Black- Hawkins, 2011; Florian, 2014). It also found that teachers can meet the learning difficulties of students in mainstream classrooms, regardless of the often restrictive structures of schooling (O'Hanlon, 2003; Hart et al, 2004; Skidmore, 2004; Ainscow et al., 2006; Black-Hawkins et al, 2007; Finkelstein et al., 2019). Research reveals that mainstream teachers are free to implement teaching and learning methods for inclusion in their classroom, and students are able to evaluate and express what they want for their learning (Florian and Black- Hawkins, 2011; Greenham, 2019).

I have also pointed out that labelling, which tends to reproduce negative stereotypes regarding the learning difficulties of these students in mainstream schooling, affects both the way the students see themselves and the way teachers perceive their students' difficulties (Link and Phelan, 2001; Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). Particularly, maladaptive attributional profiles tend to be forced on students with learning difficulties because of their teachers' institutional adaptations (Schuh, 2003), which are still produced on the premise of students' labels and deficits rather than their potentials (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011; Florian, 2019). From these analytical points, there can be identified the presumptions associated with the implementation of inclusive educational policies in mainstream schools and the teaching and learning practices for all learners in mainstream classrooms. These positions are qualified in this research case study, which has been

developed to explore how the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties are and could be (better), supported in the mainstream classroom of public Cypriot secondary schools.

From the review so far, it is obvious that in the international literature and specifically, in the context of Cyprus, there is only limited research evidence regarding what constitutes an 'inclusive pedagogy'. Considering that an 'inclusive' pedagogy is associated with encompassing beliefs and conceptions about what constitutes inclusive teaching and learning (Florian, 2019), this highlights the need for more intense and focused exploration of the teaching and learning processes in mainstream classrooms. To achieve this, it is important to explore the practices which are perceived to be as 'inclusive' by mainstream teachers and students with learning difficulties. However, it is worth noting that there is limited evidence regarding teacher and student perceptions about 'inclusive' teaching and learning practices in mainstream classrooms. In the Cypriot context, there is no equivalent research evidence that informs both the perceptions of teachers of Modern Greek language and of students with mild learning difficulties about the teaching and learning practices in the mainstream classroom and the resource room at public secondary schools.

Moreover, the evidence derived from other recent studies in the field of inclusive education highlighted the difficulties that teachers have to overcome in order to implement 'inclusive' teaching and learning practices or the reasons that seem to have restricted mainstream classroom adaptations. The labels and culturally constructed stereotypes of special needs education are among the reasons why the promotion of inclusive teaching and learning practices has been restricted in mainstream schools. Similarly, teachers' inclusive values and beliefs have affected their attitudes towards these students' learning needs. As far as concerns the case of Cyprus, there is some limited evidence regarding how the labels and culturally constructed stereotypes of special needs education have restricted the promotion of inclusive teaching and learning practices, and the difficulties that primary teachers have to overcome in mainstream classrooms. To add to this debate, regarding the dilemmas of promoting inclusive mainstream classroom adaptations, it is also important to further explore the difficulties that Cypriot secondary teachers have to overcome and to identify the restrictions imposed by their presumptions about the learning needs of students labelled as having learning difficulties. The methodology of the study is further discussed in the following chapter.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. OVERVIEW

Inclusive education was primarily developed, to support learning for all students with learning difficulties and this is thought to require their inclusion and active participation in the teaching and learning process of mainstream classrooms (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). This implies that the students should have been able to choose the resources to direct their own learning and the teachers should have designed learning activities that support the students' participation in the mainstream classroom (Booth and Ainscow, 2002). At the same time, it highlighted that the policy-makers should have been listening to the 'voice' of students and teachers during the design of inclusive educational policies in mainstream schools (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). However, in most countries including the U.K and Cyprus, the practical knowledge of teachers (Pollard et al., 2000) and the students' experience and understanding, often tended to be ignored (Rodgers, 2006), although they were included among the diverse policy actors, who were involved in the enactment of inclusive education policy in schools (Braun et al., 2010).

More specifically, teachers were expected to make changes to improve the education for all, though they were not actively engaged in the decision making process (Heneveld, 2007). They tended to be the object of the educational reforms (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2011), since the stake holders considered them as being the cause of the problems facing the schools in recent times (Ingersoll, 2007). However, it is important to mention that policies are not generic methods that teachers can be trained to follow religiously (Navarro, 1992). Change will not happen by telling teachers what to do in their classroom (ibid). Additionally, by devaluing the teachers' voice in policy making, this resulted in the teachers becoming increasingly suspicious and resistant towards the education reforms which were made for them (Binder, 2012). In this sense, it is important to invite the teachers' experiences and knowledge in the decision making and the implementation of policies at schools, since they can best relate what works well for teaching and learning, as opposed to, supplementing at least, what is found in theoretical journals and policy oriented reports, rather than what is implied theoretically to be the goals and aims of the curriculum (Rodgers, 2006). Similarly, labelling the students as having learning difficulties prevents others from listening to their experiences and knowledge (Veck, 2009). However, the students individually and collectively are able to speak up about their education; students see schools as no adult does or can and thus their experiences are particularly important

to suggest what works well for their teaching and learning (Rudduck et al., 1996; Pollard and Triggs, 2000; Flutter and Rudduck, 2004). Therefore, bearing in mind that ignoring the 'voice' of teachers and students was problematic for the successful implementation of the inclusive educational policies, this study pays special attention to the experiences and insights of teachers and students.

The objectives and the research questions are essential in the choice of the methodology and the methods of this research (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). As discussed below, this research study called for an ethnographic case study within the interpretive qualitative paradigm.

This research study aims to explore 'inclusive' mainstream classroom teaching and learning practices in Cypriot secondary schools. Thus the objectives of the study are:

1. To explore teachers' perceptions and the experiences of students with mild learning difficulties about the withdrawal model of 'inclusive education' in mainstream Cypriot public secondary schools.
2. To indicate teachers' and students' perceptions of how the learning needs of students with learning difficulties might be better met within the mainstream classroom.

My three research questions are:

1. How are the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties being supported in the mainstream classroom of public secondary schools of Cyprus?
2. Can partial withdrawal from the mainstream classroom be considered 'inclusive' educational practice, and how is this practice seen in the eyes of teachers and students?
3. What changes might be necessary in order to best support the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties within the mainstream classroom in Cyprus?

In the following sections, I discuss my research approach and research design, explaining how the schools were selected, the sample chosen, and how the data collection and

analysis were carried out. The final sections include a discussion of the ethical considerations and the limitations of my approach.

3.2. RESEARCH APPROACH

An interpretive paradigm

This thesis follows an interpretive paradigm (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012; Sheppard, 2012; Rubin and Babbie, 2013). I do not have space to do justice to this large and complicated subject, but, for my purposes, I will assume that, under this paradigm, all the observations and claims of the researcher amount to an interpretation of what is seen or claimed; that there is no interpretation-free observation or claim. Working within an interpretive paradigm requires the researcher to undertake a detailed exploration of the beliefs and understanding of participants (Cohen et al., 2018), regarding the events and practices which take place in particular contexts (Wellington, 1996), along with those events and practices that are acknowledged by participants as important (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). This is necessary if the researcher is to aim at explaining their 'social world from their point of view' (Bryman, 2016,p.26).

Accepting their 'multiple realities' leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the situation under study (Morehouse, 2011). The researcher needs to identify and to acknowledge their subjective meanings, to understand and reconstruct them without distorting them (Goldkuhl, 2012). Therefore, I follow Bryman in offering three levels of interpretation: first, 'participants' interpretations of the world'; second, the researcher's interpretation of the others' interpretations; and, third, the researcher's interpretations are then 'further interpreted in terms of concepts, theories, and literature of a discipline' (ibid:28). At the same time, the researcher's impact on data interpretation seems to be unavoidable, considering that the empirical data generation is a process of subjective meanings, being socially constructed by the researcher and the participants (Walsham, 1995). Therefore, it is important to clearly explain the process used for the data interpretation (Willis, 2013); The researcher's influence on the data interpretation is further discussed (see section 3.8: Reflexivity, p.120). Interpretivism relies on qualitative research, which also focuses on exploring and understanding the participants' perceptions attributed to a social 'problem' (Creswell,2013). The qualitative study focuses on understanding the meanings that the participants attach to the topic under study (ibid).This contrasts with quantitative research which focuses on conceptualizing reality in terms of variables and it

studies the relations between these variables by testing them and by analyzing them in forms of numbers (ibid). Hence, a qualitative framework is appropriate for this study that seeks understandings and experiences of a particular group of students and teachers. Qualitative research takes place at the sites where the participants experience the issues under study and it allows the researcher to generate data by talking directly to people and seeing them act within their context (ibid). Therefore, this study was conducted in mainstream and resource room classrooms where the students with mild learning difficulties are taught and received support. Additionally, this research framework enables the provision of sufficient evidence to explain and understand the complexity of a situation (Perecman and Curran, 2006; Creswell, 2018), because it allows an exploration of how the participants behave within particular environments (Merriam and Associates, 2002; Creswell, 2018) and an understanding of how this environment has affected their perspectives (Creswell, 2018). I aimed to explore how participants' views regarding the mainstream classroom teaching and learning adaptations, are informed by their experiences of the students being partially withdrawn to receive support in the resource room. My qualitative approach puts emphasis on the 'voice' of participants (Creswell, 2013), highlighting their perceptions and understanding of the topic under investigation (Merriam and Associates, 2002; Creswell, 2014). I sought to acknowledge the meanings given by the participants to their 'multiple realities' and to be prepared to acknowledge all of them, and not pre-judge their merits or otherwise (Creswell, 2014).

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

An Ethnographic case study

A research design is the logical plan that connects the set of research questions to their conclusions (Yin, 2018). To answer the research questions of this study is needed to collect data which describe both the context within which the inclusive education took place and explore both the teachers' and students' understanding and perspectives of how inclusive education is implemented. Accordingly, an ethnographic case study design was selected, which allows an in-depth exploration of a particular project or programme, aspiring to understand the 'case' in relation to a theory or theories of culture in its socio-cultural context (Simons, 2009,p.13). This design enables the researcher to select the most appropriate methods that give space to the participants to define freely what they believe and how they experience and understand the 'emic issues' of the 'case' under study (Algozzine and Hancock, 2006; Cohen et al., 2018). It also allows the participant's

presuppositions and prejudice to be determined and discussed (Langdrige, 2007; Maso, 2001, in Atkinson et al., 2001), the researcher's familiarity with the 'case' and the context's values which have informed their interpretations of the 'case' they have experienced (Le Compte and Schensul, 2013; Perecman and Curran, 2006).

An ethnographic case study focuses on a specific project or programme, which can be investigated in different research sites and in different timescales and uses qualitative methods, but draws on a wider range of methods than in classic ethnography (Simons, 2009, p.13). As in classic ethnography, it enables the researcher to describe the unique behaviour and belief of the participants which are common to the schools involved in the 'case' (Hammersley, 1992; 2006) and to discern the patterns that explain the specific characteristics of the culture, represented by the population of the study (Angrosino, 2011; Walford, 2007). However, unlike traditional ethnography, an ethnographic case study can explore at first-hand what people say and do in a particular context, without spending an extensive time observing the participants (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). As in classic case studies, it allows an in-depth understanding of the issues of the 'case' (Yin, 2018; Flyvbjerg, 2006), the 'case' patterns of complexity and of how these are related to each other (Yin, 2012). But an ethnographic case study design allows the researcher to focus on different fieldwork sites within the single case rather than conceive of these as cases-within-the-case or embedded units of analysis (Yin, 2014) as in classic case studies. Therefore, an ethnographic case study has been selected because it allows the exploration of both the implementation of inclusive education at schools in a single case, but also focuses on describing the belief and behaviours of teachers and students which have restricted the development of (more) inclusive teaching practices within this socio-cultural context, more often associated with ethnography. In this study, following Gary Thomas (2011), the subject of the study will be the case itself, that is the 'inclusive' practice model enacted in one large Cypriot city, while the object of the study is the wider theory and discourse around Inclusive Education.

Exploring the interactions of the 'object' and the 'subject' of the study allows an in-depth exploration of those events and human relationships, which are specifically grounded in a discrete and unique, organizational environment such as a school (Gillham, 2000). It allows unfolding and explaining the complexities of a given situation (Meyer, 2001; Yin, 2003). It also enables exploring and understanding how these environments operate, the ways in which they control the context of a case and what needs to be done to change things in the under study settings (Gillham, 2000). Thus for the purpose of this study, it

seems central to explore the coordinators' and teachers' perspectives and the students' experience of the partial withdrawal support. This would reveal the impact of the withdrawal support on the coordinators' and teachers' inclusive ethos and the students' understanding of their learning needs and how these beliefs affected the development of inclusive mainstream classroom teaching practices.

Ethnographic case studies similar to classic case studies can be criticized for being generalizable only in the particular context they explore and not to other populations or universes (Gillham, 2000; Yin, 2018). However, Flyvbjerg (2006) suggested that it is possible for a researcher to generalise based on a single case, if the chosen 'case' is representative of the larger population. Therefore, a case can be used as a supplement or alternative to other methods to the development of generalisations. It also highlights that the knowledge produced in a 'case' can be transferable to other cases, even when its results are not formally generalizable to the larger population, which is under study (ibid). In this sense, case studies can also enable analytical generalizations (Yin, 2013). The findings of a case study can be transferable to other similar cases and generalizable to cases with similar theoretical conditions (ibid). Having these in mind, it acknowledges the possibility of this research study drawing contextual generalizations from Cypriot participant schools, sharing similar characteristics with the instance studied.

Defining my ethnographic case study

This ethnographic case study has been conducted in the third largest city in population in Cyprus, because it has a high number of schools and its schools are considered representatives of the average Cypriot public mainstream secondary schools. Three public mainstream secondary school sites were selected (see section 3.4,p.96), which were coded as Aristotelio, Protagorio and Thalia, for ethical reasons, in order not to be identified.

'Inclusive education' has been implemented in mainstream schools of Cyprus under the prism of the MOEC Policy that was implemented in Cypriot schools in 2001. The Cypriot schools are highly controlled by MOEC (British Council,1983; Schwartzman,1990; Angelides and Michailidou,2007), thus it was expected that the suggested MOEC Policy would be implemented in a standard way across all Cypriot schools. Particularly, the chosen schools are both 'good examples' and 'classic exemplars' of the MOEC Policy and

what are deemed inclusive practices. Each of the three schools had participated in a MOEC innovative curriculum pilot study and are similarly 'representative' in the way the MOEC policy is implemented. Similar to the average Cypriot state schools, the three schools are all mixed-sex schools with students aged twelve to fifteen years, with an equal balance of genders and are receiving the same resources from the MOEC. The students with mild learning difficulties are withdrawn from the same lessons in the mainstream classroom, five times per week to receive support in the resource room. The teachers who teach in the resource room are also those who teach these students in mainstream classrooms. Students were provided with the same curriculum of thirty- five hours per week. Despite that, the teaching periods were divided differently within the day in the three schools, but they did not exceed or fall behind the teaching hours required in any of the average Cypriot state secondary mainstream schools. In Aristotelio students were taught eight periods of forty minutes every day, while in Protagorio and Thalia students were only taught eight periods every Monday and Thursday and seven periods per day during the rest of the week.

The chosen schools are the three biggest in the city centre. This meant that access would be easily gained to a larger number of students with mild learning difficulties. At Cypriot schools, only a limited number of students are officially registered as having mild learning difficulties and it is not always possible to access all of them in one school. Conducting this study in more than one school also enabled access to teachers with a wider range of experience and training in 'special needs' education. The experience of the coordinators, the teachers and the students with mild learning difficulties regarding the withdrawal support and their understanding of the notion of inclusive education are believed to have a great impact on how inclusive education is implemented in Cypriot mainstream schools. Therefore, this study is aimed to illuminate how each group (a) the coordinators and teachers, (b) the students has understood and realized the implementation of inclusive education, as well as to identify both similar and different perspectives among the two participant groups.

3.4. SAMPLING AND SAMPLE

In this study a purposeful sample was used, because it allows selecting detailed information relevant to the 'case' under study and especially regarding issues of central importance to answer the research questions of the study (Patton,2015). This sample strategy is more common in qualitative case study research (Kumar,2011) and especially

for those with a limited group of population (Check and Schutt,2012) such as the students with mild learning difficulties. A purposive sample is one selected according to the researcher's judgments, in order to select participants with those particular characteristics that best satisfy the requirements for the study (Robson, 2002; Cohen et al., 2018). According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), the criterion for this sampling strategy is to select informants' knowledge about the situation, who are willing to talk. Therefore, for this study the purposeful typical case sampling strategy followed, because it allows a normal distribution of characteristics from which to identify 'average' examples. These cases can be selected from a demographic analysis of 'averages' and with the cooperation of the program staff (Patton, 2015).

Sample

For the final decision about the school selection, it helped to establish the number of students officially registered as having mild learning difficulties and withdrawn for support in the resource room. Schools of the same district were chosen due to time constraints, distance factors and expenses. The study was conducted at state schools rather than at private ones because private schools are atypical in Cypriot education, where the private sector is small (OECD, 1997). The same criteria were followed for the selection of all schools (see appendix:A.13,p.364). To access the schools, it helped that at one of them I had previously done some supply teaching, whereas at the other two schools I had a teacher friend who could introduce me.

The 'knowledgeable participants' that could provide relevant information were both the teachers and the students, since the same issues were explored from their different perspective angles. The coordinators, the teachers and the students were asked to be voluntarily involved in the study. The invited teachers had to be experienced in teaching the students with mild learning difficulties in the mainstream classroom and to be those who support them in the resource room. Additionally, special attention was paid in order to ensure those characteristics of the sample that determine what is typical for the teachers' sample (Check and Shutt, 2012). It was checked that the participant teachers represent the most common training in the field of 'special needs'/ inclusive education; Seven teachers are highly experienced, two are very experienced and two are adequately experienced at teaching students with mild learning difficulties. The students had to have been officially diagnosed as having mild learning difficulties. Students were selected from the teachers' group list, but again their participation in the study was voluntary. It was

aimed to select students with the most common mild learning difficulties that can be seen in mainstream secondary classrooms and the behaviour and interests represent the average of Cypriot student characteristics at secondary mainstream schools. The students with profound learning difficulties were not invited to participate in the study because these students are taught in a 'special unit' within the mainstream school and follow a more 'specialized' and distinct curriculum, considering their 'needs' rather than the mainstream curriculum. Additionally access to them, was even more difficult due to the teachers' and parents' fear of further stigmatization.

The qualitative sampling designs specify minimum samples, which allow an in-depth understanding of the particular situation (Check and Shutt, 2012; Hancock and Algozzine, 2006). For this reason, the focus of the sample selection process in qualitative studies is on those selected to be able to best answer the research questions rather than how large is the size of the sample (Kumar, 2011; Patton, 1990a). Especially, small samples can be met in case studies, whose focus is on a particular group of people confronting specific problems and their number can be from their nature very limited (Schatz, 1993). At Cypriot schools, there are only a few students officially diagnosed as having mild learning difficulties in each classroom and consequently few teachers are required to support them in the resource room. Therefore, the sample size of this study has been already defined as limited by its nature.

Table 2: The teachers participating in the study

	School	Participants (pseudonym)	Age	Years of teaching	Years at this school	Lesson in the resource room
1.	Aristotelio	Evriklia	56	26	3	Coordinators
2.		Andromache	58	26	2	History
3.		Roxani	50	22	6	Greek
4.		Alkmini	55	21	3	Greek
5.		Zinovia	32	5	2	Greek
6.	Protagorio	Meropi	63	36	3	Coordinators
7.		Tireas	55	23	7	Greek and History
8.		Pandora	45	14	2	History
9.		Semeli	45	12	4	Greek and History
10.		Evdoxia	35	10	5	Greek
11.	Thalio	Aiolos	60	33	3	Coordinators
12.		Mikini	55	24	1	Greek
13.		Ely	45	20	2	Greek and History
14.		Charidemos	45	13	3	History-using Technology

Twelve teachers of Modern Greek, both men and women, who worked in withdrawal support, agreed to participate in the study. The aim was to interview at least four teachers and a curriculum coordinator in each school. However, there participated eleven teachers and three curriculum coordinators. At Thalio, only three teachers participated instead of four. During the data collection (in January 2013), it was announced that there would be redundancy at schools due to the economic crisis and so the oldest Thalio's participant teacher decided to retire earlier and her rights to withdraw from the study were recognized and respected. Since this teacher withdrew from the study, the observation series with the group of her students could not be continued. The supply teacher who came to cover her position at school was young and less experienced in teaching students with mild learning difficulties, so it was decided not to involve him in the study, neither his student group. Both the selected teachers and coordinators were teachers of Modern Greek because, as the researcher, I am a teacher of Greek, thus I was more familiar with their topic, their practices, and I have intrinsic interest in the field. Even if the coordinators did not teach these students, they are a pertinent sample for this study. They were responsible for the support material, the resources and the activities of the withdrawal classes in the resource room.

The selected students were required to be accustomed to the secondary school system, to the withdrawal model through which inclusive education is applied and to the inclusive teaching and learning practices used in the mainstream classroom. Twenty-nine students agreed to participate: eight students attending the first year of gymnasium, nine of the second and ten of the third year (see appendix: Table B.1a,p.365). This was the maximum number of students who could be accessed and they were all included. Accessing the highest possible number of students was pivotal for the study that aimed to give prominence to the students' voice. The first year students were also invited to participate, though they were not totally accustomed to the secondary school system during the data collection process in mid November-December 2012. However, they believed that they were also accustomed to the inclusive practices adopted in the mainstream schools, because they are used to being withdrawn for support from their time at primary school. Additionally, students from Thalio were invited to participate, during the data collection, because the parents of some of the students from the first two schools did not consent to participate in this study.

Table 3: The participant students

	School	Participant Students (Pseudonyms)	Age Group	Teacher	Year level at school
1.	Aristotelio	Maximus	13	Mrs. Alkmini	1 st
2.		Menelaus	13	Mrs. Alkmini	1 st
3.		Giota	12	Mrs. Alkmini	1st
4.		Marianthi	12	Mrs. Alkmini	1st
5.		Christodoulos	14	Mrs. Zinovia	2nd
6.		Makes	13	Mrs. Zinovia	2nd
7.		Gregoris	14	Mrs. Roxani +Andromache	3 rd
8.		Xenia	14	Mrs. Roxani +Andromache	3 rd
9.		Aphrodite	14	Mrs. Roxani +Andromache	3rd
10.	Protagorio	Minas	12	Mrs. Pandora	1 st
11.		Antonakis	13	Mrs. Semeli	2 nd
12.		Demosthenes	13	Mrs. Semeli	2 nd
13.		Giorgula	13	Mrs. Evdoxia	2 nd
14.		Marinos	13	Mrs. Evdoxia	2nd
15.		Kostakis	13	Mrs. Semeli	2 nd
16.		Katerina	13	Mrs. Semeli	2 nd
17.		Nektaria	13	Mrs. Semeli	2 nd
18.		Niki	14	Mrs. Semeli	2 nd
19.		Solonas	14	Mr. Tireas	3 rd
20.		Charilaos	14	Mr. Tireas	3 rd
21.	Efstathios	14	Mr. Tireas	3 rd	
22.	Thalio	Giagkos	12.6	Mr. Charidemos	1 st
23.		Anna	13	Mr. Charidemos	1 st
24.		Mary	12.6	Mr. Charidemos	1st
25.		Demos	14	Mrs. Mikini+Ely	3 rd
26.		Chara	15	Mrs. Ely	3 rd
27.		Charalabos	15	Mrs. Mikini +Ely	3 rd
28.		Chrysanthi	15	Mrs. Ely	3 rd
29.		Zoitsa	15	Mrs. Ely	3 rd

One of the weaknesses of this study sample selection could be that fewer male teachers participated (three male and eight women teachers), as well as more boys than girls (sixteen boys and thirteen girls). Ideally, an equal number of men and women teachers and boys and girls were sought, since a wider diversity of sample was desired. What else could be construed as a weakness of this sample is that an equal number of students from the different year levels at school did not participate. Considering the already limited number of students with mild learning difficulties, of men teachers and of girl students at the three schools (see appendix: Table B.1a and Table B.1c, pp.365-366), it is obvious that there could not be control over the gender of the participant teachers and students, nor even over the number of students participating from each year level. Those male teachers and girl students, who were available in each school and fulfilled the criteria of the sample selection, were all selected. On the other hand, since this case study does not aim to make generalizations or suggest how the gender or the year level of the participants have affected their beliefs and understanding of inclusive education, it was considered to be

reasonably strong and reliable to have only a few male teachers and girl students to participate in the study (Kumar, 2011; Patton, 2015). Overall, having a small sample allowed a more in-depth exploration of those values, which seemed to affect or influence their perceptions and behaviours of the participants in the study (Check and Schutt, 2012).

3.5. METHODS OF DATA GENERATION

Multiple data collection methods were used in this study such as observations of Modern Greek and of History lessons in the mainstream classroom and the resource room and semi-structured interviews with the teachers and the students. Reflections regarding the participating schools and the participants' answers and behaviour were also documented in my research diary and they were presented additionally in the groups of data sets, whenever it was necessary to enrich or further support the data. Considering that an ethnographic case study allows a wider range of data collection methods to be used than in classic ethnography (Simons, 2009), teachers' and coordinators' questionnaires were used to complement the semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The questionnaires were used to explore initially the inclusive ethos and understanding of inclusive education of the teachers and coordinators. In the following section, each method of data collection is discussed. It also presents the protocols for each method and the difficulties arising from the use of these methods.

Questionnaires

A fifteen minute questionnaire was prepared for the participant teachers and coordinators in each participating school. The option of conversational interviews was initially rejected owing to the teaching responsibilities of the participants and the lack of time during their school days. Questionnaires were chosen since they offer the prospect of gaining information from many people very quickly, and it is possible for the respondents to answer the questions when it suits them and wherever they want (Gillham, 2008). Questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and the coordinators on the first day of fieldwork in their schools. Teachers were given the time and space to think and answer their questionnaires individually. Their questionnaires were subsequently collected on the same day since their data were used as the basis of the observation grids and the ensuing teacher interviews.

The questionnaires mainly consisted of ten closed questions regarding their training, their understanding of inclusion policies, the withdrawal support policy for the students with mild

learning difficulties and the teaching practices. Closed questions were used to ensure a short completion time of the questionnaires. Considering the overall more qualitative nature of the study the questions were developed using a Likert scaling: strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not sure (Sapsford, 2007), in order for the participants to be able to choose freely the statements that express or represent more closely their beliefs and understanding. Likert scaling questions were constructed using both positive and negative statements and equally, more than five statements for every question were provided to the respondents in order to avoid acquiescence and positional bias (Sapsford, 2007). These statements and the answers provided were further discussed during one- to-one interviews (discussed below). Additionally, the questionnaires were translated into Greek because this research was conducted in Greek- Cypriot mainstream secondary schools. The questionnaires were piloted in order for the questions to be phrased in a way that matches the definitions used in English and in order to clarify if the questions were clear and unambiguous for the respondents (Munn and Drever, 1995). Questionnaires were also piloted to ensure the brevity needed for the questions to be answered (ibid). Piloting was also useful to check the participants' responses and select the relevancy of the statements to the aims of the research study and to decide what to add or which statement to discard (ibid).

On the other hand, there was acknowledged the risk of the participants agreeing with a statement or working down a response column and giving the same answer to every item (Sapsford, 2007). This was more obvious when the teachers were asked to rate the practices they considered to be most helpful to be developed for the support of the students' learning difficulties in mainstream classrooms. Similarly, by using a questionnaire there is always the risk of the participants answering what they think is the correct answer or the socially desired one (Gillham, 2008) and this was more obvious when the teachers were asked to rate the aims of their teaching practices. For this reason, a few simple open questions were asked in order to clarify the reason for agreement with, or for, their rating of a statement. However, dealing with the aforementioned possible bias of the questionnaires, extra time was provided during the individual face-to-face interviews with the teachers to discuss those questions which seemed to have been misunderstood, omitted or biased.

Classroom observation

Participant observations of Greek lessons (and sometimes of History classes) took place both in mainstream classrooms and the resource room, to capture the holistic picture of the learning process taking place in both classroom environments. Semi-structured observations focused on the behaviour of teachers and students as a response to the implemented policy. They were used to provide an additional insight into the interviews, revealing what was difficult to be stated (Elliot, 1991).

In ethnographic research, the researcher adopts different roles of participation, while observing what actually happened in the field and this data collection method is termed participant observation (Angrosino, 2011). The reason for this, is that the researcher is being exposed or involved in a routine of participant activities in the research setting (Le Compte and Shensul, 1999). Particularly a researcher can adopt a complete observer role, which means that he/she becomes a member of the organisation or group which is being studied and does not reveal his / her purpose to the group members but continues to do the research at work. A researcher can also act as a participant-observer, which means that he/she is more fully integrated into the life of the group under study and is more engaged with the people, though his / her activities as a researcher are still acknowledged (Angrosino, 2011). To borrow the term of Angrosino (2011), I acted as 'an observer – participant' who conducts observations for brief periods, whose role is known and recognized by the 'subjects', but relates to them solely as a researcher. The reason for this decision was that it is not easy to erase the researcher's presence completely, neither to be fully detached from the setting under study. Acknowledging that the presence of the researcher can influence the routine of the classroom and the teachers' and students' behaviour, I aimed to be as unobtrusive as possible in order to enhance the chances of the people being observed to behave as close to normal as possible (Bell, 2005). Thus, I chose to sit at the back of the classroom and far away from the students' rows of seats, trying to remain unnoticed and endeavouring to distance my self from the teacher-student interactions.

The classroom observations started in mid-November 2012. Teachers voluntarily invited me to observe their classrooms. Bearing in mind that this study investigates issues around inclusion, imposing my presence in their classrooms did not seem at all inclusive. Nonetheless, what was important for the success of the study was that a discussion took place with the participants about the selection of the classrooms. It was clear both to the

heads and the teachers that classrooms had to be selected based on the presence of the students with mild learning difficulties, who followed support outside the mainstream classrooms and who have also accepted to be interviewed. Consideration had to be made that people are more sceptical when they have to be involved in observations and they feel more vulnerable being observed than being questioned or interviewed. This may happen because the focus of the observations is not always described as fully as possible and the observation schedule is not clearly presented to the participants (Simpson and Tuson, 1995), in order to avoid the final results being affected (BERA, 2011). To address such feelings of vulnerability and to encourage teachers and students to agree to being observed, the main intentions of this study were clarified to them. Before entering their classroom for the observations, teachers were reassured that they were able to read individually the anonymous transcript of the observations by the end of the session, and that they were given the chance to change anything which may have been misinterpreted. They were also reassured that nothing would be reported to the MOEC and the head of the schools without being first negotiated and discussed with them (Simpson and Tuson, 1995).

Specifically, I decided that Greek and History lessons would be observed because as a teacher of Modern Greek language, who also teaches history, I was more familiar with the field being observed and because of the assumptions that these classes were considered as important knowledge for the students. There were thirty-one observations focused on Greek class lessons and twelve focused on History. Due to the limited time, only two observations in the resource room and two observations in the mainstream classroom were conducted with each participant, rather than four in each classroom environment as initially planned. The observed sessions took place from the beginning to the end of each session and lasted for forty-five minutes. Observations took place in parallel only in the first two mainstream secondary schools. To ensure the highest number of participant students, Thalio was invited to participate only a little before the school holidays for Christmas and thus the observations had to take place after the school holidays. Observations at Thalio followed those at the first two schools and thus they were used to further explore some issues identified previously regarding the teachers and student behaviour responding to the teaching and learning process.

Observations were aimed at the teaching practices, the engagement of students 'with learning difficulties' in the learning process and the interactions between teachers and these students in each classroom environment. Conducting an ethnographic case study,

the focus was on observing the behaviours of the participants in each classroom environment and the interactions of the target students with their teachers and classmates in order to highlight their beliefs about inclusive teaching and learning practices. I was an observer participant with clear focus on the aims of the study. Even though I did not play an active role in the activities taking place in the classroom, I was participating with my exposure in the routine activities of the teaching and learning practices (Le Compte and Schensul, 1999). As a former student and an educational practitioner at mainstream schools of Cyprus, I was immediately accustomed to the classroom teaching practices, used in Cypriot schools. However, at the same time the fact that what I initially observed seemed very natural to me, made it difficult to see and understand what was going beyond these traditional practices. It is for this reason that more observations should have been conducted but there was no more time (see section 3.8, p.117).

It is important that observations are recorded in a way that facilitates information retrieval. The researcher can choose to record his/her observational materials by using highly structured checklists, grids, tables, and field notes (Angrosino, 2011). Considering also the qualitative nature of the study, field notes were initially believed to be a very good way of data collection format, which can show all kinds of incidents in teaching and learning process and give many details, more than other records (Macintyre, 2000). However, having never before conducted an observation, it was a significant challenge for me to take notice of all the things taking place in the classroom. As a novice researcher, I also needed time to learn the discipline of accurately and methodically recording my observations. For these reasons, structured observation schedules were finally selected, which allow both a considerable amount of and specific information to be collected (ibid), encouraging the researcher to stay constantly concentrated on the aims of the study. For the design of the grid of the observation series, it was also important to consider the focus of the observation process. I consulted a list of factors that might happen during the classroom observations in order to be more aware of them. The familiarity of the events that happen in a mainstream classroom made it more useful to design the observation grid. Particularly, the field note schedules were defined into specific categories on which to concentrate such as the teaching practices and materials delivered during the sessions, the teacher-student interactions, the student support from their classmates and the students' engagement in lessons (see appendices:A.11a-A.12b,pp.353-363).

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were selected as being the main tool of the data collection. Ideally, interviews aim to collect information about what people believe, prefer and explore in depth their motivations, experiences and reasoning (Drever, 2003). Especially with semi-structured interviews, people are encouraged to talk at some length and express what they want and believe (ibid). Even though interviews are a very time-consuming process, particularly in transcription and data analysis, they are important because they help us to understand how the participants understand different meanings and they empower the 'voice' of the participants (Taylor, 2005; Low, 2007). In-depth interviews give the participants more power and control over what and how they want to talk (ibid). Therefore, using semi-structured interviews enabled the participants to discuss not only the topics intended, but also those ideas that were digressions and raised by the participants (Elliot, 1991). I was particularly interested in discussing what they believe and how they approach the different meaning, policies and practices regarding inclusion in everyday life, rather than giving a 'yes' or 'no' response in relation to them.

Five semi-structured interviews were conducted one- to- one, with the teachers and the curriculum coordinator at each of the first two schools and four of them at the third school. The interviews took place after the observations and these were mutually agreed, so as not to disturb either the lessons or the regular operation of the school. The interview location was the work place such as the teachers' room or the school library and with the curriculum coordinators, their offices were preferred. The room, in which the interviews were conducted, was only accessible to the researcher and the interviewee teachers and the time of the interviews was respected and guaranteed undisturbed by the heads. The interview process was interrupted a few times since I requested and negotiated with the head of each school that those teachers, who agreed voluntarily to be interviewed, should be exempted from any additional educational and administrative responsibilities during the time of the interviews. Interviews took place immediately after the observations, in order to elicit and accumulate the data collected by classroom observations and the questionnaires. Initially, the plan was to discuss in a focus group those incidents observed in the classroom and about which more clarification was needed, but for ethical reasons this did not go ahead. I did not want the participants to feel pressured or that they were being evaluated or criticized about their teaching practices. Especially, I did not want them to consider me as a ministry inspector but as a colleague and a researcher.

The key interview questions put to the teachers were concerned with their views on the policy which determined how the students with learning difficulties are withdrawn from certain classes to obtain individual support; the labelling of students as having learning difficulties; if and how these labels have influenced their perceptions towards inclusion and what practices have been implemented in their classroom. For curriculum coordinators, key issues covered their thoughts about the application of current policy at schools and the practices related to the policy, as well as the inclusive classroom practices which have been, or should be developed. Curriculum coordinators were selected for interview because they can provide a high quality of knowledge and they can assist in a better understanding of how policy works at Cypriot mainstream schools, since they can provide information, which is withheld by others, and they can facilitate the research process with teachers and students (Gillham, 2000). The initial aim was to tape-record the interviews, but the participants refused, thus notes were taken during the interview process (see appendices: A.8a-A.9b, pp.340-347).

Semi-structured one-to-one interviews with the students were also chosen. Considering that the students who participated in the study were considered as having learning difficulties, it was a challenge to decide which method should be used in order to elicit and collect original information and to obtain as much information as the students could give. Initially, the intention was to ask the students to fill out a questionnaire, since research (McConkey and Mezza, 2001; Emerson et al., 2005) has identified examples of people with learning difficulties, who managed to complete effectively their questionnaires alone or with the help of their support workers. The reasons why at first questionnaires were considered as appropriate, were that students would be able to answer what they believe with no influence from others' opinion and they would have the time to think and correct their answers if necessary thus gaining greater anonymity and confidentiality.

To give space to students' voice and aiming to consider how students understand different notions, and how policy and school practices are related to inclusion, interviews were preferred overall because these allow flexibility and the student experiences to be fully explored. Accordingly, one-to-one semi-structured interviews were used, rather than focus group interviews. In one-to-one interviews, the students' voice and opinions are valued greatly (Cohen et al., 2018). Another reason why the focus group interviews were not chosen is that it would be more difficult to organize them. Key issues to be discussed with the students were what they thought about the policy which suggested that their learning difficulties should be supported outside the mainstream classrooms and what they like

their teachers to do, in order to meet their needs in mainstream classrooms (see appendices:A.10a-A.10b,pp.348-352).

Special consideration of the student interviews

The student data collection methods depend among others on the age, competence and the experience of the participants (Punch, 2002).The methods adopted in this study are similar to those used for younger students. Nevertheless, these methods apply to these participant students as they have learning difficulties and are considered to be 'vulnerable'. First, it was important to make children trust me as the interviewer and feel confident to talk about their problems (Cohen et al., 2018). The research setting for interviewing needs to be chosen with care, awareness and sensitivity (Punch,2002).The resource room is one of the school places preferred for the children's interviews (Goodenough et al., 2003), since it is 'in-between the formal and the informal world of the school' (Malet et al.,2010, p.6).Interviews took place after the classroom observations, so students had enough time to grow accustomed to my presence and understand my role as a researcher. Moreover, the fact that I am also a teacher and that the interviews were planned to take place in the resource room, where the students were used to having tuition, contributed to making children feel comfortable and non –threatened.

Second, it was important to develop rapport and build a trust relationship both with the children and also with the adult gatekeepers (Morrow, 1999). Special attention was given to students being interviewed before the end of the session in the resource room, due to the restrictions placed most of the time by the heads of the school. Restrictions were enforced to ensure that the students would not be stigmatized if they participated in the study. It was always planned for their interviews to be finished before the school breaks. It was agreed with their teachers that one student at a time, who had agreed to be interviewed, was to be exempted once from the session in the resource room in the last twenty minutes. I used to sit with the student at the back of the classroom, at a quiet corner table, where usually the supply materials are stored and undertook the interview. In the cases where the resource room was small, student interviews could not be undertaken in that classroom and in order to avoid noise and distractions, it was arranged for students to be interviewed in the school library but again during the resource room sessions.

Another potential issue faced is that interviews had to be interesting and enjoyable for the children (Hill, 1997). Thus, the questions were piloted to be easy for them to understand

and to be concise. Time was spent talking with them at the beginning and the end of the interview about their experiences and interests in relation to school. This was necessary to create a rapport, in order for them to feel comfortable, unthreatened and safe to provide all the prerequisite data to the researcher (Costley, 2000,p.166).This was also necessary to facilitate the dialogue with the students and increase the students' openness and engagement (Christensen, 2004). Considering the learning difficulties of the children, gentle probes were used to help students understand the questions and clarify their answers, in order to ensure that their responses represented what they actually believe and feel rather than what the researcher expects them to say. Prompts are widely used in interviews with children to stimulate their responses (Clark, 2005).

From my personal experience as a teacher, I was aware that these students usually have 'difficulties' in expressing themselves. Having also been mindful of the challenges identified by Booth and Booth (1996) such as their inarticulateness that is connected to their lower self-esteem, their unresponsiveness in open questioning and the difficulty of generalizing from their experience, for their interviews, the questions that were developed were more structurally organized than those for the teachers. The highly structured design of the interviewing questions was used, acknowledging the limitation for the voice of the participant students. However, acknowledging that accessing the views of these children can never be achieved perfectly, this mode of questions was developed as an endeavour for their views to be heard and reflected as authentically as possible (Lewis, 2002).

Following Lewis' (2004) position, questions and answer formats were developed with more constraints rather than narratives or use of statements, since they were found to be more helpful for the target students. A high level of support seems to be required in order to enable the students to give their views during the interviews (Lewis et al., 2008). However, careful consideration regarding the nature and the phrasing of the interviewee questions was required in order to avoid their views being tokenism or misrepresented (ibid). One approach, which has been developed to address this, is a tabular mode of response. A list of cues and ideas was designed as an option to each question and when students were struggling with their answers, they were prompted to use the list of choices in order to think and address their answers (see appendix A.10a,p.348). A tabular mode of response was available to students both when asked to give details about themselves (q4&6, see appendix A10a,p.348) and when having to explain what they do or do not like regarding the teaching and learning process in mainstream classrooms and the resource room (q7-12,see appendix A10a,pp.348-349). Students were asked to rank in order of importance

(Clark, 2005) what they like their teachers to do to support their needs in mainstream classrooms. A list of teaching practices, informed by the literature review, was provided to students and they were asked to evaluate them as: very important, important, of little importance, or not important at all (q13, see appendix A10a, p.349). An open question was given to students to conclude and freely express what they favour of their teachers' practices and what they expect their teachers to do for them. This follow up question was necessary to ensure that the students were not guessing (Malet et al., 2010). As expected, only a few students were found to be willing to comment on that question. Although the researcher reassured them many times that there were not 'right' and 'wrong' answers (Punch, 2002), the students seemed to be concerned about answering incorrectly, due to the fear cultivated in them when they were asked in mainstream classrooms.

Acknowledging the fact that this interviewing is of students with mild learning difficulties and that there might be some kinds of questions that they might not be able to answer (Sigelman et al., 1982), I was prepared to facilitate the students by giving them time to think about their answers and always ready to rephrase these questions. Special attention was paid to the language which was used and the conduct of the interview. As with people who are not talkative, I was prepared to be more attentive to the short answers given by the participant students (ibid). I was also prepared that it might be necessary to move to another question without irritation, even in the case they might not want to answer the question (Booth and Booth, 1996; Clarke and Moss, 2001; Cohen et al., 2018).

Interviewing the students was a considerably more difficult and time-consuming process than that of the teachers. The students' parents were suspicious of their interviews being recorded, thus three interviews with the students were recorded and transcribed, while for the other twenty-six interviews with the students, notes were taken. Parents, like the stakeholders, considered these children as 'vulnerable' and more at risk of being stigmatized. Acknowledging that these students are less talkative and that they are less confident to support their arguments (Punch, 2002), more time was required in order to clarify what I quoted was exactly what they reported and that it was actually, what the children wanted to say.

Research diary

A few teacher and student interviews were audio-recorded, at the end of each day at school, so for this reason notes were taken in my diary of the informal discussions with the

teachers and students. Gradually, I took consistent notes of what I had observed and what classroom incidents shocked or surprised me, as well as making notes of initial perceptions and understanding about the school climate and culture (Thomas, 2013). By the end of the research, this diary was an extremely useful tool that helped an in-depth understanding of the teachers' and students' attitudes towards inclusion, as well as recognizing those insights that influenced their attitudes and of which I had not been aware before entering the field work for the data collection.

3.6. METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The first stage prior to analysis is the preparation of data (Harris, 1995). The field notes were arranged and entered into a Microsoft office Word file. Notes were kept on each of the respondents and saved in files according to the data source and the school at which they were obtained. Data from each of the three schools were collected and stored separately, to minimize the risk of losing data and to avoid any doubt as to the data source. All the transcripts of interviews and the observational notes were first typed and saved in Greek, before being translated into English. During the phase of the data manipulation (Harris, 1995), data were entered into N-Vivo. For each school, the data were organized more systematically into sub-groups of participants and data subsets. The words that were frequently mentioned in the participants' responses were used for the coding of the questionnaire data (Boyatzis, 1998). Conceptual codes were used for the coding of the interview data, in order to identify the domains of the study phenomenon (Vaismoradi et al., 2016). The same process of storage and coding was also followed with the series of classroom observations (see appendix:C1,p.367).

The process of identifying themes and reducing data occurred at the same time; each database was examined, seeking to explore and understand any relationships between the data held in each. Themes were explored and discussed with reference to the relevant literature. Since it was important to explore the connection between teacher and student beliefs on inclusive education and their inclusive teaching and learning practices, I explored relevant themes found in the sub-folders for teachers and students in each school. I drew on evidence from my observational notes and aimed at conclusions that drew on evidence from data derived from both teachers and students in each school. Thus, the participants' answers were easily summarised under specific codes, which initially seemed to arise constantly in each school and which later were collated across the schools. The interpretation of that coding resulted in the data analysis themes.

To ensure a more in-depth review of the collected data and to further redefine and name the theme codes, I used a subsample of the data set from each participant group, the same sample according to which the theme codes were initially based and developed (Boyatzis, 1998). I selected the two most experienced participant teachers of those teaching the participant students and from their students, the two most communicative. The summaries of the participant answers in the two subsamples were compared and those answers with the same meaning were also coded together. To generalise the themes, the produced subsample codes were compared and contrasted across the collected data (ibid). Additionally, each theme was enriched by presenting and interpreting those extracts of participants' quotes, which were judged to be the most representative (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

A process of inductive thematic analysis was preferred, since it allowed identifying themes which emerged directly from raw data (Boyatzis, 1998). The data do not need to fit into a pre-existing coding frame, neither to the researcher's analytical pre-conceptions (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Nevertheless, the majority of questions addressed to the participants were informed according to the key literature review evidence in the field of inclusive education and during the analysis I aimed to determine themes with a semantic approach (Boyatzis, 1998). This analytic process describes how the data are organized into patterns of semantic content and summarized in order to be interpreted (ibid), theorizing their significance, their broader meanings and implications (Patton, 1990b), in relation to previous literature (Frith and Gleeson, 2004). Therefore, this form of analysis has been chosen because it allows the production of detailed and complex accounts of findings that emerge from data (Roustlon, 2001). It is also well suited to enabling the researcher to identify patterns in the data that are relevant to the research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In this sense, this form of analysis was chosen, in view of this study aim to explore the interactions between the 'subject' and the 'object' of the study, following Thomas (2011). This allows an in depth exploration of the complex of issues around the events, human relationships and local cultural practices taking place in organizational environment, such as a school (Gillham, 2000). Finally, the preferred form of analysis was also chosen in view of the principal methodological aim of the study, to give priority to the voice of participant teachers and students. Inductive thematic analysis gives space to the voices of respondents, which might otherwise go unheard (Boyatzis, 1998).

Inductive thematic analysis is often critiqued for the process of coding and identifying themes and is generally likely to be affected by the assumptions and experiences of the

researcher. Therefore, it is important to discuss how trustworthiness can be assessed by a range of techniques (Thomas, 2003). In the present case, any findings were compared with similar findings presented in previous published research. All draft findings were subject to the process of triangulation. All interviewees were asked to identify any errors or misinterpretation in transcripts and those whose testimony was included in the final analysis were also asked to comment on its accuracy and faithfulness.

3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Accessing the schools

By the end of 2011, an information letter to the MOEC of Cyprus was sent, in order to gain access to secondary schools. Since this study was carried out among participating students who are considered as 'vulnerable', I complied with all the mandatory legal requirements. Prior to the research an updated copy of a clear criminal record was obtained from the Ministry of Justice and the Police Department of Cyprus and a clear criminal record certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau of the United Kingdom was also obtained because I also visited some schools in U.K. before my case schools in Cyprus. The reason for this was that there are no schools in Cyprus at which children with mild learning difficulties are supported solely in the mainstream classroom. The visit to U.K. schools helped to broaden my understanding about inclusive education and inclusive practices. This study has also been ethically approved by the MOEC and the IOE, University College London and permission was requested and granted from the MOEC to access schools.

Having the permission from the MOEC, it became easier to arrange meetings with the school heads with whom meetings were arranged, always having the help of 'gatekeeper' teachers. The heads and the coordinators were informed about the study and the research process giving them time to consider whether they want their school to participate in the study. With their permission, a meeting with the teachers was arranged. With the help of teachers previously contacted and the students and parents, a face-to-face meeting with the students was arranged and their parents were contacted with letters.

Field Relations

One of the most important tasks of the researcher is to explain the ethics of the study. The researcher needs to constantly ensure the participants about good ethical practice and the commitment to this until the end of the process. The BERA (2011) guidelines were followed at every step to ensure the anonymity, confidentiality and validity of the research.

It is essential to ensure that the participants know the aims and the purpose of the research. Both teachers and students were fully informed about the study and their contribution to this, particularly being mindful of the participation of students with mild learning difficulties. Consent forms were allocated to the students with mild learning difficulties in the resource room in order to avoid any possible further stigmatisation. Although the students are sufficiently competent to understand the ethics and act on their consent (Fraser et al., 2004), fully informed consent is required, because they are young and they are classed as 'vulnerable' due to their mild learning difficulties (BERA, 2011). Looking to listen to the students' voice, more attention was given in order that these students were informed about every detail of the process in which they had been engaged, and they were facilitated in providing their fully informed consent. With the teachers' contribution I met the students in the resource room, during one of their meetings for tutorials. I explained to them my position and role, the reason for this research topic and what I expected them to do regarding their contribution in the study. Information letters with consent forms were allocated to them. These forms were read together and their rights to anonymity, confidentiality and withdrawal at any stage of the research were highlighted. Time was given to ask questions about anything they did not understand regarding the topic and their rights in the research.

Consent forms were required to be signed both by them and their parents (BERA, 2011) and children participated only if their parents had agreed (see appendices:A.3a-A.4b, pp.319-322). Those students and their parents who had signed the consent forms, agreed to the children participating in one –to- one interviews and in a series of observations aimed in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. The consent forms were collected from each student by the school staff before the research commencement. Teachers helped considerably in collecting the children's consent forms. Even though sufficient time was allowed to receive the duly signed consent forms, there were also cases where children did not return their consent forms. In such cases, I had to investigate if parents had not agreed to their children participating in the study or if parents had not

been informed by their children. Although oral consent was not accepted, in the cases where the consent form had not been returned due to the child's negligence, their parents were contacted by phone. Detailed explanations were provided, but they could not allay all the fears; there were parents whose children had accepted but they felt insecure or threatened if their children were to be interviewed. In that case, the children's rights not to participate were recognized and I withdrew the consent of these children. Because some parents refused permission for their child to participate in the research process, some of the participant teachers encouraged more of their target students to participate in the study.

The process of signing the teachers' informed consents was much easier than that of the students. Teachers were asked to consent to being observed in the mainstream classroom and the resource room and the aim was to make teachers know me before the research process and to invite me voluntarily to observe their classrooms. Time was spent visiting the resource rooms and the staff rooms in order to become acquainted with the dynamics and the subcultures of the school. I attended some of the teachers' meetings not only to explain the aims and the process of this study but also to increase familiarity with the people working in the school and the role they occupied. Particularly, the teachers who agreed to be interviewed and observed were provided with all the clarifications needed to ensure that they understood the research purposes and why they had been asked to participate. The fact that I am a younger and less experienced teacher than others made it easier for them to trust me and consider me more as a teacher who needs their guidance and their experience rather than as a threat. Duly signed consent forms by each teacher were collected prior to the research process (see appendices:A.5a-A.5b,pp.323-324).

During the school meetings, teachers were also informed about my institute of study, the ethics process and the doctoral studies following, that they could withdraw from the study at any stage of the procedure and that they would be informed about the transcript of their response and would have the right to withdraw any statement that they do not agree with. I was committed to the ethical guidelines we agreed (see section 3.5), in order to maintain the positive relationship with my participating teachers. Three of Thalio's participant teachers asked to read my observational notes and they were allowed to do so by the end of the observation series in their classrooms. Their wish for me to avoid referring in my analysis to insights of their students' misbehaviour was respected. Additionally these did not seem to be valuable for the aims of this study. My empathetic attitude facilitated the observation process and the teachers did not seem to feel embarrassed or uneasy. This

was also the reason why information regarding the observations were supplied on a 'need to know' basis. The teachers, the parents and the students were told that the teaching and learning pedagogies in the classrooms would be observed, without providing more detail, in consideration of recognized difficulties that could arise when research participants change their behaviour because they know they are being studied (BSA Guidelines, 2017,p.5). The relationship between the participants and the researcher was based entirely on trust and friendship. Teachers, who were initially restrained and rather sparing in their statements, gradually became more than willing to discuss their students by the end of each session where they had been observed. For some, observation sessions helped them to notice problems in their classroom, which might affect their students.

Before the interviews, teachers were also asked to consent to being interviewed and to being tape-recorded in their interviews. At the first two schools, the main data collection period took place close to the test period. However, teachers agreed to be interviewed during their free non-teaching period. The friendly and trusting relationship established with the teachers and the heads' commitment to exempt teachers from extra educational and administrative responsibilities facilitated the interview meetings with the teachers. Teachers agreed to be interviewed, but were reluctant for their interviews to be tape-recorded, even though it was explained to them that recording will be used only to help me tracking fully and authentically their responses. Acknowledging and respecting the teachers' right for their responses to be off record whenever they asked, notes were taken of the teachers' responses during their interviews. Even in the case of three teachers who initially agreed to their answers being recorded, when it was perceived that they felt discomfort, the audio recording was immediately switched off.

Anonymity and confidentiality were safeguarded by using pseudonyms for the schools and avoiding naming the town in which the schools were located. Participants were assured that everything quoted in the research report was anonymized and both students and teachers were asked to pick their pseudonyms. Teachers picked their pseudonyms from a list of ancient Greek names, which a teacher, who also taught drama to the students, had suggested and the others were excited with the idea. I suggested picking a name that started with their initials just to assist me while I was writing the transcript of their interviews and they agreed. Students picked their pseudonyms, again by choosing a name starting from their initial. Teachers' concerns were about the report, which was needed to be submitted to the MOEC, but they were assured that they could have access to it before the submission and that nothing, which was not agreed with them, would be reported.

They were equally reassured about the confidentiality of the process and about the fact that the transcripts would only be read by them and the researcher who would evaluate them solely for the purpose of the research study. The transcripts and the recordings would be stored safely until the successful submission of this PhD thesis and then they would be destroyed (BERA, 2011). In the case of the students, they were informed that neither their parents nor their teachers could read their answers. I read their draft of answers only to them to make sure that they were happy with what they had said. To assure the confidentiality of the students and to avoid the risk of further stigmatizing them, their interviews were always planned to be conducted in the resource room and to finish some minutes earlier than the end of the resource room sessions.

Being interested in empowering those who participated in this study, I was concerned about the language which was used. I considered carefully the language being used not only in order to be accessible to the students with mild learning difficulties and to avoid further stigmatization of their 'needs', but also I considered carefully the translation of the participants' responses into English. This study was conducted in Greek, with Greek-Cypriot teachers, students and the researcher, also a native Cypriot Greek speaker, so in order to avoid the risk of 'tokenism' in their voices, another native Greek speaker, a teacher of English Language, was asked to check the translation of the data collected by the participants from Greek to English.

3.8. MANAGING SOURCE OF BIAS

This section will explain how the credibility and reflexivity of the study are achieved and it will discuss the overall study limitations. Considering that the qualitative researcher's selections are involved at every stage of the study design such as the sampling and interpretation of the data (Walker, 1980), it is necessary to explain how the researcher has to enhance those elements that ensure the quality or the trustworthiness of the study (Baxter and Jack,2008).

Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the researcher manages to ensure that the participants have the chance to validate their responses (Scott and Usher, 1999).The following procedures contributed to credibility: To ensure the credibility of the data collected from interviews, which were not tape-recorded, immediately by the end of the

discussion, a complete record of teachers' and students' answers was presented to them and they were asked to read them and to change or add what they wanted. For this reason, a longer time was needed and sometimes an extra meeting was arranged with the participants if they did not have the time after the end of the interview. To avoid forgetting what had been heard from the participants, extra notes were taken in my diary after the interviews or after any informal conversation with them and the interview notes were transcribed immediately on return from schools when the memory was stronger and more reliable.

As for the credibility of the data analysis, the researcher may wish to share his/her interpretation with the participants of the study, aiming to clarify his/her interpretations and contributing additional perspectives to the issues of the study (Krefting, 1991). Even when the teachers were kindly requested to check the transcript of the analysis, teachers were not willing to do so either because they seemed to trust me and/or because they lacked time. The majority declined by answering that enough clarification had been given during the planned discussion. I asked more persistently those whose quotations I had used in the analysis context and five of them agreed to discuss by phone some of the points they had made and how they had been interpreted. The most difficult was to find the students in order to validate my interpretations of their responses. Many of the students, who were in the third class during the research process, were at different schools both at lyceum or vocational school and due to the school policy of protecting the students' personal data. I could not gain access to their phones. I even wanted to visit them in their new schools but I was unable to, since it was time-consuming to request permission to access their schools. I did not persist in searching for them for ethical reasons, because I did not want to marginalize them, if they had possibly stopped attending the resource room for support. As for the younger students, I did not ask to see them because I was afraid that their parents and their teachers may see me suspiciously and deny access to them.

To overcome the limitations caused by the non-checking of the interviews' analysis, I triangulated their answers with those given by other participants, which offered informal validity (Ball, 1984,p.833). I also checked the consistency, otherwise the internal validity (Shell, 1992) of their answers at the interviews by comparing what they answered about their beliefs about inclusive education and practices. This was done by comparing these statements with the relevant evidence of teachers and student behaviour and interactions recorded while I was observing them in both the mainstream and resource classrooms. I also chose to follow the double coding suggested by Krefting (1991). After a period, I firstly

coded my data, then coded the same data set again and compared the results. The same themes were also identified, even though I had to reconsider and reorganize some of the data sets coding under the theme of 'special needs' labelling and the teacher beliefs about the support of students within the mainstream classroom.

As for the observations, I noted down all I observed during the lessons and sometimes in my research diary any incidents happening outside the classroom and it seemed to be explanatory such as how the students felt about the 'special needs' labelling. I did not ask teachers and students to validate the observational data, because as already mentioned, both teachers and students used to talk with me, after the observation session, explaining why they behaved or acted in such a manner. Students especially used to apologize themselves when they understood that they had misbehaved in the lesson. There were cases when teachers asked me to read my notes, or where students unexpectedly tried to read from my observational grids and so the observational notes were also validated whilst recording them in their classroom.

Validating the data translation

Special attention should also be paid to the validity pursued by the translation of the data. I translated both my method tools of data collection from English to Greek and the data collected from schools had to be translated from Greek to English. The translation was done by me and not by an experienced translator. I attempted word-to-word translation but it was not easy, especially in idiomatic expressions.

Translating the tools of data collection in Greek, it was easier for me as a native speaker of Greek language, who knows the cultural and the social background of the people participating in the study (Filep, 2009) and the structure of the educational system of Cyprus as a student and as a teacher. However, great care was taken about translating the meaning of the research questions into Greek (Esposito, 2001). To translate accurately the terms used in the questions, I consulted the policy documents and other colleagues working together. The tools were piloted, especially those that referred to the students such as the interview questions, in order to be easily understood by them.

Regarding the translation of the collected data from Greek to English, I initially translated them but I also asked help from a native English academy teacher to edit my translation. Thus they would be easily read and grammatically and syntactically correct (Esposito,

2001). Then I asked another Greek teacher of English language, who is detached from the research, to validate my translation, especially validating the translation of the quotations presented in the analysis.

Reflexivity

Qualitative studies are not aiming to ensure the possibility of replication but rather aim to confirm whether the researcher has followed the most appropriate procedures, made the most rational connections and drawn the most sensible conclusions in consideration of the circumstances found in the field (Guba and Lincoln, 1992).

For this reason the study refers to reflexivity, considering the ways the researcher accessed the field and developed particular interpretations (Schwandt, 2007). Towards this end, great efforts were made when writing this chapter, to present a detailed and explicit documentation of the procedures followed and of the development of a case study database. To warrant reflexivity, the research design and methods of data collection and analysis were carefully chosen to answer the research questions (Baxter and Jack, 2008). A variety of methods was employed for the data collection, namely interviews, observation and questionnaires, in order to acquire as many perceptions on the issues under study. The data collected from various sources were also compared during the analysis and so findings were confirmed from multiple perspectives (Knafl and Breitmayer, 1989).

Reflexivity refers also to the researcher's subjective values, according to which he/she considers and engages with the topic under study and makes sense of the data (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). These personal beliefs, interests and experience that may impact on the research question, data collection, analysis and writing up of the study, are called 'personal reflexivity' (Willing, 2001). According to Reinharz (1997), the researcher can present several different 'selves' in the field of research. Especially Reinharz (ibid) identified approximately twenty different 'selves' that are categorized under three major groups: the 'researcher self', the 'brought self' that is affected by social, historical and personal values and the 'situational created selves' that are created in the field.

As far as this case study is concerned, there were many cases in the data analysis where I needed to negotiate and challenge my 'brought self' with those of the 'researcher self'. As a researcher, I was influenced by the global agenda regarding inclusive education and by the inclusive educational practices developed in other countries, such as in the U.K.

According to these influences and my experience, as a practitioner at Cypriot schools (the experience of students complained about the fact that they were 'withdrawn' from their mainstream classroom to receive support), I was motivated to undertake this case study. However, as a student and as a teacher in Cypriot mainstream schools, I was familiar and accustomed to the Cypriot educational system, the historical, and the socioeconomic factors, which have already been explained in the background of the study. I was also aware of the negative stereotypes of special needs labelling that affected and stigmatized the development of inclusive/special needs education in Cyprus. As a result of this impact, I was friendly and empathetic with my participants in the field, even in cases where their beliefs contradict the inclusive ones of mine. In terms of ethical research that respects the participants, the researcher has to critically evaluate his/ her values, understanding and engage in the topic under study (King and Horrocks, 2010). For this reason, I constantly reflected on, and carefully documented, every step of the procedures followed for the data analysis.

The lack of time

A prolonged or intense exposure to the phenomenon can result in a deeper understanding of the case under study (Krefting, 1991). While I was designing the study, I thought that spending almost a month every day at schools would be enough, since I was familiar with the educational system of Cyprus. Though considerable time was spent to be acclimatized at schools and to create a friendly rapport with participants, nevertheless, I should have stayed longer at the participant schools. The fact that I am working full-time hindered this.

The lack of time mainly influenced the observation process at schools. I should have spent more time observing the students and the teachers in mainstream classrooms and the resource room. Observation series were restricted to two sessions in the mainstream classroom and in the resource room, due to the heavily time-constrained program of the participant teachers. There was not sufficient time to repeat an observation in such cases where students seemed slightly affected by my presence. Even though I attempted to keep a professional distance with the children and teachers while observing, this was not always possible. Some students stared at me during the first observation in their classroom or sometimes teachers used me as a motive to make children behave obediently and participate in the learning process.

As a student and as an educational practitioner in Cypriot schools, it was difficult to avoid considering myself as part of the culture under study and as an 'insider' researcher (Asselin, 2003). Thus, it was initially very difficult to recognize the differences of what happened not only because of the fact that I was accustomed to the classroom but also due to my preconceptions. An 'insider' researcher shares the same identity, language and experiences with the participants (ibid), while an 'outsider researcher' aimed to obtain an overview by reading the main literature on the research topic (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). However, the qualitative researcher is difficult to be a 'true outsider' or a 'complete insider' researcher. To have an in-depth understanding of the context under study, the qualitative researcher needs to familiarize his/herself with the participants' perceptions and the environment of the study, while his/her perspectives are unavoidably affected by what he/she reads in the main literature on the research topic (ibid).

At the first two schools, observation took place close to the Christmas holidays and test periods, due to the time limit. Recognizing that different moments and periods of school life affect what happens at school in various ways, I felt that I should have spent more time observing the students and the teachers. Student behaviour and interest in learning vary from Monday to Friday, or while holidays and test periods are approaching. However, trying to overcome such time restrictions, it should be noted that in the first two schools observations were generally of early class sessions in the day and that observations in the third school took place in mid-January - the beginning of February 2013, when holidays and tests were over.

Data Translation

Translating data from Greek to English would seem to be the other limitation for the study that aims to listen to teacher and student perceptions. However, every effort was made in the processed translation to keep the actual content of the participants' perspectives (Rothkegel, 2006, in Filep, 2009,p.67). Even in the case where the reported idiomatic expressions were paraphrased in order to follow the terminology and grammatical and syntactical structure of the English language (Filep, 2009), this was scrupulously done to ensure the accuracy of the processed translation.

Problems in translation were found in the questionnaire design despite the questions being piloted and having been double-checked to ensure the translation adequacy. Problems in translation related only to question seven (see appendices:A.6a,A.7a,pp.325, 333). It was

considered one of the main questions that aimed to capture the understanding of participant teachers and coordinators regarding inclusion and the withdrawal support. At this question were provided statements with contradictory notions of inclusive education and withdrawal support, which aimed to conclude on the inclusive ethos of each participant. There were teachers who misunderstood the statements and agreed with ideas that were found to be not in favour when they were interviewed. For this reason, to avoid any possible biases of the questionnaire design, time was available during the individual face-to-face interviews, to discuss with the teachers those issues, which seemed to need further explanation or those questions, which seemed to have been misunderstood or omitted.

Interview tape-recording

During the interviews with both the teachers and the students, notes were taken to record their answers. This is one of the main limitations of the process, since it is preferable for the interviewee responses to be tape-recorded. By tape recording their responses, it is easier to claim their authenticity, credibility and trustworthiness. Although it had been explained that recording was used only for facilitating the process of data collection and that nobody would listen to the recordings apart from the researcher, only three students and their parents agreed for their answers to be tape-recorded, whereas none of the participant teachers allowed the tape recording of their responses. Both the teachers and the parents did not allow tape-recording, because they considered that in such a way anonymity and confidentiality are threatened. That is why the headmistress in Aristotelio prohibited the use of audio recording for both student and teacher interviews and so for ethical reasons I had to comply with the school policy. Taking into account the highly centralized education system of Cyprus, teachers seemed to be afraid of being identified in case they expressed something against the MOEC policies and practices. Parents did not allow the tape recording of their children's responses, due to the fear or risk of their children being (further) stigmatized.

Under such circumstances, the researcher took notes and it was helpful that teachers were willing to repeat their answers and to spend time, during the interviews, discussing individual drafts in order to ensure the recording was as accurate as possible of their beliefs. Notes were also taken of the student responses and attention was paid to clarifying the children's answers and noting down what actually the children wanted to say. This was a difficult task because sometimes the children were impatient and other children were

easily distracted. Understanding the children's desire to finish the interview quickly and in order to not make them feel anxious about their answers and that they were being tested, they were not constantly asked to repeat themselves but at key junctures they were requested to sum up their preceding points (King and Horrocks, 2010).

3.9. Summary

In this chapter, I presented the rationale, which underpins all the methodological decisions undertaken for this study. The most important decision was that of carrying out an ethnographic case study. The main challenges methodologically seemed to be the interviews with students who are diagnosed as having mild learning difficulties and the observation series, which took place both in the mainstream and the resource room classrooms for over a limited of time. Other challenges have to do with the fact that the tape-recording of the interviewee responses was not allowed and that it was necessary to translate the data from Greek to English. The next chapter, which is about presenting the findings, shows how these methodological decisions were put into practice and how these challenges were encountered in order to allow for an in-depth exploration and understanding of the participants' perceptions and for their 'voice' to be illuminated.

4. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. OVERVIEW

This chapter presents the findings derived from my fieldwork, specifically, the semi-structured interviews with the participant groups of students and of coordinators and teachers, the observations from the mainstream classroom and the resource room and the coordinator and teacher questionnaires. The coordinators and teachers were grouped together because they were identified as having largely similar perceptions regarding inclusive education, the way it is or should be implemented and the classroom adaptations. The findings are presented across the three participant schools and they are organised under the themes, which will be discussed in the analysis chapter. First, the profile of each school is presented in order to understand their inclusive ethos. Second, the data patterns are presented, which have been coded into four main themes:

- 1. The social attitudes and conceptions** discuss whether the students are stigmatized or/and discriminated against as a result of their withdrawal support in the resource room. It also explores the possible effects of the stigmatization process on the participant students.
- 2. The impact of withdrawal support** presents the effects of teaching in the resource room on the students' learning identity and teachers' practicing profile.
- 3. The teaching and learning process in the mainstream classroom and the resource room** presents the current teaching practices, used in mainstream Cypriot secondary schools and indicates those teaching adaptations that the participants like /dislike.
- 4. The students' engagement in learning** focuses on the students' active participation and explores the reasons for students' disengagement. It also suggests how the interest in learning of these students could be (further) encouraged.

The final section summarizes the key findings which are further analyzed and discussed in chapter 5. It is important to note that there were some sub-themes which were derived only

from the answers of the students and teachers who were more involved with students with learning difficulties than the coordinators. These findings are also indicated and further discussed in the following analysis chapter, aiming to further illuminate how the experience of students and teachers in Cypriot mainstream schools has affected their perceptions about inclusive education.

School Profiles

All public mainstream Cypriot secondary schools follow the same architectural design and classroom layout, including the required specialized rooms such as science laboratories, libraries, IT rooms and playgrounds, according to the MOEC guidelines. Curriculum textbooks are provided by the MOEC and there are photocopying facilities for staff. According to the MOEC records, the case study schools were neither underprivileged nor poor. From my visits, I was struck by the creative school atmosphere shown by the displays of student work on the corridor walls and in the classrooms. Teachers were busy with their workload of marking or photocopying, even in their free teaching time. The selected schools are also 'classic exemplars' of average Cypriot schools, since most of their students are from middle class families and are of similar socio-economic status.

The Aristotelio school was established in 1993. It is a clean, well-equipped and well-maintained school, reputed for its student discipline and academic success. The students are taught eight periods of forty-five minutes every day. Four out of six teachers of Modern Greek language, who taught in the resource room, voluntarily participated in the study. There were only women who were teachers of the withdrawal support program. Ms. Evriklia was not well trained in special needs/inclusive education and it was her first year leading as the school coordinator of withdrawal support. Ms. Andromache was observed teaching History both in the mainstream classroom and in the resource room. Ms. Alkmini was also experienced in teaching students with profound learning difficulties in a special unit within a mainstream secondary school. The headmistress put many restrictions on the ethics of the research process (see section 3.8:interview tape recording). The school also accepts students with profound learning difficulties such as 'hearing impairments' and 'mobility disabilities'. Nine students participated in the withdrawal support program. Most students who were labelled as having mild learning difficulties, were diagnosed as having dyslexia, ADHD or a combination of both.

The second school, Protagorio, was established in 1995 and is a clean and well-equipped school. During the data collection period, it was in the process of modernization and refurbishment. There was insufficient space for its student population and Portakabin classrooms were used on a permanent basis. Among the three participant schools, this was the largest in terms of student population. There is a permanently established resource room, though it is not always available for the withdrawal support of the target students since it is mainly used for the support of students with profound learning difficulties. It is a school reputed for their student results in national academic competitions. The students are taught eight periods of forty-five minutes every Monday and Thursday. Four teachers of Modern Greek language taught these students in the resource room. Ms. Semeli and Mr. Tireas were observed teaching History to these students. Ms. Meropi had been working for three years in this school, though it was her first year leading the program and she was not well trained regarding inclusive/special needs education. Ms. Semeli had previously worked in a 'special' school. The other teachers had attended a seminar about profound learning difficulties, but they mainly adapted their classroom practices using their teaching experience. There was also a teacher 'with mobility impairments', who was in a wheel chair and I saw students pushing his wheel chair during their breaks. There were twelve students, who were officially diagnosed as having 'mild learning difficulties' and virtually all of them participated in the study. Students were diagnosed as having either dyslexia, or ADHD. There were also students 'with hearing and vision impairments'.

The third school, Thalio, was established in 2002. It is clean, well-equipped, modern and eco-friendly school, which is reputed for its modern building facilities. From my visits, I was struck by the obviously happy and less stressful working environment and, the creative atmosphere shown by the colourful classroom arrangements and the students' graffiti painting on the corridor walls. Seventy percent of the student population are not native Greek students and thus the school is participating in both the MOEC's innovative curriculum study and additionally the MOEC's 'educational priority zone' support program, which aims to prevent the early leaving or dropping out of students from education. In particular, the school participated in the second aforementioned program in order to deal with undisciplined student behaviour. Mr. Aiolos was not well trained regarding special needs/inclusive education; it was his first year running the withdrawal support and his last school year before his retirement. The teaching staff of the program consisted of two women and two men, all teachers of Modern Greek and History. Mr. Charidemos taught History, while Ms. Ely taught both Modern Greek and History. From this school only three teachers from the program participated. The fourth teacher did not ask to participate

because he was a supply teacher with only one year of teaching experience. Eight out of ten students, who were officially registered as having mild learning difficulties, agreed to voluntarily participate in the research. Most of the participant students had either ADHD or dyslexia. At this school, there were also students with profound learning difficulties such as hearing impairments.

4.2.1. SOCIAL ATTITUDES AND CONCEPTIONS

This theme mainly articulates the understandings of participants regarding inclusive educational approaches, such as withdrawal support in the resource room. As was expected, their conceptions have been informed by what is culturally perceived as 'normal' or 'special'. Reflecting on the cultural stereotypes concerning the labels of 'special needs'/'learning disabilities' informs the attitudes of teachers and peers of students with mild learning difficulties towards them. At the same time, these stereotypes inform the way these students perceive themselves and how they internalize their teachers' and peers' attitudes towards them.

Students' stigmatization

This section will discuss the risk to students of being stigmatized as a result of how their 'learning needs' have been stereotyped, leading to them being separated from their classmates in order to receive additional support in the resource room.

The students across the three schools, acknowledged their learning difficulties and did not challenge the fact that they were labelled as having learning difficulties. Aligned with the official labels of their learning difficulties, students emphasized the academic skills they lacked and the aims of the mainstream curriculum, which they considered difficult to achieve. Considering the nature of the lessons observed both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom the Modern Greek and Greek History lessons, students highlighted that they lacked academic writing skills, reading comprehension skills and the knowledge of the rules of Modern Greek language grammar and syntax. It was difficult for them to write summaries, essays and assignments and to avoid spelling mistakes.

Table B.2: Students' Withdrawal Support In The Resource Room

School	Teacher	Class	Lesson In The Resource Room	Participant Student	Age	Times Of Withdrawal	Student's Learning Difficulties	Years Of Support
Aristotelio	Mrs Alkmini	1 st	Greek	Marianthi	12	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essays • Writing assignments 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Maximus	13	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Vocabulary 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Menelaus	13	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Vocabulary 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Giota	12	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Vocabulary 	1 st year in Gymnasium
				Christodoulos	14	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Essays 	2 nd year in Gymnasium
	Ms. Zinovia	2 nd	Greek	Makes	13	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Vocabulary 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Aphrodite	14	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Essays 	3 rd year in Gymnasium
				Ms. Roxani + Ms. Andromache	3 rd	Greek + History	Gregoris	14
	Xenia	14	5				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Essays 	3 rd year in Gymnasium
	Protagorio	Ms. Pandora	1 st	History	Minas	12	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Understanding the questions • Essays
Antonakis					13	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Essays 	2 nd year in Gymnasium
Katerina					13	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Reading 	Primary+Gymnasium
Kostakis					13	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Essays 	2 nd year in Gymnasium
Ms. Semeli		2 nd	Greek+History	Demosthenes	14	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Essays 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Niki	14	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Forget instructions 	2 nd year in Gymnasium
				Nektaria	13	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Understanding the questions 	1 st year in Gymnasium
Ms. Evdoxia		2 nd	Greek	Giorgula	13	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Maths 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Marinos	13	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Reading 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Charilaos	14	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Reading • Essays 	Primary+Gymnasium
Mr. Tireas		3 rd	Greek +History	Efstathios	14	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Reading • Essays 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Solonas	14	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar 	2 nd year in Gymnasium
				Giangkos	12.5	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Maths 	Primary+Gymnasium
Thalio	Mr.Charidemos	1 st	History	Anna	13	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essays • Summary 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Mary	12.5	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Essays 	Primary+Gymnasium
	Ms. Mikini+ Ms. Ely	3 rd	Greek + History	Demos	14	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Summary • Reading • Comprehension 	2 nd year in Gymnasium
				Charalambos	14	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary • Essays 	Primary+Gymnasium
				Chrysanthi	14	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essays 	3 rd year in Gymnasium
	Ms. Ely	3 rd	Greek	Zoitsa	14	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary 	2 nd year in Gymnasium
				Chara	14	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary 	3 rd year in Gymnasium

Students were afraid of being stigmatized vis-à-vis their classmates. The students felt stigmatized when their classmates commented negatively about them being withdrawn from the mainstream classroom to receive support in the resource room. In Aristotelio and

Thalio, it was natural for these students to be withdrawn for support in the resource room and thus their classmates did not comment negatively about it. The first year students such as Giota (Aristotelio) emphasized that:

'Nobody comments about us leaving the classroom, although they know that we are going to the resource room for support'.

Aristotelio's first year students, such as Aphrodite, Maximus and Menelaus, were very relieved to know that their classmates did not comment about them because they did not care about it. In Protagorio, eight out of the twelve students confirmed that their classmates were used to, or still asked them, about their withdrawal support, though they were less threatened since their classmates did not comment about them negatively. Solonas emphasized that:

'My classmates know that I am going to the resource room classes but they don't comment negatively. The first time I was attending the program they asked me about the resource room classes and I told them that I was learning more. Now they don't ask about it'.

It is also interesting that the classmates of Gregoris (Aristotelio), Antonakis (Protagorio), Chara and Zoitsa (Thalio) explained that their classmates were actually jealous of them being supported in the resource room, because they would get better grades. Gregoris' and Antonakis' classmates commented about this only when they succeeded in tests and exams. For Minas' and Nektaria's (Protagorio) classmates, it was important to attend the resource room with them, just to miss the lesson in the mainstream classroom.

These students, who internalized that they were being withdrawn from the mainstream classroom to receive 'specialised' support, felt threatened by revealing to their classmates what they were taught in the resource room, because they were afraid of being stigmatized as 'less able'. Hence, Katerina (Protagorio) felt it necessary to confirm to her classmates that they did the same activities as in the mainstream classroom. Charalambos (Thalio) avoided telling them about it, while other students responded defensively or even aggressively to their classmates when asked about their withdrawal support. Kostakis (Protagorio) made his classmates angry by not telling them what they did in the resource room. Niki (Protagorio) also avoided it, by telling them that:

'it is not your business and I don't pay attention to what the others say'.

Mary (Thalio), who felt less afraid of being stigmatized, highlighted that:

'because they are my friends, those who asked about what we are doing in the resource room, I explained to them'.

Interestingly the third year students such as Gregoris (Aristotelio), Charilaos (Protagorio) and Chrysanthi (Thalio) highlighted that their classmates were more curious when they initially began receiving the resource room tuition, but later they stopped asking them. The classmates of these students in Protagorio and Thalio were more curious than in Aristotelio. Solonas underlined that his classmates:

‘... are curious to learn why I am attending the program because they consider me a good student’.

Considering that the case of Solonas was not the only one, it is noteworthy that the classmates of these students actually perceived them as being ‘less academically endowed’, because they were withdrawn for support in the resource room.

The third year students in the three schools were sceptical about continuing their withdrawal support in the Lyceum, in order to avoid being further stigmatized as ‘less able’. Gregoris (Aristotelio) explained that he would prefer to quit school than endure further stigmatization in the Lyceum, by continuing to be withdrawn for support in the resource room. It is revealing that even these students, who had been identified by their teachers as being in need of support in the resource room, were themselves also sceptical about continuing their withdrawal support in the Lyceum. Demos and Charalambos (Thalio) would have preferred to attend a vocational school in the next year because they believed that the lessons would be easier and less challenging for their learning difficulties and thus it might be less necessary for them to be withdrawn for support (informal conversation: research diary, 6 November 2012). Only in Thalio, were the girls from Ms. Ely’s group, such as Chara, more positive about continuing their withdrawal support in the Lyceum. Her teacher probably influenced her positively towards this idea and she did not care what her classmates in the Lyceum would believe about her, if she could continue to be together with and supported by her friends Zoitsa and Chrysanthi in the resource room.

In contrast to student perceptions, the coordinators and teachers were in agreement that these students were in need of being withdrawn for support in the resource room. However, most teachers disagreed that the students were stigmatized when they attended the resource room for support. Only Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) was not sure, while Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio), Ms. Pandora and Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) agreed that these students were stigmatized when their needs were supported in the resource room. Ms. Roxani’s fourteen and fifteen year old students, did not choose to continue to attend the resource room in the Lyceum, in order to conceal their learning difficulties from their classmates. Almost all of Thalio’s teachers pointed out that students are not stigmatized

whether their learning difficulties are supported in the mainstream classroom or in the resource room. In other schools, most teachers emphasized that the students with learning difficulties were stigmatized when their 'needs' were supported in the mainstream classroom.

Table C. 6: Coordinators' And Teachers' Perceptions Regarding The Students' Stigmatization

Participants	Students With Learning Difficulties Are Stigmatized When They Are Supported In The Mainstream Classroom	Students With Learning Difficulties Are Stigmatized When They Are Supported In The Resource Room
<u>Aristotelio</u>		
Ms. Evriklia	disagree	disagree
Ms. Andromache	agree	not sure
Ms. Roxani	not sure	agree
Ms. Alkmini	agree	disagree
Ms. Zinovia	strongly disagree	disagree
<u>Protagorio</u>		
Ms. Meropi	agree	strongly disagree
Ms. Semeli	agree	disagree
Ms. Evdoxia	agree	agree
Mr. Tireas	disagree	disagree
Ms. Pandora	agree	agree
<u>Thalio</u>		
Mr. Aiolos	disagree	disagree
Mr. Charidemos	disagree	strongly disagree
Ms. Ely	not sure	disagree
Ms. Mikini	agree	disagree
<u>Total</u>	7/14 agree or strongly agree	10/14 disagree or strongly disagree

From the coordinators' and teachers' questionnaires, it is apparent that the teachers mainly agreed that the students were not stigmatized by being withdrawn for support in the resource room. Exploring their responses further, it could be argued that they probably believe this as they wanted to defend the MOEC Withdrawal Support Policy and their own practices. Ms. Meropi (Protagorio) emphatically argued that:

'The school tries to deal with such cases with confidentiality, the teachers of these students are informed and many times they attend relevant seminars in order to avoid stigmatizing them'.

Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) also highlighted that the teachers tended to protect their students from being stigmatized by explaining to them that:

‘... they are not different from the others and that they should not be ashamed about being in need of help’.

However, Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) only theoretically denied that these students are stigmatized, while in her interview, she admitted that:

‘Personally, I would feel embarrassed to be withdrawn from the mainstream classroom’.

Therefore, it was obvious that Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) was the only one who personally believed that these students were not stigmatized as a result of their withdrawal support and she strongly emphasized that:

‘If I were them, I would not feel uncomfortable. In fact if I had a close relation with my teacher and I saw that I could learn more, I would attend the classes in the resource room without feeling bad’.

From the coordinator and teacher interview responses, it is evident that they largely assumed that their students with mild learning difficulties were not stigmatized by being withdrawn for support in the resource room, particularly as these students had rarely asked to leave their withdrawal support in the resource room. However, Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) stated that:

‘There are some students who stopped attending the ‘classes’ because their classmates mocked them, I had a case in the past. We tried to advise and persuade the students not to leave the resource room support. Of course, at the end they left the classes. That’s why I believe that the aim of the resource room support should be the emotional support of the students’.

Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) argued that:

‘Probably two out of ten of their students, may feel bad to attend the resource room for support’.

Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) and Ms. Mikini (Thalio) acknowledged that only a few students, who are ‘consciously aware’, might feel embarrassed attending the resource room. Ms. Mikini had a student, who asked to leave the resource room group because he found the other students ‘less able than him’ and thus risked being stigmatized as a student of a lower academic level.

Even in cases, where the students asked to leave the resource room, Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) identified the pressure for the teachers to persuade them to stay. She explained that:

'...with the discussion, his fear of being mocked by others diminished and he felt good to come to the resource room and he did not care what the others commented about this'.

Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) along with Solonas' parents managed to persuade him to continue to attend the resource room. Similarly, Ms. Roxani_(Aristotelio)_and Ms. Evdoxia_(Protagorio)_underlined that only once had parents agreed that their child could stop attending the resource room, because the student .did not want to go. Ms.Evdoxia emphatically explained that:

'...Although we discussed it, finally he remained continually in the classroom and I supported him in the class and helped him for the test and exams, but he also tried and was very interested in the classes'.

Mr. Aiolos also indicated that:

' ... Parents want their children to participate in the programs because (they consider that) their children are helped'.

Interestingly, Mr. Tireas identified that:

'... In the cases where parents insist on their children continuing and students do not want to, then students find different excuses in order to avoid coming to the resource room class. One of the usual student excuses is that they cannot go to the gym lesson'.

Secondly, teachers supported the idea that their students should continue attending the resource room, because they believed that their students were benefiting, rather than being stigmatized. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) underlined that her students felt happy that they could achieve their tasks. Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) also explained that:

'The class is simplified, and they come to the resource room for embedding and to be emotionally supported. The resource room classes are done to help students feel good, to have an idea of what they are going to be taught in the mainstream class and so as not to be mocked by their classmates about their 'learning difficulties. In addition these students are already very good students'.

Ms. Ely (Thalio) also suggested that:

'they do revise the classroom teaching material and thus they remember more of what they have learnt and they get help with their homework'.

Ms. Mikini and Mr. Tireas (Thalio) also focus attention on the fact that the students themselves wanted to be withdrawn for support. For them the students seemed to have benefitted, even if the true motivation of these students was the 'clemency' of being helped to get better grades in classroom tests and final exams. The importance of this 'clemency' was indicated by Mr.Tireas, who underlined that:

'they are also students who want to be included in the resource room support, because they believe that they would also be helped with their grades'.

However, Ms. Mikini (Thalio) was also disappointed, upon discovering the true reason that some students attended the resource room:

'The boys you have seen are glad to come to the resource room because they believe that it is time to relax'.

Thirdly, the teachers suggested that these students are not stigmatized when they attend the resource room, since they are not isolated in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) explained that the classmates of these students are pleasant to them and do not marginalize them. Ms. Evdoxia's (Protagorio) students complained that they did not understand the lesson in their classroom, rather than being socially excluded. Mr. Tireas also highlighted that:

'In the previous and this school year, the students in the resource room are close friends. Usually the students of this target group are friends also with other children of their age. They are not isolated by their peers; maybe they feel more comfortable to be mostly with the children of the resource room group'.

Similarly, Ms. Ely (Thalio) confirmed that her resource room students, Chrysanthi, Chara and Zoitsa, chose to be closer friends because they were shy. Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) firmly supported the idea that her students were happy attending the resource room because:

'.... there is a prevailing climate of love, trust and acceptance in the resource room'

As far as her twin students, Marianthi and Giota, are concerned, Ms. Alkmini acknowledged that they had problems socializing with their classroom group of students due to their selfish behaviour and thus she tended to advise them on how to make friendships.

Finally, it is interesting that Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio), who has been affected by her previous work experience in special schools and 'special units' within mainstream Cypriot schools, suggested the withdrawal support was even more effective for these students' socialization and academic support :

'...to have a 'special' class with children of the same level being together all the time. I don't understand why we keep the same process (students leaving the mainstream classroom to attend the resource room and vice versa). The children in 'special' classes would have simplified books for the same course list of the mainstream curriculum and so children would have higher self-esteem. Now these students are 'different' in the mainstream classroom because they are made to feel aware of their 'learning difficulties'. (In the 'special'

classroom) the students would not be stigmatized and their teachers would pay more attention to their needs. It would also be easier for the teachers to work with students of the same level'.

An issue that emerges from these findings is that both groups have internalized the idea that the resource room is the place for educational support for the less academically able students. However, only the students believed that they were stigmatized or at risk of being stigmatized as a result of their withdrawal support in the resource room. For the coordinators and teachers, it was natural for these students to be withdrawn from the mainstream classroom to receive support in the resource room and thus for them, withdrawal support was not a factor in explaining these students' stigmatization.

Students' discrimination

One common effect of stigmatization was direct or indirect forms of discrimination. The majority of the students in the mainstream classroom were directly discriminated against by their classmates, who laughed at or teased them for the help these students receive from their teachers with answering their exercises or tests. Their classmates tended to laugh at them because they considered themselves to be 'more able' academically. Gregoris (Aristotelio) pointed out:

'(They) teased me as I will easily have good grades because I go to the resource room'.

The boys in their resource room group laughed at Giorgula and Niki (Protagorio), when they answered incorrectly and could not complete their exercises. Giagkos' (Thalio) classmates laughed at him, because he had not found the correct answers alone. Gregoris (Aristotelio) and Katerina (Protagorio) preferred to ask their questions in the resource room in order to avoid their classmates laughing at them and Katerina (Protagorio) preferred to ask her questions to her parents at home, rather than in the mainstream classroom. However, it is significant to note that in Aristotelio and Thalio, there were a few students, who were not laughed at by their classmates. The girl sitting next to Giagkos (Thalio), helped him with their classroom activities, and thus he was confident to raise his hand and answer questions in the mainstream classroom. The students in Ms. Alkmini's (Aristotelio) class used to work collaboratively in order to answer their exercise sheets and they listened with respect to the responses from those labelled as having learning difficulties. They were regularly more inclusive, since they agreed to lend their notes to those who were withdrawn for support. The classmates of Nektaria and Minas (Thalio) wished they could also attend the resource room with them

in order to miss the lesson in the mainstream classroom. It can possibly be inferred that the lessons in the mainstream classroom were perceived as being boring or difficult for them too.

I observed that the students were afraid of being isolated in the mainstream classroom and thus of being indirectly discriminated against by their classmates. These students attempted to be constantly part of their classroom peer group, even when they were distracted or misbehaved during the lesson in the mainstream classroom. Gregoris (Aristotelio) continued to misbehave, though his teacher remarked on his good behaviour, since his classmates paid attention to him as the 'clown of the classroom' (reflection on fieldwork: research diary, 4 December 2012). Xenia (Aristotelio) also laughed and talked with the others about a mischievous incident, which happened during the teaching and learning process in the mainstream classroom (fieldnotes, 4 December 2012). Demos' (Thalio) classmates laughed when Ms. Mikini made remarks to him about his behaviour, though they kept calling to him in class and joking with him about his behaviour towards their teacher. All the students enjoyed talking with their classmates and participated in their jokes, while a few students were irritated by these students' distracting behaviour. Some boys from Ms. Andromache's (Aristotelio) and Ms. Semeli's (Protagorio) classes were irritated respectively with Gregoris' and Antonakis' distracting behaviour. Christodoulos (Aristotelio) was also annoyed when a girl was misbehaving in the resource room. He ignored her gestures and even though he did not report her to their teachers, he laughed at her when the teacher criticized her behaviour. Solonas (Protagorio) was angry with Efstathios and Charilaos, because they distracted his attention from the lesson when they were sitting all together. He was only annoyed when other resource room students teased him, probably because they had a close friendship and he was not afraid of losing it (reflection on fieldwork:research diary: 6 December 2012).

Among the students, there was a sense of being discriminated against by their teachers. This sense emerged for two discrete reasons. Firstly, the students assumed that their teachers did not have time for their needs and their queries in the mainstream classrooms. The majority of students, who believed this, were from Aristotelio and Protagorio. Niki, Charilaos and Efstathios (Protagorio) identified that they were receiving more attention from their teachers in the resource room. Charilaos, who was used that his teacher asked all students in turn around the resource room to participate in lesson, complained that:

'...in class I am not treated fairly because only a few times does the teacher ask me to answer. I am not raising my hand to answer because I am not sure about my answer, because I forget easily what they asked us to do and (so) I don't want to be mocked if I make a mistake'.

Christodoulos (Aristotelio) mentioned that his teacher encouraged all the students in her group to ask their various questions in the resource room. Similarly, Demosthenes and Chrysanthi (Thalio) complained that there was insufficient time to answer their questions in the mainstream classroom, while Efstathios (Thalio) argued that their teachers lacked time since they were more students in the mainstream classroom. Demosthenes (Protagorio) emphasized that his teacher encouraged him to keep notes of his queries to ask later in the resource room. Secondly, these students hesitated to ask their questions in the mainstream classroom because they themselves and their classmates internalized their teachers' assumption that their queries were delaying the teaching and learning process. This assumption was mainly internalized by the students of Aristotelio. Therefore, Marianthi (Aristotelio) complained that her teacher did not seem willing to answer her questions in the mainstream classroom, because:

'...the others move to another exercise'.

Similarly, I observed that the classmates of Christodoulos and Gregoris complained about their repeatedly asking questions. Giota's and Aphrodite's classmates took advantage of the time spent by their teachers answering their questions to make noise or misbehave.

Students also felt discriminated against, when their teachers got easily annoyed with them, when they were distracted or misbehaved in the mainstream classroom. For example, Gregoris pointed out that:

'In the classroom I don't like it when teachers get mad with me because I misbehave. Everybody is naughty but usually they blame me for the noise...'.

Maximus (Aristotelio) and Minas (Protagorio) also complained that their teachers seemed to be 'unfair' towards them. Their teachers always blamed them for any misbehaviour, because they had stereotyped them as the 'misbehavers' in the mainstream classroom. Similarly, Charalambos (Thalio) and the majority of students in Protagorio, such as Solonas (Protagorio) took it for granted that their teachers would show the same equal tolerance with them as in the resource room, because they already knew about their learning difficulties. In particular, Charalambos complained that:

'I don't like it in the history class that the teacher gets angry with me and she makes remarks about my behaviour'.

However, some of the students tended to be more easily negative about the teachers, who they suspected were strict with them or less supportive of their learning needs. Antonakis explained that:

'I like the class of 'Odyssey' (Ancient Greek literature), but I do not feel sorry for missing it because I do not like that teacher'.

Similarly, Giorgula was sorry to miss the Ancient Greek class but not to miss the lesson with the French teacher.

Discrimination of some sort against students with learning difficulties was also reported by a few teachers. For example Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) and Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) implied that some of their teacher colleagues tended to discriminate against their students with learning difficulties, since they lowered their expectations of their learning. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) indicated that:

'There are also teachers who underestimate students because they are going to the resource room'.

Ms. Akmini (Aristotelio) also indicated that:

'Others refused to go to the resource room tuition in order not to be stigmatized and the teachers do not 'push them', but they are indulgent with them in the (mainstream) classroom'.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Ms. Alkmini, who has worked in special schools before, and Ms. Pandora, who is a priest's wife, were even more sensitive with their students with learning difficulties ([informal conversation: research diary, 15 November 2012](#)). The other teachers and especially those in Thalió argued that the teachers protected their students from being/feeling discriminated against by supporting them emotionally in the resource room. Indicatively, Mr. Aiolos explained that:

'The school directs the students (to behave properly to each other). Teachers give them love, and (by supporting them in the resource room) there is more chance for the students to participate in the classroom without being insulted (because they did not know the answers to the mainstream classroom activities)'.

In Aristotelio and Protagorio, teachers acknowledged the risk of these students being discriminated against, due to their withdrawal support in the resource room. However, they tended to underestimate this risk by arguing that it no longer exists. For example, Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) totally denied that her students were discriminated against:

'I don't think that students are influenced negatively. They are included at school without any problem and their classmates are sensitive to them, even the students in wheel chairs, you see them push them'.

Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) indicated that:

'Students are influenced negatively but this is the case only on the first days of school. With the help of their teacher, who loves them, the exclusion (discrimination) is overcome'.

Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) recounted that she used to have only one student who was discriminated against because:

'They understood erroneously that the resource room classes were for children 'with serious problems' or for 'stupid' children. I have never noticed any case like this at any other school'.

It is also interesting that a small number of teachers tended to underestimate the risk of these students being discriminated against because teachers supported them in the resource room to improve their academic self-esteem. Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) aimed to support her students emotionally in the resource room, because:

'..... students enjoy being in the resource room because we talk about different topics of their interest which are considered to be a problem for them and I encourage and support them. With my previous students, I was closer to them and we could talk more about their personal affairs. This year we cannot yet because these students argue with each other when we talk about such things. I asked their mainstream classroom peers to avoid ridiculing them'.

Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio), who tended to protect her students from such a risk, underlined that:

'It has not caught my eye that their classmates make fun of them because they go to the resource room... Even though there is confidentiality about the children going to the resource room, the course timetable is posted on the teachers' desk and there may be a fear of these students of being stigmatized. For this reason I explained to them that it is their responsibility to attend the lessons in the resource room without being summoned and I gave them the timetable and the place to come alone'.

Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) concurred with what Ms. Roxani had identified and thus she felt relieved that:

'.. now the children know their timetable and they don't have to look at it'.

Ms. Alkmini acknowledged that her students were protected from being stigmatized by their classmates, if they did not know when they had to leave the mainstream classroom to

receive support in the resource room. She also acknowledged that the classmates of these students perceived them to be less academically able, because they attended the resource room for support.

Overall, what emerged from these findings is that the classmates of these students and their teachers have internalized the idea that they are less academically able. It is also striking that these students themselves internalized that they were less academically able compared to their peers. On the basis of this, both their classmates and their teachers tended to discriminate against these students for their academic performance. Interestingly, these students tended to act in ways they believed would increase the acceptance of their teacher and classmate and, to an extent, minimize the risk of being discriminated against by others.

Students' lower academic self-concept and efficacy beliefs

The students appear to have lower academic self-esteem as a result of their labelling and stigmatization. I observed that these students usually chose to sit at the back row tables and tried respectively to hide away in the mainstream classroom. Seventeen students choose to sit at the back or the second back table and just seven at the first table of each row. Students sat alone or with a friend who was a 'good' student, but even more interesting was the fact that the majority of them sat close to their friends from the resource room group.

Table C.7a: Students' Seats In The Mainstream Classroom

School	Teacher	Class	Lesson	Participant Student	Students' Seat In The First Classroom Observation	Students' Seat In The Second Classroom Observation
Aristotello	Mrs Alkmini	1 st	Greek	Marianthi	last table of the third row	last table of the third row
				Maximus	first table of the first row with another student	first table of the first row with another student
				Menelaus	alone behind Giota's table	alone behind Giota's table
				Giota	alone at the second to back table of the first row	alone at the second to back table of the first row
	Ms. Zinovia	2 nd	Greek	Christodoulos	alone at the last table of the second row	alone at the last table of the second row
				Makes	at the first table of the first row with a good student	at the first table of the first row with a good student
				Aphrodite	at the first table of the first row with a good student	at the first table of the first row with a good student
Protagorio	Ms. Roxani + Ms. Andromache	3 rd	Greek + History	Gregoris	at the first table of the third row with another student	at the first table of the third row with another student
				Xenia	alone at the third table of the third row	alone at the third table of the third row
	Ms. Pandora	1 st	History	Minas	at the last table of the second row with another student	at the last table of the second row with another student
				Antonakis	at the first table of the second row	at the first table of the second row
				Katerina	at the second table of the first row	at the second table of the first row with Niki
				Kostakis	third table of the second row	third table of the second row

Thalio	Ms. Semeli	2 nd	Greek+ History	Demosthenes	last table of the third row with another student	last table of the third row with another student
				Niki	second table of the first row	absent
				Nektaria	last table of the first row	second table of the second row with another student
	Ms. Evdoxia	2 nd	Greek	Giorgula	alone at the last table of the fourth row	alone at the last table of the fourth row
				Marinos	last table of the first row	last table of the first row
				Charilaos	absent	is sitting at the third table of the fourth row
	Mr. Tireas	3 rd	Greek +History	Efstathios	with Solonas at the second to back table of the third row	absent
				Solonas	with Efstathios at the second to back table of the third row	with Charilaos at the second to back table of the third row
	Mr.Charidemos	1 st	History	Giangkos	with Mary at the last table of the second row	with Mary at the last table of the second row
				Anna	first table next to the teacher's headquarter	first table next to the teacher's desk
				Mary	with Giagkos at the last table of the second row	alone at the last table of the second row
				Demos	last table of the first row with another boy	delayed/ last table of the middle row
	Ms. Mikini+ Ms. Ely	3 rd	Greek + History	Charalambos	first table of the first row/ delayed	first table of the first row
				Chrysanthi	with Zoitsa at the last table of the first row	with Zoitsa at the last table of the first row
	Ms. Ely	3 rd	Greek	Zoitsa	with Chrysanthi at the last table of the first row	with Chrysanthi at the last table of the first row
Chara				at the second to back table of the first row with another 'naughty' girl	Second to back table of the first row with another 'naughty' girl	

Students were more confident in their academic abilities in the resource room, since they chose to sit at the front tables and in many cases they sat opposite or next to their teacher's desk. They sat close to each other, while Mr. Tireas and Ms. Evdoxia tended to encourage them to sit closer together because there were fewer students. Students also chose to sit with a friend or alone. Interestingly, Mr. Tirea's (Protagorio) students always sat alone but close to other tables. The reason for this was what Ms. Alkmini stated, that the students were not afraid to express their views or to answer incorrectly in the resource room, because they acknowledged that they were all at the same academic level (fieldnotes, 10 December 2012-9 January 2013).

Table C.7b : Students' Seats In The Resource Room

School	Teacher	Class	Lesson In The Resource Room	Participant Student	Students' Seat In The First Classroom Observation	Students' Seat In The Second Classroom Observation
Aristotelio	Mrs Alkmini	1 st	Greek	Marianthi	with her twins sister at the second table behind the boys of the group	with her twins sister at the second table behind the boys of the group
				Maximus	with Menelaus at the front table of the second row	with Menelaus at the front table of the second row
				Menelaus	with Maximus at the front table of the second row	with Maximus at the front table of the second row
				Giota	with her twin sister at the second table behind the boys of the group	with her twins sister at the second table behind the boys of the group
				Christodoulos	alone at the first table of the third row in front of the teacher's headquarter	alone at the first table of the third row in front of the teacher's desk
				Makes	alone at the front table of the second row	alone at the front table of the second row
	Ms. Zinovia	2 nd	Greek			

Protagorio	Ms. Roxani + Ms. Andromache	3 rd	Greek + History	Aphrodite	alone at the front table of the first row	with Xenia at the front table of the first row		
				Gregoris	with Xenia at the front table of the second row	absent		
				Xenia	with Aphrodite behind to Gregory	absent		
	Ms. Pandora	1 st	History	Minas	alone at the first table	alone at the first table		
				Antonakis	alone behind the girl of the group	alone at the pre-final table of the second row		
				Katerina	with Niki at the front table of the second row	with Niki at the front table of the second row		
				Kostakis	alone at the front table of the first row	alone at the front table of the first row		
	Ms. Semeli	2 nd	Greek+ History	Demosthenes	behind to Kostakis' table	behind to Kostakis' table		
				Niki	with Katerina at the front table of the second row	with Katerina at the front table of the second row		
				Nektaria	alone	alone		
				Giorgula	next to the teacher's headquarter	with Marinos(teacher encouraged them to sit together/closed)		
	Ms. Evdoxia	2 nd	Greek	Marinos	alone at the first table opposite to Giorgula's table	with Giorgula(teacher encouraged them to sit together/closed)		
				Charilaos	t round table	round table(teacher encouraged them to sit together)		
				Efstathios	round table	round table(teacher encouraged them to sit together)		
	Mr. Tireas	3 rd	Greek +History	Solonas	round table	round table(teacher encouraged them to sit together)		
Mr.Charidem os				1 st	History	Giangkos	alone at the front table of the first row	alone at the front table of the first row
						Anna	with Mary at the middle row in front table opposite to the teacher's desk	alone next to the teacher's desk
	Mary	with Anna opposite to the teacher's desk	alone at the first table of the first row					
Thalio	Ms. Mikini+ Ms. Ely	3 rd	Greek + History	Demos	behind to Charalambos' table	first table of the third row		
				Charalambos	alone at the first table of the middle row	alone at the first table of the second row		
	Ms. Ely	3 rd	Greek	Chrysanthi	next to the teacher's desk	next to the teacher's desk		
				Zoitsa	with Chara at the first table opposite to the teacher's desk	with Chara at the first table opposite to the teacher's desk		
				Chara	with Zoitsa at the front table , opposite to the teacher's desk	with Zoitsa at the front table, opposite to the teacher's desk		

These students were less confident in working autonomously in the mainstream classroom, because they were used to being constantly supported by their teachers in the resource room. Twelve students valued as very important to having access to dictionaries, cards and CDs in the mainstream classroom in order to be helped with their activities, although they confessed that they actually preferred their teachers to give them the answers. Only Charalambos aimed at finding the answers by himself, along with his teacher's help. Additionally, these students appeared to be less confident in working on lessons which they had internalized as being difficult for them. Thus, they did not bother

about being withdrawn from Ancient Greek and Ancient Greek literature classes. Aphrodite and Giota (Aristotelio) stated that:

‘No, I’m not sorry that I miss these classes because the lessons in the mainstream classroom are difficult, while in the resource room classes are easier’.

Similarly, Minas (Protagorio) stated that:

‘I did Ancient Greek at the beginning of the school and I didn’t understand it because it was difficult (for me)’.

Although Niki (Protagorio) understood a few things in the Ancient Greek lessons, she was also happy to be exempted from these course tests. Additionally, Menelaus (Aristotelio) mentioned that:

‘...I do not mind that I miss them because I learn more useful things’.

Antonakis, Solonas, Kostakis and Demosthenes (Protagorio) disliked or considered boring the classes from which they had to be withdrawn. Gregoris and Christodoulos (Aristotelio) preferred to be withdrawn from French only, because they considered this class to be boring and difficult. Anna (Thalio) was sometimes sad about missing both Ancient Greek and French, while Mairy (Thalio) was sad about missing the French classes. Only a few students were worried about being withdrawn from exam lessons. These lessons continued to be difficult for them, although they considered themselves as needing to attend them in both classroom environments. Makes explained that he was worried because:

‘... I’m missing the teaching materials of the classroom and I’m falling behind in (I can’t understand) the lesson of the (mainstream) classroom’.

Charilaos was less worried than Makes because :

‘.....I’m losing the teaching of the exam materials. My teacher consults me to take the notes from my classmates and write them in my exercise book. I’m collaborating with one of my friends who gives me his exercise book but I have to copy them at the weekend’.

It is quite intriguing that the first year students were curious about doing Ancient Greek, though they did not dare to challenge being withdrawn from this lesson.

Marianthi (Aristotelio) said :

I don’t feel sad missing the French and the Odyssey classes because I don’t like them. I am sorry that I miss the class of Ancient Greek because I like it. I have been excused from this class but sometimes when the program changed, I stayed in the Ancient Greek class, and when the teacher explained it, I understood it. I have not done any class of Ancient Greek before’.

Maximus (Aristotelio), who did not question why it was obligatory to miss this class, stated that:

‘I feel sorry missing Ancient Greek, because it is the first time to have this class. Once, the program of the withdrawal support in the resource room changed, I stayed in the class’.

However, the third year students recognized that it was obligatory for all of them to leave these particular classes. Efstathios (Protagorio) highlighted that:

‘Usually I leave from Ancient Greek and French classes and sometimes from Ancient Greek literature. Teachers decided that it is better to leave from the mainstream classes while we have these lessons’.

Charalambos (Thalio) not only stopped bothering but he also wished to be withdrawn from English, which was not his favourite lesson. It is obvious that the third year students internalized themselves as being less academically able and they stopped challenging the fact that they were being withdrawn from certain lessons in the mainstream classroom. Actually, they wanted to take advantage of this in order to miss other classes which they perceived as difficult or boring.

4.2.2. THE IMPACT OF WITHDRAWAL SUPPORT

The impact of withdrawal support will be discussed in two sections. The first section examines the impact on students’ learning identity and the second section discusses the impact on the teachers’ practicing profile.

Students’ reliance on the resource room support

Students were identified through this research as being reliant on the teaching and learning practices of the resource room, as a result of their lower academic self-concept and efficacy beliefs. Additionally, I would suggest that the grade oriented educational system of Cyprus and the lack of constant mainstream classroom teaching adaptations, have also encouraged the students’ reliance on the teaching practices of the resource room. More specifically, students were reliant on the teaching of the resource room, because they believed they benefited academically. Participating in the learning process of the mainstream classroom is understood by the students as their ability to answer their teachers’ questions. Anna, Mary (Thalio), Marianthi and Gregoris (Aristotelio) felt happy answering their teachers’ questions, because they were representative of what the students knew, understood and could do. Marianthi said:

'I understand and participate (more) in the lesson so I'm glad when I know the answer in the (mainstream) classes'.

Additionally, Katerina (Protagorio) felt happy knowing the correct answers to the classroom activities, which were pre-taught them in the resource room, since this helped her to avoid being ridiculed by her classmates. Only Minas and Efstathios (Protagorio) were disappointed, because their resource room support scarcely helped their participation either in the resource room or in the mainstream classroom (reflections on fieldwork: research diary, 20 December 2012).

Students perceived themselves as being in need of 'special' or simpler teaching, which was mainly provided to them in the resource room and thus they could benefit academically. Seven students argued that they learnt 'something new' in the resource room, eight that they had learnt 'something more', two that they could cover their 'learning gaps' and three liked that their teachers advised them 'on how to improve'. Anna felt happy because she said: 'I have improved a little academically', three students were happy because they could 'learn what they had been unable to do in the mainstream classroom' and six students because 'they could listen to the lesson twice' both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. Indicatively, Chara and Zoitsa (Thalio) liked that:

'...the rhythm of teaching is slower. I understand better the Modern Greek and Math classes in the resource room'.

Nektaria (Protagorio) also highlighted that:

'Sometimes, I understand the lesson from the class but I want to come to the resource room because they explain the lesson more simply, so we can understand what we couldn't from the classes'.

Similarly, Niki (Protagorio), who had the same learning difficulties to overcome during the learning process in both the resource room and the mainstream classroom, underlined that:

'...I can understand the lesson more easily. My problem is that I forget (easily) what I have learnt'.

Students perceived it to be less discriminatory to ask their questions in the resource room. Chara (Thalio) who was shy, preferred to ask her questions only in the resource room, while Charilaos (Protagorio), Maximus and Makes (Aristotelio), were shy about asking their questions even in the resource room. Students tried to hide their difficulties from the others in the mainstream classroom, and thus Katerina (Protagorio) waited for the bell to ring in order to address her queries only to her teacher. Giorgula also preferred to ask only

her teacher since she was the only one who could give her the correct answers. Marianthi (Aristotelio) and Solonas (Protagorio) were more confident about asking their teachers questions in the mainstream classroom since they acknowledged that their classmates also have queries. Christodoulos, Marianthi (Aristotelio) and Chrysanthi (Thalio) preferred to ask their questions in the resource room, because their teachers spent more time answering them. Only, Mary (Thalio) indicated that:

'I try to find the answer alone... Sometimes when I don't ask I made myself read in order to find the answer'.

Exam questions were pre-taught to these students in the resource room and thus they believed that they could only achieve better grades, if they attended the resource room. It is interesting that the classmates of these students were also keen to attend the resource room in order to benefit from the perceived advantage of getting better grades. All the students, except for Demos (Thalio), agreed that they wanted their teachers to support them to become independent learners, though they valued the fact that their teachers explained how to organize their study time and revise for tests and exams. Mary, Zoitsa and Charalambos (Thalio) appreciated that their teachers had already explained how they should study for tests. Similarly, Giorgula (Protagorio) was used to her teacher revising the exam materials beforehand for both her and Marinos during the resource room tuition. For this reason, she was observed to apologize to her teacher for not writing the answers or studying independently for the test and she asked her teacher to ensure that they would revise them in the resource room (fieldnotes, 13 December 2012).

Most of the time, the learning needs of these students tended to be ignored by their teachers in the mainstream classroom. Solonas (Protagorio), who complained about his teacher's lack of individual attention in the mainstream classroom, stated that:

'I do not like to do exercises all the time (during the class). Teachers sit at their desk and they don't care if I do not understand something. They explain to me and because I do not understand, I am bored in the (mainstream) classroom'.

As a result of their teachers' lack of sustained attention towards their learning needs, Giagkos (Thalio), Gregoris and Maximus (Aristotelio) were reluctant to address any questions to their teachers in the mainstream classroom. Katerina (Protagorio) also explained that:

'I feel ashamed to ask my teacher all the time'.

For this reason in the interviews, the students, who were of a conscientious character and keen to learn, stated that when they had difficulty with their exercises, they asked for help

from the students sitting next to them or near them in the mainstream classroom. Makes (Aristotelio), Chara, Mary and Zoitsa (Thalio) stated that they always asked for help, while Aphrodite and Christodoulos (Aristotelio) said that they only sometimes asked for help from their classmates. Aphrodite and Efstathios (Protagorio) aimed to ask the students they trusted, who would tell them the correct answers. Minas (Protagorio) trusted only his resource room friend Nektaria, though she did not always know the answers. Only Menelaus (Aristotelio) complained that:

‘When I don’t know something in the classroom, I ask my classmates to help me but they don’t tell me or some of them tell the teacher that I am bothering them (I distracted them)’.

However, some students from Protagorio and Thalio, who had more learning difficulties, acknowledged that they also lacked their teachers’ sustained individual attention in the resource room. Giorgula highlighted that:

‘I prefer to be supported individually because I argue with Marinós in the resource room and if there was only me, I would have more attention from my teacher’.

Charilaos (Protagorio) preferred to be supported in a smaller group of four students, while Charalambos (Thalio) preferred individual support in order to have greater concentration and more time spend on answering his queries.

On the other hand, students acknowledged that their teachers in the resource room constantly supported their learning needs and they highlighted which of the resource room teaching practices they enjoyed the most. Anna (Thalio), Aphrodite and Gregoris (Aristotelio) enjoyed the student counselling and emotional support that they had in the resource room, because they could discuss their daily routines and experiences. Most of the students liked the various ways that their teachers tended to differentiate their classroom activities. For example, Chara (Thalio), Giota and Menelaus (Aristotelio) liked how their teachers used examples from their daily routine to make their lesson more pleasant and easier for them to understand. Efstathios (Protagorio), Giota and Maximus (Aristotelio) liked that their teacher explained their classroom activities in many different and easier ways. Gregoris (Aristotelio) appreciated his teacher using additional resource materials, while Solonas (Protagorio) liked that more examples and instructions were given to help them understand complex ideas and, to a greater extent, the lesson. Niki and Minas (Protagorio) appreciated that their teachers summarized the lesson many times. Katerina liked that her teacher waited for them to answer their exercises first orally and then to write them down. Only Marianthi emphasized that her teacher ‘treated them equally well both in the mainstream classroom and the resource room’. Her teacher always

used many examples to help them understand the lesson and she was excited that her teacher motivated her to learn. Therefore, it is obvious that the students liked the support they received in the resource room, because they noticed the lack of consistent teacher support in the mainstream classroom and because they internalized themselves as being in need of 'additional' support in order to succeed academically.

Coordinators' and teachers' reliance on the teaching of the resource room

I found that the reliance of coordinators and teachers on the resource room support stemmed from their moderately inclusive ethos. To explore the inclusive ethos of the coordinators and teachers, in their questionnaires, I asked them to state if they agree or disagreed with the idea that the students were required to be withdrawn from the mainstream classroom in order to receive support. Nine out of the twelve participants agreed that all the students, regardless of whether they had mild or profound learning difficulties should be withdrawn from some mainstream classes to receive individualized support in the resource room. Only, Ms.Meropi_(Protagorio)_was not sure, highlighting that:

'It depends on the individual and his/her capacities'.

Except for Ms.Alkmini (Aristotelio), all the others agreed that the 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room because teaching is concerned with identifying the 'strengths' of students and their potentials for building their learning development. Except for Ms.Roxani and Ms.Zinovia (Aristotelio), all the others agreed that these students should be supported in the resource room, because teaching aims to supporting them to achieve the goals of the mainstream curriculum_(see_appendix:Table C.8,p. 376).

Additionally, when the coordinators and teachers were questioned about whether some students, such as those with mild learning difficulties, should be withdrawn from the mainstream classroom, ten out of the twelve participants strongly agreed. The only exception was Ms.Alkmini (Aristotelio), who just agreed and Ms.Semeli (Protagorio) who was not sure about this statement. The participants did not believe that these student needs could be supported exclusively in the mainstream classroom. Mr. Aiolos argued that these students 'are naughty' and thus the teachers could not focus adequately on their learning needs in the mainstream classroom. Four participants from Aristotelio and Protagorio respectively and two from Thalio argued that

in the mainstream classroom these students wanted to work on the same activities as like their classmates. Four participants in Aristotelio, all in Protagorio and three in Thalia supported that the teachers lacked time due to the teachers' pressure to cover the curriculum materials needed for the exams. Except for Ms.Roxani (Aristotelio), who disagreed, the teachers explained that they lacked time due to the large number of students in the mainstream classroom. This result is somewhat counterintuitive, considering that in Aristotelio and in Protagorio three out of five agreed that they could meet the learning difficulties of the students in the mainstream classroom by differentiating the classroom activities according to their educational possibilities. These teachers also believed that helping a student to deal with his/her learning difficulties could be helpful for the learning process of other students. Surprisingly, in Thalia three out of four did not believe that differentiation is an effective practice to meet the learning needs of these students, and they were not sure if they could differentiate their mainstream classroom activities effectively (see appendix: Table C.8, p. 376). Issues related to the individual inclusive ethos of the teachers were particularly prominent in the interview data. Mainly the Aristotelio and Protagorio teachers highlighted that teaching these students in the resource room, they became more sensitive to their needs. Ms.Alkmini (Aristotelio) stated that:

‘...for resource room tuition, there should be chosen teachers who love, empathize and are sensitive to the ‘learning difficulties’ of the children’.

Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) also said:

‘You see these students with more sympathy and you are emotionally connected with them because you teach them in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. In the past, I have become emotionally connected with all the resource room students except for one, who was a very cheeky student. This year I do not yet feel connected with these students. I encourage them to talk with me about the problems they have at school and at home in order to help them’.

Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) and Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) also alluded to how teaching these students in the resource room made them more willing to meet these students' needs in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) explained that she always saw herself as a ‘second mother’ to them. In contrast to those teaching in the resource room, Ms.Roxani pinpointed that:

‘the others do not understand their ‘difficulties’. They just labelled them as ‘less able children’. What they problematize is what grades they should give them. I don’t know if it is correct to mark them according to the results in tests or in a different way’.

It is also for this reason that she personally tried to be both sensitive and objective towards her students' needs, though she indicated that:

'I don't take school problems home, so I am not personally influenced, neither feel 'compassion' about them'.

Furthermore, the coordinators and teachers tended to be reliant on the teaching of the resource room due to their common belief that these students had improved academically from their withdrawal support. Indicatively, Mr. Aiolos (Thalio) said that their students' academic improvement was obvious in their term evaluation records. Ms. Ely (Thalio) explained that her students in the resource room had been helped academically by listening 'twice' to what they had been taught in the mainstream classroom, revising for tests and receiving help with their homework. Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) mentioned that these students improved in the resource room because the teaching materials are oversimplified for them. He said:

'I considered that nothing is easy for the students, so I give them more explanations. For example, last year, I did the Odyssey and for the whole year, I referred to the 'pretenders' of Penelope. I presumed this word was known to the students because we still use it today but at the end of the year to my surprise, a student asked me what it means'.

On the other hand, a few of the teachers questioned whether the resource room support benefited these students academically. Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) and Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) agreed that the teaching of the resource room is academically beneficial only for the students of a lower academic level. More specifically, Ms. Zinovia said:

'It depends on the 'learning difficulties' of each student. I used to have students of B or C grade. The fact that they leave their classroom to have support in the resource room has influenced their learning negatively because they missed their classes and they did not understand the curriculum materials. For the students of D and E grades, I do not think that it makes any difference whether or not they are in the mainstream classroom because they have already many learning difficulties or gaps from the previous class levels'.

Similarly, Ms. Ely admitted that:

'For the boys you have already observed, the resource room program is a waste of money because they are indifferent. In this program there should be other students who want it and are in need of support'.

It is also particularly important to note that there were teachers, such as Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio), who encouraged their students to continue attending the

resource room, even if they had not greatly improved and their learning difficulties had not been overcome. These teachers did not believe that the needs of these students could be supported solely in the mainstream classroom. According to Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio), the teaching in the mainstream classroom was effective in identifying her students' 'difficulties', which she aimed to support in the resource room. Additionally, Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) underlined that the 'needs' of a few of these students can be supported solely in the mainstream classroom and only be withdrawn if 'necessary', because the parents do not want their children to be withdrawn from their classroom.

A common view among the coordinators and teachers was that the teachers could better support their students to meet the aims of the mainstream curriculum in the resource room. Teachers aimed for their students to understand the symbolism and difficult terms in their literature texts and to make comparisons with the suggested parallel texts to those on their curriculum syllabus. To help her students consolidate how to develop their arguments in their assignments, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) encouraged them to express their ideas and justify their arguments first orally and then in writing. To help students to consolidate the grammatical and syntactical phenomena of Modern Greek language, Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) explained to her students how to recognize the form of verbs in sentences. Mr. Tireas, Ms. Semeli and Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) reminded their students about the grammar and vocabulary rules by identifying the students' mistakes and challenging them to correct the mistakes by themselves. The teachers believed that there was no time for this in the mainstream classroom because it was difficult for them to manage these students' misbehaviour, inattentiveness and rule infractions. Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) explained that:

'These students are those who usually misbehave in the classroom, thus the close relationship that is building between us during the resource room teaching, helps these students not to be naughty in the classroom'.

Similarly, Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) pinpointed that:

'When these students misbehave in the mainstream classroom, annoying the other students, I get stressed. I am also stressed because when you devote much time to these students' difficulties, you lose the flow of the class'.

A surprising finding is the clear link between aspects of support provided in the resource room and students' success in tests and exams. The teachers were reliant on the resource room support, since they believed that they could help their students to increase their academic grades. Therefore, Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) allowed her students to have their

notebooks in order for them to revise more easily for their test at home. For those who did not teach in the mainstream classroom, she used to ask the teachers about the test, in order to help the students prepared (fieldnotes, 26 November 2012). To virtually guarantee her students' success, she asked her students to write their term essays in the resource room before attending the mainstream classroom and she spent time giving them feedback. She used to work individually with each student, not only correcting their paragraphs to be grammatically and structurally correct but also helping them to restate more strongly their arguments. Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) prepared her students in the resource room to do an additional test, in order to help them improve the grade they received for the test in their mainstream classroom. Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) pre-taught her students the exam comprehension text and helped them to answer the questions, allowing them to have their notes with them during the test in the mainstream classroom. She read the correct answers to her students, explaining what they had done wrong and how they should prepare for the final exams, teaching them strategies on how to memorize things easily. Ms. Ely (Thalio) constantly helped her students to answer their homework questions orally and then she asked them to copy the answers from the board, which she had written for them, using simple sentences. She constantly aimed to give them examples of how they should answer similar types of questions in tests.

Some other teachers identified that these students have benefitted in the resource room, not only because they were supported to succeed in their tests and exams, but also because the teachers had 'extra' (more) time to support these students emotionally to increase their academic self-esteem and to individually address their learning needs. Mr. Aiolos (Thalio) highlighted that the teachers had to spend more time managing their students' misbehaviour rather than supporting them emotionally. Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) indicated that:

'Students coming to the resource room need to be able to discuss their personal issues and be supported. For example, I had a student whose family has economic problems and he did not have enough to eat which was more important than supporting him academically. I want these students to be emotionally strong because they would also overcome the fear of failing in the mainstream classroom'.

Ms. Meropi also highlighted that:

'The focus is on students to have high self-esteem because they will benefit if they feel confident enough to ask questions in the mainstream classroom without being embarrassed'.

In this line, all the Aristotelio teachers and Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) reported that, in the resource room, students had their 'teachers' exclusive attention' and 'exclusive' time to express their views. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) supported the idea that there was more time for the students to ask their questions and for the teachers to explain the answers to them individually. Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) felt that her students are 'unfairly treated' since she did not have the time to individually support her resource room group in the mainstream classroom. Mr. Tireas (Protagorio), despite his year of experience, also pointed out that he could only give limited attention to these students and only when the other students in the mainstream classroom were working individually or doing writing exercises.

It is important to note that almost all the participants, such as Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) took for granted that:

'There was more time in the resource room to explain to these students what they have not understood in the mainstream classroom. There was more time, even if the number of students making up the resource room groups has increased due to the economic crisis and even if they grouped together students of different academic levels, as in the mixed ability classroom'.

Additionally, teachers also took for granted that these students benefitted from the extra time they had to be supported in the resource room. Ms. Meropi (Protagorio) highlighted that:

'In the resource room, students feel closer to the teacher, thus they can freely express their queries and the teacher can better explain to them (because there is more time). Students concentrate more because they know that the teachers refer to them individually rather than in general to all the children in the mainstream classroom.

She also underlined that she spent this 'extra time' working on her students' difficulties, which she had identified by observing their engagement in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. Ms. Mikini (Thalio) was the only one who attested that:

'Even though fewer students attend the resource room, than in the mainstream classrooms, teachers may not always have the time to give them individual attention, especially if these students continued to misbehave during the teaching and learning process in the resource room'.

Ms. Mikini tended to believe this, because she had to support a 'difficult' group of students in the resource room.

Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) supported the idea that teaching is 'simplified' for students in the resource room, considering that teachers have limited time to prepare 'different' and 'simplified' exercises during the learning process in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) also identified the difficulty of planning activities for a mixed-ability group, indicating that:

'There are more students in the mainstream classroom and students with different levels and also students from other countries who also need support. Thus teachers need more time to be prepared, to simplify the teaching materials and tests. It is impossible for teachers to support the students' difficulties only in the mainstream classroom'.

In agreement with her, Ms. Ely (Thalio) underlined that planning teaching activities for all the students in the mainstream classroom is both stressful and time consuming, because time is needed to research extra teaching materials and it requires teachers to be continually informed and trained about their teaching courses. Only Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) mentioned that:

'..because of my experience, I do not need extra time to prepare for them (the students with learning difficulties). I like History and I read other historical books than those suggested by the curriculum syllabus, so I can easily find extra teaching materials'.

Despite their years of teaching experience, the teachers believed that it was difficult for them to meet these student needs in the mainstream classroom, because they had not been sufficiently trained. Ms. Semeli, who was the most professionally trained, highlighted that:

'I have a second diploma as a social worker and I have done psychology classes. Definitely, you have to be trained in order to communicate with them, to know how to deal with their 'difficulties' but also with their behavioural problems'.

Except for Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio), Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) and Mr.Charidemos (Thalio), who had no professional training, the others had only once attended a seminar organized by the MOEC. Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) attended a seminar for autistic children, Ms. Pandora, Ms. Meropi and Mr.Tireas (Protagorio) for the teaching of students with 'hearing impairments' and Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) for the teaching of students diagnosed as having dyslexia. Ms. Alkmini and Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) had attended a seminar about student learning difficulties and the differentiation and simplification of the literature text in order to help these students achieve positive self-esteem. Interestingly, Mr. Charidemos indicated the lack of consistency in in-service training for inclusive education by saying that:

'I am teaching the students in the resource room from the first year I was hired but I didn't have the chance to attend any seminars. Each academic year, I am responsible for other things in the school community such as the school journal so I have not been available to attend any in-service training. Therefore I support students more from my experience'.

However, all the participants asked to be trained in how to differentiate their mainstream classroom activities for a mixed-ability student group. Ms.Semeli identified that:

'Students are supported outside the mainstream classroom because there are many levels of students in mixed ability classrooms. The level of these children is much lower than the level of the other students in class....There are also many children who have difficulties in learning and their parents didn't want them to go to the resource room for support'.

Ms. Mikini (Thalio) also highlighted that:

'In the mixed-ability classroom you work with the middle level of students, which is inappropriate for the low ability or excellent students. We work with the middle level students and this happened because of the pressure of time. Even though the level of students in my school in general is low, again it is difficult to support the learning difficulties of the students in the mainstream classroom because there are both international students and students with learning difficulties'.

Though they lacked training, all the teachers, tended to design practices from their experience and according to what they had observed as being helpful for supporting the learning needs of these students in the resource room. Ms. Alkmini, Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio), Ms. Pandora and Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) perceived the teaching of their students both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom as a good motivation for them to be continually self-training and self-informing about the teaching practices they could use to support their students' needs. However, differentiating their teaching activities purely from their experience was stressful for some teachers. Ms. Mikini (Thalio) explained that the teachers tended to feel uncertain about whether they were doing their 'job correctly'. Other teachers such as Ms. Ely (Thalio) managed their stress about differentiation by attributing the ineffectiveness of their practices to the students' difficulties. More specifically, she underlined that:

'From my experience, I had always taught in the resource room the students with mild learning difficulties; I want to help the students but this depends on the cases of students, if they are interested or not'.

These results suggest that the coordinators and teachers were reliant on the teaching of the resource room because they believed that these students benefitted academically from

it and because they tended to focus on what they could not do for these student learning needs in the mainstream classroom.

Teachers' lower expectations

The coordinators and teachers, who had internalized these students as being less academically able, consequently had lower expectations of their learning. Pointedly, Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) said:

'.... children should be aware of their 'difficulties' so they will not be disappointed. I try to help them with their difficulties mainly in the resource room, since I communicate with them better. I help them to have a real insight into their 'difficulties' and to understand why they have to go to the resource room, but I also encourage them with their abilities (gifts) such as using computers. In this way, I help them not to be disappointed when they do not achieve in the test in their classroom. In the (resource room) classroom due to my experience I adapt the lesson to their abilities in order to be easier'.

Ms. Roxani's attitude reflects a common behaviour among the teachers who tend to have lower expectations of students they believe to be less academically able. They tend to relate the students' abilities to their success and they are usually less willing to spend extra time supporting students whose achievements will not be academically rewarded. Similarly, Ms. Ely_(Thalio) observed that some teachers used to have lower expectations of these students' learning, since they considered the resource room tuition as a time to relax, rather than as supporting these students' needs. Thus she commented that:

'...Now the pressure of bureaucracy has increased regarding the program of support for students in the resource room. Things are stricter now for those working on the resource room program because maybe in previous years there was not a good job'.

Similarly, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) indicated that:

' The teachers, who support these students in the resource room should respect the children's needs, rather than considering the resource room tuition as a time to relax'. The teachers should go to the students' level in order to give them knowledge'

Teachers seemed to have lower expectations of these students, even when they aimed to differentiate their teaching practices. Ms. Ely (Thalio) specified that:

'I encourage them (these students) to participate in the learning process even if they don't raise their hand. My teaching is adapted as it suits the level (of the students). It is usual to adapt the exercises; I also use difficult and simple questions'.

Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) also said that:

'I have worked in a 'special' school and in a 'special unit' within the mainstream school and I have always encouraged my students to learn despite their difficulties. I encouraged my students with profound learning difficulties to participate in school plays and to learn poems, which the 'normal' students could also learn. I also taught them everyday life skills for example, how to cut potatoes, how to flavour them, how to cook them. Students need to be encouraged to learn and we should give them global skills. I have been observed by step inspectors and they liked the way I worked with these students in the special unit' (informal conversation: research diary, 17 December 2012).

The teachers continued to believe that these students' needs could not be solely supported in the mainstream classroom, because they attributed the difficulties in learning to the child rather than to their less supportive teaching practices. Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) and Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) argued that these students could not follow the learning process in the mainstream classroom because they were respectively identified as having more 'learning gaps' than their classmates and concentrating less on the lesson. Similarly, Ms. Ely (Thalio) emphasized that:

'I don't believe that it is difficult but because these students are usually naughty, their support is unfinished (either in the resource room or in the mainstream classroom). Teachers will always have to teach mixed-ability groups. It is difficult for all the children to be entirely good or bad students. You don't make discriminations in a mixed-ability classroom. They all have to be helped including the less able students'.

On the other hand, Ms. Roxani indicated that:

'These students are 'lost' in the mainstream classroom. From the teaching in the (mainstream) classroom, I can understand where they have difficulties and I can help them to improve. These students could be supported in the mainstream classroom only if teachers had a different kind of support such as the teaching assistants who are used abroad and help children while working in the classroom and if technology was used. The class would be more pleasant with technology. By using computers, the resource room lessons would be more pleasant and the children would be helped more. If I knew how to use technology, I could differentiate the exercise sheets more'.

Additionally, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) suggested that:

'You cannot leave the other children in the classroom to just pay attention to two or three children. All these children should be in 'a special' (homogeneous) class in the compulsory lessons and be divided into mixed ability groups for the selective ones, so children would learn more and they would socialize because they would meet with children from other

class groups. If their 'learning difficulties' improve, the next year, they could be back in their mainstream classroom (their mixed ability group). However, there are classes such as Physics, at which students are divided in smaller groups and so their 'learning difficulties' can be supported in their mainstream classroom'.

These results suggest that the coordinators and teachers who had a moderately inclusive ethos and who had internalized the idea that these students were less academically able believed that these students benefited academically when they were withdrawn from the mainstream classroom to receive support. Having internalized these students as being less academically able, they tended to have lower expectations of their learning in the mainstream classroom, while a few of the teachers also continued to have lower expectations of their learning in the resource room.

4.2.3. THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES OF THE MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM AND THE RESOURCE ROOM

First, the teaching and learning practices which are used in the mainstream classroom and the resource room are presented. Second, the students', coordinators' and teachers' attitudes towards the classroom adaptations related to homework, tests and student evaluation are discussed, as well their attitudes towards the differentiation of the classroom activities and worksheets. Third, the coordinators' and teachers' attitudes towards the use of teaching assistants and audiovisual materials and technology in the mainstream classrooms are discussed.

Comparing the teaching and learning practices in the mainstream classroom and the resource room

In the resource room and the mainstream classroom, teachers asked guided questions both to help students revise what they had learnt and to identify the key points of the lesson. Teachers used their students' experiences and gave examples from their everyday life to help them understand key ideas and to introduce the topic of the new sessions. They linked the new sessions with what they already expected the students to know, and they always summarized the main points on the board. However, in the mainstream classroom, the innovative mainstream curriculum required the students to develop individual critical thinking. Thus, teachers encouraged their students to use their imagination to answer questions and to make comparisons with parallel literature texts to those in their Modern

Greek literature curriculum textbooks. In History sessions, teachers more often used diagrams, pictures and sometimes maps to help students understand the historical context. Mainstream classroom sessions always began with teachers listening to the students' answers to their homework and revising them by adding whatever needed to be included in their answers. The lesson always finished with teachers giving homework to the students and explanations and examples of how to answer the questions. Especially in the resource room, teachers asked guided questions to help the students find the answers to their classroom exercises. Teachers repeated the main points of the lesson more times, and they were observed explaining to their students the terms and new vocabulary in the mainstream books. Teachers individually guided the students with their homework and tests (see appendix: Table C.11, p.382).

These practices should be considered the main teaching practices required by the MOEC. Though only a small sample of teachers was observed, these practices would have been used by all the teachers, regardless of the age group they taught and the location of the school. The only difference between the resource room and the mainstream classroom was the smaller number of students in a group. A mixed-ability group of students was educated in the resource room, similar to the group of students in the mainstream classroom, since in the resource room there were also students who seemed to need more help and guidance than others. Nevertheless, despite teachers believing that they had more time in the resource room to support the learning difficulties of these students, considerable time was lost during the transition of these students from the mainstream classroom to the resource room, or vice versa. There was almost always five to fifteen minutes' delay to the sessions taking place in the resource room. This was mainly because the students arrived in the classroom late, or sometimes because it was necessary due to difficulties concerning the curriculum delivery plan for the students to attend withdrawal support in different classrooms than the one used as the resource room. Often, some of the students who attended the resource room were absent and missed their support. Additionally, it is important to say that the students were partly withdrawn to the resource room, which meant that they had fewer hours per week to practice what they had learnt in the resource room compared to the hours they were taught in the mainstream classroom. For example, the students had a one-hour History class in the resource room, but they had a History lesson twice a week in the mainstream classroom. Similarly, students had two hours of Modern Greek classes in the resource room, but they had Modern Greek lessons five times per week in the mainstream classroom (reflections on fieldwork :research diary, 9 January 2013).

Students', coordinators' and teachers' attitudes towards the teaching and learning practices of the mainstream classroom

In their interviews, students were asked to indicate which of their teachers' classroom adaptations were helpful, easy or difficult for them. The students' attitudes towards their teachers' mainstream classroom adaptations appeared to be formed from the way they had internalized their difficulties with learning subjects in the mainstream classroom. As a result, doing their homework exercises helped them to learn their lessons better, and at the same time to demonstrate to their teachers what they already knew. Niki (Protagorio) and Giagkos (Thalio) wanted to do all their homework exercises, though in general they wished they had no homework. Students such as Charilaos (Protagorio) considered it important for their teachers to give them a choice in the classroom activities and homework. It is indicative of how important this practice was for the students, considering that Charilaos agreed that it was important, though he used to forget to do his homework. Giota and Marianthi (Aristotelio) argued that it would be easier for them to succeed academically if they could choose only the exercises that were appealing to them. Other students, such as Nektaria (Aristotelio), wished they had no homework because they had difficulties doing it autonomously. Minas had a teacher at home to help him. Only Solonas was sceptical about this practice, suggesting that:

'it is better if we are given obligatory exercises and only one option because students will choose the easy ones'.

Half of the students agreed that it was (very) important for their teachers to use mini projects or mini evaluative tasks to get them to demonstrate what they had learnt and what they needed to improve. Demosthenes (Protagorio), who usually did not study, valued this practice as important and helpful for him in answering the exam questions. Chara (Thalio) liked having such tasks, while Demos (Thalio) did not, since he did not like to study. He was bored in the classroom and constantly distracted. The other half of the students, such as Zoitsa (Thalio) considered the projects difficult, while Charalambos and Chrysanthi (Thalio) considered them to be stressful. Chrysanthi (Thalio) preferred to only have to study her favourite lessons at home. Additionally, most of the students considered it important to be valued according to what they could do, because they believed that their teachers would give them higher grades. Only some students, such as Anna (Thalio) and four students from Aristotelio, indicated that it was more important for them to achieve good marks autonomously. Characteristically, Giota (Aristotelio) said:

'Everyone should have the grades they deserve without favours'.

Charalambos (Thalio), who believed that it was hard for him to improve, despite how hard he was trying, said:

'I want to be helped a little to have good marks but also to be evaluated according to what I can do'.

Antonakis (Protagorio) claimed that they could understand the lesson better by listening to their teachers' examples. Aphrodite and Gregoris (Aristotelio) though this was of little importance, because they still had difficulties in understanding the lessons. Charilaos and Niki (Protagorio) defined the need for their teachers to give them more instructions on how to study for tests. Niki wanted to have more guidance from the teachers because as she stated:

'I study many hours but I am not doing well at written tests'.

Mary was satisfied with the guidance, she received from her teachers on how to study for tests, despite that she did not perform well on tests, while Demos (Thalio) was observed as being always disengaged from lessons. Efstathios and Giorgula (Protagorio) were already happy revising for the tests with their teachers in the resource room. However, Giorgula expected to revise only the possible questions for the test (informal conversations: research diary, 17 December 2012). The students, except for Giorgula (Protagorio), agreed that it was pivotal for their teachers to give them feedback. Menelaus (Aristotelio) recognized that the teachers' feedback indicated how to improve their learning, whereas for Antonakis (Protagorio) and Chara (Thalio) it taught them how to avoid making the same mistakes. Similarly, Anna (Thalio), who wanted to get good grades and was willing to try harder, suggested that she needed more consistent feedback. Mary (Thalio) asked for more explicit feedback which was also specific to her learning difficulties because, as she said:

'They (my teachers) always indicate our mistakes but they do not give us many comments so I understand little of what I did wrong'.

Zoitsa also highlighted the need for the teachers to find an effective way to explain to students how to avoid repeating errors, since she said that:

'Sometimes I forget and I make the same mistakes'.

The coordinators and teachers were also asked to indicate which classroom adaptations they used or preferred using in their lessons. In their questionnaires, they agreed on the importance of giving direct instructions and extra explanations to students who needed them to complete their work. Only Ms. Ely (Thalio) was not sure whether there was time for this in the mainstream classroom. Accordingly, all the coordinators, when interviewed,

agreed that individualized instructions could not be provided in the mainstream classroom because of the large number of students. For this reason, Ms. Evriklia_(Aristotelio) was relieved that her students were also supported in the resource room, pinpointing that:

‘..in a class of twenty five students, it is hard to stop for two or three students who are now withdrawn in the resource room for support.... .Although I try to support them in the mainstream class I cannot due to the large number of students’.

Ms. Meropi (Protagorio) explained that the teachers do not have the time to ‘individualize’ the lesson to the ‘needs’ of these students or to offer them ‘personalized’ help. Additionally, Mr. Aiolos (Thalio), insisted that:

‘..these programs should not be abandoned because like this, more ‘philologists’ (teachers of Modern Greek language) can be hired’.

He explained that his son was also a ‘philologist’ (informal conversation: research diary, 10 January 2013).

It is interesting that despite the teachers’ concerns regarding the use of individualized instructions in the mainstream classroom, they unanimously suggested that it was necessary to systematically differentiate their students’ tests and homework exercises. Mr. Aiolos (Thalio) underlined that his schoolteachers already gave these students simplified exam papers, extra explanations and more time during the tests and exams, according to the guidelines of the MOEC. Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) clearly underlined that differentiated activities aimed to help these students achieve better grades, rather than to support their learning in the mainstream classroom. For this reason, she was also observed giving her students one easy and one difficult exercise to choose from according to what they would like to do, and examples of how they should answer these homework exercises. Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio), who disagreed in her questionnaire about the importance of differentiation, tended to explain orally and give direct instructions to her students to complete their homework exercises in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) rarely let these students draw pictures of what they had understood from the teaching of the literature texts. Ms. Alkmini, Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) and Ms. Ely (Thalio) encouraged their students with learning difficulties to work in groups in order to get help with their exercises and to be encouraged to participate in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. Ms. Ely (Thalio) also allowed these students to answer fewer questions in tests and to give ‘more simple’ (shorter) answers. However, she did not constantly differentiate her students’ activities or give them a choice of exercises because she needed ‘extra’ time to plan them. This was also the reason why Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) only systematically helped her students to answer their homework

exercises in the resource room. Similarly, Mr. Charidemos_(Thalio) was more systematic in answering his students' questions during break time or in the resource room, not only because there was more time, but also in order to avoid these students being further stigmatized for being 'less academically able'.

Students', coordinators' and teachers' attitudes towards the differentiation of classroom activities and worksheets

Half of the students valued it as being of little importance for their teachers to differentiate their activities according to the level of difficulty. Charalambos (Thalio) was not sure, Antonakis (Protagorio) and Christodoulos (Aristotelio) disagreed, but the others agreed that it was important. Students also expected their teachers to plan their classroom activities according to what they knew and liked in order to motivate all students to learn and be academically successful. Charilaos (Protagorio) emphasized that Maths exercises would be easier for him if they were planned according to what he already knew. Antonakis (Protagorio) expected to be given only easy exercises. Demos (Thalio) expected to be given both easy and differentiated exercises according to his interest and previous knowledge. Chara, Zoitsa and Chrysanthi (Thalio) wanted to do the same activities in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. Particularly, Chrysanthi and Mary (Thalio) identified that it was necessary for their teachers to give them both easy and difficult exercises, in order to be as equally challenged as their classmates and to avoid being discriminated against in the mainstream classroom. Anna (Thalio) pointed out that they were in need of more consistent differentiated classroom activities. On the other hand, Maximus (Aristotelio) suggested that differentiation could only work if there were fewer students in class, approximately ten to fifteen, while Marianthi, who did not want to challenge the authority of her teachers, stressed that:

'Teachers know what exercises the students should do'.

According to Maximus' and Marianthi's comments, it is obvious that these students felt they were in need of constant attention and support from their teachers. Therefore, Marianthi appeared to be afraid to challenge the teacher-centred practices which were used in her classroom, because she did not want to lose the support and attention that she received from her teachers.

The coordinators and most of the teachers theoretically agreed about using differentiated worksheets in the mainstream classroom. In her questionnaire, Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio)

stated that she encouraged her schoolteachers to differentiate their teaching materials for these students both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. All Thalia's participants were in favour of differentiating teaching materials according to process. Ms. Zinovia and Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) were the only ones who did not agree with this statement. From the interviews, there was identified the common assumption among teachers that differentiated classroom activities are similar to 'simplified' or easy exercises. Characteristically, Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) explained that:

'....Some teachers insist on teaching students with learning difficulties challenging topics or asking them to leave the classroom when they are doing a test. For example, I heard a teacher trying to teach a student in the resource room adverbs, but they could not understand. Was this important for their needs? That's why I advise teachers to simplify their teaching since the students benefit socially when they are in the mainstream classroom'.

In line with this, Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) explained that:

'I photocopy simple reading texts from primary school books, especially to explain to them the grammatical exercises (in the resource room).When the lesson is also difficult for the other students in the mainstream classroom, I give an easier worksheet to everybody, the work sheet that I could give to students in the resource room'.

Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) explained the classroom exercises orally to her students. Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) planned student differentiated worksheet exercises based on the curriculum books, to give to them both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. As she explained, it was important for her to give them easier exercises to do, in order that they would not feel excluded from the learning process of the mainstream classroom. On the other hand, Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) and Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio), as more experienced teachers, differentiated their classroom activities by a range of difficulties. The need for this, according to Ms. Andromache was such that:

'You have to motivate them working also with difficult exercises. Teachers should have high expectations from them, otherwise using easier materials for them, students will achieve below their levels'.

Some of the participant teachers assumed that the differentiation of the classroom activities is either a time-consuming or an ineffective process. Ms.Zinovia, the youngest teacher in Aristotelio, rarely used extra support materials, or pictures to meet the needs of her students with learning difficulties. She explained that:

'I consider the differentiation of materials in the mainstream classroom as a stupid idea, because I could give an easy exercise to a student but it may not be effective at all because I would not have the time to explain or correct it for him/her'.

Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio), who was also one of the youngest participants, argued that the process of differentiation is not time-consuming since teachers could give these students easier exercises which are also easy to correct. Similarly, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio), one of the most experienced teachers, highlighted the lack of 'specialized' curriculum and 'specialized' books and the need for these to be allocated to students by the MOEC. However, she also acknowledged that:

'The teaching material is difficult to be individually differentiated for these students by MOEC, because each child and their difficulties are 'unique'.

In this line, Mr. Tireas (Protagorio), identified the need for the teachers:

'... to learn how to adjust the teaching in a mixed ability classroom; I believe that the teachers could learn easily how to differentiate their teaching material for these students'.

However, he was also concerned about the impact of supporting the needs of these students only in the mainstream classroom, explaining that:

'The teachers have time only to explain the basics without giving more in depth information to students of what they are taught. The teaching has to move at a slower rhythm and so the teaching of the exam materials falls behind'.

As for the lack of differentiated materials in the mainstream classroom, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) and Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) suggested that there was no need to differentiate their classroom activities since student exercises had already been differentiated in relation to the age group of the mainstream classrooms. Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) differentiated her classroom activities only in the resource room. Thus, she underlined that:

'In the resource room, we work also on both the grammar and vocabulary. Students answer orally and I take notes for them on the board. Regarding the literature class, I write for them and simplify questions on the board to help them understand the text. When the literature text is difficult, we answer the questions orally and then we write the answers down'.

Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) also identified teachers from her school who believed that there was no need to differentiate their classroom activities, since these students were already being withdrawn for support in the resource room. She said that:

'Most teachers are supportive of the children in the mainstream classroom, but some aren't. They believe that students should know the answer when they are asked, because they are

pre-taught the mainstream classroom exercises in the resource room.....so they are just listeners in the mainstream classroom’.

Some other teachers did not differentiate their classroom practices, because they assumed that it was necessary for these students to work with the same material in the resource room as in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) explained that:

‘... they have to be taught the literature texts of the curriculum and I give them the same work sheet as their classmates but I explain it to them more simply orally in the resource room’.

Ms. Mikini (Thalio) also highlighted that:

‘There is freedom with the worksheets we give, which are structured according to what is suggested by the curriculum. Students take the same exams as their classmates and as there is no differentiated curriculum for the resource room programs, teachers are obliged to teach the same as in the classroom’.

The coordinators’ and teachers’ attitudes towards the use of teaching assistants in the mainstream classroom

Most of the coordinators and teachers, when they were asked in their questionnaires about the use of teaching assistants (TAs) in the mainstream classroom, valued this as important, while a small number of teachers placed little or no importance on having TAs with them in the mainstream classroom. A smaller number of teachers were unsure about whether TAs could help them check the progress of all of their students in the mainstream classroom (see appendix: Table C.9., p.378). Only a small number of teachers thought the presence of TAs in the mainstream classroom was more likely to be beneficial than pose a risk of these students being stigmatized. Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) did not bother having TAs in his classroom unless it was for the benefit of these students. Ms. Mikini (Thalio) agreed that TAs are helpful in the mainstream classroom for both the children and the teacher. Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) also stated:

‘I could accept TAs staying all the time in the mainstream classroom alongside the students with profound learning difficulties, since student safety is more important than teachers’ feelings of insecurity’.

Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) explained that stigmatization could be avoided if the TAs were used for supporting the needs of these students in the initial stages, and if their presence in the classroom was gradually reduced and the students were left alone in the classroom in order to become independent learners.

TAs are only required by MOEC policies in the mainstream classroom for students with profound learning difficulties. Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) considered them to be necessary for students with mobility difficulties, Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) for students with behavioural problems, and Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) for students with ADHD and 'mental disabilities'. Similarly, Ms. Andromache highlighted that TAs were not necessary for her students because they could participate in the learning process without being helped, if they could concentrate in the lesson. Mr. Aiolos encouraged the teachers to differentiate their classroom activities by taking ideas from MOEC sample lessons and seminars, rather than by using TAs in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) underlined that TAs are not necessary, since these students are helped academically by being withdrawn for support in the resource room. Additionally, she explained that:

'Having TAs in the mainstream classroom will be disruptive and I would not feel comfortable having someone else in my classroom. I don't understand, there will be another teacher to support the classroom teacher'.

Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) and Ms. Ely (Thalio) also suggested that TAs would make teachers feel uncomfortable and that the students would be stigmatized. In line with this, Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) considered that this practice would be economically impossible if applied in mainstream schools in the near future.

The coordinators' and teachers' attitudes towards the use of audiovisual material and technology in the mainstream classroom

All the coordinators and teachers, when questioned, agreed that it was important to use audiovisual material and technology during the learning process in the mainstream classroom, and to involve their students in group projects. Only Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) thought that using audiovisual material and technology in her lessons was of little importance. Mr. Aiolos (Thalio) was greatly enthusiastic about the involvement of these students in group projects and research activities, and he tended to encourage teachers to include them in their routine teaching practices (see appendix: Table C.9, p.378). A recurrent theme in the participants' interviews was the teachers' difficulty in systematically using ICT and audiovisual materials in their lessons. Ms. Zinovia, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) and Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) underlined that they used audiovisual resources in their lessons because they were available from the MOEC. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio), who also taught History, highlighted that:

'I often use computers, videos, pictures, Power Points. Now for the Mycenaean era I showed them a map and pictures which I think helps them to understand better what they are taught'.

On the other hand, Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) and Ms. Ely (Thalio) strongly stressed the lack of ICT equipment in the mainstream classroom and Ms. Mikini (Thalio), also pointed out that it was lacking in the resource room. She said that:

'Technology is not used, due to lack of training and money. We have a classroom with technological equipment, but there should be technology in every class. Audio visuals can be helpful if the students want to work in class. If the resource room classes stop because of the economic crisis, students will be at the 'mercy of God'.

Given the absence of ICT in lessons, Ms. Evdoxia and Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) encouraged their students to use the internet for their project assignments at home, whereas Ms. Ely (Thalio) engaged all her students in group exercises and research projects. In particular, Ms. Semeli was very proud of one of her resource room students whose assignment was selected for the school newspaper.

Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) was the only one who used ICT constantly in his lessons both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. He explained that:

'Technology is used every day. With technology, they are encouraged to search and they have a motivation to work. When I gave them a project about "Choirokitia" (a Neolithic settlement) the resource room students and especially the boys worked more. I use the digital representations of the MOEC and the students have to answer multiple-choice questions, crosswords, true –false; students are working in groups or individually and I direct them to answer correctly. Students are encouraged to work in group exercises and the best students are encouraged to work with less able students and so they can all work easily'.

On the other hand, Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) was not in favour of using ICT in her lessons, because:

'Using technology in mainstream classroom doesn't bring better results, because students should spend time studying History in order to succeed. It depends on the class, for History it is needed for students to memorize the historical facts. I did an experiment in the past with another History teacher who used technology, whereas I did not, and again our students had the same results in tests'.

These results highlight the effort of the teachers to respond to the inclusive practices suggested by the MOEC. The teachers were not constantly committed to using audiovisual

materials and technology during the teaching and learning process in the mainstream classroom. Except for Mrs Charidemos, who tended to use ICT in every lesson, the other teachers, such as Ms. Andromache, seemed to find it difficult to abandon their well established and traditional teaching practices.

4.2.4. STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF THE RESOURCE ROOM AND THE MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM

This section explores the factors which tended to affect student engagement and behaviour in the learning process in both the resource room and the mainstream classroom. It also discusses how the coordinators and teachers aimed to encourage their student engagement in learning, as well as their suggestions for how to increase the active participation of their students in both classroom environments.

Students' (dis)engagement in the learning process

Students were less interested in the lessons from which they were withdrawn to attend the resource room. For this reason, Menelaos (Aristotelio) was not sad about missing French to learn more useful things in the resource room. Marianthi (Aristotelio) also commented:

'.... that day, I was an observer in the class (of Ancient Greek), but I would have preferred if I could have extra material work in (Modern) Greek, as the time would have passed creatively and productively'.

Only Menelaos (Aristotelio) and Charilaos (Protagorio) were concerned about being withdrawn from the lessons in which they had to be examined at the end of the year. Charilaos identified that:

'I am worried missing out on the teaching of exam materials. My teacher advised me to take my classmates' notes and write them in my exercise book. I'm collaborating with one of my friends, who gives me his exercise book but I have to copy them at the weekend'.

However, the most surprising aspect of the findings is that most of the students were disengaged from the learning process on the whole in the lessons being taught in the mainstream classes.

Being pre-taught the classroom exercises in the resource room, student engagement in learning was affected both positively and negatively. Solonas and Kostakis (Protagorio) were less motivated to participate in the lesson, because they knew the answers to the

mainstream classroom activities beforehand. Kostakis did not even write down the answers because he had already got them from his teacher in the resource room. Christodoulos (Aristotelio) also explained that:

'I rarely participate in the classroom. I wait to listen to the answers from my teacher, I want to participate but the others answer (before me). My teacher already knows that I am aware of the questions from the resource room class '.

On the other hand, Makes (Aristotelio), Anna and Mary (Thalio), who also knew the answers from their support in the resource room, were more keen to answer their classroom activities alone. Additionally, the students who were used to working with easier exercises in the resource room were easily disengaged from the classroom activities, which they considered difficult. Chara (Thalio), Giota, Marianthi (Aristotelio) and Charilaos (Protagorio), when they had a 'difficult' exercise, waited to copy the answers from the board, whereas Niki (Protagorio) waited to hear the answers from the others. Chrysanthi (Thalio) did not participate in the lesson and neither did she misbehave when they were given difficult exercises. Among these students who liked to be given easier exercises in the mainstream classroom, there were students who were just lazy. Antonakis and Demosthenes (Protagorio) did not want to be given any exercises, even when they were taught in the resource room. They explained they had liked their previous teacher, who had allowed them to draw or doodle in the resource room, and were disappointed this year because their teacher, Ms. Semeli, did not permit such behaviour.

Students were less confident about participating in the lesson because their classmates tended to laugh at them when they answered incorrectly. In their interviews, the students were asked to evaluate some statements regarding the 'inclusive' teaching practices they would like their teachers to use in the mainstream classroom in order to encourage and /or increase their engagement in the lesson. Virtually all the students agreed that it was (very) important for their teachers to create a classroom environment where everyone is respected. Menelaus and Maximus (Aristotelio) were the only ones who valued this statement as not important at all. They were already welcome in their class and they had many friends. It is interesting that there were students who laughed at other children from their resource room group. It can be presumed that these students ridiculed others in order to distract their classmates' attention from their own wrong answers and thus to avoid being discriminated against for their poor performance. Both Antonakis and Kostakis (Protagorio) laughed at Niki, who was in the resource room with them, when she did not know the answers in the class. However, Antonakis (Protagorio), Demos and Anna (Thalio) highlighted that the student teasing behaviour was their way of socializing.

For the same reason, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) tried to help Giota overcome her distress about the fact that some girls laughed during her Power Point presentation in the mainstream classroom.

What is particularly important to note is that, in the resource room, I observed that most students felt more confident about answering questions without raising their hands and competing with each other over who was answering the most. The competitive behaviour among these students surfaced mainly in relation to the fact that the teaching in the resource room continued to be performance goal-oriented. Antonakis (Protagorio) was angry with his friend Kostakis, who interrupted his answer to a question which his teacher addressed personally to him. Xenia (Aristotelio) was angry when she could not find the answer and say it before the others. The students continued to laugh at their classmates who answered wrongly, in an attempt to prove that they were more academically successful. Xenia (Aristotelio) used to laugh at Gregoris' behaviour when she was in the resource room with Ms. Roxani. The boys in Ms. Semeli's (Protagorio) class and the boys in Ms. Mikini's (Thalio) class laughed at each other when they answered wrongly and criticized each other's behaviour. Mary (Thalio) laughed at Giagkos while he was reading out his answer, because she knew that Mr. Charidemos had answered it for him. Marinos (Protagorio) used to laugh at Giorgula, and sometimes they argued over incidents which had initially taken place in the mainstream classroom. For example, he blamed Giorgula for revealing in front of their classmates that their teachers had helped them with their test revision. Only Maximus and Menelaus (Aristotelio) did not actively participate in the resource room, no matter how much their teachers tended to encourage them. Both were shy and had to overcome many learning difficulties. Indicatively, Menelaus commented that:

'I don't participate as well in the resource room because I'm afraid that if I make a mistake, they will laugh at me'.

Having this in mind, it is easy to assume that a higher academic self-efficacy and a temporary and superficial academic self-esteem were enabled for some of the students, but this did not seem to affect those students with lower self-esteem than the average student in the resource room group.

It was observed that students were equally distracted from the learning process both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. This appeared to happen because the teaching materials in the resource room were slightly different from what they were taught

in the mainstream classroom and thus they were still perceived by the students to be difficult or boring. In particular, in the resource room, most students were late for the class, while Minas (Protagorio) used to forget his books and was constantly disengaged. In the mainstream classroom, only Giota, Marianthi (Aristotelio), Nektaria (Protagorio) and Anna (Thalio) always remained committed to the learning process. They always wanted to participate in the lesson, and were constantly focused and willing to help other students. Chrysanthi, Chara and Zoitsa (Thalio) were, by character, very shy and they did not participate in the lesson without their teachers' encouragement. These girls were easily distracted by the girl who sat next to Zoitsa. Solonas (Protagorio) was distracted by his friends Efstathios and Charilaos. He used to help other students with their activities when engaged in the lesson. He engaged in the lesson only with continual encouragement. Antonakis, Kostakis and Giorgula (Protagorio) distracted others from the lesson in their classroom. For this reason, some boys were angry with Antonakis, while others encouraged him to be naughty. Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) tried to keep Giorgula busy by asking her to be the 'teacher's helper'. However, Antonakis and Kostakis were also observed to encourage their friends to answer correctly. Demos (Thalio) was distracted for most of the lesson both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom, and thus he was characterized as the 'troublemaker' in his classroom.

Students who were puzzled by their learning most of the time became indifferent and were continually distracted. It was mainly the boys who misbehaved in the classroom, while more incidents of misbehaviour were observed in Protagorio and Thalio. In Aristotelio, Menelaus made call signs with his friend Maximus during the lesson. Aphrodite, who used to concentrate and copy from the board, also ended up chatting with her friends while waiting for the answers. Similarly, Xenia was observed colouring in her book. In Protagorio, Antonakis used to misbehave in class by playing with his friends. Demosthenes was the least naughty compared to his friends and classmates Antonakis and Kostakis. Minas either fell asleep or misbehaved during the lesson and teachers used to ask him to leave the classroom. Efstathios and Charilaos used to answer monosyllabically with just 'yes' or 'no' when asked questions; otherwise they would talk with their friends. In Thalio, Demos and Charalambos were the most difficult. They used to come late to the class and were indifferent to the lesson. It was mainly Demos who caused 'trouble' in class and was attention-seeking. He did not write but always pretended that he was writing, or he used to grasp others' notebooks in order to present them to his teacher as his own. Charalambos was negatively affected by his friend Demos' misbehaviour.

The students who were influenced negatively by their friends to misbehave, such as Maximus, Menelaus (Aristotelio) and Efstathios (Protagorio), emphasized that they only used to doodle in the lesson sometimes. Other students, such as Niki, Nektaria (Protagorio), Zoitsa, Chara and Mary (Thalio) aimed to differentiate themselves from those who misbehaved. They highlighted that they were always well behaved, continually concentrated on the lesson and waited 'silently' to listen to the answers from the others. In Protagorio, the students highlighted that they misbehaved in order to attract their teachers' attention to their difficulties. Charilaos highlighted that:

'I am more focused on the learning process in the resource room, teachers explain the lesson better, but in the mainstream classroom teachers say that I misbehave.... but in the classroom, I don't always know what we do because I'm missing some classes'.

Similarly, Demosthenes said:

'I don't like it when I am in the classroom and my teachers get angry with me because I am distracted but I am distracted because I found difficulties'.

It is interesting that in both classroom environments the students did not mind when their classmates misbehaved because they liked being with their friends and the time passed more quickly and pleasantly. Additionally, the classmates of Gregoris (Aristotelio), Demosthenes, Antonakis (Protagorio) and Demos (Thalio) encouraged them to misbehave in order to waste teaching time. The reason for this could be that their teachers did not allow them enough time in the mainstream classroom to review and practice what they had been taught. Among the students, only Marianthi (Aristotelio) identified being annoyed with the mischievous ones. She explained:

'I don't like it when other children make a noise, as the teacher gets angry with them and we lose time from teaching (in the mainstream classroom)'.

The others agreed with Niki (Protagorio), who indicated that:

'I don't mind if we stop the lesson in order for the teacher to talk with those who misbehave because we miss some time from the lesson (so we can relax). We make jokes but we are also studying'.

On the other hand, those students who misbehaved did not like it when their classmates misbehaved in the resource room. Menelaus (Aristotelio), who acknowledged his difficulty with constantly concentrating on the lesson, said:

'I prefer to be supported in a group, but I don't like there to be too many since we are going to be distracted in the lesson. I would like to be in the resource room only with boys, because I am ashamed in front of the girls and I do not ask any questions'.

Kostakis (Protagorio) also preferred to be supported with just three or four children and only boys because the girls of their group used to laugh at them when they misbehaved. Solonas (Protagorio) preferred to have even fewer students in the resource room, though he agreed with Giorgula (Protagorio) and Mary (Thalio) that there was less noise than in the mainstream classroom, because there were fewer students. For the same reason, Demosthenes (Protagorio) and Giagkos (Thalio) preferred to be supported individually in the resource room. Although, Ms Zinovias' resource room group consisted of only two students, Christodoulos (Aristotelio) highlighted that he preferred to be alone in the resource room, pointing out that:

'... I do not like being with this girl in the resource room group, because she misbehaves (and we lose time from teaching), I like the class in the resource room when she is absent'.

He believed that his teachers' attention was reduced when this girl was misbehaving.

Students were more tolerant of the mischievous in the mainstream classroom not because they were friends with them, but because the lesson was boring for them and they enjoyed 'having fun' with their classmates. The students also agreed that it was very important for the teacher to ensure that students enjoy the classroom activities and are interested in participating in the lesson. Only Giota, Makes (Aristotelio), Katerina and Minas (Protagorio) valued this idea as not important at all. The reason for Make's and Minas' decision was that they were shy and did not want to participate in the mainstream classroom. Except for Makes and Gregoris (Aristotelio), the other students preferred working in groups. Maximus (Aristotelio) explained that by having more students in the mainstream classroom and in the resource room they could learn by working collaboratively. Niki (Protagorio) said:

'I like it that we are working in pairs. I have difficulties in the mainstream classroom because I forget what I have been taught in the resource room and it is like hearing it for the first time...'

Additionally, Anna, Charalambos and Mary (Thalio) underlined that with more students in the mainstream classroom, they could listen to more views. Anna explained:

'I like that we are more students, because I understand better the lesson. If not, the others explain to me, or they give me their notes'.

Giota and Maximus (Aristotelio) also indicated that they 'learn more' by listening to their classmates' questions and they could solve all their queries, even those they had not recognized as theirs before the others had asked them. Finally, most of the students, except for Menelaus (Aristotelio), Nektaria and Antonakis (Protagorio), suggested that

the lessons would be easier and more interesting if their teachers used ICT. The students who were computer illiterate, such as Zoitsa and Anna (Thalio), preferred to listen to the lesson from their teachers. Makes (Aristotelio) and Nektaria (Protagorio) were frightened that their teachers would demand more frequent use of ICT for their assignments. Mary (Thalio) was also afraid that:

‘Some students may use the computers for a long time in the classroom and may not allow others to use them’.

From Mary’s comment student conformity to the traditional teaching practices in the mainstream classroom is apparent, despite these practices appearing to lead most of the students to disengage in the mainstream classroom. At the same time, it is obvious that some student attitudes towards ‘inclusive’ learning practices, have been affected by the competitive behaviour of students in the mainstream classroom. It was particularly important for these students to constantly prove to their teachers and classmates that they were academically able.

Contrary to what the students suggested and what has been observed regarding these students’ engagement in lessons, teachers suggested that these students did not participate in the learning process of the mainstream classroom, probably due to their lower academic self-esteem. Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) identified that most of these students preferred to conceal their difficulties from others in the mainstream classroom, while she also acknowledged that it was more difficult for the shy students to participate in the lesson. Thus, she pointed out:

‘Few children have the courage to participate. For example, the children you have observed: the boy participated in both the classroom and the resource room. The first girl didn’t because she is shy and the second girl participated more in the resource room’.

Similarly, the shy students of Ms. Pandora (Protagorio), Ms. Roxani and Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) preferred to work individually in the resource room and to have their exercises individually explained to them. On the other hand, the students of Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) and Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) felt comfortable expressing their opinions, and Ms. Semeli’s (Protagorio) students were comfortable working both individually and in groups. Mr. Tireas’ (Protagorio) and Ms. Ely’s (Thalio) students aimed at showing off what they could achieve.

How the coordinators and teachers aim to encourage their students' engagement in learning

The coordinators and teachers, in their questionnaires, were asked to hierarchically value the aims of their student support and to indicate which they considered to be the most important for increasing their students' engagement in learning. Except for Ms. Evriklia and Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio), the teachers suggested that it was (very) important to help their students develop high self-esteem, to encourage their active participation in the mainstream classroom. Except for Ms. Ely (Thalio), they agreed that it was important to help their students develop their learning styles and techniques, and to be able to value their skills and experience in order to become independent learners. The three experienced Aristotelio teachers considered this to be practically difficult for these students. All the teachers prioritized the aim of increasing these students' academic self-esteem in order to stop them being afraid of their 'learning deficiencies', of being revealed to others and of failing in tests and exams. As a result of this, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) underlined that the students would be more confident in expressing their views, while she agreed with Ms. Meropi (Protagorio) that the students would be more confident in asking for help from their teachers and classmates and working in groups. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) and Ms. Mikini (Thalio) also highlighted that the students would learn more successfully, while Ms. Ely (Thalio) pinpointed that they would behave 'normally' in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) and Ms. Meropi (Protagorio) aimed at helping their students to meet the standards of the mainstream curriculum. Interestingly, Mr. Aiolos (Thalio) expected teachers to support these students to be equally cognitively, personally, socially and emotionally developed. Only Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) strongly believed that these aims could not be practically applied in mainstream Cypriot schools (see appendix: Table C.9, p.378).

Teachers believed that their students developed higher self-esteem because they worked on easier exercises in the resource room. Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) asked her students to read the 'easy' parts of their texts and always gave them an 'easy' text to analyze for ideas and terms for their essay preparation. Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) asked her students to draw what they understood from the text instead of writing a text paragraph. Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) pre-taught them their test questions, while Ms. Semeli and Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) pre-taught their classroom worksheets in the resource room. Ms. Mikini (Thalio) was observed asking them to find the synonyms of words she considered easy for them, and she answered what was difficult for them.

To motivate the participation and learning of their students in the resource room, Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio), Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) and Ms. Ely (Thalio) linked their teaching with students' everyday life experiences and also supported them emotionally and advised them about their everyday lives. Ms. Alkmini took advantage of the topic of the literature review text they studied to give her students advice about their relationships with their teachers and family. Ms. Pandora asked them charitably about what they needed, in order to give them a present for Christmas. In the last session and sometimes in the morning sessions she used to give them prize treats, such as chocolates. She used to be more patient and caring with Minas, whose mother had been diagnosed with cancer (from my research diary). Ms. Alkmini made jokes about her students' incorrect answers in order to give them the time to think of the correct answers. Ms. Mikini and Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) used jokes in order to encourage their students to be well behaved and to concentrate. Ms. Pandora made jokes about the historical terms to help the students memorize them easily. Ms. Alkmini, Ms. Ely and Mr. Tireas used to dramatize the text in order to help the students understand their reading comprehension text and to make it more interesting for them.

To make the teaching process more interesting, Ms. Alkmini and Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) used diagrams and pictures, while Ms. Pandora and Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) used the pictures from the students' textbooks. Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) showed them a short film relevant to the teaching material to make the students understand the context of what they studied. Ms. Andromache also used to first narrate and then explain historic events to her students. Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) used peer assessment, while Ms. Mikini asked her students to see their exercises as a competition as to who could answer the most questions correctly. She often had to give small, five-minute breaks or finish her lesson five minutes early in order to maintain her students' concentration and she had to slow down her teaching rhythm in the resource room.

The experienced teachers were more confident and willing to adapt their teaching methods to suit the needs of their students with learning difficulties. They adopted classroom practices which they had identified as being effective during the teaching and learning process of the resource room. Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) asked her students to take the role of the teacher. The student who took this role asked the teachers' questions, listened to the students' answers, checked their answers against her notes and wrote them on the board. Ms. Alkmini and Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) continued to make jokes with their

students to encourage their active participation and disciplined behaviour, and they constantly supported them emotionally. Ms. Pandora indicated that she felt like ‘a mother’ to her students. Ms. Roxani and Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) gave two guiding questions to their students regarding the analysis of a literature review text and asked them to choose one to answer, working in a group or pairs. Ms. Andromache used to ‘simplify’ the main research question for her students on the board. However, in both classrooms, I observed that the students mostly worked individually and rarely in pairs. Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) gave his students examples of how to answer their homework questions. Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) continued to use ICT in the mainstream classroom because:

‘It is too boring for the students to concentrate for forty five minutes in the classroom unless you give them interesting learning motivations’(informal conversation:research diary, 11 January 2013).

He also used a game with multiple-choice questions in order to involve all the students in learning and to help them consolidate the historical terms and incidents of each period.

It is worth noting that there were teachers who were affected by my presence and by being observed, they tried to pay more attention to these students than usual, or to help me observe overly naturalistic student behaviour (see 3.8.: the lack of time). A characteristic example of that came from Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) who told me that:

‘I didn’t ask Xenia to answer many questions, because I wanted to show you a natural lesson’.

Similarly, Ms. Ely (Thalio) did not ask questions to the girls of her resource room, because they had not been taught the text earlier in the resource room. Ms. Andromache and Ms.Zinovia (Aristotelio), who used to ask those students who raised their hands, tended to ask the target students to answer an easy question, although they had not raised their hands and were usually distracted. Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) and Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) tended to make gestures to his students who attended the resource room in order to make them behaved well in the classroom and to raise their hands to participate in the lesson.

Suggestions for increasing the students' participation in learning both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom

The coordinators and teachers were asked to indicate inclusive practices and improvements regarding the withdrawal support that would increase the students' active participation in learning. Ms. Evriklia (Aristotelio) expected the MOEC to use the teachers' experience regarding how to adjust the teaching materials in the interest of students with learning difficulties. Ms. Meropi (Protagorio) agreed that the students should also be asked about the difficulties in implementing withdrawal support, and to indicate their interest and the practices they liked for supporting their learning difficulties. Both Ms. Evriklia and Ms. Meropi agreed that the classroom teachers should feel responsible for planning and implementing differentiated teaching practices in the mainstream classroom. However, Mr. Aiolos (Thalio) expected the teachers to always follow the MOEC specialist guidelines regarding how to develop (more) inclusive teaching practices. All the coordinators agreed that the statements of 'special educational needs' should specify the resources required to support students with learning difficulties to achieve the goals of the mainstream curriculum, and how the teaching adaptations would be personalized to these students' needs in the mainstream classroom. Except for Ms. Meropi, who disagreed, the other two coordinators acknowledged the need for the mainstream curriculum aims to be adjusted to these students' personal interests, knowledge and skills and to be addressed by the support policies. Both Ms. Evriklia and Ms. Meropi agreed that withdrawal support is a special addition to teachers' classroom adaptations and that schools should examine ways to improve their support both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. Mr. Aiolos expected these students' learning gaps to continue to be supported mainly in the resource room, since he indicated that it was academically beneficial for most of these students.

Mr. Tireas and Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) explained that these students' needs could be met solely in the mainstream classroom, if there were a maximum of twenty-three to twenty-six students. However, both expected that the number of students in mainstream classrooms would probably increase rather than diminish, due to the cuts caused by the economic crisis. In particular, Ms. Ely (Thalio) underlined that:

'Reducing the number of students in the classroom means an increase in the number of teachers and so the cost will be bigger I cannot understand why the resource room program should be stopped. I considered that as aimless. In our school, the number of students in mainstream classrooms is small but again there are many students with learning difficulties.'

Thus the students' difficulties make it hard for the teachers to give individual support to students in the mainstream classroom'.

For this reason, Ms. Pandora, Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) and Ms. Mikini (Thalio) highlighted that there should be a 'special' class that would be permanently dedicated to resource room tuition and that this class should be equipped with a board for the students' assignments. Additionally, Ms. Evdoxia and Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) asked for computers and interactive boards in their classrooms in order to make the teaching more interesting for their students.

Teachers had concerns regarding the books and materials delivered to schools by the MOEC. Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio) pointed out:

' I haven't seen the new teaching books suggested by the innovative mainstream curriculum, but I hope the books will be better and have differentiated material and exercises in order to be achievable for the children 'with learning difficulties'.

Ms. Pandora and Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) agreed that the levels of the new books were difficult and challenging for all the students in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Ely (Thalio) also indicated that:

'The history books have compressed teaching materials. All the teaching material of the book is about important historical issues, which the students have to be taught in a limited time and thus they are more difficult for the students with learning difficulties to follow'.

Only Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) and Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) supported that the books were helpful as they were supplied by the MOEC; they included both easy and difficult materials for all students, the pictures were descriptive and the resource materials contextualized.

Teachers, such as Ms. Ely (Thalio), expected already prepared 'simple' teaching materials for the students with learning difficulties to be allocated to schools by the MOEC. Ms. Mikini (Thalio) underlined that:

'...the 'special teachers should create a bank of 'specialist' teaching materials. The coordinator of the program is not trained and he coordinates the program regarding bureaucratic issues'.

Ms. Pandora and Ms. Evdoxia (Protagorio) explained that it was demanding to find parallel texts for their students with learning difficulties. Teachers lacked the knowledge needed to identify whether the chosen text would be 'easy' or 'specialized' for these students' learning needs. Only Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) acknowledged that the MOEC

expected the teachers, 'as the authority' in the classroom, to differentiate the teaching materials by themselves. Ms. Semeli (Protagorio) did not like having the responsibility of finding what to teach these students in the resource room. Ms. Semeli, Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) and Mr. Charidemos (Thalio), who firmly supported the idea that the students in the resource room were all on the same level, believed it would be easy for 'specialized' teaching materials to be planned for the resource room and allocated to schools by the MOEC. In particular, Ms. Zinovia and Ms. Charidemos expected:

'...to be given different teaching materials according to their difficulties and their level and not the same teaching materials as in their mainstream classroom'.

However, Mr. Charidemos regretted that the students would have to be given 'different' exams from their peers and that the resource room would provide segregated support, rather than being a tutorial for what they were taught in the mainstream classroom.

Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) asked to be trained in effective teaching practices for students with learning difficulties. She did not ask for training in differentiating the teaching materials because, as she pointed out:

'the teaching materials are not a problem. Each teacher tends to plan his/her classroom activities and working exercises'.

Ms. Ely (Thalio) also highlighted that:

'Seminars are not helpful, they are more theoretical than practical and they are not relevant to the reality of Cyprus'.

Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) underlined the need for the MOEC to organize continual seminars and to prioritize the participation of those teachers who have always taught in the resource room and the mainstream classroom. Teachers also asked for further training in how to manage their teaching time and activities in mixed ability classroom groups. For this reason, Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) pointed out that:

'The groups need to be better distributed in order to have the same difficulties, because now there are groups with students having difficulties in reading, writing and others who just need help to understand the teaching of the mainstream classroom. So again during the resource room tuition teachers have to deal with a mixed-ability group of students with different difficulties and the level of learning needs and again the teacher cannot support the students numbering more than fifteen minutes in a total of forty five minutes. The best was when students were individually supported in the resource room'.

Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) also suggested that:

'Teachers are used to teaching students of a lower academic level and thus it would not be difficult for them to teach these students in 'special' classes in which all the students would be of the same academic level. However, during that time, some students would improve and the classroom would be again mixed ability with the best, the good and the weakest students'.

From the comments by Ms. Zinovia and Ms. Alkmini it is evident both the difficulty of teachers to manage the teaching time and activities in mixed-ability groups, and their difficulty in abandoning well-established segregated practices such as the resource room support.

4.3. SUMMARY

This section summarizes the key findings, which are presented under the four main themes. A principal finding, recounted under the theme of social attitudes and conceptions, is that the students felt stigmatized and were afraid of discrimination as a result of receiving withdrawal support in the resource room. The coordinators and teachers either denied or underestimated the risk of stigmatization and discrimination. Secondly, there was identified an association between the process of students' stigmatization and the place where they received support. Students explained that they were afraid of being stigmatized for being 'less academically able' because they received support in the resource room. Only some of the students felt relieved knowing that their classmates did not comment negatively about them being withdrawn for support. The third-year students did not want to continue their withdrawal support in the Lyceum, in order to avoid being further stigmatized. Taken together, these results suggest that the classmates of these students and the students themselves have internalized the idea that they are less academically able. These students already had a lower academic self-concept and efficacy beliefs as a result of their 'special needs' labelling. On the other hand, the coordinators and teachers emphasized that the students with learning difficulties were stigmatized when their 'needs' were supported in the mainstream classroom. However, most of them argued that these students did not feel stigmatized because they had no students asking to quit their withdrawal support. They also suggested that these students benefited academically, rather than being stigmatized in the resource room. This was the reason why the MOEC and the students' parents pressurized them to continue attending the resource room for support. Teachers also acknowledged that it was the stigma of the labels of special needs education which obscured the students' support in the resource room. Hence, they aimed

to support these students emotionally in the resource room in order to develop higher academic self-esteem and thus to avoid feeling stigmatized.

Students were directly discriminated against by their classmates, who used to laugh at them or tease them for the help they received from their teachers with answering their exercises or taking tests. These students were also afraid of being discriminated against during the learning process of the mainstream classroom. It could be argued that most of these students misbehaved during the lesson in order to hide their learning difficulties from others and thus to avoid being rejected and isolated in the mainstream classroom. The students either were or felt indirectly discriminated against by their teachers, who spent less time answering their queries and were less tolerant with their misbehaviour in the mainstream classroom. On the other hand, the coordinators and teachers denied that these students are discriminated against because they were not marginalized in the mainstream classroom. Students were observed enjoying jokes with their classmates and, most of the time, their classmates encouraged them to misbehave in order to take time away from teaching. Teachers also offset the lack of attention paid to these students by supporting their 'needs' in the resource room. At the same time, teachers aimed to support them emotionally in the resource room in order to avoid feeling discriminated against. However, these students were actually being discriminated against by their teachers, who had lower expectations of their learning, and they continued to see their needs with sympathy and compassion.

The main impact of the withdrawal support was that the students, coordinators and teachers became reliant on the teaching and learning practices of the resource room. The students' reliance on their withdrawal support could also be attributed to their lower academic self-concept and efficacy beliefs and the grade-oriented nature of the Cypriot educational system. This conclusion is further discussed in the following chapter. The students suggested that they were helped and had improved academically in the resource room. They got more attention from their teachers, more time to ask their queries and were helped to achieve better grades. The coordinators and teachers suggested that the students benefited academically in the resource room. They were supported to achieve the aims of the mainstream curriculum and to succeed in their tests and exams, but this could be attributed to having the exam questions pre-taught. In the mainstream classroom, the teachers suggested that they lacked time to support these students individually and to answer to their questions. The teachers believed that they lacked the training to adapt their classroom activities to the students' needs. They argued that they lacked time for

differentiating their classroom activities. They also lacked time to support the learning difficulties of these students, due to their misbehaviour. Teachers assumed that there would be more time in the resource room, although considerable time was lost during the students' transition from the mainstream classroom to the resource room or vice versa. Additionally, they considered their resource room teaching practices to be more effective than those used in the mainstream classroom, while the same practices were observed in both classroom environments.

As far as the teaching and learning practices of the mainstream classroom are concerned, half of the students preferred to have no homework, or to be given a choice over the classroom and homework activities. Half of the students believed it was difficult to do mini projects, while the other half believed they were necessary to demonstrate to their teachers what they knew. Half of the students agreed that it was (very) important for their teachers to differentiate their activities according to the level of difficulty and according to what they knew and liked. All the students liked that they were helped to revise for their tests and exams, and they asked to be evaluated according to what they could achieve. All of them asked to be given more consistent feedback and differentiated activities. The teachers were puzzled by the traditional, teaching-centred practices and those suggested by the MOEC's innovative curriculum. Most of the teachers were consistent in differentiating the students' tests and homework activities. Teachers tended to orally simplify their classroom activities, while they preferred to differentiate their classroom activities according to the level of difficulty and quantity. There was a sense among the teachers that the teaching in the resource room was a substitute for classroom-differentiated activities. Most teachers were concerned about using TAs due to the risk of further stigmatizing their students and because they felt uncomfortable having another teacher with them in the mainstream classroom. Teachers were not constantly committed to using ICT and audiovisual materials in their lessons.

The findings suggest that the students participated more in the learning process in the resource room than in the mainstream classroom. Students needed to be continually encouraged to participate in the mainstream classroom as a result of their lower academic self-esteem. Being pre-taught the classroom exercises in the resource room affected both positively and negatively the students' motivation and engagement in the learning activities of the mainstream classroom. Students were distracted or misbehaved in both classroom environments. This appeared to happen because the teaching materials in the resource room were slightly different from those taught in their mainstream classroom and thus were

still perceived to be difficult or boring. The students suggested that they preferred to work in groups and for their teachers to use ICT and audiovisual resources to increase their interest and participation in the learning process of the mainstream classroom.

The coordinators and teachers attributed their students' disengagement or limited participation in the mainstream classroom to their 'lower academic self-esteem', while the students identified it as being a result of the lack of teachers' sustained attention to their needs. To encourage their students' active participation in the mainstream classroom, the teachers aimed to support them in the resource room to develop higher academic self-esteem and to overcome the fear of failing in tests and exams. They also aimed to give them the same activities in both classroom environments. To make their lessons more interesting and more understandable, they used jokes and examples from their everyday life, pictures and diagrams. Additionally, the teachers asked for already-differentiated teaching materials and to be trained in time management and the differentiation of their teaching activities for a mixed-ability student group. As a result of their moderately inclusive ethos, the teachers also asked for a permanently established resource room classroom, equipped with the appropriate teaching materials and ICT resources.

Overall, the results reported in this chapter provide evidence that the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus has been negatively affected by the stereotypes related to special educational needs labelling, students' withdrawal support in the resource room and school performance orientation. In this line, the design and implementation of inclusive mainstream classroom adaptations also seem to have been negatively affected. All the participants were over-reliant on the teaching process of the resource room. A possible explanation for the participants' attitudes towards inclusive approaches could be that they were oriented towards the practical implementation of inclusive education, rather than a specific ideology and understanding of inclusiveness. At the same time, it was observed that the withdrawal support reinforced the negative learning profile of students and restricted the implementation of mainstream classroom adaptations. The findings presented here and elsewhere in this chapter will be the subject of elaboration, analysis and discussion in the following chapter.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Overview

The data presented in the previous chapter demonstrates a complex set of issues around stigmatization, discrimination, the students', coordinators' and teachers' reliance on resource room support, the teachers' dependency on traditional teacher-centred practices and local cultural practices in the enactment of the MOEC's 'inclusive' policy in the case study city. In interpreting these data, in this chapter I will be exploring the interactions of the 'object' and the 'subject' of the study, following Thomas (2011) and as discussed in chapter 3 of methodology. The 'object' of the study will therefore be the theories and discourses discussed extensively in the literature review (see chapter 2).

Thematic analysis is used to explore the 'inclusive' teaching and learning practices in the mainstream classroom at public secondary schools in Cyprus. The analysis and discussion of the findings are organized under the four main themes, which were introduced in the findings chapter:

The first theme, social attitudes and conceptions, explores the data on how prejudices regarding 'disabilities' affected the way the students with learning difficulties were seen and treated by their teachers and non-disabled peers and also how the students believed that they were treated and their learning difficulties were perceived by others.

The **second theme, the impact of the withdrawal support**, identifies how the students were made to see their abilities and difficulties in learning and how the coordinators and teachers stereotyped the learning needs/ difficulties of these students and what resulted in the expectations for these students learning.

The **third theme regarding the teaching and learning practices**, concerns the responsiveness of teachers to adjust their teaching practices to meet the needs of all their students and particularly of their students with mild learning difficulties in the mainstream classrooms. It also considered which the preferable classroom adaptations are for the participant students.

The **fourth theme, the students' engagement in learning**, emphasizes what the participants suggested as necessary to be changed to meet the needs of these students and encourage their active participation in learning.

The analysis of these themes draws on a range of theoretical resources, including 'disability' and psychological theories, the idea of inclusive education, as well as pedagogical models of teaching and learning.

Models of disability, insights from these models are used to illuminate how the prejudices and negative stereotypes that arose, affected what the coordinators and teachers believed about the learning needs of their students with mild learning difficulties. The negative stereotypes and the prejudices also affected the way the students conceptualized themselves and their learning identity.

Psychological theories of stigmatization, self-esteem and academic self-concept, academic self-efficacy, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are examined to justify the impact of labelling and withdrawal support on the students with mild learning difficulties. They were also investigated in order to explain how labelling and withdrawal support formed the learning identity of the students.

Models of teaching and learning are examined to explain the practices used by the teachers to meet the needs of these students in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. To understand the reason why some adapted tasks were preferable to these students and which classroom adaptations were preferred by the participant teachers, it was necessary to draw on this combination of the aforementioned theoretical resources. The implication of theories from these different disciplines were necessary in order to listen to the perspectives of both the learners (the students) and of the practitioners (the coordinators and teachers) regarding inclusive education and what they had to suggest for its (further) development within the mainstream schools in Cyprus.

Characteristics affecting the analysis of the students' perspectives

Students tended to answer and evaluate the teaching and learning practices according to their learning style and identity. Students were grouped according to their age and their school year level, rather than according to their 'learning difficulties'. I was more interested in focusing on how the students, themselves understood their labelling and thus they were

asked to mention what they considered to be challenging for them in the Modern Greek language lesson. I felt that grouping these students according to their labels, would have resulted in them being further discriminated against by their peers. The age and the school year level of each group of students were taken into account to explore whether these had affected their perspectives and understandings. In particular, I found that it was mainly the boys who misbehaved in the classroom. Similarly, the students of the third class of the gymnasium were more concerned about being withdrawn for support in the Lyceum.

Additionally, students were not grouped according to the years they received support in the resource room, since there were no significant differences among their withdrawal support system experiences. The large majority of students used to receive support from primary school and they continued in the gymnasium. All the students were withdrawn from the mainstream classroom to receive support in the resource room twice a week for Modern Greek and twice in History and they were all withdrawn from the classes of Ancient Greek, Ancient Greek Literature and French, which were those suggested by the MOEC policy (see Table B.2, p.133). Although at the third school some students were also withdrawn from other classes apart from the aforementioned ones, students' perceptions were not found to be affected differently. The students were rarely withdrawn from other classes, only when there were difficulties with the curriculum delivery plan (Reflections on fieldnotes, from my research diary, December: 2012).

Characteristics affecting the analysis of the coordinators' and teachers' perspectives

The coordinators' and teachers' reports are grouped and discussed individually according to their personal beliefs towards inclusive education and according to their experiences as 'practitioners' within the educational system of Cyprus. The participants' responses were rarely affected by the difference between the years of teaching experience in mainstream Cypriot schools and among the teachers' training in the field of inclusive and special needs education. Female teachers formed the majority of teachers of Modern Greek language and literature in the case study schools, as only two male teachers participated in this study. For this reason their answers cannot be reflective on issues of gender or whether male and female teachers understand inclusive education differently.

5.2. ANALYSIS OF THEMES

5.2.1. SOCIAL ATTITUDES AND CONCEPTION

Were students with mild learning difficulties stigmatized due to their withdrawal support?

As discussed in chapter 2, individuals are stigmatized because they possess, or are believed to possess, some characteristics devaluing them within a particular social context (Crocker et al., 1998). The process of stigmatization is related with terms such as socially constructed stereotypes and prejudices (Dovidio et al., 2000,p.3, cited in Heatheron et al.,2000). Therefore, an individual can be stigmatized at one moment and in one given situation but not in another within the same period of time (ibid). It is for this reason that student, coordinator and teacher answers differed when they commented under which circumstances the target students were, or could be stigmatized. Students were more concerned whether they were stigmatized because they were withdrawn in the resource room, rather than because they were labelled as having learning difficulties. The coordinators and teachers suggested that these students were more stigmatized due to their labels of special needs education.

Stereotypes represent the traits that are considered as the characteristics of particular social groups (Nelson, 2010). However, the stereotypes when focused only on undesirable characteristics, resulted in the labelled people being seen negatively (Link and Phelan, 2001). What is particularly interesting for this case study is how the stereotypes concerning the support in the resource room were internalized by the participants. Students internalized their withdrawal support as 'negatively different' and discriminatory compared to their classmates. In accordance with MOEC policy (Official Newspaper of Cypriot Democracy, 2001), the coordinators and teachers perceived their students' withdrawal support as an inclusive practice rather than as a segregating placement. Additionally, the coordinators and teachers acknowledged the need to persuade these students to continue their withdrawal, whenever they asked to be dropped due to the pressure they had from the students' parents. This supports the findings of Charalambides (1998) and Symeonidou (2002) discussed in chapter 2. According to Symeonidou (2002), most parents preferred their children to be supported in the resource room because they internalized that their children were in need of individualized and tailored practices, which were provided to them in the resource room.

The withdrawal support of students in the resource room can be related to the process of stigmatization of the students with learning difficulties. The resource room is culturally stereotyped as the place for providing support to the students of a lower academic level than the average of their age. As, the resource room was among the spaces which were originally and especially designed for the 'disabled' students (D'Alessio, 2014) and continued to run for the students with learning difficulties (Persson, 2000; Armstrong et al., 2000; Vlachou, 2006). The label of less academically able students was unquestionably attached to those students attending the resource room and their learning difficulties were automatically defined as special educational needs. This is the reason that mainly the students of the third year of gymnasium did not choose to continue their withdrawal support in Lyceum to avoid being further stigmatized. By being withdrawn from the mainstream classroom, students experienced loss of academic status since it was indicated to them the academic skills they lacked in accordance with the aims of the mainstream curriculum. The participant students experienced status loss also due to their classmates, similar to those who participated in a research undertaken in five Cypriot primary mainstream schools by Mamas (2013), internalizing that the students had to attend the resource room for support because they were not considered good students. Hence, the classmates of Solonas (Protagorio) could not understand why he had to attend the resource room since they identified him as a good student.

On the other hand, the coordinators and teachers tended to overlook that their students experienced further loss of academic status by being withdrawn for support in the resource room. The coordinators and teachers continued to support the withdrawal of these students from the mainstream classrooms and identified the resource room as a more effective learning environment to meet these students' 'special' educational needs. It could be that the coordinators and teachers tended to interpret inclusive learning environments as those that give access to the students with 'special' educational needs (Finkelstein et al., 2019), within the existing school facilities (Smyth et al., 2014). This also suggests that there may be a link between the perception of the coordinators and teachers and the medical model of disability, which has been influential in official and popular Cypriot discourse for decades. The development of special needs education in the Cypriot educational context originated from this model since for a long period of time the students labelled as having 'special needs' were required to be educated in segregated schools and institutions. This may have played a vital role in bringing about the learning difficulties of these students to be continually internalized by the coordinators and teachers as a 'deficit' within their students, which needed to be 'fixed' by specialists such as the medical professionals and the special needs pedagogic experts. In the literature, it has also been

identified that the teachers tended to interpret and perceive the learning difficulties of these students in terms of disability (Armstrong,2003), as a result of the way they read into what was suggested by the medical model of disability.

Additionally, the coordinators and teachers denied that their students were stigmatized when they attended the resource room for support; rather, they perceived that students experienced academic status loss as a result of being labelled as having learning difficulties. A possible explanation for this might be that the coordinators and teachers have identified that the labelling process focused on defining what was the learning 'deficit' of these students. Even when the labels aimed to guide the teachers how to meet these students' academic needs, Corbett (1996) and Armstrong (2003) suggested that the labels were still used to maintain the boundaries between what is considered as 'normal' and 'abnormal', in the mainstream schools. According to the labelling process, students were required to receive special educational interventions outside of the mainstream classroom, because their learning 'deficits' were greater and seemed to be 'different' compared to those of their classmates (Corbett, 1996). In that way, the coordinators and teachers acknowledged that the labelling process contributed to the learning difficulties of these students being negatively stereotyped, while it was difficult for them to concede that their students with learning difficulties experienced status loss due to their withdrawal support. For them, the withdrawal support of these students was internalised as an effective teaching intervention rather than as discriminatory mechanics against these students. Similarly, in the research undertaken by Mamas (2013), teachers overlooked the fact that the students felt marginalized as a result of their withdrawal support, because for them this practice was considered to be an inclusive one. On the other hand, the students acknowledged that they lacked academic skills when they were withdrawn for support. Their officials' labels did not seem to affect them directly to feel the loss of academic status. Students experienced a greater sense of status loss when they are withdrawn for support because this was highly visible and attracted the negative comments of their classmates against them. The coordinators and teachers, who were unwilling to see the stigmatizing effect of the withdrawal support, related the negative comments of these students' classmates to their labels rather than to their withdrawal support in the resource room.

All the coordinators, teachers and students recognised the 'stereotype threat' connected with the withdrawal support in the resource room. However, the majority of the coordinators and teachers emphatically rejected the idea that the resource room is among

the factors that contributed to these students' stigmatization as being less able academically. Students felt threatened and worried whether they were part of their peer classroom group. They were afraid of being alienated from their classmates, since they tended to be separated from their classmates a couple of times in the week to attend the resource room. This fear was even more obvious among the students of the third year of gymnasium. Chara (Thalio) felt less threatened by being socially alienated by her classmates because they attended the resource room with a group of students of their age and who usually resulted in being their closer friends. Crabtree and Rutland (2001) also confirmed that their participant adolescent students with mild learning difficulties were also worried about being socially accepted by their classmates. Additionally, the students of this case study worried that their classmates would reject them if they identified them as a lower ability student. The students felt threatened telling their classmates what they were taught in the resource room, unless those who asked were already their friends. These students felt less threatened because their friends asked them out of curiosity about the teaching in the resource room. The classmates of these students conceived that they were set apart to be supported academically, but they did not stereotype negatively their support as being for the students with 'special educational needs', which is more negative concept, as was maintained by Clements (2001).

Coordinators and teachers tended to underestimate the risk of their students being marginalized by their classmates because they attended the resource room for support. This resonates with Shoho et al. (1997), who suggested that the students with learning difficulties were neither alienated from their classmates, nor marginalized in the mainstream classroom. The coordinators and teachers were not concerned that these students were mainly friends with the students of their resource room group and indicated that these students had also friendships with other peers in the mainstream classroom. Madge et al. (1990) also identified that it was normal for the students attending the resource room to select their resource room classmates to be their friends, seeing it as a 'preference'. In fact these students tended to participate in their classmates' jokes and to imitate their classmates' mischievous behaviour. Contrary to what was suggested by Woolfolk (2001), the traditionally sitting in rows did not seem to affect the socializing of these students with their classmates. Acknowledging the participants' lack of criticality regarding the withdrawal policy, this can be also the reason why the coordinators and teachers failed to acknowledge that their students were worried about being marginalised because they were separated from their classmates to attend the resource room. As noted above, the policies implemented in mainstream Cypriot schools were informed by the

medical model of disability (Koursoumba, 2019), where the learning difficulties of students are regarded as being the result of their impairments and disabilities (Oliver, 1990e) and subject to the decision-making regimes of professionals (Rioux, 2002; Eliot and Armstrong, 2019), and the students as being in need of remedial provision (Corbett, 1996). In this sense, the teachers overlooked the fact that their students tended to imitate their classmates' mischievous behaviour, which possibly related to the students' need to feel that they were constantly part of their peer-group. Paradoxically, the coordinators' and teachers' perspectives regarding the support of these students in the resource room were also informed by the social model of disability; the coordinators and teachers internalized that the right of these students to have access and be educated in the mainstream classroom was guaranteed when the students also received support in the resource room.

Were students with mild learning difficulties discriminated against due to their withdrawal support?

As suggested by Link and Phelan (2001), people are both stigmatized and discriminated against when their labels and stereotypes result in a separation of 'them' from 'us'. People are directly separated from 'others' when the fact they are labelled sets them apart and links them to undesirable characteristics (ibid). Obvious forms of direct discrimination against the labelled people are their devaluation, rejection and exclusion from certain forms of social life (ibid). Riddick (2000) identified that the classmates of the students with learning difficulties tend to be discriminated against by those in the mainstream classroom, since they had already stigmatized them as having poor performance. In this case study these students' learning abilities were identified by their classmates as lower than theirs due to their withdrawal support in the resource room. Direct discrimination by the classmates of these students was identified when they laughed at them whenever they answered incorrectly or they were in need of help to complete their classroom exercise or when they teased them for their success in tests. The classmates of these students tended to tease them because they took for granted their lower academic performance and because they linked their success with their withdrawal support in the resource room. It is important to be noted that in this case study, the comments of their classmates were not aggressive and concerned solely with these students' academic performance, whereas Salend et al., (1999) identified that these students tended to be the target of physical attack, name calling and ridicule by their classmates and teachers.

According to Link and Phelan (2001), the process of discrimination occurs with considerable regularity. It is also linked to the process of negative stereotyping that is operating automatically and precociously (ibid). For this reason, some of the students of this case study tended to tease their classmates from the resource room, for their lower academic performance. Their withdrawal support and their discrimination by their classmates were mechanics that mutually reinforced their stigma as the less academically able students and persuaded them to accept their lower status. However, Kostakis and Antonakis (Protagorio), who realized the status loss they experienced by their discrimination, explained that they did not tease each other deliberately, but it was their way of socializing. It is also important to be noted that the lower placement in a status hierarchy can be the basis for discrimination (ibid). The students discriminated against their classmates from the resource room group, as a consequence of their lower academic status and because they wanted to highlight that they themselves should be in a higher ability status hierarchy than their classmates.

The labelled people can be affected by many forms of indirect discriminatory behaviours, when their stigmatization is based on cultural stereotypes (Link and Phelan, 2001). According to a cultural stereotyping process, the labelled people fear that discrimination would become personally relevant to them and thus they were afraid of being personally rejected by others (ibid). In this case study, and similar to what Link and Phelan (2001) had identified, the students expected and feared rejection by their classmates. Especially, in this case study the students aimed to conceal the reason why it was necessary to attend the resource room for support, in order to avoid being indirectly discriminated by their classmates. Students almost expected to be rejected by their classmates because they recognized that they were negatively stereotyped as having learning difficulties. The students' fear can also be easily understood, if there was any difficulty for students with learning difficulties to be accepted by their classmates, when their needs were supported in any other segregated setting within the mainstream schools (Corbett and Norwich, 1999; Weinstein, 2004). Additionally, the students of this case study avoided asking their queries in front of their classmates in the mainstream classroom, to ensure that the possibility of indirect discrimination would not be personally applied to them.

Other forms of indirect discriminatory behaviours are related with the theory of 'stereotype threat'. According to Steele and Aronson (1995), a stereotype can be a threat when one's needs are stereotyped and resulted in this being negatively evaluated. As far as it concerns the students with learning difficulties, it has been observed that their teachers tended to have lower expectations from them in most subjects in the mainstream

curriculum (Macintyre, 2008) and that these students lacked their teachers' attention in the mainstream classroom (Weinstein, 2004). In this case study, the students who were identified as having 'stigma consciousness' (Pinel, 1999), acknowledged that they were stigmatized as lower ability learners and they expected their teachers to have lower expectations from them. The students assumed that their teachers discriminated against them because they did not have both constantly and individually their teachers' assistance to complete their classroom exercises. From the teaching in the resource room, the students internalized the idea that they were in need of such uniquely tailored practices (Florian, 2009; 2019) and distinct provisions (Lewis and Norwich, 2005). Equally, it was common for most of the students with learning difficulties to feel that they were treated differently by their teachers compared to the high achievers (Weinstein, 2004). In this case study, Gregoris (Protagorio) felt discriminated because their teachers asked him to participate less in the learning process of the mainstream classroom, compared to his 'more academically able' classmates.

It is important to be noted that discriminatory attitudes can be identified by the people when they themselves confirm such a stereotype thread through their own behaviours (Steele and Aronson, 1995). During the teaching and learning process, the students in this case study, reinforced their teachers' discriminatory behaviour against them, when they feared or avoided asking their queries. Similar to other research evidence, the participant students presumed that their teachers would spend less time giving them positive feedback (McIntosh et al., 1993; Hocult, 1996) or because they would be given less feedback, compared to the high achievers (Weinstein, 2004). Nevertheless, Hocult (1996) identified that the teachers spent the same time for assistance with these students and their classmates in the mainstream classroom. The time spent by the teachers with each of the students, depends on the students' time of engagement and concentration on the lesson, which was not significantly different for both the students with and without learning difficulties (ibid). Especially, in this case study, the teachers highlighted that their students had more time for their queries in the resource room, since they were fewer students in the resource room group. It could be argued that the students such as Demosthenes (Protagorio) felt discriminated against by their classmates when their teachers encouraged them to ask their questions in the resource room. However, it was not because they wanted to avoid answering them; their classmates misbehaved while they tried to solve their queries and they lost the control of the classroom. The teachers were stressed in covering the required exercises of the course syllabus and meeting the aims of the mainstream curriculum and thus they did not have time to lose with the students' unruly

behaviour (Didaskalou and Milward, 2001). Additionally, the students felt discriminated by their teachers because they were not as tolerant with their mischievous behaviour as they were in the resource room. The students expected to be rejected by their teachers, thus they failed to recognize what Didaskalou and Milward (2001) had identified. Teachers tended to consider the misbehaviour of all of their students in the mainstream classroom as disruptive (ibid). In the resource room, the participant teachers were more tolerant with them, because they recognized what was suggested by Briggs (2004), that these students were in need of feeling and seeing that their teachers like them.

It is interesting that the coordinators and teachers tended to deny that these students had been discriminated against by them and their classmates. It was not readily apparent to them the forms of discrimination against their students with learning difficulties because they have been affected by dominant cultural beliefs regarding the labelling of these students. These students were culturally stereotyped as being less able academically and thus among the teachers only Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) and Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) identified that they had colleagues who discriminated against these students by having lower expectations from them. Similarly, Mamas (2013) identified that his participant teachers tended to have lower expectations of the learning of their labelled students, since they internalized them as being less academically able. The labelling of students with learning difficulties affects negatively the attitudes and perceptions of these students themselves, their classmates and their teachers (Dillon, 2001; Riddick, 2000; Corbett, 1996; Vaughn et al, 1993; Loreman and Deppeler, 2000; Richards, 2010; Damianidou and Phtiaka, 2018) towards their learning and participation in the mainstream school (Ainscow et al., 2006). The findings indicated that the participants tended culturally to perceive the learning difficulties of their students in terms of disability, as was also suggested by Armstrong (2003), and thus they culturally considered their students' needs with sympathy and compassion. It was also indicated that this teacher behaviour was linked with the teaching in the resource room. However, due to the dominant cultural belief linked with the labelling of the students with learning difficulties, for the coordinators and teachers, it was difficult to recognize that it was also discriminatory for these students to be separated from their classmates in order to receive support in the resource room. This is strongly related with the finding that twelve out of fourteen coordinators and teachers suggested that these students could not be supported exclusively in the mainstream classroom and continued to have engaged in not obvious discriminatory forms of teaching practices.

The students with learning difficulties resulted in having lower self-esteem due to their labels (Dillon,2001; Riddick,2000) and as a consequence of the others' discriminatory attitudes and behaviours (Wright et al., 2000). Even the participant coordinators and teachers overlooked the threat that they might discriminate against their students with learning difficulties, when they failed to meet their needs in the mainstream classroom, and they acknowledged that these students had lower self-esteem. Nevertheless, the coordinators and teachers failed to identify the link between their discriminatory attitudes, their classmates' negative comments regarding their poor performance, and the students' withdrawal in the resource room to the students' lower academic self-esteem. Though the MOEC acknowledged the risk of these students being indirectly discriminated against due to their withdrawal support in the resource room, the coordinators and teachers aimed to mitigate against this and develop these students' self-esteem by supporting them emotionally in the resource room. Even though there was no reliable association between these students developing higher self-esteem in the resource room or in the mainstream classroom (Elbaum, 2002), the coordinators and teachers focus instead on the formation of these students' self-esteem in the resource room. Similar to Crabtree and Rutland (2001), the coordinators and teachers suggested that these students would experience higher self-evaluation in the presence of their classmates in the resource room, who were on the same level of 'ability' as them.

Direct and indirect forms of discriminatory behaviour have been identified as being connected with the lower academic self-esteem of the students with learning difficulties. However, it is taken for granted that the power of those who discriminate against others increases the impetus to use mechanics that sustain the link of the labelled people to the negative stereotypes (Link and Phelan, 2001). As a consequence, the stigmatized groups, who accept the dominant view of their lower status, are less likely to challenge the structural form of discrimination that blocks opportunities they desire (Link and Phelan, 2001,p.375). The students hesitated to challenge their withdrawal from the lessons they liked such as Ancient Greek and Ancient Greek literature. The students accepted the others' convictions that they would not succeed academically in these lessons, which were considered difficult for them. As Kloomok and Cosden (1994) suggested, the students resulted in lacking effort and engagement in school tasks, due to their 'stigmatized' self-concept identity'. Especially, the students' hesitation to challenge their 'discriminating' withdrawal support from Ancient Greek classes was related to their unrealistic assessments of their abilities, their lower achievement expectations and their perceptions of social acceptance and support from others (Núñez et al., 2005).

Discussing Theme 1

The results analyzed under the first theme suggest consistency with the literature that the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus continues to be strongly affected by the cultural interpretations of disability (Stangvik, 2010). The most obvious finding to emerge from the analysis is that there is an association between the medical model and the way in which the needs of students with learning difficulties are stereotyped in mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus. These results are in line with those of previous studies (Conrand, 1992; Oliver, 1990d; Shakespeare, 1994, 1996; Goodley, 1998; Armstrong, 2003; Aspis, 2010; Berghs et al., 2019), which suggested that the negative images and cultural representations of individuals with disabilities negatively affected teachers' interpretations of students' learning difficulties in mainstream schools. The teachers continued to perceive the 'needs' of the students with learning difficulties as 'deviant' compared to those of an average student of their age, and they still regarded them as being synonymous with having mental impairments (Aspis, 2010). A strong relation has also been identified between the stereotypes regarding students' learning difficulties and the labelling process. This result corroborates the findings of a great deal of previous research such, as studies undertaken by Becker (1963), Green et al. (2005), Mamas (2013) and Sowards (2015).

This study also supports evidence from previous research (Kelly and Norwich, 2004; Boyle, 2007), which suggested that labelled people can be stigmatized for their learning difficulties and their poor academic performance (Riddick, 2000; Arnesen et al., 2007). In agreement with Link and Phelan (2001), who highlighted the risk of stigmatization for labelled individuals when they are separated from others, these results underlined that students are stigmatized as a result of their withdrawal support in the resource room. The withdrawal support reproduced the stigma that the students were less academically able. Similar to Arishi et al. (2017), it was also identified that the classmates of these students internalized them as being less academically able than themselves because they were in need of support in the resource room. Another consequence of the stigmatization process, which is underlined by Link and Phelan (2001) and Green et al. (2005), is status loss and discrimination. Being withdrawn for support in the resource room resulted in the students further losing their academic status, and they experienced direct or indirect forms of discrimination from both their classmates and their teachers.

Another important finding which also confirms what Steele and Aronson (1995) and Pinel (1999) have found, is that the labelled students were afraid of the negative effects of being stigmatized, or they tended to confirm the effects of the stigma with their behaviours. In addition to what Dillon (2001) and Riddick (2000) have found, the students had lower academic self-esteem due to both their labelling and their stigmatization. Similar to Link and Phelan (2001) and Goffman (1963), the students were also found to be afraid of being socially marginalized by their classmates as a result of their stigmatization. Students possibly misbehaved in the lesson in order to ensure that they were constantly socializing with their classmates and in order to conceal their learning difficulties from others.

These results are useful to consider in response to the second research question (see chapters 1 and 3). It can be inferred that the partial withdrawal support of the students in the resource room cannot be considered an inclusive practice if there is a connection between this practice and the students' stigmatization and discrimination. In the eyes of coordinators and teachers, the students' partial withdrawal support in the resource room was perceived to be an 'inclusive' practice. The reason for this was that they continued to interpret these students' learning difficulties in terms of learning disabilities. For them, this MOEC policy was 'inclusive', since it aimed at removing the barriers which hindered the active participation of these students in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. They tended to attribute these students' possible stigmatization and discrimination to their special educational needs labels, while believing that they were protecting these students from feeling further stigmatized and discriminated against by supporting them emotionally in the resource room.

5.2.2 THE IMPACT OF THE WITHDRAWAL SUPPORT

Why are students' reliant on the teaching of the resource room?

The participant students experienced an academic status loss as a result of their labelling. Labelling affected negatively the academic self-esteem of the participant students, who acknowledged that they were labelled as having learning difficulties because they lagged behind their classmates. Self-esteem is associated with the belief that one has socially acceptable characteristics such as academic competence (Thomson, 2012). However, labelling is defined as the attachment of a deviant name to some characteristics of the individual (Gove, 1980). Deviant names were attached to individuals identified as having pathological and physical deficiencies (Slee, 1996), or disabilities (inabilities) to do

something (Barton and Armstrong, 1999). Deviance is socially constructed by the judgement of others regarding what cannot fit into the social norms (McGrew and Evans, 2003). Therefore the labels have a destructive impact on the individuals' self-concept (Osterholm et al., 2007) and on their self-esteem (Thomson, 2012). As a consequence of labelling, the participant students resulted in having lower academic self-concept and lower academic self-efficacy beliefs. They resulted in believing the idea suggested by Clements (2001), that they had to be set apart from their peers in mainstreaming to receive 'specialised' support. From the teaching and learning in the mainstream classroom, it was identified that the students selected to sit at the rear or pre-rear table, while in the resource room they chose to sit at the front tables because they were identified as having higher academic self-concept. These findings confirmed what Elbaum (2002) suggested that the labelled students tended to have higher academic self –concept, when they compared themselves with peer students who also have learning difficulties.

On the other hand, the participant students resulted in being reliant on the teaching practices of the resource room, due to the strong sense of 'learned helplessness' (Chapman, 1988), they experienced during the teaching and learning process of the mainstream classroom. The students were identified as having lower academic self-efficacy, as a result of their labelling and their academic failures. Self-efficacy can be defined by the beliefs regarding the performance capabilities in a particular context, while the failures in this particular context can lower the self-efficacy of the individuals (Bandura, 1997). As a result, the students of this case study felt 'helpless' in the mainstream classroom because they did not believe that they can succeed academically without the help of others. This is one of the causal reasons, which is similar to what was maintained by Salend et al. (1999), that the students tended to appreciate the academic support and extra help they received in any of the special educational placements, such as in the resource room. Similar to Briggs (2004), the students liked that their teachers spent time for them in the resource room. In accordance with Loreman et al., (2010), the students identified that they enjoyed their teachers asking them frequent questions and giving them examples, especially from their daily life and experiences to help them understand their lesson. The findings indicate that this may be linked to the fact that the teachers did not use regularly inclusive classroom adaptations. However, it should be noted that many factors can affect the constant teachers' attention to, and support for, their students during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In such a case, findings indicated that the teaching in the resource room was beneficial for the students, contrary to the teaching in the mainstream classroom, which is mostly driven by clock time (Garnett, 1996). It

cannot be denied that some of the causal factors may be that the students with learning difficulties need more time to review and practise what they have been taught (Mitchell, 2014), while the students did not like spending time either waiting for help or being interrupted in what they were doing in the mainstream classroom (Garnett, 1996). Similarly, it could be argued that the students enjoyed the slower pace of lessons in the resource room and the continuous summarizing of the main points of the lesson.

What is the impact of withdrawal support on the students' learning identity?

The places where these students receive instructions can affect student academic self-concept either positively or negatively (Bakker and Bosman, 2003). Núñez et al. (2005) also suggested that the support in the resource room was found to affect negatively the academic self-concept of the students with learning difficulties. Similarly, the withdrawal support of these students partially in the resource room, reinforced to them the belief of having lower abilities and efficacy which was implicitly alluded to within their stigma of being students with learning difficulties. The students' perception of their academic abilities was also affected negatively by the instructional process followed by their teachers (Núñez et al., 2005). The participant students resulted in being over reliant on their teachers' individual attention which was conceded as part of the resource room adaptations. Though the students agreed to have access to additional support materials in the mainstream classroom, they were found to prefer having their teachers' constant and individual support rather than working autonomously in the mainstream classroom. Contrary to Shuh (2003), the adaptive tasks of the resource room resulted in the students improving only temporarily their academic self-concept belief. Consequently, the students did not transcend permanently their fears whether they would be negatively evaluated by others (Crozier, 1995), or if they would be socially accepted and if they would receive favourable feedback from their teachers and classmates (Núñez et al., 2005; Wadman et al., 2008). As a result of their lower academic self-efficacy beliefs, the students were identified as having negative motivational reactions (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003), such as being shy to ask questions in the mainstream classroom.

The teaching in the resource room usually aims at encouraging more positive cognitive self-perceptions for the students with learning difficulties (Zimmerman, 2000, cited in Boekaerts, 2000). Despite what the teachers assumed, the teaching in the resource room did not bring a stronger, academic self-efficacy, but rather the students remained reliant on the teaching practices of the resource room. Students tended to be reliant on these

practices, even if they were not always effective for the attributional learning profiles of all the students in the resource room group. The participation of the shy students did not increase in the mainstream classroom. In accordance with Weiner (2000), the participant students continued attributing their success to external variables such as luck and the help of others, rather than their effort and abilities. Therefore, students believed that they understood the lesson of the mainstream classroom better when they listened to it a second time or more simply in the resource room. Students felt more confident that they would be academically successful, when the classroom activities and the exam questions were pre-taught to them. It is common for both the students with and without learning difficulties to expect their teachers to clarify the concepts and assignments they did not understand in the mainstream classroom and to teach the same material in different ways to help everyone learn (Klinger and Vaughn, 1999).

It is identified that when people are stigmatized, it not only negatively affected how the others see them but also how they experience their self-identity (Crocker, 1999). Students with learning difficulties resulted in having lower academic self-concept (Kavale and Forness, 1996), by comparing their abilities with that of their classmates with no difficulty (Elbaum, 2002). These students considered themselves as less able in the environment with high able students and more able with less able peers (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003,p.15). Though there was no evidence suggesting consistent and systematic association between these students' lower academic self-concept/efficacy and their placement (Elbaum, 2002), in this case study, there seems to be a connection with their withdrawal support in the resource room. Students were made to internalize their learning difficulties as 'different' and 'discriminatory' (ibid) and themselves as in need of 'special' pedagogy (Corbett and Norwich, 1999; Florian, 2010; Liasidou, 2012). Therefore, the teaching in the resource room helped the students to build up only a 'temporal and superficial academic self –esteem'. According to what Marsh and Martin (2011) explained, the teachers focused on how to increase easily and quickly their students' academic achievements rather than on fostering their success through the development of students' self-beliefs in their academic abilities. The teachers tended to give these students the correct answers, rather than guiding them to work independently on the classroom activities. The shy students continue to avoid asking their queries in the mainstream classroom and they feel safe to address them only to their teachers. Those students who were also conscientious with their learning, tended to ask the students who sat close to them. It is common for the students with learning difficulties to expect their teachers to probe individually their understanding and to monitor their individual progress (Garnett,1996). In this case study, those students who had a greater sense that they

lacked abilities, asked to be supported in the resource room individually rather than in a group. They aimed to maximize their opportunity to gain their teachers' individual attention, since they acknowledged that time was lost by arguing with their classmates in the resource room.

Coordinators' and teachers' inclusive ethos and their reliance on the teaching of the resource room

It could be argued that the medical model of disability is still prevalent as far as it concerned the coordinators' and teachers' views and behaviour. In the mainstream school, the individuals' impairments were defined by medical terms, using medical language and medical interventions to affect a cure or treatment (Conrand, 1992). Therefore, the learning difficulties of the students continued to be conceptualized in the same way as those who had previously been labelled as having mental impairments (Aspis, 2010). Accordingly, students with learning difficulties were internalized in the mainstream schools as in need of receiving specialized support (Clements, 2001). Teachers were made to feel insecure about supporting their learning difficulties (Corbett, 1996), since they lacked 'specialized' training (Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012). Under such a spectrum, the coordinators and teachers of this case study, internalized their students' learning difficulties in terms of disability. They resulted in feeling insecure about supporting these students in the mainstream classroom, though they were more confident to support them in the resource room. Goodman and Bond (1993) suggested that when the learning difficulties of these students were supported in segregated locations rather than in mainstream classrooms, the teachers resulted in having difficulty in meeting both the individual needs of the students and supporting them to achieve the aims of the mainstream curriculum. Similarly, the teachers who acknowledged that they lacked 'specialized' training were more confident in designing adaptive teaching practices in the resource room, due to their long years of teaching experience in withdrawal support. In addition to this, the coordinators and teachers still considered the support of these students in the resource room as necessary due to their compliance with their school ethos. Teacher beliefs and attitudes towards adaptations and pedagogical approaches are formed and affected according to their schools' attitude towards inclusive education (Rapp and Arndt, 2012). As a result of the teachers' conformity to their school ethos, the participant teachers did not dare challenge their students' withdrawal support even when they were sceptical regarding the effectiveness of these teaching practices.

To include the students with learning difficulties in the mainstream schools, it was required for these students to be supported raising their attainments to specified target levels and at the same time to preserve the schools' capacity for producing good overall outcomes for their students (Ainscow et al., 2006; Evans and Lunt, 2002). Therefore it was identified as necessary for these students to have access to different forms of provision outside of the mainstream classroom, otherwise it was judged that these students would have failed (Florian, 2008). The coordinators and teachers reached the conclusion that their students with learning difficulties benefited academically in the resource room, if it was required by MOEC (2013) withdrawal support to help their students succeed in tests and exams. Additionally, it was not difficult for the participant teachers to conclude that as in many educational systems the support of these students has been associated with resource rooms (Armstrong et al., 2000; Persson, 2000; Vlachou, 2006). The same was also assumed by the participant students due to the great sense of 'learned helplessness' they had during the teaching in the mainstream classroom. Albeit, it is important to be noted that despite what the coordinators and teachers of this case study have assumed, there was no compelling evidence that the support of these students outside of the mainstream classroom was academically stronger than in the mainstream classroom (Brunch and Valeo, 1997; Thomas and Vaughan, 2004; Richmond et al., 2009). Hocult (1996) identified that the students in his study, though attending the resource room for support, were not able even to achieve at the level of the low achieving classmates in the mainstream classroom. Rea et al. (2002) also found that the middle school students of their study scored higher outcomes than their peers who received withdrawal support.

Teachers' lack of time and their reliance on the teaching of the resource room

The needs of the students with learning difficulties persisted as being 'different' from the common needs of their classmates (Norwich, 1996). Teachers presumed that they had to provide for their students something 'additional' or 'different' to what is already and ordinarily provided in schools for the needs of the majority of learners (Florian, 2008). Consequently, the teachers tended to perceive them negatively, since it is required to prioritize them in the classroom along with their peers' needs (Norwich, 1996), but they did not know how to produce such provisions (Florian, 2008). For this reason, teachers tended to focus mainly on what they cannot do for their learning needs in the mainstream classroom (Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012).

In this case study, the coordinators and teachers perceived these students' needs negatively, 'different' from their classmates because they had already stigmatized them as being academically less able students. The status of the stigmatized persons tended to be reduced in the eyes of the stigmatizers (Link and Phelan, 2001). Consequently, as Macintyre (2008) identified, the participants resulted in having lower expectations from their students. For this reason, the teachers except for Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) considered it as difficult and time-consuming to plan specialized classroom activities for these students. Ms. Elly (Thalio), a well experienced teacher, also emphasized that planning teaching activities is both stressful and time-consuming not only for the students with learning difficulties, but also for all the students in the mainstream classroom. It is obvious from Ms. Elly's (Thalio) comments that the participants internalized that it was not necessary to adapt their teaching practices to meet the needs of their students. This is common in educational systems where the learning needs of the students were perceived as 'special' and in need of being adapted to meet the aims of the mainstream curriculum, rather than the opposite (Allan, 2003; Florian, 2009; Makoelle, 2014). For the coordinators and teachers participating in this case study, the needs of their students were internalised negatively, as 'special' because they acknowledged what was suggested by Lewis and Norwich (2005). The students with learning difficulties learn more slowly than their classmates and they need more time for practice and repetition to consolidate what was required by the curriculum.

Under such a spectrum, the teachers of this case study assumed that they lacked time in the mainstream classroom, to support these students in meeting the aims of the mainstream curriculum. Similar to Westwood and Graham (2003) and Strogilos et al. (2017) the teachers lacked time due to the pressure to cover the context materials required by the curriculum and needed for students' examinations. In accordance with other research evidences (Avramidis et al., 2000; Westwood and Graham, 2003; Strogilos et al., 2017), the teachers explained that they could not spend time on these students' needs in the mainstream classroom, due to the large class sizes. Additionally, the teachers argued that time was lost due to these students' unruly behaviour. It was identified both by Barton and Armstrong (1999) and Konza (2008), that such an excuse was generally employed among the teachers. In this case study, the students' disruptive behaviour appeared to be just an excuse, if these students misbehaved both in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. However, it was more stressful and time consuming for the participant teachers, when this behaviour took place in the mainstream classroom. Similarly, Damianidou and Phtiaka (2018) identified that their participant teachers labelled the

students with learning disabilities as 'weak and annoying' and perceived them as being either a 'big or small problem' for them in the mainstream classroom. In line with this, it is interesting what Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) identified, that he managed to control student misbehaviour in the mainstream classroom, as a result of the close relationships they developed between them in the resource room.

Additionally, most of the teachers assumed that it was a waste of time to plan additional specialized activities for their students with learning difficulties in the mainstream classroom, if these students were required to attend the resource room for specialized teaching. Similar to what was suggested by Avramidis et al., (2000) and Westwood and Graham, (2003), the teachers in this case study internalized that the individualized support for these students could be achieved only by using remedial teaching practices in a separate place from the mainstream classroom. They also acknowledged that these practices were more effective both in meeting the students' individual needs (Isaksson et al., 2007) and supporting them to meet the aims of the general curriculum (Goodman and Bond, 1993). This was the reason why the participant teachers continued to believe that there was more time for individual attention for these students in the resource room, even though the number of students in the resource room group has recently increased. This was also the reason that Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) suggested that it is better for these students to continue being taught in special classes as a homogeneous group of students, ignoring the benefits for these students and their peers when they work together in mixed ability (heterogeneous) groups (Briggs, 2004). Students were identified as being more motivated and performed better in heterogeneous groups rather than in homogeneous groups (Mohammad et al., 2005).

Finally, the coordinators and teachers believed that they did not have time for individually supporting these students to succeed in tests and exams in the mainstream classroom. The reason for this was the teachers' conformity to their school's ethos and attitudes towards inclusive education. Teachers' acknowledged the pressure to quickly raise these students' academic achievements (grades), while they acknowledged how difficult it was for these students, who have been stigmatized as being less able academically. It is interesting that Ms. Roxani (Aristotelio), considered student expectations and tried to prepare her students for their lower scores in tests and exams in order to protect them from being disappointed. Therefore and in accordance with the suggestions of Black-Hawkins et al. (2007), the teachers continued to be reliant on the practices of the resource room because they internalized them as effective in raising quickly these students'

academic achievements. Due to the teachers' conformity with school practices for inclusive education, the participants failed to acknowledge that the support in the resource room focused merely on these students passing final exams or achieving high grades. It is for this reason that the teachers were generally criticized for not teaching their students skills or how to learn (Klingner et al., 1998; Winzer and Mazurek, 2000; Sanchez and Mejia, 2008; Papageorgiou et al., 2008). The students proceeded to short-term academic gains, because their teachers gave them a summative feedback. Summative feedback concerns the progress of students and is referred to as the extent to which these students meet the assessment criteria and the objectives of the curriculum (Brown, 2005). To promote the students' learning, it would be more appropriate for teachers to use formative feedback. This feedback is intended to enhance the students' learning (Stiggins, 2005), informing the students regarding how they could modify their thinking or behaviour to improve their learning (Shute, 2008).

Discussing Theme 2

Together these results provide important insights into the reasons why both the students and the teachers became reliant on the teaching of the resource room. First of all, these students were reliant on the teaching of the resource room due to their lower academic self-concept and efficacy beliefs (Skaalvik, 1997; Bandura, 1986). These students' beliefs derive from their stigmatization and labelling process. The students' previous failures in academic domains (Skaalvik, 1997) and the comparison with the most 'able' others in their classroom confirmed to them their lower academic abilities (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). In accordance with what was indicated by Chapman (1988), the students were identified as experiencing a strong sense of learned helplessness, which resulted from their lower academic self-efficacy beliefs. However, in this study the students' sense of learned helplessness was also associated with the lack of regular and systematic mainstream classroom adaptations. The inconsistency of classroom adaptations was identified as the second reason why the students were reliant on the teaching and learning process of the resource room. This finding is closely related to the results of other studies, such as Salend et al. (1999), which highlighted that students with learning difficulties tended to appreciate any academic support provided to them in any special educational placement.

In particular, the students who enjoyed their teachers' resource room adaptations and constant attention to their needs felt more included in the teaching and learning process of the resource room, rather than in the mainstream classroom. These results suggest that

students perceived their partial withdrawal support in the resource room as an inclusive educational approach. However, the impact of the withdrawal support on students' learning identity set out that this approach was not successful in achieving the active participation of students in the mainstream classroom and, to an extent, in achieving this aim of inclusive education. The withdrawal support tended to reaffirm the learned helplessness that the students experienced in the mainstream classroom. A likely cause of this result was that the students continued to attribute their success to external variables rather than to their abilities. Contrary to what was suggested by Marsh and Martin (2011), teachers did not aim at raising the students' academic self-concept and efficacy beliefs during their support in the resource room.

With respect to the second research question (see chapters 1 and 3), it was found that withdrawal support was perceived by the coordinators and teachers to be an inclusive rather than a segregated approach. There are two possible explanations for this result. First of all, the coordinators and teachers acknowledged that, with this practice, the MOEC aimed at helping the students to overcome their learning difficulties, which hinder their active participation in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. Second, the coordinators' and teachers' restricted inclusive ethos increased their conformity with MOEC practices which reproduced the philosophy of segregated educational approaches. Taking into account the particular values embedded within Cypriot society regarding disabled people, it was more apparent that the teachers had internalized feelings of 'sympathy' and compassion, rather than of respect for the students' right to be educated in the mainstream classroom alongside their peers (Phtiaka, 1999b, 2003; Liasidou, 2008; Symeonidou, 2009).

On the other hand, it should be noted that the coordinators and teachers believed that withdrawal support is an inclusive educational approach, since they attributed their commitment to differentiating their teaching practices to the existing settings and structural factors of the resource room. This result confirms what was suggested by previous research (Florian, 2008; Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012), that the aims of inclusive education tended to be restricted when the teachers focused on what they could not do for the needs of students with learning difficulties in the mainstream classroom. This study corroborates the findings of a great deal of the previous work, which suggested that teachers failed to acknowledge the conceptual premise that inclusive teaching interventions are a matter of effective planning and teachers' commitment to responding to the individual learning needs of all the students in the mainstream classrooms (Florian and

Black-Hawkins, 2011; Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012; Ahmed, 2012; Florian, 2014, 2019), rather than a matter of placement (Hocult, 1996) or of time (Avramidis et al., 2000; Westwood and Graham, 2003; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Loreman et al., 2010; Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007; Isakson et al., 2007).

5.3. THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES OF THE MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM AND THE RESOURCE ROOM

Comparing the teaching practices of the mainstream classroom and the resource room

Research suggests that there is not a diverse repertoire of teaching approaches and learning strategies for the students considered as having learning difficulties or disabilities (Corbett and Norwich, 1999; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2010, cited in Hallett and Hallett, 2010; Liasidou, 2012). In spite of this evidence, the teachers in the mainstream classrooms continued to perceive the students' learning difficulties as 'special needs' and in requirement of distinct or special pedagogical practices (Corbett and Norwich, 1999).

In this case study, both the coordinators and teachers erroneously considered their practices in the resource room as 'special educational practices' and thus as more effective for the students' needs. In accordance with Lewis and Norwich (2005), the teachers internalized that special education means special pedagogy. Thereupon, the teachers assumed any practice used in the resource room as part of special pedagogy and the classroom environment as 'specialized', even though it was observed that the teaching practices of the mainstream classroom and the resource room were significantly similar. The coordinators and teachers have internalized what was suggested by Florian (2010, cited in Hallett and Hallett, 2010) and Clements (2001) that the individual needs of these students needed to be isolated from the mainstream classroom and targeted for 'specialized' interventions. Both the coordinators and teachers considered the support in the resource room as an effective 'tutorial', in supporting the students with learning difficulties to understand what they were unable to in the mainstream classroom. From this, it could be argued that the participants considered the practices of the resource room as more effective because they failed to acknowledge what Hocult (1996) suggested, that the effective interventions for students with learning difficulties are not a matter of placement (*ibid*). Although the participants were reliant on the resource room teaching practices, it is important to be noted that the participant teachers were more positive than

the coordinators in discussing and valuing a variety of classroom adaptations which could be, or were, provided in the mainstream classrooms of their schools.

Observing the participants' teaching practices, it could be argued that these teachers were affected imperceptibly by the ideas of pedagogy for special needs education (Florian, 2009) and the connective pedagogy (Corbett, 2001). Almost all of the participants believed that their students with learning difficulties benefit more academically in the resource room. The reason for this was that the participants internalized that their students with learning difficulties were in need of uniquely tailored practices (Florian, 2009; 2019) and distinct provisions (Lewis and Norwich, 2005). This is also the reasons that even those teachers who were sceptical regarding the effectiveness of the resource room practices did not dare to challenge them. For them, the resource room was also the place where they could identify their students' strengths and weaknesses. At the same time, the participant teachers, in accordance with Kavale (2007), acknowledged that these practices of special needs pedagogy are successfully or potentially effective in improving the academic outcomes of these students. Similar to Norwich (2008), the participant teachers identified the need to reproduce these practices in order to guarantee their students' academic success. Teachers failed to acknowledge what had also been suggested by Corbett (1996), that they could design classroom adaptations from different sources, either explicit or distinct that seemed suitable for all learners.

The teachers acknowledged individualized instructions as effective practice from their teaching experience in the resource room, even though they assumed that there was no time for applying it in the mainstream classroom. Similar to Arnaiz and Castejon (2001), the teachers supported that the maximum time they can spend for these students' instructions in the mainstream classroom could not be more than two or three hours every week. In agreement with what was suggested by Forlin (2001), the teachers lacked time for the needs of these students in the mainstream classroom due to the large number of students. Especially, Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) highlighted that there was limited time to give individualized instructions to these students in the mainstream classroom, since their peers rarely worked independently with their classroom activities. Faber (1991) explained that this was an overall impression among the teachers, based on their difficulty in managing their instruction time equally between one or two students with learning difficulties and the majority of the classroom. The same difficulty was experienced by the teachers in this case study, though they did not worry how to overcome it. It was taken for granted that these students would always have their time for individualized instructions in the resource room.

For this reason, the teachers tended to overlook that considerable time was also lost during the lessons in the resource room.

Students' attitudes towards the teaching and learning practices of the mainstream classroom

Students tended to see grades as the proof of their achievements, since they have internalised the mainstream schools' expectations for high achievements (Norwich and Kelly, 2005). Similar, the students called for teachers' mainstream classroom adaptations which would help them improve their academic achievements. Cognitive academic self-concept was found to be indistinguishable from academic self-efficacy (Pietsh, 1999; Skaalvik and Rankin, 1996), especially when they aimed to predict similar sets of outcomes and performance (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). Therefore, the students in this case study, expected their teachers to help them succeed academically, since they acknowledged that they had lower academic abilities as a result of their labelling, leading to their withdrawal support in the resource room and by comparing themselves with their peers in the mainstream classroom. Students asked for such teaching classroom adaptations because similar to what Mitchell (2014) identified, their teachers failed to teach them that achievement resulted from effort as much as from ability. It was common for the teachers in performance oriented educational systems to aim at helping their students succeed in tests and exams by focusing on what is necessary for their tests and helped them master through constant revision (Liasidou, 2015). Similar, the students were pre-taught the test exercises in the resource room in order for their teachers to ensure and increase their academic success. Teachers recognised that their students were in need of such teaching practices, because they had already stigmatized them as being of a lower academic level. Consequently, the students resulted in being keen on teaching adaptations that would allow them to 'hunt' for easy good grades in the mainstream classroom.

The participant students, due to their lower academic self-efficacy belief, were still reliant on their teachers' support to complete their classroom activities. Therefore, having a choice over classroom activities, for most of the students, did not seem to make any difference to them. Especially, most of the students did not want to have any homework exercises, while in the Alliance Action report (2006), they preferred a small number of exercises for their homework. The reason for this is possibly as mentioned by Hughes et al., (2002) that these students have difficulty in completing their homework independently.

These students can only do their homework autonomously if they receive explicit, step by step instructions from their teachers about how to complete their assignment (ibid). Other participant students such as Giagkos and Niki, although the homework exercises were difficult for them, wanted to do all their homework, since they acknowledged what Hughes et al. (2002) had identified that teachers tended to give homework exercises to their students in order to practise the new contexts and help them improve their academic achievements (ibid). In addition, the students who acknowledged that ability to succeed competently in school tasks was highly valued by their teachers, aimed to do all their homework, in order to prove to their teachers what they knew and what they were able to do.

In the same manner, most of the students did not want to participate in projects because they also considered them as difficult. As Wingfield and Karpathian (1991) noted, students tended to avoid academic tasks that would likely result in making them feel bad about themselves. Lenz et al. (1991) highlighted that for the engagement of students in projects, it required the systematic guidance and supervision of teachers. Therefore, the majority of the participant students, who acknowledged that they would not achieve skilfully to engage in projects, bore out what has already been highlighted by Norwich and Kelly (2005). They also preferred being evaluated not only for their attainment, but also for their effort in completing their assignments (ibid). Similar to Norwich and Kelly (2005), the students also asked for more guidance and explicit feedback to do both their classroom and homework activities. The need for direct instructions to these students was also identified by Mitchell (2004), who also mentioned that instructions need to be given systematically, at a brisk pace, not very slow, not very fast, and to be explicit. It is also important for the teaching and learning time to be organised in order to be given sufficient and balanced individual and whole group instructions in mainstream classrooms (Loreman et al., 2010).

Considering the student concerns about succeeding academically, the participant students expected their teachers to differentiate their activities according to the subject and their interests. This was important for them in order to demonstrate to their teachers what they knew, understood and could produce (Tomlinson, 1999). For the participant students, due to their lower academic self -concept and academic self- efficacy, it was important for them to earn their teachers' appraisal and to be perceived as 'smart' or as academically able. The participant students aligned with the students of the Alliance Action (2006) appreciating their teachers making adaptations for them in the mainstream classroom. However, both the students of Alliance Action (2006) and of this study complained that

these adaptations were not frequent and not on a systematic basis. The students of Alliance Action (2006) and of this study had also internalised that they were in need of 'distinctive' practices and thus in need of 'easy' activities, or in need of being taught the same material in different ways.

What are the coordinators and teachers' attitudes towards mainstream classroom adaptations?

To include all the students in the learning process of the mainstream classroom, teachers acknowledged the need to make learning available to all students and to involve them in the activities of the mainstream classrooms (Ruijs and Peetsma, 2009; Florian, 2010; Mara and Mara, 2012; Nilholm and Alm, 2010). Accordingly, all the participants, except for Ms. Alkmini, evaluated most of the classroom adaptations suggested to them as (very) important. However, they mainly based their mainstream classroom adaptations on the idea of differentiating the teaching and learning process in the mainstream classroom and the contexts of the mainstream curriculum. The reason for this was that they keep defining these students' learning needs as Norwich (1996) has identified them. The pedagogical needs of these students are defined as 'special' and 'distinct' instead of 'unique' to individual learners (ibid). For the same reason, the participant teachers did not differentiate their activities according to the students' learning styles as suggested by Liasidou (2012). As indicated by Florian (2010, cited in Hallett and Hallett, 2010; Florian, 2014; 2019) the participant teachers differentiated their classroom activities according to the labelling categories of special needs, which resulted in the learning abilities of these students continuing to be defined negatively.

What are coordinators' and teachers' understanding and perspectives on differentiation?

Corbett (2001) identified that it was an overall impression among the teachers that the withdrawal support of students with learning difficulties can be a substitute for differentiated classroom activities. Similarly, this case study unveiled the great impact of withdrawal support on the teachers' attitudes towards the process of differentiation, even if a few teachers did not differentiate their classroom activities because these student needs were supported in the resource room. This teacher assumption is also confirmed by the findings of Charalampous and Papademetriou (2018) in the research undertaken in Cypriot primary schools. As a result of the withdrawal support, the teachers of this case study

erroneously assumed that differentiation is a last minute adjustment of the teaching materials, only when it appears to be difficult for some learners in the mainstream classroom. Indeed, differentiation is proactive lesson planning by the teachers to respond to the range of learners' needs in the mainstream classroom, rather than as a reactive adjustment of the teachers' single approach to the lesson (Tomlinson, 2001). Additionally, it was identified that the coordinators and teachers were sceptical about supporting the needs of these students only in the mainstream classroom, because they agreed with Angelides et al. (2004), Loreman et al. (2010) and Norwich (2019) that there was a risk of the classmates of these students receiving an inferior quality of education. A common reason used by the teachers to conceal this fear was, as Ms.Mikini (Thalio) and Ms.Roxani (Aristotelio) underlined, that their students preferred to work on the same exercises in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. It could be argued that this fear of the coordinators and teachers derived from their conformity with the students' withdrawal support in the resource room. This is apparent considering that there was evidence suggesting that the learning and the outcomes of the student peers cannot be affected negatively, if teachers aim to help all students to learn and use different practices, technologies and resources (Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007; Loreman et al., 2010; Ainscow et al., 2019).

More specifically, the individualized instructions and attention provided to the students with learning difficulties in the resource room were perceived by the coordinators and teachers as equal to the process of differentiation. Consequently, they affected the belief that there was no time for individual instructions in the mainstream classroom, if there were many students. In large classrooms, it seemed easier for the teacher to tell students everything rather than guiding them how to complete their work individually (Tomlinson, 2001; Pritchard, 2009; Makoelle, 2014). Teachers need to carefully consider the differences between the learning styles of these students when they are planning their differentiated activities (Moran and Abbott, 2006; Liasidou, 2012), but there is no need to have as many variations of learning activities as the number of students in the classroom (Corbett, 2001; Rapp and Arndt, 2012), neither differentiated activities in every lesson in the unit that they taught (Loreman et al., 2010). This was what the teachers misunderstood, as seven well experienced teachers acknowledged that it is not easy to support these students only in the mainstream classroom, if it is required to simplify the teaching materials and tests every day for each one of these students. This was also the reason why the teachers perceived it as time-consuming to prepare different activities for the level of these students (Renick, 1996).

It is identified that the teachers' lower expectations towards the learning of their students with learning difficulties (Macintyre, 2008; Florian, 2009; Ainscow et al., 2012; Mamas, 2013) can also affect negatively their attitudes towards the differentiation process. In line with this, the teachers assumed that they differentiated the classroom activities for these students, by giving them easier or simplified tasks to do, rather than differentiating them according to outcome. Among the teachers, only Mr. Tireas (Protagorio) and Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio) were observed to give their students differentiated activities with a range of difficulty. Additionally, for the participant teachers, who had already stigmatised these students as being less able academically, it seemed more reasonable to differentiate these students' activities in context rather than in process. Similarly, in the research undertaken by Angelides and Michailidou (2007) in primary Cypriot mainstream schools, but also that undertaken by Damianidou and Phtiaka (2018) in secondary schools, easier tasks were also preferred to be given to the students. Even though the teachers' attitudes towards differentiation could have a negative effect due to their lack of 'specialized' training (Renick, 1996; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Angelides and Michailidou, 2007; Symeonidou, 2017), or due to their lack of experience in designing differentiated activities (Rapp and Arndt, 2012; Strogilos et al., 2017), the teachers remained committed to this process. They searched by themselves for easier tasks to give to these students both in the mainstream classroom and in the resource room. According to Ms. Pandora (Protagorio), they continued being committed simplifying orally their students' tasks. Ms. Zinovia (Aristotelio) highlighted that they continued giving oral explanations and instructions to these students to help them complete their classroom activities. None of the participant teachers were identified as being unwilling to differentiate their teaching materials, unlike the participant teachers of a previous research undertaken in mainstream Cypriot primary schools (Vlachou, 2006; Angelides et al., 2004). However, it is noteworthy to mention that the students identified that their teachers needed to differentiate their classroom activities more frequently and systematically.

It is common for the teachers' adaptations to be informed and affected by the dual aim of the mainstream schools to promote high academic outcomes for all the students. At the same time, it is expected to promote successfully the learning for the students with learning difficulties (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). It is also common for the teachers, who believed in the existence of 'special educational pedagogy' to reproduce them, whilst they had to promote the practices of the perceived 'pedagogy for inclusion' (Norwich, 2008). A possible explanation might be that these teachers strongly believed in the effectiveness of the practices of special educational pedagogy in improving the academic outcomes of the

students with learning difficulties (Armstrong et al., 2000; Slee, 2005; Kavale, 2007; Göransson and Nilholm, 2014). With this notion in mind, the participant teachers were in favour of differentiating their practices related to these students' academic performance. The teachers aimed to help their students succeed in their tests and exams by differentiating their classroom activities according to outcomes. However, it is worth noting that the teachers continued to perceive as more effective the teaching practices used in the resource room in relation to these students' assessment. Similar to Papageorgiou et al.(2008), the teachers had internalised the main aim of their teaching in the resource room as promoting these students' academic success. For this reason, it was difficult for the teachers to recognize that they used almost identically the same practices for students' assessment in both classroom environments.

The teaching materials can be differentiated in context, according to the level of difficulty, in quantity and at the level of outcomes (Rapp and Arndt, 2012). However, Tomlinson (2001) identified that the teachers tended to prefer differentiating their activities in quantity. The teachers in this case study, who stereotyped negatively the abilities of their students with learning difficulties, considered it more reasonable to give them less work to do than their classmates. It was also less demanding for them in terms of teaching planning. As far as it concerns the homework exercises, the teachers tended to give to these students something different according to context, or according to process aiming to be something easier than their classmates. However, the differentiation of classroom activities is effective, if the teachers explain to their students the success criteria and how to meet them, if the tasks are focused on these students' 'content goals', or if the teachers allow time for these students to reflect on what they had learnt (Tomlinson and Strickland, 2005). The teachers failed to differentiate effectively the homework exercises for their students, or if they preferred to have no homework. Similar to Renick (1996), the teachers argued that there was not adequate time to implement successfully differentiated teaching activities in the mainstream classroom. That is the reason that well experienced teachers such as Mr. Charidemos and Ms. Semeli (Thalio) tended to just explain orally the homework exercises to their students in the resource room.

What are coordinators' and teachers' perspectives regarding other means of differentiation in the mainstream classroom?

Using Teaching Assistants (TAs) alongside these students in the mainstream classroom was another proposed classroom adaptation that the teachers could use to help these

students achieve the standards suggested by the mainstream curriculum (Arnaiz and Castejon, 2001; Lloyd, 2008). However, only a few of the teachers agreed with Papageorgiou et al. (2008) that TAs can help these students improve their achievements in the mainstream classroom. Similar to other research findings (Vaughn et al., 1993; Loreman and Deppeler, 2000; Richards, 2010), the teachers believed that the TAs would be more effective in supporting the needs of these students in the mainstream classroom, rather than themselves who lacked specialized training.

On the other hand, most of the teachers were against the use of TAs in their classroom, since similar to previous research findings, they acknowledged the risk of these students being negatively stigmatized towards their classmates (O'Rourke and Haughton, 2008; Blatchford et al., 2009). In accordance with Loreman et al., (2010), the teachers noticed that TAs were traditionally preferred to help the students with profound learning difficulties, rather than the students with mild learning difficulties. Some of the teachers negatively viewed the use of TAs in the mainstream classroom, since they considered them to be a 'substitute' for the withdrawal support in the resource room. The teachers were more accustomed to the withdrawal support rather than with the use of TAs in the mainstream classrooms. Additionally, the participant teachers did not believe that these students were stigmatized because of their withdrawal support in the resource room. Others of the experienced teachers such as Mr. Tereas and Ms. Semeli (Thalio) explained that they felt uncomfortable having the TAs alongside them in the mainstream classroom. Considering that TAs would be more trained than them in dealing with the learning difficulties of these students in the mainstream classroom, they were afraid that TAs would strongly criticize them regarding their teaching practices and adaptations. This was also the reason why the Greek primary teachers assumed that they lacked training in co-teaching and collaborating with TAs in the mainstream classrooms (Strogilos et al., 2017).

Informative Computer Technology (ICT) resources could be used as motivation for the students to become independent learners (UNESCO IITE, 2006). The teachers encouraged their students with learning difficulties to find information from the internet for their assignments, in order to encourage these students to learn how to study independently. The fact that the students were not excited about their participation in mini projects, highlights how necessary it was for these students to be trained working as autonomous learners. Teachers used ICT and audio-visual material in the mainstream classroom to differentiate the curriculum activities in context, to provide these students with additional material for exploration and to attract these students' interest in the lesson. By

using ICT and audio-visual materials in the mainstream classroom, teachers can encourage the students' active participation in the lesson (Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007). However, it is interesting that the teachers were only theoretically in favour of using ICT and audio-visual resources and technological equipment in the classroom. They tended to use those digital materials, only when they were available from MOEC. They felt that they had to use ICT resources because they were allocated to schools by MOEC, supplementary to the curriculum textbooks. Similar to what was suggested by Bingilmas (2009), teachers did not regularly use ICT in their lessons, because they were not always available in the mainstream classroom. Ms. Andromache (Aristotelio), one of the most experienced participant teachers, avoided using ICT resources in her lesson, because she erroneously understood that the effect of ICT on these students should only be to raise the students' test scoring. Although research confirmed that ICT can improve the students' performance in test scoring (Chandra and Lloyd, 2008), in the case of the students with learning difficulties, ICT resources resulted mainly in helping them to improve their motivation (Bagon and Vodopivec, 2016) and their self-esteem (Adam and Tattall, 2010). On the other hand, Mr. Charidemos (Thalio) tended to use the ICT resources constantly and almost in every one of his lessons. However, Mr. Charidemos rarely incorporated these sources to meet the individual needs and understanding of these students, since he believed that the classroom activities have already been differentiated by MOEC in relation to the level of the age group of the mainstream classrooms.

Discussing Theme 3

The first question in this study sought to determine how the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties were being supported in the mainstream classroom. The findings analyzed in this theme identified the students', coordinators' and teachers' attitudes towards the mainstream classroom adaptations, which were useful for answering the first research question.

Aiming to explore the students' attitudes and preferences towards mainstream classroom teaching adaptations, I explored previous research evidence and in particular I drew on the Alliance Action Report (2006) and the study undertaken by Norwich and Kelly (2005). The students' preferences were in agreement with those indicated in the above studies. Students were in favour of teaching adaptations that aimed at facilitating their school performance. This finding broadly supports the work of other studies in this field which

identified that the school's aim of increasing the students' academic performance affected the implementation of inclusive mainstream classroom adaptations. These results further support the idea that lower academic self-concept, self-efficacy and self-esteem beliefs affected the students' attitudes towards the mainstream classroom adaptations.

The coordinators' and teachers' attitudes towards the mainstream classroom adaptations have been affected by the premise that students with learning difficulties are in need of 'distinct' and 'special' pedagogy. These results are in line with the existing literature of the field, which suggests that the needs of labelled students are internalized as negatively 'different' or 'additional' to those of their classmates and thus they are in need of a diverse repertoire of teaching approaches and learning strategies (Norwich, 1996; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2010, 2014, 2019; Liasidou, 2012). Additionally the results of this study match those suggested in previous research (Hocult, 1996; Hemingway and Armstrong, 2014), that effective teaching interventions are considered to be a matter of placement or time rather than of personalized, frequent and systematic planning of differentiated teaching activities. This is the reason why the teaching adaptations implemented in the resource room were automatically named as 'special' and in this sense the teachers considered them to be more effective, even though similar teaching adaptations were implemented both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. On this spectrum, teachers were identified as having the same difficulties in planning differentiated activities as those suggested in previous research (Corbett, 2001; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Moran and Abbott, 2006; Angelides and Michailidou, 2007; Loreman et al., 2010; Rapp and Arndt, 2012; Symeonidou, 2017; Strogilos et al., 2017) regarding teachers' attitudes towards inclusive educational practices. In particular, the teachers in this study had also internalized the resource room adaptations as a substitute for differentiated activities in the mainstream classroom and saw the differentiation process as a 'last-minute' adjustment.

This study confirms the association of the stigmatization process with the implementation of mainstream classroom adaptations which focus on how to ameliorate the 'deficit' of the labelled students. In agreement with the studies of Corbett (2001) and Mitchell (2014), teachers identified the risk of these students being marginalized when they worked on differentiated activities in a mixed-ability group in the mainstream classroom. Similar to research evidence (O'Rourke and Haughton, 2008; Blatchford et al., 2009), which flagged up the risk of students being stigmatized through the presence of TAs in the mainstream classroom, teachers were also afraid of these students being further stigmatized by their

classmates. Additionally, teachers felt less comfortable having TAs with them in the mainstream classroom because they were perceived to have better 'special educational needs' training than themselves. This study also sets out the idea that teachers had lower expectations of these students' learning, even when they planned differentiated activities for them. Teachers were more committed to differentiating these students' homework and test activities by asking them to answer easier or fewer activities. Similar to the findings of Damianidou and Phtiaka (2018), teachers tended to treat these students, who had already internalized themselves as being less academically able, with more leniency.

5.4. STUDENTS' (DIS)ENGAGEMENT IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OF THE RESOURCE ROOM AND IN THE MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM

Students' disengagement in the learning process of the mainstream classroom

Academic self-concept is correlated with the students' achievements (Heyman, 1990), thus it could be argued that the students' prior lower academic self-concept could impact negatively on their subsequent academic result. The students resulted in believing that they would continue to underachieve, when they compared themselves with their classmates due to their previous lower academic results (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). The students with learning difficulties manifested a maladaptive attributional style (Núñez et al., 1995) and they resulted in lacking those specific characteristics suggested by Marsh et al. (1999) according to which subsequent achievement could be mediated. These students resulted in having lower achievement expectations, lower persistence at school tasks (Núñez et al., 1995), rather than increased conscientious effort, persistence in the face of difficulties and enhanced intrinsic motivation (Marsh et al., 1999). The students, as a result both of their lower academic self-concept and their lower academic self-efficacy, disengaged from learning when activities seemed difficult for them.

Students resulted in being less motivated to work with difficult tasks or less persistent to achieve, if the teachers failed to preserve a positive self-efficacy belief in them (Linnenbrink and Pindrich, 2002), if they failed to promote in them a positive attitude towards academic tasks (Loreman et al., 2010), or if they failed to enhance in these students the belief that ability is a modifiable characteristic that depends on effort (Núñez et al., 2005,p.87). Presumably, it was difficult for the teachers to break down the stereotype which suggested that these students would not be academically successful, despite how much they would try, if they had also stigmatized these students of being of a

lower academic ability. Consequently, almost half of the students disengaged in lessons, when they had a 'difficult' exercise and they preferred copying the answers from the board. Similarly, the students, who aimed to outperform others or to avoid their previous failures, also resulted in being demotivated to participate in classroom activities (Arnes, 1992). It is interesting that the performance goal orientation affected only negatively the students' engagement in the mainstream classroom. In the resource room, though the students had higher competitive relations with their classmates, they worked harder to complete their tasks successfully. It was important for them to prove what they were capable of to their teachers and show off to their classmates. The students were more committed to their performance goals in the resource room, since it is likely, as suggested by Pintrish and Shunk (2002), that they were interested in developing social relationships and improving their social status.

Student misbehaviours: an evidence of their disengagement from the lesson

Barton and Armstrong (1999) identified the teachers' general fear that the students with learning difficulties would disturb the lesson in the mainstream classroom by misbehaving. Such an impression is connected with the teachers' difficulty to meet the needs of these students in the mainstream classroom because they negatively stereotyped them as 'different' from those of their classmates (ibid). Additionally, teachers perceived these students as 'disruptive' in the learning process of the mainstream classroom because they feared that the learning of their classmates would be negatively influenced' (Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007). The reason for this was that the teachers, who perceived as negatively 'different' these students' needs, resulted in believing that they had to prioritise them against their classmates' needs (Norwich, 1996). In this case study, all the students, except for Marianthi and Christodoulos, did not complain when their classmates misbehaved in the lesson. Thus it could be presumed that this was only an unsubstantiated teachers' fear.

Contrary to Mitchell (2014), the students in this study did not misbehave, only during, and due to, their transition from the mainstream classroom to the resource room and vice-versa. They tended to misbehave in both classroom environments, whenever they could not overcome their learning difficulties. However, there was less noise in the resource room, since there were fewer students. Covington (1998) suggested that the students with learning difficulties misbehaved to avoid being questioned and thus concealed their 'learning gaps'. This sounds reasonable for the students, if they were observed to be

competitive with their classmates in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. However, the students were more concerned about concealing their learning difficulties from their classmates, than from their teachers. Students aimed to attract their teachers' individual attention to their learning difficulties. Considering that the classmates of the students encouraged them to misbehave in the mainstream classroom, in order to waste time from teaching, it suggested that the teachers failed to see what actually was the reason for the students' disruptive behaviour. Kassotakis (2000), supported that this student mischievous behaviour was an indication of Greek students' refusal to participate in the highly bureaucratic and teacher-centered practices.

Students' demotivation as a result of their lower academic self-esteem

There is no systematic evidence that these students' academic self-concept is exhibited to be higher when these students' needs are constantly supported in the mainstream classroom (Elbaum, 2002). However, the students were demotivated as learners both due to their withdrawal support in the resource room and their labelling as having learning difficulties. Students tended to judge themselves as less capable in the environment with highly able students and more capable in the environment with less able peers (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). Therefore, the participant students resulted in having negative self-efficacy belief in the mainstream classroom and temporarily higher academic self-efficacy belief in the resource room. Acknowledging that students are able to succeed when they have higher self-efficacy belief (Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2002), the students tended to participate more in the resource room, whilst they resulted in wishing to be withdrawn from lessons which they did not like, or perceived as less important or difficult for them. However, it is important to acknowledge that student participation can be affected also from their interest and motivation to learn. In accordance with Pintrich and Shunk (2002), by being pre-taught the classroom activities in the resource room, some of the students such as Solonas and Kostakis (Pihagorio), resulted in losing their situational interest in the lesson. A few students such as Anna (Thalio) and Makes (Aristotelio) wanted always to participate and receive answers to their queries in the mainstream classroom. These students always tried to participate or finish their classroom activities, due to their intrinsic motivation (Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2002).

Academic self-esteem affects greatly students' performance at school (Rosenberg et al., 1995). High academic self-concept leads to high academic performance (Valentine et al., 2004). Academic self-efficacy refers to feelings of self-confidence that lead to school

performance (Bandura, 1982). Hence, it is important to mention that the effects of self-esteem on achievement are mediated by academic self-concept (Trautwein et al., 2006), whereas the effects of self-efficacy on achievement is mediated by positive self-esteem (Bandura, 1982). Students with learning difficulties often have lower self-esteem, just because they were withdrawn from the mainstream classroom (Klinger et al., 1998; Riddick, 2000; Dillon, 2001; O'Rourke and Haughton, 2006). Especially, the students in this study resulted in having lower academic self-esteem as a result of being both labelled as having learning difficulties and being withdrawn from the mainstream classroom to receive support in the resource room. Similar to what Loreman et al., (2010) have highlighted, the teachers failed to develop higher academic self-esteem for their students. Especially, the teachers failed to preserve constantly positive self-esteem feelings to their students with learning difficulties. Students' academic self-esteem was affected negatively by their lower academic self-concept and efficacy, which were reciprocally affected by their withdrawal support in the resource room. Consequently, the students hesitated to participate in mainstream classroom activities, which seemed difficult or boring for them and which were not pre-taught to them in the resource room.

Teacher-centred practices were the result of the performance orientation in the mainstream classroom (Arnes, 1992). In this case study, teaching both in the mainstream classroom and the resource room was highly performance oriented, thus the students resulted in being reliant on teacher-centre practices. For this reason and due to their lower academic self-esteem the majority of the students were concerned about using ICT, if this means working autonomously on their classroom activities in the mainstream classroom. Especially, the students who were computer illiterate did not like this practice, though they acknowledged that it could help them increase their participation in lessons. As a consequence of their lower academic self-esteem, the participant students enjoyed more working in groups in the mainstream classroom, where there are more students and so they could conceal their learning difficulties. Briggs (2004) also identified that the student participation increased when they worked in small groups. The teachers erroneously assumed that these students preferred to work individually, in order to 'show off' what they knew to their classmates in the mainstream classroom. The teachers' assumption was generated by these students' preference in the resource room, where they were identified as having higher academic self-esteem. However, most of the students preferred to work individually in the resource room, in order to receive more attention and guidance from their teachers.

Coordinators' and teachers' remarks about the students' engagement in learning

The teachers' conceptualisation of the needs of their learners distinguished how teachers address the issues of inclusion in their daily practices in mainstream classrooms (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011; Florian, 2010; 2014; Strogilos et al., 2017). Students' inclusion in the learning process of the mainstream classroom is mainly connected with the active participation of the students with learning difficulties. The participant teachers of this case study also identified that their students with learning difficulties did not participate in lessons because they lacked academic self-concept and they had lower academic self-esteem.

Similar to previous research evidence regarding the effects of labels (Ward et al., 1994; Efstathiou, 2003; Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007), the teachers acknowledged that these students' self-esteem is affected negatively by the stigma related to their special educational needs labels. They recognized that these students' lack of academic self-esteem generated from their lower academic skills and that these students avoided participating in lessons in order to hide their learning difficulties from the others in the mainstream classroom. However, the teachers erroneously assumed that they would increase these students' academic self-esteem, by focusing mainly on improving these students' academic achievements. Although direct (individualized) instructions have been identified by King-Sear (1997) and Mitchell (2014) as more effective for the students with mild learning difficulties, the teachers used didactic instructions. In schools of a highly competitive character and performance orientation, teachers preferred using didactic direct methods, because they could easily guide their students to succeed (Vlachou, 2006). The teachers prefer using didactic instructions, because they did not believe that there was time for direct instructions in the mainstream classroom. These teachers who were highly reliant on the teaching practices of the resource room, resulted in being unable to manage time for what was suggested by Loreman et al., (2010), giving sufficient and balanced individual and whole group instructions in mainstream classrooms.

The teachers of this case study acknowledged that it was necessary to support these students developing their academic skills because as identified by Marsh and Martin (2011) students' academic gains would be long lasting. However, the teachers focused on improving the academic skills of these students only in the resource room. Contrary to Dillon (2001) and Riddick (2000), the teachers did not believe that these students'

academic self-esteem remained generally low due to their withdrawal from the mainstream classroom. The teachers ignored that these students' self-beliefs were inextricably linked with their students' self-esteem, while they failed to acknowledge that their students' academic self-perception and efficacy were further lowered due to their withdrawal in the resource room. They believed that these students' academic self-esteem would be higher, because they helped them with their exercises and let them work on easier exercises in the resource room. By using easier exercises, the teachers continued to promote a temporary academic self-esteem for their students in the resource room, whereas in the mainstream classroom the risk of these students being further stigmatized among their classmates continued to exist (Klinger et al., 1998). The students asked to work on easier or the same tasks in both classroom environments because they acknowledged the lack of differentiated activities according to their interest in the mainstream classroom.

Contrary to the teachers' practices, it was identified that these students' academic self-esteem could be strengthened by giving them moderately challenging materials and tasks (Turner, 1995) and constantly increasing the task difficulty (Margolis and McCabe, 2006). Student self-esteem could be higher, if their teachers give them continual and positive feedback (Loreman et al., 2010) and if they emphasized the areas they perform at a higher level (Norwich and Kelly, 2005). The teachers did not spend time consistently personalizing their practices and targeted them according to the learning profile and the needs of these students even in the resource room. The reason for this was that the teachers considered it not worth spending extra time planning activities for students whose achievements would not be rewarded for all their efforts (Konza, 2008). Consequently, these students worked mainly on easier exercises as a consequence of the teachers' lower expectations towards their learning (MacIntyre, 2008; Mitchell, 2014).

Enhanced students' motivation to encourage their participation in the lesson

Students with learning difficulties had reduced motivation, as a result of their lower academic self-concept (Núñez et al., 2005). The teachers acknowledged this and they aimed to increase their students' motivation both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom. Especially in the resource room, the participant teachers used examples from their students' daily life. This practice was used by the teachers in order to attract their students' interest in the lessons (Tomlinson and Strickland, 2005). The students also suggested that they liked it when their teachers gave them examples from their experiences. Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) used to praise her students' participation by

giving them presents. It was important for the teachers to engender the extrinsic motivation of their students (Pintrich and Shunk, 2002). Teaching materials in the resource room were covered at a slower pace, which was also what the students indicated that they liked. Slowing down the rhythm of teaching in the classroom accommodates better the learning profiles of these students (Hocult, 1996). Both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom the participant teachers used jokes to encourage their students to be well behaved in the lesson. Like this, the teachers aimed to create a safe, positive and motivating classroom for their students (Mitchell, 2014). Teachers used ICT, diagrams and pictures, since they acknowledged that ICT resources are effective in increasing the students' motivation (Bagon and Vodopivec, 2016).

It is interesting that even the teachers acknowledged the need to motivate these students during the learning process of the resource room and the mainstream classroom; they did not systematically aim to plan differentiated activities according to the students' interest. This could be attributed to the teachers' lack of planning time (Renick, 1996) and their lower expectations towards the learning of these students. Tomlinson and Strickland (2005) identified the need for the teachers to use a range of media and formats in order to promote a better understanding of the lesson for their students. Though the teachers acknowledged this, they failed to plan ICT materials according to what was suggested by Tomlinson and Strickland (2005) and Mavrou (2012) that would be at varied levels of readability and sophistication. Other teachers such as Ms. Alkmini (Aristotelio) and Ms. Pandora (Protagorio) attempted to motivate their students' active participation in the mainstream classroom, engendered by their feelings of compassion, according to which lower expectations were also encouraged. It is not surprising that both teachers taught first grade (twelve year old) students, who needed more support due to the transition from primary to secondary school. Additionally, Ms. Alkmini was affected by her previous working experiences at the 'special units' in mainstream secondary schools, while Ms. Pandora seemed possibly affected by the fact that she is the wife of a priest.

Suggestions for the students' participation in the mainstream classroom and the resource room

Generally, student participation is affected by the way the teachers aim for the individualised educational goals of these students and the aims of the mainstream curriculum (Barton and Armstrong, 1999; Jung, 2007; Loreman et al., 2010). Contrary to what Vlachou (2006) Angelides and Michailidou (2007) and Strogilos et al. (2017)

suggested, the participant teachers of this case study started considering how to meet the learning needs of all the students and to achieve the aims of the mainstream curriculum within the mainstream classroom. However, the way the teachers tended to consider the learning needs of these students in the mainstream classroom, was apparently affected by the teaching in the resource room and the correlated stigma regarding these students' learning ability.

The teachers of this case study asked to be allocated (for work in the mainstream schools) officially pre-prepared 'simple' teaching materials for the students with learning difficulties. This is also what was suggested from the teachers in research undertaken by Koutrouba et al., (2006). The teachers of this study, as in the research undertaken by Angelides et al., (2004), still based their teaching on the books allocated by MOEC in order to meet the aims of the mainstream curriculum. They did not dare to use other possible supplied materials, even when they recognized 'faults or limitations' with these books. Teachers also highlighted the need for further training, which was also previously suggested by Angelides et al. (2004). Especially in this case study, there was identified the need for teachers to be trained in how to differentiate their classroom activities and manage the time to support the needs of all the students in a mixed ability classroom group. Teachers also asked to be allocated to them specialized books for the classes in the resource room and for it to be a 'special' classroom that would be dedicated permanently for resource room tuition.

Discussing Theme 4

The results in this section provide important insights into why these students are easily disengaged and demotivated from participating in the learning process of the mainstream classroom and how their teachers aimed to increase their engagement in the lessons. These results were found to be relevant in answering the second and third research questions (see chapters 1 and 3).

The withdrawal support was found to negatively affect these students' motivational reactions in the mainstream classroom. This result seems to be consistent with the existing literature (Núñez et al., 2005; Schuh, 2003; Bakker and Bosman, 2003; Smiley and Dweck, 1994), which has also identified the causal relationship between the special educational placement and the instructional adaptations to the students' learning profile and behaviours in the mainstream classroom. Students were less committed in participating in

activities that seemed difficult to them or that they had not been pre-taught in the resource room. A few of the students were disengaged from the lesson because they felt answering the activities was boring because they had already been pre-taught them. Students became more competitive among themselves both in the resource room and in the mainstream classroom and were keen on 'hunting' easy high grades. Similar to what was suggested by Morvitz and Motta (1992), the withdrawal support helped these students to have more positive academic self-esteem, and similar to Festinger (1954), it helped them to have stronger motivational reactions. However, the students in this study developed only temporary and superficial higher academic self-esteem and motivational reactions to the lessons in the resource room. Contrary to what was suggested by Marsh and Martin (2011), the teachers aimed to promote higher academic self-esteem among their students by focusing on increasing their achievements rather than their academic self-concept and efficacy beliefs.

The high-grade orientation of the educational system of mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus obstructed the aim of the withdrawal support to remove the barriers hindering these students' active participation in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. Similar to what was suggested by Goodman and Bond (1993), the withdrawal support increased the teachers' difficulties in both meeting the individual needs of the students and supporting them to achieve the aims of the curriculum in the mainstream classroom. A striking result for this study is that the teachers also had difficulty differentiating their teaching practices for their mixed-ability resource room groups and managing the time effectively to address the individual educational needs of these students in the resource room. By supporting these students' needs in the resource room, it was difficult for the teachers to abandon the dominant, culturally constructed belief that these students were less academically able. Therefore, similar to Konza (2008), teachers' practices were not systematically differentiated according to these students' learning needs, since the teachers had internalized the idea that these students' achievements would not be rewarded for all their efforts. Teacher-centred practices were used in both the mainstream classroom and the resource room, probably because the teachers conceived them to be more effective in easily and quickly raising these students' attainments. In line with this rationale, they used to apply the traditional rather than the inclusive practices suggested by the innovative mainstream curriculum. Even in the resource room, teachers failed to do what was suggested by Elbaum and Vaughn (2003), namely to teach strategies to these students that would help them master academic study and become independent learners.

5.5. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

In conclusion, I return to my research questions and, taking each of the subsidiary questions in turn, I summarize what I have learnt from this analysis that will help me to answer them. Finally, I attempt to link together the elements of the multidisciplinary theoretical framework used in the data analysis that commonly affect the behaviours and attitudes of the two participant groups towards inclusive education and also the academic performance of students with mild learning difficulties.

RQ 1: How are the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties being supported in the mainstream classrooms of public secondary schools in Cyprus?

The lessons in the mainstream classroom always began with the teachers' revision of their previous taught session. The teachers aimed to summarize and repeat many times the main points of their teaching materials. Most teachers differentiated their teaching practices and learning materials in terms of difficulty and quantity. They used to be more systematic in orally explaining (simplifying) their students' classroom and homework activities, and they also used examples from students' everyday lives to help their students consolidate the lesson. They were also enthusiastic in involving their students in mini projects. They were in favour of using ICT and audiovisual materials, and especially in History classes they were observed systematically using diagrams, pictures and concept maps.

This study confirms the idea that the implementation of mainstream classroom adaptations has been affected by the teachers' premise that students with mild learning difficulties are less academically able. This finding corroborates the results of a great deal of previous work on disability (Oliver, 1990d; Conrad, 1992; Shakespeare, 1996; Goodley, 1998; Thomas, 2004; Aspis, 2010; Owens, 2014; Grue, 2016) and the negative representation of the educational needs of students with learning difficulties in mainstream schools (Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Norwich, 1996; Florian, 2010, 2014, 2019). In this sense, this study also confirms that the differentiation process is associated with effects on the students' performance. Most teachers tended to differentiate more systematically the test and homework activities, while a few of them preferred to work with what existed and with didactic, directed instructions because they were more confident that these could

effectively raise their students' achievements. Others were reluctant to differentiate their classroom activities because they considered them to be discriminatory for these students' learning abilities. Additionally, the teachers' difficulties in planning differentiated activities attributed to the conceptual premise that students with learning difficulties are in need of 'distinct' and 'special needs' pedagogy. Consequently, the teachers identified themselves as being in need of training in how to manage skilfully the challenging behaviour of these students and at the same time to address successfully the educational needs of a mixed-ability group of students in the mainstream classroom.

The students also indicated the need for more systematic and frequent classroom adaptations. They asked for explicit feedback and more guidance on how they could revise for their tests. Similar to other research evidence (Barton and Armstrong, 1999; Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007; Covington, 1998; Kassotakis, 2000), students misbehaved in lessons because they lacked attention from their teachers and in order to conceal their learning difficulties from others. This study also provided a new perspective on why these students might be misbehaving in the lesson. Taking into account the highly performance-oriented educational system of Cyprus, students tended to distract the others' attention from their own difficulties by noticing the difficulties of others from their resource room.

RQ 2: Can partial withdrawal from the mainstream classroom be considered 'inclusive' educational practice and how is this practice seen in the eyes of teachers and students?

The partial withdrawal support was considered as a means of inclusive educational practice by the coordinators, teachers and students. The multidisciplinary theoretical framework I drew on proved to be valuable in explaining why students and teachers assumed that the withdrawal support was an 'inclusive' practice, and especially why they believed it to be more effective than the mainstream classroom teaching adaptations.

According to the socially and culturally constructed stereotypes related to the labelling of the students' learning difficulties (Oliver, 1990e; Barton and Oliver, 1997; Rioux, 2002; Terzi, 2004; Armstrong, 2007; Shakespeare, 2013; Eliot and Armstrong, 2019), teachers believed that these students had more 'learning gaps' than their average classmate and thus they expected them to learn at a slower pace than their classmates. Consistent with the literature (Corbett, 1996; Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012), teachers felt insecure in

supporting the needs of these students solely in the mainstream classroom because they recognized their lack of training in 'special educational' practices. There was a feeling of inadequacy and helplessness among the teachers because they failed to acknowledge what was suggested by previous research (Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2010; Liasidou, 2012), that mainstream classroom adaptations are not different from overall good classroom practice. Additionally, this study confirms that the successful implementation of inclusive educational approaches is associated with the school's and teachers' inclusive ethos. Similar to what was suggested by Rapp and Arndt (2012), at schools where it is believed that all the students can learn, teachers are encouraged and supported in promoting inclusive classroom adaptations. The implementation of the partial withdrawal support by the MOEC increased the coordinators' and teachers' conformity with the educational practices which had been developed on the basis of the medical model. The teachers' misunderstandings regarding the process of differentiation further increased their conformity with and reliance on interventions that segregated the students from their classmates. In particular, the coordinators and teachers internalized this practice as being a substitute for the process of differentiation.

The students who experienced a strong sense of helplessness (Chapman, 1988) in the mainstream classroom internalized the withdrawal support as an effective inclusive adaptation because they used to receive personalized teaching adaptations. Despite what the students believed, the results of this study identified that the withdrawal support promoted exclusionary and marginalized behaviours for such students. This study supports evidence from previous observations (e.g. Link and Phelan, 2001) regarding the effects of stigma and discrimination on labelled individuals. The students were already stigmatized for their poor academic performance as a result of their labelling (Riddick, 2000). Being withdrawn for support in the resource room resulted in the students further losing their academic status. Their classmates, teachers and the students themselves internalized them as being less academically able. In this sense, the students were directly discriminated against by their classmates when they were laughed at or teased about their school attainments, and indirectly discriminated against by their teachers, who had lower expectations for these students' learning. Additionally, the withdrawal support was found to hinder rather than increase these students' participation in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. Using the existing literature evidence (Schuh, 2003; Bakker and Bosman, 2003), and in particular the study by Núñez et al. (2005), it was easier to identify those maladaptive attributional characteristics of the learning profile of these students,

which were reinforced by their withdrawal support and seemed to affect their engagement and motivational reactions in the mainstream classroom.

Bearing in mind that implementing inclusion in mainstream schools does not necessarily mean the abolition of additional support for the students who need it (Corbett, 1996), withdrawal support can have an integral place in effective inclusive education (Barton, 1996). However, this practice should not be the only form of differentiation or the only inclusive teaching practice used in mainstream schools (Corbett, 2001). Inclusive education is not a matter of place, but a matter of ethos. Educational practitioners should acknowledge that all learners can learn in their own way and at their own pace and should be willing to support their learning and abilities in the mainstream classroom. Inclusive education takes place in systems that do not marginalize some of the students because of organizational and curricular structures, and do not marginalize learners based on predetermined judgements of what they can and should learn (Florian, 2019). In this study, it was observed that the partial withdrawal support reinforced the negative learning profile of students and restricted the implementation of mainstream classroom teaching adaptations. Therefore, contrary to what the participants of this study believed, the partial withdrawal support should not be considered a means of inclusive educational practice.

RQ 3: What changes might be necessary in order to best support the educational needs of students with mild learning difficulties within the mainstream classroom in Cyprus?

The findings of this study provide some support for the conceptual premise that the socially and culturally constructed stereotypes related to the labels of special needs education hinder the successful implementation of inclusive educational approaches in the mainstream classroom of public Cypriot secondary schools. Inconsistent with the literature (Barton and Armstrong, 1999; Pollard et al., 2000; Rodgers, 2006; Braun and Ball, 2010), this study further supports the need to listen to teachers' and students' experiences in order to implement (more) inclusive educational policies and practices in mainstream classrooms (McDonnell, 1992; Campbell, 2002; Rioux, 2002; Symeonidou, 2009; Gavrielidou, 2011; Ainscow and Messiou, 2018; Messiou, 2019; Messiou and Ainscow, 2020), indicating that in policy documents the needs of these students are regarded as being subject to the decision-making regimes of professionals. In particular, the coordinators and teachers expected the MOEC policymakers to listen to their and their students' experiences with the implementation of inclusive classroom adaptations. They

also asked for the special educational statements to clarify for them what resources were required in order to meet these students' needs.

Furthermore, this study supports the existing literature evidence which highlights the need to use teachers' professional knowledge in order to respond efficiently to problem-solving efforts related to issues of pedagogy and curriculum (Navarro, 1992; Hargreaves, 1996; Frost, 2008; Hanushek, 2011; Gyurko, 2012). In particular in this study it was identified that the implementation of the withdrawal support affected the participants' understanding of inclusive education. Similar to what Hemingway and Armstrong (2014) suggested, both the teachers and the students had internalized the notion of inclusion in relation to space and place. Consequently, teachers were identified as having the same dilemmas related to the barriers of meeting the learning needs of these students in the mainstream classroom and supporting them to access the mainstream curriculum (Judge, 1981; Thomas and Loxley, 2001; Norwich, 2008; Makoelle, 2014; Strogilos et al., 2017). In this sense, teachers asked for already 'simplified' (differentiated) teaching materials and extra materials such as ICT resources to effectively meet these students' learning needs in the mainstream classroom. Contrary to previous research undertaken in mainstream Cypriot schools, teachers also asked for continual pedagogical training in how to differentiate their teaching approaches for mixed-ability student groups. Similar to what was suggested by Boyle and Topping (2012), the teachers, who were not persuaded about the effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices for these students' learning, also suggested changes regarding the teaching and learning process in the resource room. Specifically, they asked for books about special needs education to be given to them for their resource room tuition, and for permanently allocated, fully equipped and established resource rooms.

This study further supports the existing literature evidence which highlights the need for teachers to listen to their students' experiences in order to improve aspects of their practices that would have remained unnoticed (Fielding, 2001; MacBeath et al., 2001; Rose and Shevlin, 2004; Rudduck and Fielding, 2006; Rudduck, 2007; Flutter, 2007; Cook-Satler, 2011, 2014; Bourke and Loveridge, 2014; Messiou, 2019). In this sense, students suggested that they liked the adaptations that aimed at facilitating their school performance. Although the withdrawal support aimed at supporting these students to succeed in tests and exams by pre-teaching their classroom activities in the resource room, it was found that some students lost their situational interest in the lesson in the mainstream classroom. Most students asked for more systematic individual and group support in the mainstream classroom. They highlighted that they were in need of explicit

instructions, both step by step and at a brisk pace, in order to accomplish their classroom activities and their homework.

Summarizing these study results, I became aware of the common elements of the theoretical ideas which informed the analysis of the participants' understanding of inclusive education and their attitudes towards the implementation of inclusive educational practices. According to the models of disability, negative stereotypes were identified related to the labelling of students as having learning difficulties. In performance-oriented educational systems, students tended to be labelled according to their abilities. The needs of students who have been identified as having lower abilities than average result in them being believed to be negatively 'different' and in need of 'distinct' and special educational pedagogy. In this sense, the students tended to be stigmatized about their poor academic performance and consequently they experienced status loss and discrimination. The students themselves, their classmates and their teachers had lower beliefs regarding their (self-)worth, their abilities and their academic performance. This belief increased the teachers' resistance to designing and implementing mainstream classroom adaptations and this negatively affected the students' engagement and motivational reactions in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. The withdrawal support implies a separation of these students from their classmates and goes back to the stereotypes embedded in Cypriot society and the philosophy of segregation. Therefore, the withdrawal support policy could be a major factor in restricting the development of an inclusive ethos and the implementation of inclusive teaching practices in mainstream classrooms in secondary schools in Cyprus. This study's analytical, theoretical conclusions are further discussed and critically evaluated in the following chapter.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. OVERVIEW

This chapter considers the contributions of this study to knowledge in the field of inclusive education, and in particular the implementation of inclusive educational approaches for students with mild learning difficulties in public mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus. This study contributes to our understanding of the perspectives of teachers and students with mild learning difficulties regarding inclusive teaching and learning practices. It also contributes to our understanding of teachers' presumptions and dilemmas which affect the design and implementation of inclusive teaching and learning practices in mainstream classrooms. It also informs us about the culturally constructed stereotypes of special needs education which affect teachers' and students' attitudes towards mainstream classroom adaptations. Second, I appraise the value of the multidisciplinary theoretical framework used to interpret what I found, a framework including ideas derived from the disciplines of disability studies, pedagogy and psychology. Third, I highlight the implications of this study for policy and practice, and fourth, I consider some findings that warrant further research. Lastly, I set out the limitations of this study.

6.2. CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This study explored 'inclusive' educational practices in mainstream public Cypriot secondary schools. Students with mild learning difficulties tended to be partially withdrawn for (additional) support in the resource room, rather than always being supported in the mainstream classroom along with their classmates. Special attention was paid to investigating the perceptions of teachers and the students with mild learning difficulties. The originality of this study lies in the fact that this research explores the perceptions of students with mild learning difficulties regarding inclusive teaching practices in secondary mainstream schools in Cyprus. There is limited literature review evidence about students' perspectives regarding inclusive educational approaches in mainstream schools. In particular, in the Cypriot setting, previous research conducted on the implementation of inclusive education has focused mainly on the primary sector and on teachers' perspectives. Thus, the results of this study can inform our knowledge of similar issues from the perspectives of students and teachers and contribute additional material to previous research studies. This small case study contributes to questioning the taken-for-

granted assumptions which affect the design and implementation of teaching and learning practices and mainstream classroom adaptations for students with mild learning difficulties in public secondary schools in Cyprus.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To explore teacher perceptions and the experiences of students with mild learning difficulties regarding the withdrawal model of 'inclusive education' in mainstream Cypriot public secondary schools.
2. To indicate teacher and student perceptions of how the learning needs of students with learning difficulties might be better met within the mainstream classroom.

The above objectives were used to develop the research questions and informed the choice of the methodology and methods of this study. To find answers to the research questions, I undertook an ethnographic case study in the third largest town in Cyprus, with fieldwork conducted in three school sites. Data were collected through various methodological tools, coordinators' and teachers' questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and observations of lessons in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. The ethnographic case study design allowed a wider range of data collection methods to be used, which enabled an in-depth exploration through multiple expressions of the participants' beliefs. This also deepened the understanding of sociocultural issues which informed and affected their beliefs and experiences regarding the 'emic' issues of the 'case' under study. In addition, the use of various methods of data collection and the variety of informants enhanced the informal validity of the findings as data were cross-checked and compared. By cross-checking the participant groups' answers, I managed to give equal space for the teachers' and students' voice to be heard. First, I cross-examined the students' answers against those of the coordinators in each school and then across the three selected research sites. In that way I aimed to check the consistency, otherwise the internal validity (Shell, 1992). This also allowed any contradictory experiences to be equally validated and interpreted among the two participant groups in relation to the implementation of the educational approaches in mainstream schools.

From the literature review (see chapter 2), it was identified that there is only limited research evidence regarding what constitutes an 'inclusive' pedagogy. Research suggests that teaching approaches and learning strategies used for students considered to have learning difficulties or disabilities are not significantly different from general good practice (Corbett and Norwich, 1999; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2010, 2019; Liasidou,

2012). The lack of empirical evidence suggests that the use of a diverse repertoire of teaching and learning practices for students with learning difficulties can lead to doubts about whether a separate, distinct pedagogy for these students actually exists (ibid). Considering the learning difficulties of the students labelled as 'special' (Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011), this can also lead mainstream teachers to erroneously believe that 'special' pedagogy is needed in order to effectively meet the needs of these students in mainstream classrooms (Corbett and Norwich, 1999; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2010, 2019; Liasidou, 2012). The main conclusion which emerged from reflecting on the key findings was that the (systematic) implementation of mainstream classroom adaptations has been affected by the teachers' assumption that there is a 'special' and 'distinct' pedagogy for students with mild learning difficulties. First, this assumption was found to negatively affect the teachers' expectations of the learning of these students. In alignment with what was reported in Lewis and Norwich (2005), teachers assumed that all students with mild learning difficulties learn at a slower pace than their classmates and that they need more time for practice and repetition in order to consolidate learning and to do the assessment tasks required by the curriculum. Second, this study confirms what has been identified in previous research (Corbett, 1996; Norwich, 1996; Corbett and Norwich, 1999; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2009, 2010, 2019; Finkelstein et al., 2019), that teachers who have internalized these students as being less academically able tend to define their learning needs as negatively 'different' and 'additional' to those of their classmates in the mainstream classroom.

Furthermore, to understand what constitutes an 'inclusive' pedagogy, it is important to explore the encompassing beliefs and conceptions about what constitutes inclusive teaching and learning (Florian, 2019). As far as the case of Cyprus is concerned, there is limited evidence regarding teacher and student perceptions about inclusive teaching and learning practices in the mainstream classroom. In this sense, this thesis has provided a deeper insight about the teachers' perspectives, explaining why teachers assumed that there is a 'special' and 'distinct' pedagogy for students with mild learning difficulties. The need for these students to be withdrawn from the mainstream classroom at times in order to receive support reinforced this assumption for the teachers. As a result of this, and in accordance with the existing literature (Armstrong et al., 2000; Slee, 2005; Rapp and Arndt, 2012; Göransson and Nilham, 2014), the teachers internalized the need for special needs-oriented support practices to be encouraged and cultivated in the mainstream classroom in order to meet the needs of their students with mild learning difficulties, and to support them to achieve the mainstream curriculum aims. This was also one of the

reasons why the teachers were reliant on the teaching and learning process of the resource room. Additionally, one of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that the implementation of the withdrawal support increased the teachers' conformity with the philosophy of segregated teaching practices. This also confirms the findings of Hemingway and Armstrong (2014) and Charalampous and Papademetriou (2018), that in mainstream Cypriot schools the notion of inclusion continues to be internalized in relation to place. The teachers, who internalized the resource room as the place where special education tutorials were taking place, tended to automatically name the teaching practices of the resource room as being 'specialized' to the target students' needs. However, these were not different from the overall general mainstream classroom teaching practices.

More specifically, the exploration of inclusive teaching and learning practices is associated with the encompassing teacher dilemmas regarding the design and implementation of such practices in mainstream classrooms (Norwich, 2008, 2019). Such dilemmas can vary according to the teachers' inclusive values and beliefs about what students with learning difficulties are able or unable to do (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011; Waitoller and Subini, 2017). In the case of Cyprus, some limited evidence has been identified regarding the dilemmas of primary school teachers, but there is no equivalent research evidence regarding secondary school teachers' inclusive values, beliefs and attitudes towards mainstream classroom adaptations. In this thesis, teachers' attitudes towards the process of mainstream classroom differentiation were negatively affected, because they assumed that there is a 'special' or distinct pedagogy for these students. In accordance with what was suggested by Black-Hawkins and Florian (2012), teachers focused on what they could not do for these students' learning needs in the mainstream classroom. Moreover, consistent with the existing literature identifying the teachers' difficulties in relation to the process of differentiation (Corbett, 2001; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Westwood and Graham, 2003; Moran and Abbott, 2006; Angelides and Michailidou, 2007; Konza, 2008; Loreman et al., 2010; Rapp and Arndt, 2012; Symeonidou, 2017; Strogilos et al., 2017), the teachers did not have time to differentiate their mainstream classroom activities either consistently or systematically due to the pressure of covering the materials needed by the curriculum and for the student examinations. Teachers just wanted a quiet classroom to cover the aims of the curriculum and achieve high outcomes for their students. These findings were helpful in identifying the need for teachers to be trained in how to manage skilfully the challenging behaviour of these students and at the same time to address

successfully the educational needs of a mixed-ability group of students in the mainstream classroom.

The second of the more significant findings to emerge from this study was that the (systematic) implementation and frequency of mainstream classroom adaptations have been affected by the highly competitive, performance-oriented Cypriot educational system. This study indicated that the coordinators and teachers have associated the academic success of these students with their withdrawal support. This was another reason why the teachers were reliant on the teaching process of the resource room. Teachers internalized the 'specialized' teaching practices in the resource room as being more effective in quickly increasing the academic performance of these students. The teachers, who were used to teacher-centred methods, tended to perceive the students as passive recipients of knowledge (Makoelle, 2014) and to emphasize more how to increase their students' performances (Greenham, 2019). In this sense, teachers were observed to 'bend' the rules and pre-teach the exam questions in the resource room in order to ensure higher grades for these students. These results lay the groundwork for further research in order to generalize whether these students' achievements are raised because they are supported in the resource room.

These findings also shed new light on how teachers have internalized the nature of mainstream classroom adaptations. Similar to the existing literature review evidence (Avramidis et al, 2000; Westwood and Graham, 2003; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Florian, 2009; Loreman et al., 2010; Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007; Isakson et al., 2007; Makoelle, 2014; Strogilos et al., 2017), teachers internalized that effective intervention is a matter of time, or placement (Hocult, 1996), rather than effective planning (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011; Ahmed et al., 2012; Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2012; Florian, 2019). In accordance with this, it was revealed that teachers internalized the withdrawal support as a substitute for the process of differentiation. Contrary to what was posited by Tomlinson (1999) and similar to what was confirmed by other literature evidence (Pritchard, 2009; Makoelle, 2014), teachers also internalized the process of differentiation as a reactive adjustment to the teacher-centred and content-focused classroom practices. Similar to what was suggested by previous research undertaken in the Cypriot primary sector (Angelides et al., 2004; Koutrouba et al., 2006; Charalampous and Papademetriou, 2018), teachers expected the MOEC to provide them with pre-prepared, differentiated teaching materials for the support of these students in the mainstream classroom and the resource room. Taken together, these results reveal that

withdrawal support increased the teachers' conformity with the traditional, teacher-centred practices and their difficulty in responding to the range of learners' needs in the mainstream classroom.

Additionally, the range of multidisciplinary theoretical materials I used was valuable in analyzing both the current inclusive educational approaches applied in mainstream classrooms in Cypriot secondary schools, and the perspectives and experiences of teachers and students regarding them. Firstly, these study findings suggest that the teachers assumed that students who have been labelled as having learning difficulties are 'unable' to learn. Secondly, these results suggest that the teachers' are resistant to abandoning the well-established segregated teaching practices. Thirdly, these results also highlighted the maladaptive attributional learning characteristics of the target students in the learning process of the mainstream classroom. Therefore, the selected framework further adds to the exploration of the misunderstandings concerning the labelling and stereotyping of learning abilities and the needs of students categorized as having mild learning difficulties. Also this further adds to the exploration of how these presumptions can restrict the (successful) implementation of inclusive educational policies and practices in mainstream classrooms. Finally, it further illuminates the academic and social benefits of inclusive educational practices for students with mild learning difficulties.

From the literature review, it was identified that there is little accompanying research evidence regarding the 'voice' of teachers and students about the implementation of inclusive teaching and learning practices in mainstream classrooms. At the same time, it is acknowledged that inclusive teaching and learning practices can be developed by building a common understanding among stakeholders, teachers and students about how inclusive and equitable systems work (UNESCO, 2015a, 2017). In accordance with recent studies (McDonnell, 1992; Campbell, 2002; Rioux, 2002; Symeonidou, 2009; Gavrielidou, 2011; Ainscow and Messiou, 2018; Messiou, 2019; Messiou and Ainscow, 2020), this study further supports the need to listen to the 'voice' of teachers and students in order for (more) inclusive educational policies and practices to be implemented in mainstream schools. Listening to the students, this research identified that their attitudes towards the mainstream classroom teaching adaptations had been affected by the highly competitive, performance-oriented Cypriot educational system. Similar to the findings of the Alliance Action Report (2006) and the study undertaken by Norwich and Kelly (2005), students liked their teachers to differentiate their activities according to the level of difficulty, to help them with their homework activities and to give them frequent and explicit feedback..

Overall, the students asked for more frequent and systematic classroom adaptations. In relation to this, the findings suggest that students misbehaved when they were bored by the learning process of the mainstream classroom, when they could not understand the lesson or when they wanted to attract their teachers' attention. In contrast to what was suggested by Weinstein (2004), the students misbehaved both in the mainstream classroom and the resource room, since they needed to attract their teachers' attention to their learning needs in both classroom environments. Therefore, the present study adds to the growing body of research (Barton and Armstrong, 1999; Gallagher and Lambert, 2006; Kalambouka et al., 2007; Covington, 1998; Kassotakis cited in Brock and Tulasiewicz, 2000) which aims to explain the reasons for the challenging behaviour of these students in lessons.

Listening to both teachers and students was important in order to explore whether withdrawal support negatively affected or helped to achieve the aims of inclusive education in mainstream schools in Cyprus. It can be concluded that, contrary to what the coordinators, teachers and students believed, this practice promoted exclusionary and marginalized behaviours for these students. First of all, the implementation of the withdrawal support increased the teachers' conformity with these kinds of segregated practices. In this sense, and contrary to what was put forward by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011), the teachers believed that they could not overcome the constraints of the mainstream curriculum and the system of assessment to design and implement inclusive teaching and learning practices for all their students in their own classroom. The withdrawal support contributed to these students being further stigmatized as being less academically able. In accordance with this, teachers were used to having lower expectations of these students' learning, even during the teaching and learning process in the resource room. Similar to the existing literature evidence (Schuh, 2003; Bakker and Bosman, 2003), and in particular the study by Núñez et al. (2005), it was identified that those maladaptive attributional characteristics of the learning profile of students were reinforced by their withdrawal support. The withdrawal support did not manage to increase the participation of most of these students in the mainstream classroom. Students were observed to be mainly passive recipients of knowledge since they were more easily disengaged and demotivated from learning in the mainstream classroom and because they continued to experience a sense of helplessness in the mainstream classroom. Contrary to what has been suggested by Jordan and Stanovich (2001), these students continued to have lower academic self-esteem, which also hindered their active participation in the learning process of the mainstream classroom.

In general, the findings of this study have significant implications, since it has unpicked teachers' taken-for-granted assumptions and stereotypes regarding the learning needs, abilities and profiles of students with mild learning difficulties, which affect the implementation of inclusive mainstream classroom adaptations. The findings of this study may well have a bearing on the discourses around the effects of withdrawal support on the implementation of inclusive mainstream classroom adaptations. Therefore, the insights gained from this study may be of assistance to best supporting the learning needs of students with mild learning difficulties in mainstream Cypriot schools. To achieve this, (a more) solid inclusive ethos needs to be constructed for both students and teachers in mainstream schools in Cyprus.

6.3. A REVIEW OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, I review the multidisciplinary theoretical materials used for the analysis of this study's findings. First of all, the medical model of disability gave a framework of defence for educating students with mild learning difficulties solely in the mainstream classroom. Similar to the existing literature (Oliver, 1990c; Conrad, 1992; Shakespeare, 1996; Goodley, 1998; Rioux, 2002; Armstrong, 2007; Aspis, 2010; Eliot and Armstrong, 2019), teachers were found to internalize their students learning difficulties as being synonymous with learning disabilities, and to an extent synonymous with having mental impairments. In this sense, the medically constructed labels which defined what the labelled students were able or unable to do encouraged the teachers' philosophy regarding segregated educational approaches. These ideas informed the specific values and stereotypes which are embedded within Greek Orthodox Cypriot society, and these were found to be valuable in explaining the teachers' attitudes towards and reliance upon the withdrawal support in the resource room. These ideas are useful in explaining why the teachers were observed to have lower expectations of these students' learning. Similar to the results of previous research in mainstream schools in Cyprus (Phtiaka, 1999, 2003; Liasidou, 2008; Symeonidou, 2009), it was identified that events such as the *Radiomarathonios* (the yearly fair which presents itself as the sole defender of Cypriot children with special needs) reinforced the dominant notion of the charity model in Cyprus and also informed the teachers' expectations towards these students' learning. These charity events promote feelings of 'sympathy' and compassion rather than respect for the children's right to be educated in the mainstream classroom alongside their peers. The idea that students with learning difficulties need special educational professionals (Slee,

1996; Corbett and Slee, 2000) was also useful in explaining why the teachers felt less comfortable supporting the learning needs of these students in the mainstream classroom. According to this idea, this study has provided a new understanding of how mainstream teachers feel about the use of TAs in their classroom. They felt uncomfortable having them in the mainstream classroom because they perceived them to be better trained than them. However, my evidence provides moderate support for the use of the social model of disability. Using the existing literature (Oliver, 1990d; Barton and Oliver, 1997; Terzi, 2004; Shakespeare, 2013; Berghs et al., 2017, 2019) regarding how the term 'disability' is defined by the social model proved to be useful in explaining why the teachers internalized the withdrawal support as a means of inclusive educational practice. The social model recognizes the responsibility of society to remove the functional barriers found in places, buildings, transportation and other forms of service (ibid). In this sense, the MOEC withdrawal support seems to be an 'inclusive' educational practice because it aims at removing the barriers which hinder the active participation of these students in the learning process of the mainstream classroom.

To explain the consequences of the labelling stereotypes, this research used the framework proposed by Link and Phelan (2001). This allowed for the analysis of the effects of stigma and discrimination on these students. For the exploration of the stigmatized effects of the withdrawal support in the resource room, there was valuable evidence suggesting that the labelled students were stigmatized when they were separated from their classmates, or when people focused on labelling stereotypes regarding their learning abilities. By being separated from their classmates to receive support, their learning needs were also internalized as being 'different' from those considered to be 'normal'. The students suggested that their withdrawal support encouraged their stigmatization as being less academically competent, while the teachers attributed any stigmatization to the labelling stereotypes. The concept of status loss shed more light on why the teachers tended to have lower expectations of the learning of these students, who they considered to be less academically able. This framework was also valuable for identifying the forms of direct and indirect discrimination which these students have experienced from their classmates and teachers as a result of their poor academic performance.

The framework suggested by Link and Phelan (2001) was also useful in identifying one of the possible negative effects of the process of labelling and stigmatization: whether the students are socially rejected or isolated in the mainstream classroom. The findings did partially substantiate this idea. Contrary to what was suggested by the studies of Shoho et

al. (1997) and Woolfolk (2001), most of the time the students were observed to be socially interacting with their classmates and participating in their classmates' jokes. At the same time, these students were observed to be closer friends with their classmates from their resource room group. Similar to the work by Madge et al. (1990), the teachers suggested that it is normal for these students to select their closer friends from their resource room group, with whom they spend more time. Along with this framework, the concept of stereotype threats (Steele and Aronson, 1995) was useful for exploring the association between the challenging behaviour of these students in the mainstream classroom and their fear of being socially marginalized. These results need a more thorough examination, and they lay the groundwork for future research. Similarly, the analysis also needs to draw on the concept of stigma consciousness (Pinel, 1999) in order to more thoroughly examine these students' fear of being discriminated against or socially marginalized by their classmates. As a result of their withdrawal support in the resource room, they have also internalized their learning difficulties as being 'different' than those of their classmates.

Second, the analysis drew on the theoretical ideas of teaching and learning practices which are used to promote the aims of inclusive education. Similar to Lewis and Norwich (2005), the premise that 'special education' means 'special pedagogy' was found to be valuable in explaining the assumptions affecting the teachers' inclusive teaching approaches. The existing literature regarding teachers' attitudes towards the process of differentiation (Corbett, 2001; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Westwood and Graham, 2003; Moran and Abbott, 2006; Angelides and Michailidou, 2007; Konza, 2008; Loreman et al., 2010; Rapp and Arndt, 2012; Symeonidou, 2017; Strogilos et al., 2017) offers a theoretical framework to discuss the teachers' difficulties in planning differentiated mainstream classroom adaptations. This study confirms that the teachers assumed the differentiation process to be time-consuming. It also raised the need for teachers to be trained in how to manage skilfully the teaching time in lessons and to differentiate their classroom activities for a mixed-ability group of students. The analysis encompassed evidence related to the debate regarding the effectiveness of the differentiation process on students' performance. However, further research is needed in order to generalize these results.

Third, the psychological theories regarding academic self-concept (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003) and academic self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986; Skaalvik, 1997) were useful in conceptualizing the negative effects of labelling and stigmatization on these students' beliefs about their abilities. A limitation regarding the way these concepts have been

applied during the process of analyzing the findings is that it was difficult to define whether the academic self-concept or the academic self-efficacy most impacted the individuals' beliefs regarding their competence in academic domains. The reason for this was that academic self-concept and academic self-efficacy beliefs are not easily separable, despite their few differences. Academic self-concept beliefs are mainly affected by teachers' evaluations (Skaalvik and Rankin, 1996), whereas self-efficacy beliefs are informed by a more self-regulated evaluation (Wolters and Pintrich, 1998). The students' persistence and performance are more negatively affected by their lower self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura et al., 1996). In this study, the students had lower academic self-concept and self-efficacy beliefs because they were stigmatized as being less academically able.

Additionally, the research insights suggested that the instructional adaptations (Schuh, 2003) and the place where the students with mild learning difficulties received instructions (Bakker and Bosman, 2003) proved to be valuable in identifying the negative self-concept and self-efficacy beliefs of these students, which were reinforced by their withdrawal support and seemed to affect their learning behaviour in the mainstream classroom. Similarly, the findings suggested by previous research (Núñez et al., 2005; Covington, 1998; Chapman, 1988) shed light on the reasons why these students became easily disengaged and demotivated in the lesson. Furthermore, the existent literature regarding the notion of academic self-esteem (Rosenberg et al., 1995; Marsh and Martin, 2011; Elbaum and Vaughn, 2003) contributed to exploring the causal effects of the withdrawal support and the students' academic performance on these students' academic self-esteem beliefs, though these results could be usefully extended in future research.

To sum up, the range of theoretical materials which I used proved to be valuable in many respects for understanding the factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education, and particularly of mainstream classroom adaptations. At the same time, they placed limits on the depth of my analysis in a few cases, such as in the exploration of the students' academic self-concept, self-efficacy and self-esteem beliefs. I was also aware that my data might not strongly support such in-depth exploration of those concepts which were not directly related to the objectives of this study, but I also acknowledge that these could provide a starting point for drawing out analytical generalizations (Yin, 2013) that may be explored in more depth in further research.

6.4. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The conclusions of this study have several implications for policy and practice for inclusive education in mainstream Cypriot public secondary schools. According to the findings of this study, it seems important for policymakers to design systematic and inspiring teacher training programs that will aim to increase teachers' awareness about the learning needs of students diagnosed as having learning difficulties, and to deconstruct the negative representation of these students as being 'unable' to learn. For the successful implementation of inclusive educational approaches, it is necessary for teachers to develop inclusive values and for schools to encourage and cultivate an inclusive ethos among their teachers. In schools where it is believed that all students can learn, teachers are encouraged and supported in promoting inclusive classroom adaptations (Ruijs and Peestma, 2009; Loreman et al., 2010; Nilholm and Alm, 2010; Rapp and Arndt, 2012; Mara and Mara, 2012; Ainscow et al., 2019). In this sense, schools need to develop a self-review tool such as *Themis* (Azorín and Ainscow, 2018) in order to review and examine the needs of their students and the factors which create barriers to their learning and participation. School principals should also record and assess teacher training needs in order to organize more specialized seminars in accordance with their teachers' profiles. In particular, from the findings of this study it is obvious that teachers need to be trained in how to effectively differentiate their classroom activities and to better develop classroom management for a mixed-ability group of students. Teachers also need to be trained in how to improve their students' academic self-concept, efficacy beliefs and academic self-esteem.

Second, the MOEC should consider providing teachers with adequate support and resources for successfully implementing these inclusive teaching approaches in their classrooms. The MOEC should also ensure that these are implemented successfully in class through more regular supervisions by school coordinators. All schools should create a bank of differentiated activities which will aid in meeting and exceeding the potential of all their students. Teachers can jointly plan their lesson activities and thus they can share the workload and be relieved from stress. They can further adapt their teaching practices in accordance with their students' interests and learning needs. Further, they need to review their practices in weekly meetings by reflecting on the difficulties of implementing the suggested teaching practices. The maladaptive attributional characteristics which were identified as affecting these students' learning profiles and behaviours in the mainstream classroom seem to be valuable research evidence. These results have provided a deeper

insight for teachers to explain why these students are disengaged from lessons. They highlight the sense of learned helplessness that these students have in the mainstream classroom, raising the need for their teachers to plan more frequent and systematic inclusive classroom adaptations.

Moreover, it is important for teachers to reflect on their students' experiences of the learning process in the mainstream classroom. Schools need to recognize and represent the students' voices, which tend to be shunned because of their poor performance. Particularly, teachers should be able to self-critique and self-reflect on their attitudes and learning expectations towards these students. Thus, they can challenge and abandon any possible 'exclusionary' behaviour against them. This would also help the parents to stop pressing their children about their academic performance. Similarly, the students would benefit from the development of a (more) inclusive classroom environment which welcomes and accepts a range of learners with 'different' learning needs, rather than those socially internalized as being 'normal'.

Teachers need to abandon their traditional teacher-centred practices and be more consistent in providing more explicit and personalized feedback to these students. This study also highlights the need for teachers to support these students to become independent learners. Teachers should also focus on differentiating their practices in relation to process. Students' progress in accomplishing their tasks should be measured, rather than their performance. Teachers prefer a reduction in student numbers rather than co-teaching with TAs in mainstream classrooms. In this sense, it is important the MOEC considers reducing the number of students in the mainstream classroom. It is also important the MOEC considers providing adequate training to teachers regarding how to implement peer-tutoring practices in their classroom. Additionally, teachers need to consistently ask their students to work in pairs and small groups and to be actively involved in debates and problem-solving activities.

Finally, the findings of this study offer insights for further research into the effects of stereotypes and prejudices connected to the notions of disability and the implementation of (more) inclusive educational policies and practices in mainstream schools in other countries with similarities to the Cypriot educational system. The challenge now is to establish a more solid inclusive ethos within school communities that should be based on the deconstruction of elitist and exclusionary assumptions regarding the 'learning needs' and 'academic abilities' of students labelled as having learning difficulties.

6.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis has identified that the development and implementation of inclusive education in public secondary mainstream schools in Cyprus have been impeded by negative stereotypes concerning the needs and learning characteristics of students labelled as having learning difficulties. The grade-oriented educational system of Cyprus and the competitive academic success ethos have mainly affected the development of an inclusive pedagogical ethos among teachers. Therefore, it is necessary to explore ways of breaking up the negative dominant cultural stereotypes concerning the abilities of labelled students. Further studies may also be conducted on a wide scale involving a large sample of students with mild learning difficulties and teachers of Modern Greek, as well as coordinators of the withdrawal support and MOEC inspectors, across the public mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus. They should explore how to establish more inclusive values and create inclusive cultures among the members of their school communities. Secondly, further research studies are essential to explore teacher training regarding classroom teaching practices, such as creating differentiated activities, planning teaching adaptations and managing teaching time effectively in order to meet the learning needs of all of the students in the mainstream classroom and to be able to support them in achieving the aims of the mainstream curriculum. Factors that would increase teachers' confidence in planning teaching approaches for their students with learning difficulties could also be explored, and these would motivate them in transforming their students' learning capacity.

As far as the students are concerned, it is also important to undertake a longitudinal study in order to generalize the impact of withdrawal support on the students' learning identity profile. Future research is needed to explore how inclusion has affected these students' achievements in secondary mainstream schools in Cyprus. Additionally, future research can explore the results of practices that aim to promote students' academic self-concept, self-efficacy and self-esteem beliefs. Based on the results of this case study, it is also important to explore the teaching approaches which have been chosen by the students, and whether they are effective in motivating the students' active participation and engagement in the learning process of the mainstream classroom.

6.6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As discussed in the methodology (chapter 3), there are certain limitations to the present study that are mainly relevant to its methodological aspect. To begin with, limited time was spent in schools, observing the student–teacher interactions and behaviour during the teaching and learning process in both the resource room and the mainstream classroom. There was not sufficient time to repeat an observation in cases where the students and the teachers were slightly affected by my presence. There were teachers who tried to pay more attention to these students than usual, or who avoided challenging these students to participate in the lesson since they wanted to help me observe overly naturalistic student behaviours. There were teachers who tended to show greater leniency towards their students' challenging behaviours during the lessons in the mainstream classroom. However, the observation series was restricted to two sessions in the mainstream classroom and in the resource room due to the heavily time-constrained program of the participant teachers.

Additionally, it is acknowledged that the research study has certain limitations regarding the wider applicability of its findings. This research study did not intend to provide findings generalizable to populations. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that even a single case study can enable analytical generalizations to other cases that represent similar theoretical conditions (Yin, 2013). A number of teaching adaptations have been discussed as part of this research, which were named as being 'inclusive'. According to the perspectives of the participant teachers and students, these practices were perceived to be 'inclusive' since they seemed effective in addressing the 'needs' and improving the learning of all the students in the mainstream classroom. These 'inclusive' teaching practices may also be evidenced in other 'cases', and thus the challenges which affected the design and implementation of the particular 'inclusive' interventions may also deepen current knowledge of other cases in different contexts and settings. The case study approach also allows for the transferability of findings to similar contextual cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Having purposefully chosen my research sites and participants to have typical characteristics of the 'average' population, this raises the possibility of the transferability of my findings to similar school cases in Cyprus. The thorough exploration of the topic under study, which the case study design allowed, also raises the possibility of transferring the findings to other contextual cases where the reader identifies similar teaching profiles and student learning identities to those described in this study. In this sense, it could be argued that some of the teachers' and students' choices of 'inclusive' teaching interventions, which

they perceived to be effective for implementation in mainstream Cypriot classrooms, may also apply to other similar contextual cases.

Finally, this research identified that the researcher's reflexivity was both a strength and a limitation for the analytical process. Using Reinharz's (1997) terminology, my 'brought self' can be considered to be a limitation for this case study analysis, since it made it difficult for me to acknowledge at first glance the participants' beliefs that contradicted mine. However, my 'research self' helped me to illuminate my participants' interpretations based on an internal validity process (Shell, 1992) and to carefully document my themes by double coding my findings (Krefting, 1991). My 'situationally created self' helped me to be sympathetic and friendly with my participants in the field, even when their beliefs contradicted my inclusive ones. By listening to the perceptions of teachers and students who were in favour of the resource room's 'educational benefits', I realized that inclusive education in mainstream schools in Cyprus cannot be promoted by abolishing the teaching and learning process in the resource room. Nevertheless, I still believe that the stigma concerning the teaching of labelled students in the resource room needs to be deconstructed in order for this practice to become an inclusive educational approach.

6.7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Reaching the end of this thesis and reflecting on the findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of inclusive educational approaches in the mainstream classrooms of public secondary schools in Cyprus has been affected by stereotypes and prejudices related to the notions of disability. These are reproduced by misunderstandings concerning the way in which the rights of disabled people are indicated in models of disability, and these have informed the development of educational policies. The implementation of withdrawal support increased teachers' conformity with the philosophy of segregated teaching practices and encouraged exclusionary and marginalized behaviours against students with mild learning difficulties. The crux of the problematic conceptualization of inclusive education is the highly competitive, grade performance-oriented educational system of schools in Cyprus.

Moreover, this study confirms the arguments made by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) that the teaching and learning methods used to meet the learning needs of all students in mainstream classrooms are not significantly different from good general teaching practice. What makes them effective classroom practices is the teachers' inclusive values and their

beliefs in the learning of these students (ibid). In addition to this, there is acknowledged the need for schools to cultivate and encourage teachers' belief that all students can learn (Rapp and Arndt, 2012). Notwithstanding the absence of an inclusive school ethos, it is also suggested that teachers with inclusive values can work towards inclusive education in their own classroom, despite the restrictive structures of schooling, the constraints of the curriculum and the systems of assessment (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011, p.207; Florian, 2019; Finkelstein et al., 2019). Therefore, the results of this study may challenge the MOEC policies regarding the implementation of inclusive education, while raising the point that it is crucial for a (more) solid inclusive ethos to be cultivated by teachers in mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus. However, there is no denying that it will take time for the schools in Cyprus, which are very exam-oriented and performance-based, to have a change of mindset and to implement any major changes in inclusive education.

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APPENDICES

PART A: DATA COLLECTION

A.1. MOEC's ethical approval



ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ
ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ

ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ
ΜΕΣΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ

Αρ. Φακ.: 7.19.46.7/19
Αρ. Τηλ.: 22800630/631
Αρ. Φαξ: 22428268
E-mail: circularsec@schools.ac.cy

25 Ιουνίου 2012

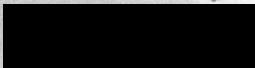
Κυρία
Παναγιώτα Χριστοδουλίδου
19 Κλεόππα Χριστοδούλου,
8220 Χλώρακα
Πάφος

Θέμα: Παραχώρηση άδειας για διεξαγωγή έρευνας

Αναφορικά με τη σχετική με το πιο πάνω θέμα αίτησή σας στο Κέντρο Εκπαιδευτικής Έρευνας και Αξιολόγησης, ημερομηνίας 2/5/2012, πληροφορείστε ότι το αίτημά σας για διεξαγωγή έρευνας, με θέμα «*Η ένταξη των μαθητών 'με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες' στα Δημόσια Σχολεία Μέσης Εκπαίδευσης της Κύπρου: Ακούγοντας τις αντιλήψεις των εκπαιδευτικών και των μαθητών*», στα πλαίσια έρευνας για την απόκτηση διδακτορικού τίτλου σπουδών στο Institute of Education του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου, εγκρίνεται. Νοείται ότι θα λάβετε υπόψη τις εισηγήσεις του Κέντρου Εκπαιδευτικής Έρευνας και Αξιολόγησης οι οποίες επισυνάπτονται, και θα τηρήσετε τις ακόλουθες προϋποθέσεις:

1. Θα εξασφαλίσετε τη συγκατάθεση των Διευθυντών των σχολείων τα οποία θα συμμετάσχουν στην έρευνα.
2. Η συμμετοχή των μαθητών και των εκπαιδευτικών θα είναι προαιρετική.
3. Θα εξασφαλίσετε τη γραπτή συγκατάθεση των εκπαιδευτικών και των γονέων των μαθητών που θα συμμετάσχουν στην έρευνα.
4. δε θα επηρεασθεί ο διδακτικός χρόνος και η ομαλή λειτουργία των σχολείων για τη διεξαγωγή της έρευνας.
5. Θα χειριστείτε τα στοιχεία των εμπλεκόμενων με τέτοιο τρόπο, ώστε να διασφαλιστεί πλήρως η ανωνυμία τους.
6. για τη χρήση μαγνητοφώνου ή οποιασδήποτε άλλης μεθόδου για τυχόν καταγραφή ήχου ή εικόνας, θα πρέπει πρώτα να πάρετε άδεια γραπτώς από τους εμπλεκόμενους οι οποίοι θα συμμετάσχουν και τέλος,
7. τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας θα κοινοποιηθούν στο Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού και στα σχολεία που σας παραχώρησαν διευκολύνσεις για τη διεξαγωγή της.

Ευχόμαστε καλή επιτυχία στους ερευνητικούς σας σκοπούς.


Δρ Ζήνα Πουλλή
Διευθύντρια Μέσης Εκπαίδευσης

90

Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού 1434 Λευκωσία
Τηλ: 22 800 600 fax: 22 428268 website: www.moec.gov.cy

A.2a.Letter for school head

Dear Head/Headmistress,

My name is Panayiota Christodoulidou. I am a teacher of Greek Philology in Cyprus and a PhD student at the Institute of Education, University College London in the U.K. I am conducting a research about the perspectives and the experiences of teachers and students with 'mild learning difficulties' about the inclusive support policies and the teaching practices used in the mainstream and the resource room classrooms in public mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus. My project has been ethically approved by the Ministry of Education in Cyprus, the Institute of Education in London and my supervisor Dr.Barbara Cole (Programme Leader, Doctor of Education, Department of Humanities and Social Science: b.cole@ioe.ac.uk).

In order to carry out my research, I will ask **4** teachers of Modern Greek language who teach on the withdrawal support program and the coordinator of this program to participate in **15** minutes closed ended questions and a one-to-one **45** minute interview. I would invite to participate **3** students with mild learning difficulties of each teacher (in total **12** students) who are withdrawn for support in the resource room. Students would participate in a one-to-one **30** minutes interview. I also want to let you know that **2** series of observations will be conducted in the mainstream classroom and **2** in the resource room, but they will focus on the teaching and learning pedagogies in general. The teachers', the coordinators' and students' participation in the study is voluntary, their rights will be respected and they can withdraw from the process anytime they wish. The information provided by the participants will be treated as confidential, and will stored and protected through a coding system, so nobody else except me could have access to it.

I want also to ask you in facilitating the participation of the teachers in interviews on the day and time that would be agreed with them individually. I would also like to assure you that I would not enter the teachers' classroom prior to their agreement. As a teacher, I take into account the heavy school workload program thus I assure you that teachers will spend the minimum amount of their time, involved in this research. I will faithfully follow the interview schedules and the agreed observation timetables. I am committed to inform you of the results of this study.

Your teachers' and students' participation in this study is necessary and important. I would appreciate it if you can inform your teachers about this research process and inform me about their interest in participating or not **by the 10th of November 2012.**

Thank you very much in advance for your co-operation .If you have any queries, or you are interested in finding out more about the research project, please contact me by e-mail: pchristodoulidou@ioe.ac.uk or telephone: 0035799xxxxxx.

A.2b. Letter for school head (in Greek)

Προς: Διευθυντή/Διευθύντρια,

Ονομάζομαι Παναγιώτα Χριστοδουλίδου, είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο Institute of Education του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Στα πλαίσια των σπουδών μου διεξάγω αυτή την έρευνα που μελετά τα Προγράμματα Στήριξης των μαθητών 'με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες' στα 'κανονικά' σχολεία. Η έρευνα αυτή έχει εγκριθεί από το Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού στην Κύπρο, από το Institute of Education όπου φοιτώ και την καθηγήτρια μου Dr. Barbara Cole (στοιχεία επικοινωνίας: b.cole@ioe.ac.uk), που έχει την εποπτεία αυτής της έρευνας.

Για τους σκοπούς της έρευνας, χρειάζεται η συμμετοχή **4** φιλολόγων που διδάσκουν στο πρόγραμμα στήριξης και **3** μαθητών τους 'με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες' (συνολικά **12** μαθητών) και του/της Β.Διευθυντή/ντριας, συντονιστή/τριας του προγράμματος στήριξης. Η συμμετοχή στην έρευνα είναι εθελοντική και οι συμμετέχοντες μπορούν να αποχωρίσουν από αυτή οποιαδήποτε στιγμή κρίνουν ότι είναι αναγκαίο.

Οι συμμετέχοντες θα λάβουν μέρος σε **μία** ατομική **45'** λεπτή συνέντευξη και επιπλέον οι εκπαιδευτικοί και σε **ένα 15'** λεπτό κλειστού τύπου ερωτηματολόγιο. Εγγυώμαι την ανωνυμία της συμμετοχής τους καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της έρευνας και του απόρρητου των απαντήσεων τους. Παρακαλώ όπως διευκολύνεται τη διεξαγωγή της συνέντευξης των εκπαιδευτικών και μαθητών την ώρα και μέρα που θα συμφωνηθεί με τον καθένα τους ξεχωριστά.

Χρειάζεται επιπλέον η παρακολούθηση **2** μαθημάτων Νέων Ελληνικών/ Ιστορίας στην 'κανονική' τάξη και **2** στη στήριξη. Οι παρακολουθήσεις θα γίνουν σε μέρα και ώρα που θα συμφωνήσουν οι συμμετέχοντες εκπαιδευτικοί και σύμφωνα πάντα με το πρόγραμμα διδασκαλίας τους. Θα αποφεύγεται η είσοδος στην τάξη χωρίς την άδεια των εκπαιδευτικών.

Ως εκπαιδευτικός, κατανοώ το βεβαρυμμένο σχολικό πρόγραμμα του σχολείου, γι' αυτό και η έρευνα αυτή, έχει σκοπό να σας απασχολήσει στο ελάχιστο. Τα συμφωνημένα χρονοδιαγράμματα των εργασιών της έρευνας θα τηρηθούν πιστά καθ' όλη την διάρκεια της. Δεσμεύομαι να σας ενημερώσω για τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας αυτής.

Η συμμετοχή των εκπαιδευτικών και μαθητών του σχολείου σας κρίνεται απαραίτητη και πολύ σημαντική. Θα το εκτιμούσα ιδιαίτερα αν μπορείτε να με βοηθήσετε, ενημερώνοντάς με για το ενδιαφέρον τους να συμμετέχουν το συντομότερο δυνατό.

Σας ευχαριστώ εκ των προτέρων για την συνεργασία σας. Για οποιοσδήποτε διευκρινήσεις σχετικά με την έρευνα μπορείτε να επικοινωνήσετε μαζί μου μέσω e-mail: pchristodoulidou@ioe.ac.uk ή τηλεφωνικώς: 0035799xxxxxx.

A.3a: Parents' Consent Form

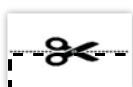
Dear Parent/ Guardian,

My name is Panayiota Christodoulidou. I am a teacher of Greek Philology in Cyprus and a PhD student at the Institute of Education, University College London in the U.K. I am conducting a research about the perspectives and the experiences of teachers and students with 'mild learning difficulties' about the inclusive support policies and the teaching practices used in the mainstream and the resource room classrooms in public mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus. My project has been ethically approved by the Ministry of Education in Cyprus, the Institute of Education in London and my supervisor Dr. Barbara Cole (Programme Leader, Doctor of Education, Department of Humanities and Social Science: b.cole@ioe.ac.uk).

In order to carry out my research, I will ask pupils from years 12-15 to answer some interview questions. The interviews will last only **30** minutes. I would like to assure you that your child's participation is voluntary, their rights will be respected and they are allowed to be withdrawn from the process anytime they wish. Interviews will take place in the resource room and in school time. The information provided by your child will be treated as confidential, and will be stored and protected through a coding system, so nobody else except me could have access to it. I also want to let you know that **2** series of observations will be conducted in the mainstream classroom and **2** in the resource room, but they will focus on the teaching and learning pedagogies in general.

Thank you very much in advance for your cooperation. If you have any queries, or you are interested in finding out more about the research project, please contact me by email: pchristodoulidou@ioe.ac.uk or telephone: 0035799xxxxxx.

If you do or do not wish your child to participate please fill in the slip and return to their class teacher. I would appreciate it if you could let me know your intentions, by the **19th of November 2012**. Please attach the signed consent form for your child. I would also like to assure you that your child would not participate in the study if you do not agree.



CONSENT FORM

I give permission for my child,(child's name), who is in(child's class) to participate not participate in the interview.

Parent's / Guardian's name :.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

A.3b.Parents' Consent Form (in Greek)

Προς:Γονείς

Ονομάζομαι Παναγιώτα Χριστοδουλίδου, είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο Institute of Education του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Στα πλαίσια των σπουδών μου διεξάγω αυτή την έρευνα στα σχολεία που μελετά τις απόψεις και τις εμπειρίες των καθηγητών και μαθητών 'με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες' σχετικά με τα μαθήματα στην 'κανονική' τάξη και στη στήριξη. Η έρευνα αυτή έχει εγκριθεί από το Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού στην Κύπρο, από το Institute of Education όπου φοιτώ και την καθηγήτρια μου Dr. Barbara Cole (στοιχεία επικοινωνίας: b.cole@ioe.ac.uk), που έχει την εποπτεία αυτής της έρευνας.

Για τους σκοπούς της έρευνας χρειάζεται η συμμετοχή των μαθητών ηλικίας **12-15 χρονών** σε **μία** ατομική **30'** λεπτή συνέντευξη. Η συμμετοχή των παιδιών σας στην έρευνα είναι εθελοντική. Η συνέντευξη θα γίνει στην αίθουσα στήριξης, σε ώρα λειτουργίας του σχολείου. Οι απαντήσεις των μαθητών θα είναι άκρως ανώνυμες και εμπιστευτικές και θα αποθηκεύονται και θα προστατεύονται μέσω ενός συστήματος κωδικοποίησης που κανείς άλλος εκτός από εμένα θα μπορεί να έχει πρόσβαση. Ακόμη σας ενημερώνω ότι θα παρακολουθήσω **2** μαθήματα στην 'κανονική' τάξη και **2** στη στήριξη, για την επιμόρφωσή μου στις παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές, που χρησιμοποιούνται. Υπενθυμίζεται ότι τα παιδιά σας μπορούν να αποχωρήσουν από τη διαδικασία οποιαδήποτε στιγμή το επιθυμούν.

Σας ευχαριστώ εκ των προτέρων για την συνεργασία σας. Για οποιοσδήποτε διευκρινήσεις σχετικά με την έρευνα μπορείτε να επικοινωνήσετε μαζί μου μέσω e-mail: pchristodoulidou@ioe.ac.uk ή τηλεφωνικώς : 0035799xxxxxx.

Αν θέλετε το παιδί σας να συμμετέχει στην έρευνα αυτή, παρακαλώ συμπληρώστε την πιο κάτω δήλωση και να την επιστρέψετε στο σχολείο **μέχρι τις 19/11/12**, συνοδευόμενη από την ενυπόγραφη δήλωση του παιδιού σας, που επισυνάπτεται. Σημειώνεται ότι κανείς μαθητής δε θα συμμετέχει χωρίς την σύμφωνη γνώμη των γονιών/ κηδεμόνων του.



ΕΝΤΥΠΟ ΣΥΓΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΗΣ

Έχω ενημερωθεί για την έρευνα που διεξάγεται στο σχολείο του παιδιού μου και συμφωνώ δε συμφωνώ ο/η γιός/κόρη μου που φοιτά στη(ν) τάξη, να συμμετέχει στην ατομική 30' συνέντευξη.

Όνομαεπώνυμο γονιού/ κηδεμόνα:.....

Υπογραφή:.....

Ημερομηνία:.....

A.4a. Students' Consent Form

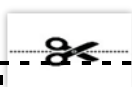
Dear Students,

My name is Panayiota Christodoulidou. I am a teacher of Greek Philology in Cyprus and a PhD student at the Institute of Education, University College London in the U.K. I am conducting a research about the perspectives and the experiences of teachers and students with 'mild learning difficulties' about the inclusive support policies and the teaching practices used in the mainstream and the resource room classrooms in public mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus. My project has been ethically approved by the Ministry of Education in Cyprus, the Institute of Education in London and my supervisor Dr.Barbara Cole (Programme Leader, Doctor of Education, Department of Humanities and Social Science:b.cole@ioe.ac.uk).

In order to carry out my research, I will ask you to answer some interview questions. The one-to-one interviews will last only **30** minutes. I would like to assure you that your participation is voluntary. You can withdraw from the process any time you feel is necessary. Interviews will take place in the resource room in school time and on a day and a time that will be agreed with you and arranged by your teachers. Your answers would be tape-recorded only if you agree to this. You would have time to think about your answers and explanations will be given to you for any questions which seem to be difficult for you. The information provided by you will be treated as confidential, and nobody else except me could have access to it. At the end of your interview, I will allow you to read your responses in order to add, delete or change what you did not like to be recorded. Answer as many questions as you can. I also want to let you know that **2** series of observations would take place in the mainstream classroom and **2** in the resource room, but they will focus on the teaching and learning pedagogies in general.

If you wish to participate, please fill in the slip and return to your teacher by the **19th of November 2012**. Please give the attached form to your parents in order for them to sign and be informed about this research. Please return your form with your parent's signed consent.

Thank you very much in advance for your co-operation.



CONSENT FORM

I would like to participate in one-to-one 30' interview

I want to I do not want to have my answers tape-recorded.

Student's name and surname :

Signature:.....

Date:.....

A.4b.Students' Consent Form (in Greek)

Προς: Μαθητές


Ονομάζομαι Παναγιώτα Χριστοδουλίδου, είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο Institute of Education του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Στα πλαίσια των σπουδών μου διεξάγω αυτή την έρευνα στα σχολεία που μελετά τις απόψεις και τις εμπειρίες των καθηγητών και μαθητών 'με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες' σχετικά με τα μαθήματα στην 'κανονική' τάξη και στη στήριξη. Η έρευνα αυτή έχει εγκριθεί από το Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού στην Κύπρο, από το Institute of Education όπου φοιτώ και την καθηγήτρια μου Dr. Barbara Cole (στοιχεία επικοινωνίας: b.cole@ioe.ac.uk), που έχει την εποπτεία της έρευνας αυτής.

Για τους σκοπούς της έρευνας χρειάζεται η συμμετοχή σας σε **μία** ατομική **30'**λεπτή συνέντευξη. Η συμμετοχή σας στην έρευνα είναι εθελοντική. Η μέρα και ώρα της συνέντευξης θα αποφασιστεί αργότερα μαζί σας και σε συνεννόηση με τους καθηγητές σας. Η συνέντευξη σας θα γίνει στην αίθουσα στήριξης, σε ώρα λειτουργίας του σχολείου. Οι απαντήσεις σας θα μαγνητοφωνηθούν μόνο εαν το θέλετε. Θα σας δοθεί χρόνος να σκεφτείτε τις απαντήσεις σας και εξηγήσεις σε όποιες ερωτήσεις σας δυσκολεύουν. Οι απαντήσεις θα είναι ανώνυμες και εμπιστευτικές. Στο τέλος της συνέντευξης θα σας δοθεί να διαβάσετε τις απαντήσεις σας για να προσθέσετε ή να αλλάξετε ό,τι επιθυμείτε. Μπορείτε να απαντήσετε σε όσες ερωτήσεις θέλετε και έχετε το δικαίωμα να αποχωρήσετε από τη διαδικασία όποτε κρίνετε αναγκαίο.

Ακόμη σας ενημερώνω ότι θα παρακολουθήσω **2** μαθήματα στην τάξη σας και **2** στη στήριξη, για την επιμόρφωσή μου στις παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές, που χρησιμοποιούνται.

Αν θέλετε να συμμετέχετε, παρακαλώ συμπληρώστε την δήλωση που ακολουθεί και να την επιστρέψετε **μέχρι τις 19/11/12**. Η δήλωση σας πρέπει να συνοδεύεται με την ενυπόγραφη δήλωση των γονιών/ κηδεμόνων σας. Θα το εκτιμούσα πολύ αν με βοηθούσατε, δίνοντας στους γονείς σας την επιστολή που επισυνάπτεται σχετικά με την έρευνα.

Σας ευχαριστώ πολύ για την βοήθεια σας.


ΕΝΤΥΠΟ ΣΥΓΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΗΣ

Συμφωνώ να συμμετέχω στην ατομική 30' συνέντευξη

Θέλω δε θέλω να μαγνητοφωνηθούν οι απαντήσεις μου

Όνοματεπώνυμο Μαθητή/τριας:

Υπογραφή:.....

Ημερομηνία:.....

A.5a. Teachers' Consent Form

Dear Teachers,

My name is Panayiota Christodoulidou. I am a teacher of Greek Philology in Cyprus and a PhD student at the Institute of Education, University College London in the U.K. I am conducting a research about the perspectives and the experiences of teachers and students with 'mild learning difficulties' about the inclusive support policies and the teaching practices used in the mainstream and the resource room classrooms in public mainstream secondary schools of Cyprus. My project has been ethically approved by the Ministry of Education in Cyprus, the Institute of Education in London and my supervisor Dr. Barbara Cole (Programme Leader, Doctor of Education, Department of Humanities and Social Science: b.cole@ioe.ac.uk).

In order to carry out my research, I will ask you to participate in **15'** closed-ended questions and in a one-to-one **45'** interview. I also want to ask you to invite me to observe **2** series of Modern Greek/ History lessons in the mainstream classroom and **2** in the resource room. Observations both in the mainstream and resource room classrooms will focus on the teaching and learning pedagogies in general. The days and time for the observations would be arranged beforehand and with you at a time that is convenient for you. Your participation in research is voluntary and you can withdraw from the process anytime you wish.

The information provided by you will be treated as confidential and nobody else except me could have access to it. You can have access to your interview and observation data whenever you wish. At the end of the interviews, you would be encouraged to read your answers in order to add, delete or change anything you want. Your interview would be tape-recorded only if you agree to do so.

As a teacher, I have taken into consideration your heavy workload and thus I would also like to assure you that you will spend the minimum of time, involved in this research. I also want to let you know that I will not enter in your classroom without prior consent. I will faithfully follow the interview schedules and the agreed observation timetables. I am committed to inform you of the results of this study.

Thank you very much in advance for your cooperation. If you have any queries, or you are interested in finding out more about the research project, please contact me by e-mail: pchristodoulidou@ioe.ac.uk or telephone: 0035799xxxxxx.

Your participation in the study is necessary and very important. If you wish to participate, please fill in the slip and return to the school secretary **by the 19th of November 2012.**

<u>CONSENT FORM</u>	
I would like to participate in one-to-one 45' interview	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to <input type="checkbox"/> I do not agree to <input type="checkbox"/>	have my interview answers tape-recorded.
I agree to be observed in 2 lessons of Modern Greek/ History both in the mainstream and in the resource room classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name of Teacher:.....	
Signature :.....	
Date :.....	

A.5b. Teachers' Consent Form (in Greek)

Προς: Εκπαιδευτικούς

Ονομάζομαι Παναγιώτα Χριστοδουλίδου, είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο Institute of Education του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Στα πλαίσια των σπουδών μου διεξάγω αυτή την έρευνα στα σχολεία που μελετά τα Προγράμματα Στήριξης των μαθητών 'με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες' στα 'κανονικά' σχολεία. Η έρευνα αυτή έχει εγκριθεί από το Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού στην Κύπρο, από το Institute of Education όπου φοιτώ και την καθηγήτρια μου Dr. Barbara Cole (στοιχεία επικοινωνίας: b.cole@ioe.ac.uk), που έχει την εποπτεία της έρευνας αυτής.

Για τους σκοπούς αυτής της έρευνας χρειάζεται η συμμετοχή σας σε **ένα 15'** λεπτό κλειστού τύπου ερωτηματολόγιο και **μία** ατομική **45'**λεπτή συνέντευξη. Χρειάζεται επιπλέον η παρακολούθηση **2** μαθημάτων σας στην 'κανονική' τάξη και **2** στη στήριξη που θα προγραμματίζεται σε συνεννοήση πάντοτε με σας και σύμφωνα με το πρόγραμμα διδασκαλίας σας. Η συμμετοχή σας στην έρευνα είναι εθελοντική και μπορείτε να αποχωρίσετε από αυτή οποιαδήποτε στιγμή κρίνετε ότι είναι αναγκαίο.

Εγγυώμαι την ανωνυμία της συμμετοχής σας καθ' όλη την διάρκεια της έρευνας και του απόρρητου των απαντήσεων σας. Οι συνεντεύξεις θα είναι ατομικές και θα μαγνητοφωνούνται μόνο εάν το επιθυμείτε. Θέλω να σας διαβεβαιώσω ότι θα μπορείτε να έχετε πρόσβαση στα δεδομένα της έρευνας οποιαδήποτε στιγμή και ότι αντίγραφο των απαντήσεων σας από τις συνεντεύξεις και τα σχόλια των παρατηρήσεων στις τάξεις θα είναι στη διάθεσή σας για να προσθέσετε ή να αλλάξετε ό,τι επιθυμείτε.

Ως εκπαιδευτικός καταλαμβάνω το βεβαρυσμένο πρόγραμμα σας και η έρευνα αυτή σας βεβαιώ ότι θα σας απασχολήσει στο ελάχιστο. Θα αποφεύγεται η είσοδος στην τάξη χωρίς την άδεια σας. Το πρόγραμμα σας και τα συμφωνημένα χρονοδιαγράμματα των εργασιών της έρευνας θα τηρηθούν πιστά καθ' όλη την διάρκεια της. Δεσμεύομαι να σας ενημερώσω για τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας αυτής.

Σας ευχαριστώ εκ των προτέρων για την συνεργασία σας. Για οποιοδήποτε διευκρινήσεις σχετικά με την έρευνα μπορείτε να επικοινωνήσετε μαζί μου μέσω e-mail: pchristodoulidou@ioe.ac.uk ή τηλεφωνικώς: 0035799xxxxxx.

Η συμμετοχή σας κρίνεται απαραίτητη και πολύ σημαντική. Θα το εκτιμούσα ιδιαίτερα αν μπορείτε να με ενημερώσετε για τις προθέσεις σας, συμπληρώνοντας την πιο κάτω δήλωση και να την επιστρέψετε στη γραμματεία του σχολείου σας, **μέχρι τις 19/11/12**.



ΕΝΤΥΠΟ ΣΥΓΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΗΣ

Συμφωνώ να συμμετέχω στην ατομική 45' συνέντευξη

Θέλω Δε Θέλω να μαγνητοφωνηθούν οι απαντήσεις μου

Συμφωνώ να παρακολουθήσει τα μαθήματα Νέων Ελληνικών στην τάξη και στην στήριξη

Όνοματεπώνυμο Καθηγητή/τριας:.....

Υπογραφή:.....

Ημερομηνία:.....

A.6a. Example of co-ordinators' questionnaire

I am a teacher of Greek philology in Cyprus. Because of my personal development and my interest in inclusive education, I am currently conducting this PhD study at the Institute of Education, University college London in the U.K. The study aims to explore the teachers' experiences of teaching Greek to the students 'with mild learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom and the resource room and their understanding about inclusive education and of using inclusive practices in their classroom.

Answering the following questions will take you no more than fifteen minutes. Please note that the confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants are ensured. You have the right to withdraw at any stage of the process and not answer any question you do not wish.

The questionnaires will be numbered. The numbers will be read and used only by me. It is necessary for the development of the semi-structured interview questions which will follow additionally to the questionnaire.

Code number: (official used only) _____

QUESTIONS:

A.1. Personal Information: (Please tick or complete what is appropriate for you)

1. Man Woman
2. Age: 30-45 46-55 56-63 other _____

3a. How many years have you been teaching at secondary schools? _____

3b. How many years have you taught in this school? _____

3c. Have you ever worked in 'special school'? Yes No

4. Have you had any special training regarding teaching students 'with learning difficulties'?

Yes No

If yes, can you please tell me about it?

5. Have you had any special training regarding how to devise and manage inclusive learning activities in your classroom?

Yes No

If yes, can you please tell me about it?

A.2 Information about the students with 'mild learning difficulties':

6a. How many children are currently diagnosed as having 'learning difficulties' in your school?

6b. How many children 'with learning difficulties' are taking support in the resource room?

6c. How many teachers of Modern Greek Language support the students 'with learning difficulties' in the resource room?

6d. What are the common areas of the Modern Greek module, that the students with 'learning difficulties' are supported in the resource room? (**Please tick all that apply**)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading
<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing essays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding complex ideas
<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing summaries
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spelling
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

B. Personal understanding –beliefs:

7. To what extent do you agree/ disagree with the following statements?

Please tick the box nearest to your view		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
7.1.	All the students 'with learning difficulties' should be withdrawn from some mainstream classes to get individualized support in the resource room					
7.2.	Some students 'with learning difficulties' should be withdrawn from some mainstream classes to get individualized support in the resource room					
7.3.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported only in the mainstream classroom.					
7.4.	Helping a student to deal with his/her 'learning difficulties' can be helpful for the learning of the other students					
7.5.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students can be supported in the mainstream classroom, by differentiating the classroom activities according to their educational possibilities.					
7.6.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students can't be supported in the mainstream classroom, because students want to work with the same material like their classmates.					
7.7.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students can't be supported in the mainstream classroom, because of the pressure of time to cover the teaching material, the tests, revisions and exams.					
7.8.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room, because teaching is concerned with identifying the 'strengths' of students and their 'possibilities' to build on their learning development					
7.9.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room because teaching is aimed to help students to achieve the goals of the mainstream curriculum.					
7.10.	Students 'with learning difficulties' cannot be supported in the mainstream classroom due to the large number of students.					
7.11.	Students 'with learning difficulties' are stigmatized when their 'needs' are supported in the mainstream classroom.					
7.12.	Students 'with learning difficulties' are stigmatized when their 'needs' are supported in the resource room.					
Please add any extra comments you may have if you have ticked 'not sure' :						

C. Teaching practices:

8a. Why do you think it is important to develop inclusive educational practices, for the students 'with learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom?

(Please show the level of importance which should be given to each of the following statements about inclusive practices, by ticking the appropriate box)

Please tick the box nearest to your view		Very important	Important	Not sure	Little importance	Not important at all
8.1	Students develop high self – esteem.					
8.2	Students develop their learning styles and techniques.					
8.3	Students can meet the standards of mainstream curriculum.					
8.4	Students value their skills and experiences to learn.					
8.5	Students overcome the fear of being identified for their 'learning deficiencies' in front of the others.					
8.6	Students overcome the fear of failing in mainstream classroom and exams.					

8b. Which of the above aims do you perceive as the most important to be achieved in your classroom? **(Please explain in more details)**

9. To what extent do you find the following inclusive practices in your school important for encouraging students 'with learning difficulties' to achieve in the mainstream classroom?

Please tick the box nearest to your view		Very important	Important	Not sure	Little importance	Not important at all
9.1.	Using differentiated worksheets to meet and extend the learning of students.					
9.2.	Giving students choice over their classroom activities.					
9.3.	Giving students choice over their homework exercises.					
9.4.	Giving direct instructions and extra explanations to students who need them to complete their work.					
9.5.	Using teaching assistants to help the mainstream teachers check the progress of all students in the mainstream classroom.					
9.6.	Using audio visual material and technology during the learning process in the classroom.					
9.7.	Involving students in group projects/ research / discussions.					

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Please tick the box nearest to your view ►		Agree	Strongly agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10.1.	Students should be consulted about the support which should be provided to them within the mainstream school in order to avoid their own 'difficulties' in learning.					
10.2.	The curriculum should change to meet and extend the different interests, knowledge and skills of all students in the mainstream classroom.					
10.3.	Statements of 'Special educational needs' should specify the changes in teaching and learning arrangements required in order for the students 'with learning difficulties' to achieve the goals of the mainstream curriculum.					
10.4.	Statements of 'special educational needs' should specify the changes in teaching and learning arrangements required to meet the individual 'educational needs' of the students in the mainstream classroom.					
10.5.	Classroom teachers should be responsible for overcoming barriers to the access and participation of particular students to make changes for the benefit of students more widely.					
10.6.	Support policies for students who are categorized as having 'special educational needs' should recognize them as individuals with different interests, knowledge and skills.					
10.7.	Support policies for students who are categorized as having 'special educational needs' should be seen as a special addition to their education in the resource room.					
10.8.	Schools should examine ways to reduce the need for individual support of the students in the resource room.					
10.9.	Schools should examine ways to improve the individual support of the students both in the resource room and the mainstream classroom.					

A.6b. Example of co-ordinators' questionnaire (in Greek)

Είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο «Institute of Education», Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Η έρευνα αυτή διεξάγεται στα πλαίσια των διδακτορικών μου σπουδών και ερευνά τις απόψεις και εμπειρίες των καθηγητών Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας, σχετικά με την διδασκαλία των ελληνικών στους μαθητές με «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην κανονική και στην ενισχυτική διδασκαλία.

Για να απαντήσετε στις πιο κάτω ερωτήσεις θα χρειαστεί μόνο 15'λεπτά. Παρακαλώ να σημειωθεί ότι οι απαντήσεις σας θα παραμείνουν άκρως εμπιστευτικές και ανωνυμές. Μπορείτε να απαντήσετε σε όποιες ερωτήσεις θέλετε και έχετε το δικαίωμα να αποχωρήσετε από την διαδικασία όποτε το επιθυμείτε.

Στο κάτω μέρος του ερωτηματολογίου σημειώνεται ένας προσωπικός «κωδικός αριθμός» για κάθε συμμετέχοντα. Ο αριθμός αυτός είναι αναγνωρίσιμος μόνο από τον συμμετέχοντα και την ερευνήτρια. Χρησιμοποιείται μόνο για την μεταξύ μας επικοινωνία κατά τη διάρκεια της έρευνας και είναι απαραίτητος για την ανάλυση των ιδεών που προκύπτουν από το ερωτηματολόγιο σας και θα συζητηθούν στις ατομικές συνεντεύξεις που θα ακολουθήσουν.

Κωδικός αριθμός: (για ερευνητικούς σκοπούς μόνο) _____

Ερωτήσεις:

A.Δημογραφικά Στοιχεία:

(Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ ή συμπληρώστε στα κενά τις απαντήσεις σας)

1. Άντρας Γυναίκα

2. Ηλικία: 30-45 46- 55 56-63 Άλλο: _____

3α. Πόσα χρόνια διδάσκετε στα σχολεία Μέσης εκπαίδευσης? _____

3β. Πόσα χρόνια διδάσκετε σ' αυτό το σχολείο? _____

3γ. Έχετε ποτέ εργαστεί σε σχολείο «Ειδικής Εκπαίδευσης»; Ναι Όχι

4. Έχετε παρακολουθήσει προγράμματα επιμόρφωσης σχετικά με την διδασκαλία των μαθητών με «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»; Ναι Όχι

Αν ναι, μπορείτε να μας μιλήσετε για το θέμα και το περιεχόμενο τους;

5. Έχετε παρακολουθήσει κάποιο πρόγραμμα κατάρτισης σχετικά με την διαφοροποίηση της εργασίας και την προσαρμογή των εκπαιδευτικών δραστηριοτήτων στις «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών της τάξης σας;

Ναι Όχι

Αν ναι, μπορείτε να μας δώσετε κάποιες πληροφορίες για το πρόγραμμα αυτό;

A.2 Πληροφορίες για τους μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» :

6α. Πόσοι μαθητές έχουν διαγνωστεί ότι έχουν «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στο σχολείο σας;

6β. Πόσοι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» συμμετέχουν στα μαθήματα στήριξης του σχολείου σας;

6γ. Πόσοι φιλόλογοι διδάσκουν στο πρόγραμμα στήριξης;

6δ. Ποιές είναι οι πιο συχνές «δυσκολίες» που αντιμετωπίζουν οι μαθητές του προγράμματος στήριξης στα Νέα Ελληνικά; (**Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ όλα όσα ταιριάζουν**)

<input type="checkbox"/>	στην ανάγνωση
<input type="checkbox"/>	στην παραγωγή γραπτού λόγου
<input type="checkbox"/>	στην κατανόηση και σύνθεση περίπλοκων συλλογισμών
<input type="checkbox"/>	στη σύνταξη
<input type="checkbox"/>	στην ορθογραφία
<input type="checkbox"/>	Άλλο (παρακαλώ σημειώστε):

B. Γενικές απόψεις-κρίσεις:

7. Σε ποίο βαθμό συμφωνείτε/ διαφωνείτε με τις ακόλουθες προτάσεις ;

Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο		Συμφωνώ απόλυτα	Συμφωνώ	Δεν ξέρω	Διαφωνώ έντονα	Διαφωνώ
7.1.	Όλοι οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» θα πρέπει να αποχωρούν από κάποια μαθήματα της «κανονικής» τους τάξης για να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης.					
7.2.	Μερικοί μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» θα πρέπει να αποχωρίσουν από κάποια μαθήματα της «κανονικής» τους τάξης για να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης.					
7.3.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται στήριξη μόνο στην «κανονική» τάξη.					
7.4.	Βοηθώντας ένα μαθητή να εξαλείψει τις «μαθησιακές του δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» του τάξη, μπορεί να είναι αποτελεσματικό για την βελτίωση των μαθησιακών δυνατοτήτων όλων των μαθητών.					
7.5.	Οι μαθητές με «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» μπορούν να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη στήριξη στην «κανονική» τους τάξη, διαφοροποιώντας τις δραστηριότητες της τάξης ανάλογα με τις δυνατότητες τους.					
7.6.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» δεν μπορούν να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη στήριξη στην «κανονική» τους τάξη γιατί παρά τις δυσκολίες τους, προτιμούν να εργάζονται με τις ίδιες δραστηριότητες όπως και οι συμμαθητές τους.					

7.7.	Οι καθηγητές δεν μπορούν να προσφέρουν εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στους μαθητές με «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» τάξη εξαιτίας της πίεσης του χρόνου για κάλυψη της διδακτέας ύλης, των διαγωνισμάτων, επαναλήψεων και εξετάσεων.					
7.8.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης γιατί βελτιώνεται η μάθηση τους, αξιοποιώντας τις δυνατότητες τους.					
7.9.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης γιατί μπορούν να επιτύχουν τους μαθησιακούς στόχους των γενικών αναλυτικών προγραμμάτων.					
7.10.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» δεν μπορούν να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη στήριξη στην «κανονική» τους τάξη , εξαιτίας του μεγάλου αριθμού μαθητών στις τάξεις.					
7.11.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στιγματίζονται όταν δέχονται ενισχυτική διδασκαλία στην τάξη τους.					
7.12.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στιγματίζονται όταν δέχονται ενισχυτική διδασκαλία στην αίθουσα στήριξης.					
<u>Παρακαλώ σχολιάστε/ αιτιολογήστε τις προτάσεις στις οποίες απαντήσατε «δε ξέρω»:</u>						

Γ. Παιδαγωγικές Πρακτικές:

8α. Γιατί νομίζετε είναι σημαντικό να αναπτυχθούν πρακτικές ενίσχυσης των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών» των μαθητών στην «κανονική» τάξη;

Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο	Πολύ σημαντικό	Σημαντικό	Δεν ξέρω	Λιγότερο σημαντικό	Καθόλου σημαντικό
8.1. Οι μαθητές να αποκτήσουν υψηλή αυτοεκτίμηση.					
8.2. Οι μαθητές να αναπτύξουν τις δικές τους πρακτικές μάθησης.					
8.3. Οι μαθητές να γνωρίζουν τους μαθησιακούς στόχους των νέων αναλυτικών προγραμμάτων.					
8.4. Οι μαθητές να μάθουν να αξιοποιούν τις εμπειρίες και τις δυνατότητες τους για μάθηση.					
8.5. Οι μαθητές να ζητούν βοήθεια από τους δασκάλους και τους συμμαθητές τους στην «κανονική» τάξη, χωρίς να φοβούνται ότι θα αποκαλυφθούν «οι μαθησιακές τους δυσκολίες».					
8.6. Οι μαθητές να ξεπεράσουν τον φόβο της αποτυχίας στην τάξη.					

8β. Ποίο από τους πιο πάνω στόχους θεωρείτε ως το σημαντικότερο, για τους μαθητές σας που αντιμετωπίζουν « μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» τάξη; **(Παρακαλώ αιτιολογήστε την απάντησή σας)**

9. Σε ποίο βαθμό θεωρείτε τις πιο κάτω παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές σημαντικές για την στήριξη των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών» των μαθητών στην «κανονική» τάξη;

Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο	Πολύ σημαντικό	Σημαντικό	Δεν ξέρω	Λιγότερο σημαντικό	Καθόλου σημαντικό
9.1. να διαφοροποιούνται οι εργασίες ανάλογα με το επίπεδο και τις δυνατότητες όλων των μαθητών.					
9.2. να έχουν οι μαθητές επιλογές στις δραστηριότητες που πρέπει να κάνουν στην τάξη τους.					
9.3. να διαφοροποιείται η κατ' οίκον εργασία.					
9.4. να δίνονται εξατομικευμένες οδηγίες και επιπρόσθετες διευκρινήσεις σε όσους μαθητές τις χρειάζονται για να ολοκληρώσουν την εργασία τους στην τάξη.					
9.5. να χρησιμοποιούνται σχολικοί βοηθοί στην «κανονική» τάξη, για να βοηθούν τους μαθητές και τους εκπαιδευτικούς κατά την μαθησιακή διαδικασία.					
9.6. να αξιοποιείται η τεχνολογία και να χρησιμοποιούνται οπτικοακουστικά μέσα.					
9.7. να συμμετέχουν οι μαθητές σε ομαδικές εργασίες, έρευνες και διαγωνισμούς.					

10. Σε ποίο βαθμό συμφωνείτε / διαφωνείτε με τις ακόλουθες προτάσεις:

Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο		Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα	Δεν ξέρω	Διαφωνώ	Διαφωνώ έντονα
10.1.	Οι εκπαιδευτικοί θα πρέπει να συζητούν τους στόχους και τις μεθόδους των προγραμμάτων στήριξης με τους μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες», με σκοπό την αποτελεσματικότερη αντιμετώπιση των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών» τους.					
10.2.	Τα αναλυτικά προγράμματα πρέπει να αλλάξουν ώστε να ανταποκρίνονται στα διαφορετικά ενδιαφέροντα, γνώσεις και δεξιότητες των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» τάξη.					
10.3.	Τα ατομικά προγράμματα στήριξης των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» θα πρέπει να προσδιορίζουν τις αλλαγές που πρέπει να γίνονται στην διδασκαλία και στο μαθησιακό περιβάλλον ώστε οι μαθητές να επιτύχουν τους στόχους των γενικών αναλυτικών προγραμμάτων.					
10.4.	Τα ατομικά προγράμματα στήριξης των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» θα πρέπει να προσδιορίζουν τις αλλαγές που πρέπει να γίνονται στην διδασκαλία και στο μαθησιακό περιβάλλον ώστε να αντιμετωπίζονται οι δυσκολίες τους στην «κανονική» τάξη.					
10.5.	Οι εκπαιδευτικοί πρέπει να είναι οι μόνοι υπεύθυνοι για τις αλλαγές που χρειάζονται να γίνουν στη διδασκαλία και στο μαθησιακό περιβάλλον της τάξης τους, ώστε να ενθαρρύνουν τη συμμετοχή των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» αλλά και να βελτιώσουν και να αναπτύξουν την μάθηση όλων των μαθητών τους.					
10.6.	Τα προγράμματα στήριξης των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» κατά τον σχεδιασμό τους, πρέπει να λαμβάνουν υπόψη τα διαφορετικά ενδιαφέροντα, γνώσεις, δεξιότητες και εμπειρίες των μαθητών.					
10.7.	Τα προγράμματα στήριξης των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να σχεδιάζονται ως συμπληρωματική ανεξάρτητη διδασκαλία που παρέχεται στην αίθουσα στήριξης του σχολείου.					
10.8.	Οι σχολικές μονάδες πρέπει να δοκιμάζουν παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές με τις οποίες θα μειώνεται η εξατομικευμένη στήριξη των μαθητών στην αίθουσα στήριξης.					
10.9.	Οι σχολικές μονάδες πρέπει να δοκιμάζουν παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές με τις οποίες θα βελτιώνεται η εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στους μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» και στην αίθουσα στήριξης και στην κανονική τάξη.					

A.7a.Example of teachers' questionnaire

I am a teacher of Greek philology in Cyprus. Because of my personal development and my interest in inclusive education, I am currently conducting this PhD study at the Institute of Education, University College of London in the U.K. The study aims to explore the teachers' experiences of teaching Greek to the students 'with mild learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom and the resource room and their understanding about inclusive education and of using inclusive practices in their classroom.

Answering the following questions will take you no more than fifteen minutes. Please note that the confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants are ensured. You have the right to withdraw at any stage of the process and not answer any question you do not wish.

The questionnaires will be numbered, the numbers will be read and used only by me. It is necessary for the development of the semi-structured interview questions which will follow additionally to the questionnaire.

Code number: (official used only) _____

QUESTIONS:

Personal Information:

(Please tick or complete what is appropriate for you)

1.Man Woman

2. age: 30-45 46- 55 56-63 Other _____

3a. How many years have you been teaching at secondary schools?

3b. How many years have you taught in this school?

4. Have you ever worked in 'special school'? Yes No

5. Have you had any special training regarding teaching students 'with learning difficulties'?

Yes No

If yes, can you please tell me about it?

6.Have you had any special training regarding how to devise and manage inclusive learning activities in your classroom? Yes No

If yes, can you please tell me about it?

B. Teachers' beliefs and perspectives

7. To what extent do you agree/ disagree with the following statements:

Please tick the box nearest to your view		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Strongly disagree	Disagree
7.1.	All the students 'with learning difficulties' should be withdrawn from some mainstream classes to get individualized support in the resource room.					
7.2.	Some students 'with learning difficulties' should be withdrawn from some mainstream classes to get individualized support in the resource room.					
7.3.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported only in the mainstream classroom.					
7.4.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students can be supported in the mainstream classroom, by differentiating the classroom activities according to their educational possibilities.					
7.5.	Teaching a student how to deal with their 'learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom can be also helpful for the learning of the other students.					
7.6.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students can't be supported in the mainstream classroom, because students want to work with the same material like their classmates.					
7.7.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room, because their learning is improved.					
7.8.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room, because teaching is concerned with identifying the 'strengths' of students and their 'possibilities' to build on their learning development.					
7.9.	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room because teaching is aimed to help students to achieve the goals of the mainstream curriculum.					
7.10.	Students with 'learning difficulties' can't have individual support in the mainstream classroom due to the large number of the students.					
7.11.	Students 'with learning difficulties' are stigmatized when their 'needs' are supported in the mainstream classroom.					
7.12.	Students 'with learning difficulties' are stigmatized when their 'needs' are supported in the resource room.					
Please add any extra comments you may have if you have ticked 'not sure' :						

C. Teaching practices:

8a. Why do you think it is important to develop inclusive educational practices, for the students 'with learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom?

(Please show the level of importance which should be given to each of the following statements about inclusive practices, by ticking the appropriate box)

Please tick the box nearest to your view		Very important	Important	Not sure	Little importance	Not important at all
8.1	Students develop high self – esteem.					
8.2	Students develop their learning styles and techniques.					
8.3	Students value their skills and experiences to learn.					
8.4	Students overcome the fear of being identified for their 'learning deficiencies' in front of the others.					
8.5	Students overcome the fear of failing in mainstream classroom and exams.					

8b. Which of the above aims do you perceive as the most important to be achieved in your classroom? **(Please explain in more details)**

9a. In which ways do you find that the most students 'with learning difficulties' feel more confident to work at the mainstream classroom?

9b. In which ways do you find that the most students 'with learning difficulties' prefer to work, when they are in the resource room?

10. To what extent do you find the following inclusive practices in your classroom important for encouraging students 'with learning difficulties' to achieve?

Please tick the box nearest to your view		Very important	Important	Not sure	Little importance	Not important at all
10.1.	Using differentiated worksheets to meet and extend the learning of students.					
10.2.	Giving students choice over their classroom activities.					
10.3.	Giving students choice over their homework exercises.					
10.4.	Giving direct instructions and extra explanations to students who need them to complete their work.					
10.5.	Using teaching assistants to help the mainstream teachers check the progress of all students in the mainstream classroom.					
10.6.	Using audio visual material and technology during the learning process in the classroom.					
10.7.	Involving students in group projects/ research / discussions.					

A.7b.Example of teachers' questionnaire (in Greek)

Είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο «Institute of Education», του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Η έρευνα αυτή διεξάγεται στα πλαίσια των διδακτορικών μου σπουδών και μελετά τις απόψεις και τις εμπειρίες των Καθηγητών Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας σχετικά με τη διδασκαλία των ελληνικών στους μαθητές με «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» τάξη και στην ενισχυτική διδασκαλία.

Για να απαντήσετε στις πιο κάτω ερωτήσεις θα χρειαστείτε μόνο 15'λεπτά. Παρακαλώ να σημειωθεί ότι οι απαντήσεις σας θα παραμείνουν άκρως εμπιστευτικές και ανώνυμες. Υπενθυμίζεται ότι μπορείτε να αποχωρήσετε από την διαδικασία όποτε το επιθυμείτε.

Στο κάτω μέρος του ερωτηματολογίου σημειώνεται ένας προσωπικός «κωδικός αριθμός» για κάθε συμμετέχοντα. Ο αριθμός αυτός είναι αναγνωρίσιμος μόνο από τον συμμετέχοντα και την ερευνήτρια. Χρησιμοποιείται μόνο για την μεταξύ μας επικοινωνία κατά τη διάρκεια της έρευνας και είναι απαραίτητος για την ανάλυση των ιδεών που προκύπτουν από το ερωτηματολόγιο σας και θα συζητηθούν στις ατομικές συνεντεύξεις που θα ακολουθήσουν.

Κωδικός αριθμός (για ερευνητικούς σκοπούς μόνο): _____

Ερωτήσεις:

A. Δημογραφικά Στοιχεία:

(Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ ή συμπληρώστε στα κενά τις απαντήσεις σας)

1. Άντρας Γυναίκα

2. Ηλικία: 30-45 46-55 56-63 Άλλο: _____

3α. Πόσα χρόνια διδάσκετε στα σχολεία Μέσης εκπαίδευσης; _____

3β. Πόσα χρόνια διδάσκετε σ' αυτό το σχολείο; _____

4. Έχετε ποτέ εργαστεί σε σχολείο «Ειδικής Εκπαίδευσης»; Ναι Όχι

5. Έχετε παρακολουθήσει προγράμματα επιμόρφωσης σχετικά με την διδασκαλία των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»;

Ναι Όχι

Αν ναι, μπορείτε να μας μιλήσετε για το θέμα και το περιεχόμενο τους ;

6. Έχετε παρακολουθήσει κάποιο πρόγραμμα κατάρτισης σχετικά με την διαφοροποίηση της εργασίας και την προσαρμογή των εκπαιδευτικών δραστηριοτήτων στις «μαθησιακές ανάγκες» των μαθητών της τάξης σας;

Ναι Όχι

Αν ναι, μπορείτε να μας δώσετε κάποιες πληροφορίες για το πρόγραμμα αυτό;

Β.Γενικές απόψεις και κρίσεις:

7. Σε ποίο βαθμό συμφωνείτε ή διαφωνείτε με τις ακόλουθες προτάσεις:

Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο		Συμφωνώ απόλυτα	Συμφωνώ	Δεν ξέρω	Διαφωνώ έντονα	Διαφωνώ
7.1.	Όλοι οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» θα πρέπει να αποχωρούν από κάποια μαθήματα της «κανονικής» τους τάξης για να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης.					
7.2.	Κάποιοι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» θα πρέπει να αποχωρούν από κάποια μαθήματα της «κανονικής» τους τάξης για να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης.					
7.3.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται στήριξη μόνο στην «κανονική» τάξη.					
7.4.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» μπορούν να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη στήριξη στην «κανονική» τους τάξη, διαφοροποιώντας τις δραστηριότητες της τάξης ανάλογα με τις δυνατότητες τους.					
7.5.	Βοηθώντας ένα μαθητή να εξαλείψει τις «μαθησιακές του δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» του τάξη, μπορεί να είναι αποτελεσματικό για την βελτίωση των μαθησιακών δυνατοτήτων όλων των μαθητών.					
7.6.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» δεν μπορούν να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη στήριξη στην «κανονική» τάξη γιατί παρά τις δυσκολίες τους, προτιμούν να εργάζονται με τις ίδιες δραστηριότητες όπως και οι συμμαθητές τους.					
7.7.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης γιατί βελτιώνεται η μάθηση τους.					
7.8.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης γιατί αξιοποιούνται οι δυνατότητες τους για μάθηση.					
7.9.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια στην αίθουσα στήριξης γιατί μπορούν να επιτύχουν τους μαθησιακούς στόχους των γενικών αναλυτικών προγραμμάτων.					
7.10.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» δεν μπορούν να δέχονται εξατομικευμένη στήριξη στην «κανονική» τους τάξη , εξαιτίας του μεγάλου αριθμού μαθητών στις τάξεις.					
7.11.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στιγματίζονται όταν δέχονται ενισχυτική διδασκαλία στην τάξη τους.					
7.12.	Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στιγματίζονται όταν δέχονται ενισχυτική διδασκαλία στην αίθουσα στήριξης.					
Παρακαλώ σχολιάστε/ αιτιολογήστε τις προτάσεις στις οποίες απαντήσατε «δε γνωρίζω» :						

Γ. Παιδαγωγικές Πρακτικές:

8α. Γιατί νομίζετε είναι σημαντικό να αναπτυχθούν πρακτικές ενίσχυσης των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών» των μαθητών στην «κανονική» τάξη;

Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο	Πολύ σημαντικό	Σημαντικό	Δεν ξέρω	Λιγότερο σημαντικό	Καθόλου σημαντικό
8.1. Οι μαθητές να αποκτήσουν υψηλή αυτοεκτίμηση.					
8.2. Οι μαθητές να αναπτύξουν τις δικές τους πρακτικές μάθησης.					
8.3. Οι μαθητές να μάθουν να αξιοποιούν παραγωγικά και αποτελεσματικά τις εμπειρίες και τις δυνατότητες τους για μάθηση.					
8.4. Οι μαθητές να ζητούν βοήθεια από τους δασκάλους και τους συμμαθητές τους, χωρίς να φοβούνται ότι θα αποκαλυφθούν «οι μαθησιακές τους δυσκολίες» εντός της «κανονικής» τάξης.					
8.5. Οι μαθητές να ξεπεράσουν τον φόβο της αποτυχίας στην τάξη.					

8β. Ποίο από τους πιο πάνω στόχους θεωρείτε ως το σημαντικότερο, για τους μαθητές σας που αντιμετωπίζουν «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» τάξη;

(Παρακαλώ αιτιολογείστε την απάντησή σας)

9α. Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» όταν βρίσκονται στην «κανονική» τους τάξη προτιμούν να εργάζονται :

(Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που συναντάται περισσότερο στην τάξη σας)

<input type="checkbox"/> Ατομικά	<input type="checkbox"/> σε ομάδες
<input type="checkbox"/> σε ζευγάρια	<input type="checkbox"/> Άλλο: _____

Για ποίο λόγο νομίζετε ότι συμβαίνει αυτό;

9β. Οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» όταν βρίσκονται στη στήριξη προτιμούν να εργάζονται:

<input type="checkbox"/> Ατομικά	<input type="checkbox"/> σε ομάδες
<input type="checkbox"/> σε ζευγάρια	<input type="checkbox"/> Άλλο: _____

Για ποίο λόγο νομίζετε ότι συμβαίνει αυτό;

10. Σε ποίο βαθμό θεωρείτε τις πιο κάτω παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές σημαντικές για την στήριξη των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών» των μαθητών στην «κανονική» τάξη;

	Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο	Πολύ σημαντικό	Σημαντικό	Δεν ξέρω	Λιγότερο σημαντικό	Καθόλου σημαντικό
10.1	Να διαφοροποιούνται οι εργασίες ανάλογα με το επίπεδο και τις δυνατότητες όλων των μαθητών.					
10.2	να διαφοροποιείται η κατ'οίκον εργασία.					
10.3	Οι καθηγητές να οργανώνουν πολλές διαφορετικές δραστηριότητες για ένα θέμα από τις οποίες οι μαθητές να μπορούν να επιλέγουν με ποία θέλουν να εργαστούν.					
10.4	να δίνονται εξατομικευμένες οδηγίες και επιπρόσθετες διευκρινήσεις σε όσους μαθητές τις χρειάζονται για να ολοκληρώσουν την εργασία τους στην τάξη.					
10.5	να χρησιμοποιούνται σχολικοί βοηθοί για να βοηθήσουν τους μαθητές και τους εκπαιδευτικούς κατά την μαθησιακή διαδικασία.					
10.6	Να αξιοποιείται η τεχνολογία και να χρησιμοποιούνται οπτικοακουστικά μέσα.					
10.7	Να συμμετέχουν οι μαθητές σε ομαδικές εργασίες, έρευνες και διαγωνισμούς.					
10.7	Να συμμετέχουν οι μαθητές σε ομαδικές εργασίες, έρευνες και διαγωνισμούς.					

A.8a.Co-ordinators' Interview Questions

I am a teacher of Greek philology in Cyprus. Because of my personal development and my interest in inclusive education, I am currently conducting this PhD study at the Institute of Education, University college London in the U.K. The study aims to explore the teachers' experiences of teaching Greek to the students 'with mild learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom and the resource room and their understanding about inclusive education and of using inclusive practices in their classroom.

Answering the following questions will take you no more than forty five minutes. Please note that the confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants are ensured. Your answers will be taped-recorded only if you agree.

School: _____

Date: _____ **Day:** _____ **Time:** _____ **Duration:** 45' minutes

Participant: _____

Profile:

Questions:

1.What do you think are the reasons why the support policy suggests that the 'special educational needs' of the children should be supported outside the mainstream classroom?

2. According to your professional experience is it possible for the 'learning difficulties' of the students to be supported in the mainstream classroom?

-(Probes: if not how different is it to support the needs of these students in the classroom considering that you teach in a mixed ability classroom?)

-Resource room support has been influenced because of the cutting of economic crisis (Students' number has increased), how about if resource room support stopped, would students' 'learning difficulties be supported in the mainstream classroom?

3.Do you believe that the teachers and the students 'with learning difficulties' should be consulted about the development of support policies for the students identified as having 'special educational needs'? Please state how they will influence the policies and what will be the benefits?

4. Why do you agree/ disagree with the case that 'learning difficulties' of a particular student should be supported in the resource room/ the mainstream classroom?

-(Probes: Please explain your views with reference to the way which withdrawal from classes / the way which supporting the 'educational needs' of the students inside the mainstream classroom may advantage or disadvantage the students 'with learning difficulties'?)

5. What do you want to be provided in your future training in reference to inclusive practices and the support of students 'with learning difficulties'?

6.Can you consider any benefits or disadvantage for the teachers to support the 'learning difficulties' of the students in the mainstream classroom? (Personal, professional, academic)

7.Have you ever thought or discussed with students how they feel when they left their classroom to get individualized support? If not, can you guess how they feel or if you were in their position, how would you feel about it?

8. Have you noticed any students complaining about being stigmatized or bullied because they have been diagnosed as having 'learning difficulties'? If yes please state how you manage such cases, if not, please explain how your school managed to avoid such cases.

9. In what ways do you feel that the labels of "learning difficulties" influence the students?

10. To what extent do you find the practices used in your school regarding the 'learning difficulties' of the students are meeting the aims indicated in question 9 of the questionnaire? What other aims do you consider as important for encouraging students 'with learning difficulties' to achieve?

11. Which of the 'inclusive' practices indicated in question 10 of the questionnaire are used in your school to help students 'with learning difficulties' to achieve?

Please explain the reasons that influenced your decision to choose this/ these practices

-(Probes: Which of the practices used in the resource room are the same/ can be used also in the mainstream classroom?)

12. Has your school implemented any practices (through your lesson planning, the curriculum and the resource materials you used in the mainstream classroom) to minimize the withdrawal of students for individual support outside the mainstream classroom? If yes, can you please talk a little more about them? If not, can you please explain why?

13. What do you think should be changed regarding the curriculum, the text books, the pedagogy, the practices and the support material/ resources in order for the 'learning needs' of the students to be supported in the mainstream classroom?

-(Probes: Please state what and how they should be changed?)

14. What other changes do you consider are necessary to be done at mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus, in order to minimize the withdrawal of students 'with learning difficulties' from the mainstream classroom?

Thank you for your time and your participation!!

A.8b.Co-ordinators' Interview Questions (in Greek)

Είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο «Institute of Education» του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Η έρευνα αυτή διεξάγεται στα πλαίσια των διδακτορικών μου σπουδών και ερευνά τις απόψεις και τις εμπειρίες των καθηγητών Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας σχετικά με τη διδασκαλία των Ελληνικών στους μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» τάξη και την ενισχυτική διδασκαλία.

Οι συνεντεύξεις θα είναι ατομικές και θα πραγματοποιούνται όλες από εμένα. Η κάθε συνέντευξη δε θα ξεπερνά τα 45' λεπτά. Παρακαλώ να σημειωθεί ότι όλες οι απαντήσεις σας θα παραμείνουν άκρως εμπιστευτικές και ανώνυμες. Οι συνεντεύξεις θα μαγνητοφωνηθούν μόνο εάν συμφωνείτε.

Σχολείο: _____

Ημερομηνία: _____ **Μέρα:** _____ **ώρα:** _____ **Διάρκεια: 45' λεπτά**

Συμμετέχοντας: _____

Προφίλ:

Ερωτήσεις:

1. Γιατί πιστεύεις ότι τα παιδιά με «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» δέχονται στήριξη εκτός της «κανονικής» τάξης;

2. Σύμφωνα με την εμπειρία σας μπορούν οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών αυτών να ενισχύονται στην «κανονική» τάξη;

- (Αν όχι πόσο διαφορετικό / δύσκολο είναι οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» να δέχονται στήριξη στην «κανονική» τους τάξη, αναλογιζόμενη ότι ήδη στην «κανονική» τάξη φοιτούν μαθητές μικτής ικανότητας;)

- Η στήριξη στις τάξεις ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας έχει επηρεαστεί εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης ;

- Ο αριθμός των μαθητών στις ομάδες ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας έχει αυξηθεί, αν σταματήσουν τα μαθήματα στήριξης στις τάξεις ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας πιστεύεται πως «οι μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών θα μπορούν να δέχονται στήριξη μόνο στην «κανονική» τους τάξη;

3. Πιστεύετε ότι οι καθηγητές και οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να έχουν ενεργή συμμετοχή στην ανάπτυξη των πολιτικών και πρακτικών στήριξης των μαθητών αυτών; Πώς πιστεύετε ότι αυτό θα επηρεάσει ή θα βελτιώσει τις υφιστάμενες πρακτικές;

4. Γιατί συμφωνείτε/διαφωνείτε με το γεγονός ότι οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται στήριξη στις τάξεις ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας/ στην «κανονική» τάξη;

- (Παρακαλώ δικαιολογήστε την απάντησή σας κάνοντας αναφορά στα θετικά και τα αρνητικά για τους μαθητές όταν δέχονται στήριξη στις τάξεις ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας/ στην «κανονική» τάξη;)

5. Σε τι θα θέλατε να εξειδικευτείτε περισσότερο όσο αφορά τις παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές της συμπεριληπτικής εκπαίδευσης και την ενισχυτική διδασκαλία των μαθητών "με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες";

6. Μπορείτε να αναφέρετε κάποια αρνητικά/ θετικά για τους καθηγητές όταν στηρίζουν τις «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» αυτών των μαθητών μόνο στην κανονική τάξη; (Προσωπική, επαγγελματική, ακαδημαϊκή ανάπτυξη τους)

7. Έχετε ποτέ σκεφτεί ή συζητήσει με τους μαθητές σας πώς νιώθουν όταν φεύγουν από την τάξη τους για να έρθουν στην ενισχυτική διδασκαλία; Αν όχι, μπορείτε να μαντέψετε πώς νιώθουν; Αν ήσασταν εσείς στην θέση τους πώς θα νιώθατε;

8. Γνωρίζετε περιπτώσεις μαθητών που παραπονιούνται για το ότι έχουν στιγματιστεί ή θυματοποιηθεί εξαιτίας του ότι έχουν διαγνωστεί ότι έχουν «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»; Αν ναι πώς

χειρίζεστε τέτοιες περιπτώσεις; Αν όχι πως καταφέρνει το σχολείο σας να αποφύγει τέτοια περιστατικά;

9. Πώς επηρεάζονται οι μαθητές εξαιτίας της κατηγοριοποίησης τους ότι έχουν «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»; (Θετικά / αρνητικά- συνέπειες στιγματισμού)

10. Ποίες από τις πρακτικές που υποδεικνύονται στην ερώτηση 9 του ερωτηματολογίου χρησιμοποιούνται στην «κανονική» τάξη για τη στήριξη των μαθητών σας «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»; Ποίους άλλους στόχους θεωρείτε σημαντικό να επιτευχθούν από τους μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»;

11. Ποίους από τους στόχους που υποδεικνύονται στην ερώτηση 10 του ερωτηματολογίου, θεωρείτε ότι επιτυγχάνονται με τις υφιστάμενες πρακτικές στήριξης των μαθητών «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»;

-Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε τους λόγους που υποδείξατε αυτούς τους στόχους/πρακτικές
- (Ποίες από τις διδακτικές πρακτικές που χρησιμοποιούνται στις τάξεις ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας είναι ίδιες με αυτές της «κανονικής» τάξης/ μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν και στην «κανονική» τάξη;

12. Έχετε υιοθετήσει κάποιες άλλες πρακτικές ή χρησιμοποιείτε κάποια εκπαιδευτικά εργαλεία και βοηθήματα που βοηθούν την στήριξη των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών» των μαθητών στην «κανονική» τάξη; Αν ναι, εξηγήστε μας τις πρακτικές αυτές; Αν όχι μπορείτε να μας εξηγήσετε τους λόγους;

13. Τι πιστεύετε ότι πρέπει να αλλάξει σε σχέση με τα προγράμματα σπουδών, τα βιβλία, τις παιδαγωγικές μεθόδους και την υλικοτεχνική υποδομή ώστε οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών να στηρίζονται εντός της «κανονικής» τάξης;

- (Παρακαλώ επισημάνετε ποία και πώς πρέπει να αλλάξουν;)

14. Ποίες άλλες αλλαγές θεωρείτε ότι πρέπει να γίνουν στα σχολεία Μέσης Εκπαίδευσης, ώστε να μπορούν οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών να στηριχτούν εντός της «κανονικής» τάξης;

Σας ευχαριστώ για το χρόνο και την συμμετοχή σας!!

A.9a. Teachers' Interview Questions

I am a teacher of Greek philology in Cyprus. Because of my personal development and my interest in inclusive education, I am currently conducting this PhD study at the Institute of Education, University college London in the U.K. The study aims to explore the teachers' experiences of teaching Greek to the students 'with mild learning difficulties' in the mainstream classroom and the resource room and their understanding about inclusive education and of using inclusive practices in their classroom.

Answering the following questions will take you no more than forty five minutes. Please note that the confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants are ensured. Your answers will be taped-recorded only if you agree.

School: _____

Date: _____ **Day:** _____

Time: _____

Participant: _____

Pseudonym: _____

Duration: 45' minutes

Profile:

1. What do you think are the reasons why the support policy suggests that the 'special educational needs' of the children should be supported outside the mainstream classroom?
2. Why do you agree with the case that 'learning difficulties' of a particular student should be supported in the resource room? [Please explain your views with reference to the way which withdrawal from classes may advantage or disadvantage the students 'with learning difficulties'](#)
3. According to your professional experience is it possible for the 'learning difficulties' of the students to be supported in the mainstream classroom?
4. Can you consider any benefits or disadvantages for the teachers to support the 'learning difficulties' of the students in the mainstream classroom? ([Personal](#), [professional](#), [academic](#))
5. Do you feel that your training and professional experience have influenced your thinking and understanding of the 'educational needs' of a particular student 'with impairment' or 'with specific learning difficulty'? ([Please state how and to what extent your views have changed or not changed and why you think this is the case](#))
6. Have you ever thought or discussed with students how they feel when they left their classroom to receive individualized support? If not can you guess how they feel or if you were in their situation, how would you feel about it?
7. Have you noticed any students complaining about being stigmatized or bullied because they have been diagnosed as having 'learning difficulties'? If yes please state how you manage such cases, if not please explain how your school managed to avoid such cases?
8. In what ways do you feel that the labels of 'learning difficulties' influence the students?
9. What teaching practices do you use in the resource room? Which of the aims of inclusive practices ([indicated in question 7 teachers' questionnaires](#)) do you feel are achieved?
10. What teaching practices do you use in the mainstream classroom? Which of the aims of inclusive practices ([indicated in question 7 teachers' questionnaires](#)) do you feel are achieved?

11a. Which of the inclusive practices indicated in question 10 of the teachers' questionnaire do you use in your classroom to help students 'with learning difficulties' to achieve?

11b. Why don't you use the (Other practices indicated in question 10)

-Please explain the reasons that influenced your decision to choose this/ these practices

12. Have you implemented any other practices (through your lesson planning, the curriculum and the resource materials you used in the mainstream classroom) to minimize the need of students to be individually supported outside the mainstream classroom?

-If yes, please talk about them? If not can, you please explain why?

13. What do you think should be changed regarding the curriculum, the textbooks, the pedagogy, the practices and the support material/ resources in order for the 'learning needs' of the students to be supported in the mainstream classroom?

-Please state what and how they should be changed

14. What other changes do you consider are necessary to be done in mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus, in order to minimize the withdrawal of students 'with learning difficulties' from the mainstream classroom?

Thank you for your time and your participation!!

A.9b. Teachers' Interview Questions (in Greek)

Είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας και διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο «Institute of Education» του Πανεπιστημίου του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Η έρευνα αυτή διεξάγεται στα πλαίσια των διδακτορικών μου σπουδών και ερευνά τις απόψεις και τις εμπειρίες των καθηγητών Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας σχετικά με την διδασκαλία των Ελληνικών στους μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» στην «κανονική» τάξη και την ενισχυτική διδασκαλία.

Οι συνεντεύξεις θα είναι ατομικές και θα πραγματοποιούνται όλες από εμένα. Η κάθε συνέντευξη δεν θα ξεπερνά τα 45' λεπτά. Παρακαλώ να σημειωθεί ότι όλες οι απαντήσεις σας θα παραμείνουν άκρως εμπιστευτικές και ανώνυμες. Οι συνεντεύξεις θα μαγνητοφωνηθούν μόνο εάν συμφωνείτε.

Σχολείο: _____

Ημερομηνία: _____

Μέρα: _____

ώρα: _____

Διάρκεια: 45' λεπτά

Συμμετέχοντας: _____

Προφίλ:

Ερωτήσεις:

1. Γιατί πιστεύετε ότι τα παιδιά με «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» δέχονται στήριξη εκτός της «κανονικής» τάξης;

2. Γιατί συμφωνείτε/ διαφωνείτε με το γεγονός ότι οι μαθητές «με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» πρέπει να δέχονται στήριξη στις τάξεις ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας / στην «κανονική» τάξη;

-(Παρακαλώ αιτιολογήστε την απάντησή σας κάνοντας αναφορά στα θετικά και τα αρνητικά για τους μαθητές όταν δέχονται στήριξη στις τάξεις ενισχυτικής διδασκαλίας στην «κανονική» τάξη)

-Αν θεωρείτε ότι ο λόγος που οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών στηρίζονται στη στήριξη είναι ότι στην τάξη δεν υπάρχει αρκετός χρόνος, τότε θεωρείτε ότι ο χρόνος της στήριξης είναι αρκετός νοούμενου ότι χάνεται χρόνος στις μετακινήσεις προς και από την αίθουσα;

3. Σύμφωνα με τις επαγγελματικές σας εμπειρίες πιστεύετε ότι οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών μπορούν να στηριχθούν στην «κανονική» τάξη;

-Αν όχι, πόσο διαφορετικό/ δύσκολο είναι να στηριχθούν οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» εντός της τάξης νοούμενου ότι οι καθηγητές διδάσκουν ήδη σε τάξεις μικτών ικανοτήτων;

-Εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης, ο αριθμός των μαθητών στη στήριξη έχει αυξηθεί, τι θα συμβεί αν τα προγράμματα στήριξης σταματήσουν; Θα μπορούσαν να στηρίζονται οι δυσκολίες τους στην τάξη; Ποιές θα είναι οι επιπτώσεις για τους μαθητές αυτούς;

4. Ποία πιστεύετε ότι είναι τα θετικά και τα αρνητικά για τους καθηγητές όταν στηρίζουν τις «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών τους εντός της «κανονικής» τάξης; (Προσωπική, επαγγελματική, εκπαιδευτική εξέλιξη)

5. Πιστεύετε ότι η επαγγελματική σας κατάρτιση και εμπειρία έχει επηρεάσει τον τρόπο που αντιμετωπίζετε τις «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών σας; (Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε πώς και σε ποίο βαθμό έχετε ή όχι επηρεαστεί και γιατί;)

6. Έχετε ποτέ σκεφτεί ή συζητήσει με τους μαθητές σας πως νιώθουν όταν φεύγουν από την τάξη τους για να έρθουν στην ενισχυτική διδασκαλία; Αν όχι, μπορείτε να μαντέψετε πως νιώθουν; Αν ήσασταν εσείς στην θέση τους πως θα νιώθατε;

7. Γνωρίζετε περιπτώσεις μαθητών που παραπονιούνται για το ότι έχουν στιγματιστεί ή θυματοποιηθεί εξαιτίας του ότι έχουν διαγνωστεί ότι έχουν «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»; Αν ναι, πώς

χειρίζεστε τέτοιες περιπτώσεις; Αν όχι, εξηγήστε πως καταφέρνει το σχολείο σας να αποτρέπει τέτοια περιστατικά;

8. Πώς επηρεάζονται οι μαθητές, εξαιτίας της κατηγοριοποίησης τους ότι έχουν «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»; (Θετικά / αρνητικά- συνέπειες στιγματισμού)

9. Ποιές πρακτικές χρησιμοποιείτε για την στήριξη των μαθητών στην ενισχυτική διδασκαλία; Ποίους στόχους από αυτούς που υποδείξατε στην ερώτηση 8 του ερωτηματολογίου, θεωρείτε ότι επιτυγχάνονται;

-Ποιές από τις πρακτικές στήριξης που χρησιμοποιούνται ήδη στην τάξη / θα μπορούσαν να χρησιμοποιηθούν στην τάξη; Αν δε χρησιμοποιούνται γιατί όχι;

10. Ποιές πρακτικές χρησιμοποιείτε στην «κανονική» τάξη; Ποίους στόχους από αυτούς που υποδείξατε στην ερώτηση 8 του ερωτηματολογίου, θεωρείτε ότι επιτυγχάνονται;

11α. Ποιές από τις πρακτικές που υποδεικνύονται στην ερώτηση 10 του ερωτηματολογίου χρησιμοποιείτε στην «κανονική» σας τάξη για την στήριξη των μαθητών σας « με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες»;

-Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε τους λόγους που χρησιμοποιείτε αυτές τις πρακτικές;

11β. Γιατί δε χρησιμοποιείτε(άλλες πρακτικές της ερώτησης 10 του ερωτηματολογίου;)

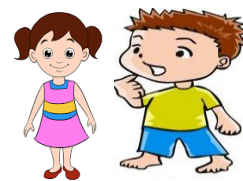
12. Έχετε υιοθετήσει κάποιες άλλες πρακτικές ή χρησιμοποιείτε κάποια άλλα εκπαιδευτικά εργαλεία και βοηθήματα που βοηθούν την στήριξη των «μαθησιακών δυσκολιών» των μαθητών στην «κανονική» τάξη; Αν ναι, εξηγήστε μας τις πρακτικές αυτές; Αν όχι, μπορείτε να μας εξηγήσετε τους λόγους;

13. Τι πιστεύετε ότι πρέπει να αλλάξει σε σχέση με τα προγράμματα σπουδών, τα βιβλία, τις παιδαγωγικές μεθόδους και την υλικοτεχνική υποδομή ώστε οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών να στηρίζονται εντός της «κανονικής» τάξης;

-Παρακαλώ επισημάνετε ποία και πώς πρέπει να αλλάξουν ;

14. Ποιές άλλες αλλαγές θεωρείτε ότι πρέπει να γίνουν στα σχολεία Μέσης Εκπαίδευσης, ώστε να μπορούν οι «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών να στηριχθούν εντός της «κανονικής» τάξης;

Σας ευχαριστώ για το χρόνο και την συμμετοχή σας!



A.10a. Students' Interview Questions

I am a teacher of Greek philology in Cyprus. Because of my personal development and my interest in inclusive education, I am currently conducting this PhD study at the Institute of Education, University College London in the U.K. You are invited to answer in some simple questions and share with me your experiences from the teaching in the mainstream classroom and the resource room .

Answering the following questions will take you no more than thirty minutes. Please note that the confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants are ensured and that you have the right to withdrawn from the process any time you wish. Your answers will be taped-recorded only if you agree.

School: _____

Date: _____ **Day:** _____ **Time:** _____ **Duration: 30' minutes**

Participant: _____

Profile:

A. Personal Information:

1. Age: _____ Class: _____
2. For how long have you had individual support in Greek?
3. How many times per week do you have individual support in the resource room?
4. During your classes in the resource room you feel that you need to be supported in:
5. Do you prefer to be supported alone or in group ? Why?
6. What classes do you miss to get individual support in the resource room?

The pupils' experiences of being withdrawn from the mainstream classroom:

7. Why do you feel it is important to attend individual support in the resource room?
8. How do you feel about missing _____ (*this (these) class/es*) to get individual support in the resource room?
9. Do your classmates say hurtful things about you going for support in the resource room? Yes/ No? If yes, can you please give an example of what they say?
10. Can you please tell me what you like and do not like about your lessons in the resource room?

C.The pupils' experiences from mainstream classroom practices:

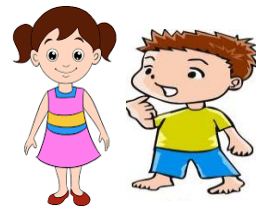
11a. What do you do when you are in the classroom and you have a problem with your work?

11b. Why?

12. Can you please tell me what you like and do not like about the lessons in your classroom?

13. What do you think the teachers should do to support the learning of the students in the mainstream classroom?

Please tick the box nearest to your view		Very important	Important	Not sure	Little importance	Not important at all
13.1.	Create a classroom environment where everyone is respected.					
13.2.	Create a classroom environment that has many dictionaries, books, cards, cds which help the students with their activities.					
13.3.	Make sure that all the students enjoy your lesson and they are interested in participating in the classroom activities.					
13.4.	Use computers and technology to make lesson easier and interesting.					
13.5.	Plan activities according to what the students know and they like.					
13.6.	Give as many details about what students have to do in the classroom, give extra examples whenever necessary.					
13.7.	Support students for planning and revising in order to become independent learners.					
13.8.	Use worksheets and books with difficult and easy activities to help all students to learn.					
13.9.	Give a choice over the activities to do in the classroom and the homework.					
13.10	Use mini projects or tasks that allow students to demonstrate what has been learned and where they need to be improved.					
13.11	Assessing students according to what they can do.					
13.12	Giving students comments how to improve their learning.					



A.10b. Students' Interview Questions (in Greek)

Είμαι καθηγήτρια Ελληνικής Φιλολογίας στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Λονδίνου στην Αγγλία. Μελετώ τη διδασκαλία των Ελληνικών στην «κανονική» τάξη και στην ενισχυτική διδασκαλία και χρειάζομαι τη βοήθειά σας σε αυτό.

Το μόνο που πρέπει να κάνετε, είναι να απαντήσετε σε μερικές απλές ερωτήσεις και να μοιραστείτε μαζί μου, τις εμπειρίες σας από τα μαθήματα στην «κανονική» τάξη και στην ενισχυτική διδασκαλία. Παρακαλώ να σημειωθεί ότι οι απαντήσεις σας θα παραμείνουν άκρως εμπιστευτικές και ανώνυμες. Η συνέντευξη διαρκεί μόνο 30' λεπτά και θα μαγνητοφωνηθεί μόνο εάν συμφωνείτε. Μπορείτε να απαντήσετε σε όσες ερωτήσεις θέλετε και υπενθυμίζετε το δικαίωμα σας να αποχωρήσετε από την διαδικασία όποτε το θελήσετε.

Σχολείο: _____

Ημερομηνία: _____ **Μέρα:** _____ **ώρα :** _____ **Διάρκεια: 30' λεπτά**

Συμμετέχοντας: _____

Προφίλ:

A. Δημογραφικά Στοιχεία:

1. Ηλικία: _____ Τάξη : _____ Αγόρι Κορίτσι

2. Πόσο καιρό παρακολουθείς μαθήματα στήριξης;

3. Πόσες φορές την εβδομάδα κάνεις μαθήματα στήριξης;

4. Όσον αφορά το μάθημα των Νέων Ελληνικών, που θεωρείς ότι χρειάζεσαι περισσότερη βοήθεια;

Ανάγνωση γραπτός λόγος ορθογραφία περίληψη κατανόηση κειμένου έκθεση
άλλο _____

5. Προτιμάς να κάνεις μαθήματα στήριξης μόνος σου ή μαζί με άλλους μαθητές ; Γιατί;

6. Σε ποιά μαθήματα φεύγεις από την τάξη σου για να πας στη στήριξη;

Νέα Ελληνικά Αρχαία Ελληνικά Τέχνη Γαλλικά Μουσική Άλλο _____

(Για τους μαθητές γ' γυμνασίου: θα συνεχίσετε την στήριξη στο λύκειο ναι /όχι γιατί;)

B. Οι εμπειρίες των μαθητών από τα μαθήματα στήριξης :

7. Γιατί πιστεύεις ότι είναι σημαντικό να πηγαίνεις στα μαθήματα στήριξης ;

(για να βελτιώσω τους βαθμούς μου για να έχω περισσότερη αυτοπεποίθηση να συμμετέχω στην τάξη για να έχω βοήθεια με τις κατ όικον εργασίες μου για να έχω βοήθεια για τα

διαγωνίσματα και τις εξετάσεις μου για να καλύψω κενά και αδυναμίες μου από την τάξη
 άλλο _____)

8. Πώς νιώθεις όταν χάνεις _____ (μάθημα/μαθήματα) για να πας στην στήριξη; (λυπημένος γιατί χάνω το/τα μαθήματα που μου αρέσει/ουν.....
χαρούμενος γιατί χάνω το μάθημα που δε μου αρέσει.....
ανακουφισμένος γιατί χάνω το μάθημα που δεν είμαι αρκετά καλός
επέλεξα να χάνω αυτό το μάθημα γιατί δεν μ' ενδιαφέρει)

9. Οι συμμαθητές σου σχολιάζουν αρνητικά όταν εσύ φεύγεις από την τάξη σου για να πας στη στήριξη; **Ναι/ Όχι Αν ναι, μπορείς να μου δώσεις ένα παράδειγμα του τι λένε;**

10. Μπορείς να μου πεις τι σου αρέσει και τι δεν σου αρέσει στα μαθήματα της στήριξης σου;

(Αυτό που μου αρέσει στα μαθήματα στήριξης είναι....., Αυτό που δεν μου αρέσει στα μαθήματα στήριξης είναι σχέσεις δασκάλων – μαθητών, δραστηριότητες, εποπτικά μέσα, ενθάρρυνση των μαθητών, computers, στιγματισμός)

(Τι σου αρέσει στο μάθημα της στήριξης; Σε βοηθά να μαθαίνεις/ να βελτιώσεις τις μαθησιακές σου δυσκολίες;)

Γ. Οι εμπειρίες των μαθητών από τα μαθήματα της «κανονικής» τους τάξης :

11α. Τι κάνεις όταν είσαι στην τάξη και δεν ξέρεις τις απαντήσεις / τι να κάνεις στις εργασίες σου;

(Ζητώ βοήθεια από το δάσκαλο μου Ζητώ βοήθεια από τον διπλανό μου
Δεν ζητώ βοήθεια , αντιγράφω από τον πίνακα και τους συμμαθητές μου
Αδιαφορώ για το μάθημα κάνω αταξίες άλλο _____)

11β. (για αρνητικές συμπεριφορές) γιατί νομίζεις ότι συμπεριφέρεσαι με αυτό τον τρόπο;

(δεν ρωτάς κανένα γιατί)

είσαι ντροπαλός , δεν σου αρέσει , δεν ενδιαφέρεσαι , δεν θέλεις να καταλάβουν οι άλλοι ότι δεν ξέρεις , προτιμάς να ρωτάς τον/την καθηγητή/τρια σου στη στήριξη

(Αν δε συμμετέχεις στο μάθημα της τάξης γιατί το κάνεις αυτό; Δεν το καταλαμβαίνω , βαριέμαι γιατί το άκουσα ξανά στην στήριξη , είμαι ντροπαλός/λη , γενικά βαριέμαι στην τάξη , οι συμμαθητές μου/φίλοι μου δεν προσέχουν το ίδιο και εγώ

12. Μπορείς να μου πεις τι σου αρέσει και τι δεν σου αρέσει στα μαθήματα σου στην «κανονική» τάξη;

(Αυτό που μου αρέσει στα μαθήματα της τάξης είναι)

Αυτό που δεν μου αρέσει στα μαθήματα της τάξης είναι
σχέσεις δασκάλων – μαθητών , δραστηριότητες, εποπτικά μέσα, ενθάρρυνση των μαθητών , computers, στιγματισμός)

13. Τι θα ήθελες οι καθηγητές σου να κάνουν για να στηρίζουν τις «μαθησιακές δυσκολίες» των μαθητών τους στην «κανονική» τάξη; (Μπορείτε να χρησιμοποιήσετε τον πιο κάτω πίνακα επιλέγοντας αυτά που σας αρέσουν περισσότερο και σημειώνοντας πόσο σημαντικά νομίζετε ότι είναι)

Παρακαλώ σημειώστε ✓ στην επιλογή που σας εκφράζει περισσότερο		Πολύ σημαντικό	Σημαντικό	Δεν ξέρω	Λιγότερο σημαντικό	Καθόλου σημαντικό
13.1	Να δημιουργούν ένα κλίμα στην τάξη όπου όλοι οι μαθητές είναι ευσπρόσδεκτοι και «οι μαθησιακές τους δυσκολίες» σεβαστές.					
13.2	Στην τάξη να υπάρχουν πολλά εκπαιδευτικά βοηθήματα για τους μαθητές μου (λεξικά, καρτέλες, βιβλία, cd, κ.α.).					
13.3	Να βεβαιώνονται ότι όλοι οι μαθητές απολαμβάνουν το μάθημα και ενδιαφέρονται να συμμετέχουν στις δραστηριότητες της τάξης.					
13.4	Να χρησιμοποιούν τους Η.Υ. για να κάνουν το μάθημα πιο εύκολο και πιο ενδιαφέρον.					
13.5	Να σχεδιάζουν δραστηριότητες στην τάξη ανάλογα με το τι μπορούν και τι αρέσει στους μαθητές να κάνουν.					
13.6	Να δίνουν πολλές εξηγήσεις και παραδείγματα για το τι πρέπει να κάνουν οι μαθητές στις εργασίες τους.					
13.7	Να μαθαίνουν στους μαθητές τρόπους πως να οργανώνουν το διάβασμα τους και πως να μελετούν για τα διαγωνίσματα και τις εξετάσεις τους.					
13.8	Να χρησιμοποιούν φυλλάδια με εύκολες και δύσκολες εργασίες για να βοηθήσουν όλους τους μαθητές να μάθουν.					
13.9	Να δίνουν επιλογές στις δραστηριότητες που έχουν να κάνουν οι μαθητές στην τάξη και στο σπίτι.					
13.10	Να βάζουν μικρές εργασίες ή ασκήσεις για να δουν τι έχουν μάθει οι μαθητές και που χρειάζονται βοήθεια.					
13.11	Να αξιολογούν τους μαθητές σύμφωνα με αυτά που μπορούν να κάνουν.					
13.12	Να δίνουν στους μαθητές θετικά σχόλια στις εργασίες τους και να τους εξηγούν τρόπους που μπορούν να γίνουν καλύτεροι.					

Σας ευχαριστώ πολύ για το χρόνο και τη συμμετοχή σας !

A.11a. Example of observation grids at the resource room

Table of Events: Observation Grid of Modern Greek Class:

School: Date: Time: Resource room

Class/ Year Group:..... No of Children: Teacher:..... Observation session:

Aims	To observe teaching and learning activities in the resource room	
Research Questions	How can students be supported in the resource room?	What students like/don't like in the resource room? How they feel in the resource room?
Time (counting from the beginning of the school period)	<p><u>Teaching/ learning activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Revision -personalized goals/ personalized learning – activities -Nature of activities: pairs/group/individually Writing / discussion -easier activities/same level activities , differentiated work sheets, same work-sheet as in mainstreaming -Curriculum delivery : books, blackboard, work sheets, computer, educational software -giving more time to answer questions / do their activities - giving instructions individually -monitoring and structuring activities closely -interacting with students privately 	<p><u>Students engagement /interactions :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Feel free to ask questions - feel free to answer questions / involve in discussion - working on computer / using resource materials -don't care if they make mistakes - don't consider about their difficulties -acceptance and use of their ideas -consideration of their needs/ recognition of what is important of each one

Table of Events: Observation Grid of Modern Greek/History Class

School: Date: Time: Resource room

Class/ Year Group: No of Children: Teacher:

Observation session:



Further notes:

A large empty rectangular box for taking notes, bounded by a thin black line.



A.11b. Example of observation grids at the resource room (in Greek)

Πίνακας Παρατηρήσεων: Φύλλο παρακολούθησης μαθήματος Νέων Ελληνικών/Ιστορίας στην τάξη στήριξης

Σχολείο:..... Ημ:..... Ώρα:..... Ομάδα.....

Ηλικίες μαθητών : Αρ. μαθητών:

Διδακτ.Περίοδος:..... Διδάσκων/ούσα:

Στόχοι	Να παρατηρήσω τις παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές και τη συμμετοχή των μαθητών στην αίθουσα στήριξης	
Ερευνητικά Ερωτήματα	Πώς οι μαθησιακές δυσκολίες των μαθητών μπορούν να στηριχθούν στην αίθουσα στήριξης;	Τι αρέσει /δεν αρέσει σ'ενα μαθητή σχετικά με τις διδακτικές πρακτικές στην αίθουσα στήριξης; Πώς νιώθουν στην αίθουσα διδασκαλίας;
Ώρα (45 λεπτά διδακτική περίοδος)	<p><u>Παιδαγωγικές Πρακτικές:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -στόχοι/οδηγίες -Δραστηριότητες -επίπεδο/ διαφοροποίηση -Εκπαιδευτικό υλικό -χρόνος εργασίας -οργάνωση εργασιών -Εξατομικευμένη βοήθεια 	<p><u>Συμμετοχή μαθητών :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Απορίες/ερωτήσεις -Συμμετοχή/ συνεργασία/ομαδικότητα/ αποδοχή/ συνεκτικότητα ομάδας -Η.Υ. /εκπαιδευτικό υλικό -Αυτοαξιολόγηση -μαθησιακές δυσκολίες

Πίνακας Παρατηρήσεων: Φύλλο παρακολούθησης μαθήματος Νέων Ελληνικών/Ιστορίας στην τάξη στήριξης

Σχολείο:..... Ημ:..... Ωρα:.....

Ομάδα:

Ηλικίες μαθητών : Αρ. μαθητών:

Διδακτ.Περίοδος:..... Διδάσκων/ούσα:

Ωρα	Παιδαγωγικές Πρακτικές	Συμμετοχή μαθητών
10'λεπτά		
20'λεπτά		
30'λεπτά		
45'λεπτά		

**Πίνακας Παρατηρήσεων: Φύλλο παρακολούθησης μαθήματος Νέων Ελληνικών/
Ιστορίας στην τάξη στήριξης**

Σχολείο:..... Ημ:..... Ωρα:.....

Ομάδα:

Ηλικίες μαθητών : Αρ. μαθητών:

Διδακτ.Περίοδος:.....

Διδάσκων/ούσα:

Επιπρόσθετα σχόλια/ σημειώσεις :

A.12a.Example of observation grids in the mainstream classroom

Table of Events: Observation Grid of Modern Greek/ History Class:

School: Date: Time: Mainstream Classroom

Class/ Year Group:..... No of Children:..... Teacher:..... observation session:

<u>Aims</u>	To observe teaching practices and students –teachers’ interactions in mainstream classroom			
<u>RO</u>	How can students be supported in mainstream classroom?		What students’ like /don’t like in the mainstream classroom?	
<u>TIME</u> (Counting from the beginning of school period)	<p>Teaching practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the lesson -Revision of the previous Lesson -Setting (personalised)goals -listen to homework exercises -Students (MLD)reading their homework exercises • Nature of activities : -pairs / group/ individually -writing /discussion • Curriculum Delivery : -Books, power point slides, projector slides , blackboard, work sheets • Conclusion -concluding main points -Instructing homework -setting goals -answer students’ queries 	<p>Teachers ‘ interactions with Students ‘MLD’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -give instructions/explanations closely -encourage students to ask for help -encourage students to work collaboratively -praise / criticize behaviours -praise/criticize participation/disengagement -demanding less -calling less often to respond -giving answers that improve them -calling for response less often 	<p>Students engagement in learning :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Direct involvement with intended task (reading/writing) -Doodling Working at other tasks -Listening to the teacher(instructions) -Ask for help (teacher/student) -Disengaged / waiting the answers -Discuss about the lesson (questions-answers, oral reporting) -Distracted with no interference/ by pupil -Physically bothering other pupils -Attempting to draw attention 	<p>Students’ interactions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Working collaboratively/calling less often for interactions - willing to help them / less often giving attention -Share resources/ materials -disengaged when the teacher supports their classmates’ ‘ educational needs’ -comment about leaving the classroom -distracted when they leave the classroom

Table of Events: Observation Grid of Modern Greek/ History Class

School: Date: Time: Mainstream Classroom

Class/ Year Group: No of Children: Teacher: observation session:.....

Time	Teaching Practices	Teacher' Interactions With Students (MLD) And Others	Students' (MLD) Engagement In Learning	Students' Interactions
10min.				
20 min.				
30 min.				
45 min.				

Table of Events: Observation Grid of Modern Greek/History Class

School: Date: Time: Mainstream Classroom
Class/ Year Group: No of Children: Teacher:
Observation session:

Further notes:

A.12b.Example of observation grids in the mainstream Classroom (in Greek)

Πίνακας Παρατηρήσεων: Φύλλο παρακολούθησης μαθήματος Νέων Ελληνικών/Ιστορίας στην κανονική τάξη

Σχολείο:..... Ημ:..... Ώρα:.....
 Ομάδα: Ηλικίες μαθητών : Αρ. μαθητών:
 Διδακτ.Περίοδος:..... Διδάσκων/ούσα:

Στόχοι	Να παρατηρήσω τις παιδαγωγικές πρακτικές και τις σχέσεις/τη διάδραση μαθητών-δασκάλων στην «κανονική τάξη»			
Ερευνητικά Ερωτήματα	Πώς οι μαθησιακές δυσκολίες των μαθητών μπορούν να στηριχθούν στην «κανονική» τάξη ;		Τι αρέσει /δεν αρέσει σ'ένα μαθητή σχετικά με τις διδακτικές πρακτικές στην «κανονική» τάξη;	
Ώρα (45' λεπτά διδακτική περίοδος)	<u>Παιδαγωγικές Πρακτικές :</u> -Εισαγωγή/Αφόρμηση -Είδος ασκήσεων -Εκπαιδευτικό υλικό -Εμπέδωση	<u>Δράση Εκπαιδευτικού:</u> -οδηγίες -βοήθεια/καθοδήγηση μαθητών -οργάνωση εργασιών Επιβράβευση/αποδοκιμασία συμπεριφορών -κίνητρα μάθησης -απαιτήσεις -Ερωτήσεις-απαντήσεις -διόρθωση/αξιολόγηση	<u>Δράση μαθητών:</u> -συμμετοχή -Αδιαφορία -ακούνε οδηγίες -ζητούν βοήθεια -δεν συμμετέχουν -συζητούν -αφαιρούνται χωρίς λόγο -ενοχλούν -επιζητούν την προσοχή των άλλων	<u>Δράση συμμαθητών:</u> -συνεργασία -βοήθεια -Αδιαφορούν -σχολιάζουν -αφαιρούνται -Αποδοχή/ανεκτικότητα μαθησιακών δυσκολιών

**Πίνακας Παρατηρήσεων: Φύλλο παρακολούθησης μαθήματος Νέων Ελληνικών/Ιστορίας
στην κανονική τάξη**

Σχολείο:..... Ημ:..... Ωρα:.....

Ομάδα:Ηλικίες μαθητών : Αρ. μαθητών:

Διδακτ.Περίοδος:.....

Διδάσκων/ούσα.....

Ωρα	Παιδαγωγικές Πρακτικές	Δράση Εκπαιδευτικού	Δράση μαθητών	Δράση συμμαθητών
10'				
20'				
30'				
45'				

Πίνακας Παρατηρήσεων: Φύλλο παρακολούθησης μαθήματος Νέων Ελληνικών/

Ιστορίας στην κανονική τάξη

Σχολείο:..... Ημ:..... Ωρα:.....

Ομάδα: Ηλικίες μαθητών : Αρ. μαθητών:

Διδακτ.Περίοδος:.....

Διδάσκων/ούσα:

Επιπρόσθετα σχόλια/ σημειώσεις :

A.13. The process of school Selection

The first step for the school selection was to check the demographic and statistical details about the state schools in each Cypriot town from the MOEC catalogue (Annual Review, 2013,pp.654-655). For further details regarding the demographics of each school, I consulted separately the web-page of each school situated in my hometown. For the final decision about the schools, it helped to establish the number of students with learning difficulties and the provision provided for them. Thus, the schools were selected because they were found to have many students who were officially diagnosed as having mild learning difficulties and registered as having been withdrawn from the mainstream classroom to receive support in the resource room. The schools were selected to be in an urban rather than a rural area because they were the three biggest in number of students and teachers and they were considered as good exemplars of cases of inclusive education for the students with mild learning difficulties.

In sum, **45** teachers of Greek were found to be at the three selected schools and **21** of the teachers, both men and women, who worked in the withdrawal support, were all invited to participate in the study. **12** of them agreed to participate in the study and they were all included. The number of participant teachers was defined according to the number of Greek teachers who teach the students with mild learning difficulties in the mainstream and the resource room. These teachers were selected because they were considered to be more familiar with the inclusive educational practices, such as the withdrawal model, adopted at Cypriot schools. The selected teachers were teachers of Greek because, as the researcher, I am a teacher of Greek, I was more familiar with their topic, their practices, and I have intrinsic interest in the field.

In total, **54** students were recorded as having mild learning difficulties and had been withdrawn for support. From them, **29** agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, it is obvious that a limited number of students were registered as having mild learning difficulties and even less than two thirds of these students in each school agreed to participate in the study. However, it was the maximum number of students who could be accessed and they were all included. Assessing the highest possible number of students was pivotal for the study that aimed to give prominence to the students' voice. Thus, in order to ensure that the students' voice was captured as accurately and authentically as possible, additionally students from Thalió were invited to participate, during the data collection.

Part B: List Of Tables Of Data Collection

Table B.1a: The population of teachers and students at the selected schools

	The Population Of The Teachers						The Population Of The Students			
	Teachers Of Greek		Teachers Of Greek, Who Teach In The Resource Room		Participating Teachers		Students At The School	Students With 'Mild Learning Difficulties'	The Participating Students	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women			Boys	Girls
Aristotelio	1	13	1	6	0	4	402	12	4	1
Total	14		7		4				5	
Protogorio	2	18	1	7	1	3	599	24	8	6
Total	20		8		4				14	
Thalio	3	8	3	3	2	2	325	18	3	5
Total	11		6		4				8	
Sum Total	6	39	5	16	3	9	926	54	15	12

Table B.1b: Coordinators' Demographic Details

Schools	Coordinators	Number Of Teachers At The Program	Students Attended The Resource Room	Number Of Diagnosed Students At School	The 'Learning Difficulties' Of Students
Aristotelio	Ms.Evriklia	4	12	12	-reading -writing summaries -understanding complex ideas -writing essays -spelling
Protogorio	Ms. Meropi	8	24	24	-writing summaries -understanding complex ideas
Thalio	Mr. Aiolos	11	18	18	-reading -writing summaries -understanding complex ideas -writing essays -spelling

Table B.1c: Teachers' Demographic Details

Participant Schools	Code Number	Participants' Pseudonyms	Gender	Age	Years Of Teaching	Years At This School	Experience /Seminars	Lesson In The Resource Room
Aristotelio	58	Andromache	Female	58	26	2	-Resource room Practices	History
	1964	Roxani	Female	50	22	6	- Students with Autism -Differentiation	Greek
	5	Alkmini	Female	55	21	3	-Worked in Special units - Meet the learning difficulties of the students(in general)	Greek
	2020	Zinovia	Female	32	5	2	-Literacy -Inclusion and inclusive practices	Greek
Protagorio	66	Semeli	Female	45	12	4	-Worked at special school -Teaching children in the resource room and in the literacy program -Differentiation	Greek + History
	43	Tireas	Male	55	23	7	-Students with 'hearing impairment'	Greek + History
	1424	Pandora (Priest Wife)	Female	45	14	2	-Students with 'hearing impairment'	History
	112	Evdoxia	Female	35	10	5	-Dyslexia -Differentiation	Greek
Thalio	178	Ely	Female	45	20	2	-----	Greek + History
	246	Mikini	Female	55	24	1	-Dyslexia	Greek
	305	Charidemos	Male	45	13	3	-----	History(using ICT)

Part C: List Of Tables And Diagrams Of Data Analysis

C.1. The early stages of methods of analysis

The first stage prior to analysis is the preparation of data (Harris,1995). The field notes were arranged and entered into a Microsoft office Word file. Notes were kept on each of the respondents and saved in files according to the data source and the school at which they were obtained. (Example: Aristotelio: teacher and coordinator questionnaires). Similar principles for the organization and storage of data applied to teacher and coordinator interviews, student interviews, the mainstream classrooms and the resource room observational notes. Data from each of the three schools were collected and stored separately, to minimize the risk of losing data and to avoid any doubt as to the data source.

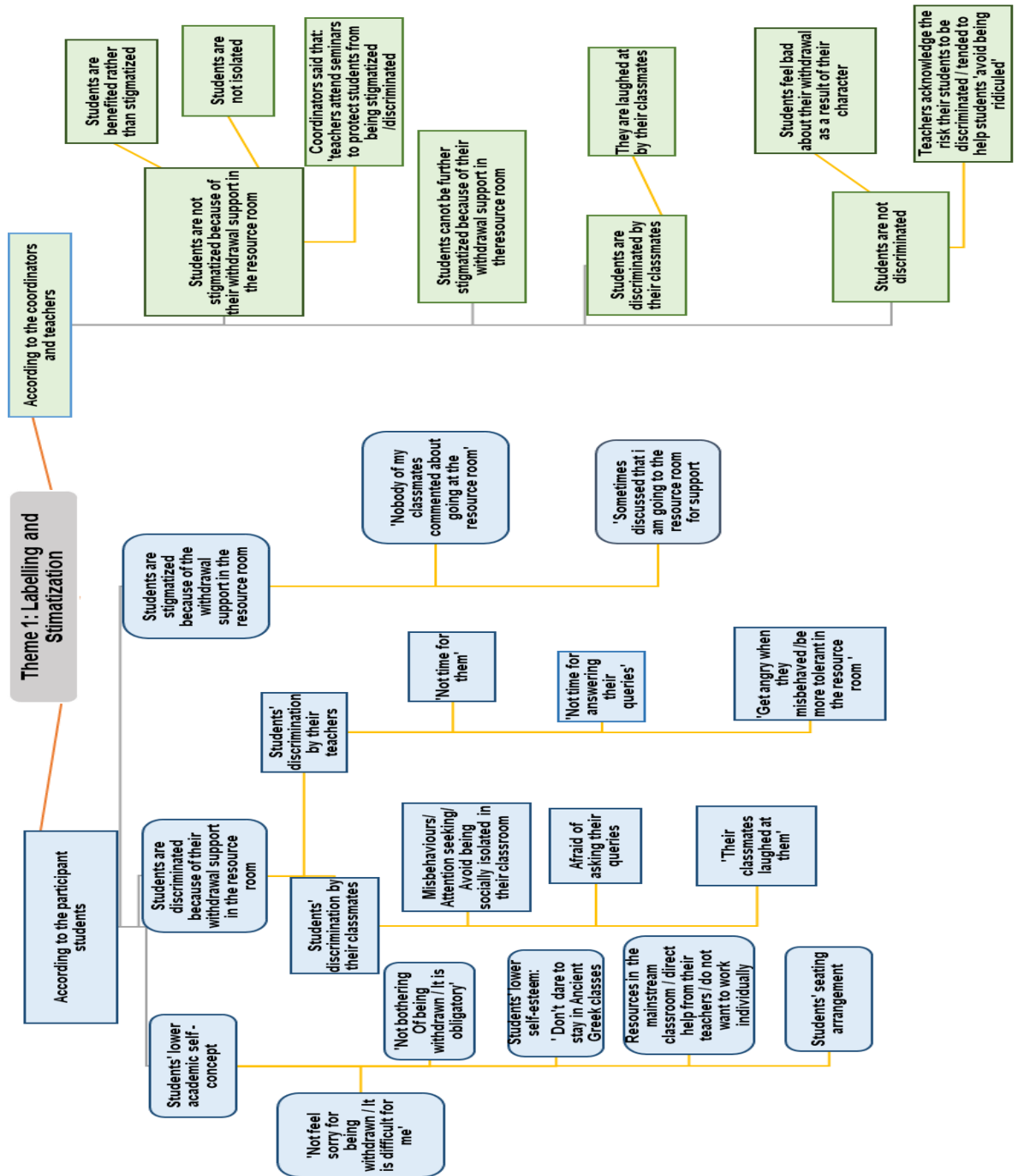
As a matter of standard practice, all notes from interviews, observations and questionnaires were written up on the day the data were collected. Since the data collection process was undertaken in Greek, they were first typed and all transcripts of interviews and observational notes were saved in Greek, before translation into English. At this stage, the main aim was to record and fully transcribe the details of all the interviews and incidents from the observations. Most interviews were not tape-recorded and thus it was necessary to transcribe all interviews in their entirety. The entire conversation conducted with each teacher and student, was translated from Greek to English, although the analysis concentrated only on those (transcribed) parts that proved germane to my principal themes. Data were re-organized and re-appraised throughout the review period. Wherever appropriate, notes were integrated from my research diary documenting incidental observations during the course of research with notes derived from interview transcripts and existing notes from observations.

The next phase comprised data manipulation (Harris,1995). After completing the data collection and translation process, the data were entered into N-Vivo, creating **3** folders to keep separate any datasets derived from each school. For each school, the data were organized more systematically into sub-groups of participants and data subsets. The data collected from each group of participants were assigned to a sub-folder, according to the methods used for data collection (e.g. interviews or questionnaires). In different subfolders, the datasets were saved according to the interview question or the questionnaire they related to. The reason for this was to identify the patterns across the data that often re-occurred (Braun and Clarke,2006).To code the data collected by questionnaires, it initially identified the words that were frequently mentioned in the participants' responses (Boyatzis,1998). The most frequently mentioned words were: the resource room, the mainstream classroom, differentiation, stigmatisation and such verbs as commented, mocked or interested in. For the interviews' data, conceptual codes were used, in order to identify the domains of the study

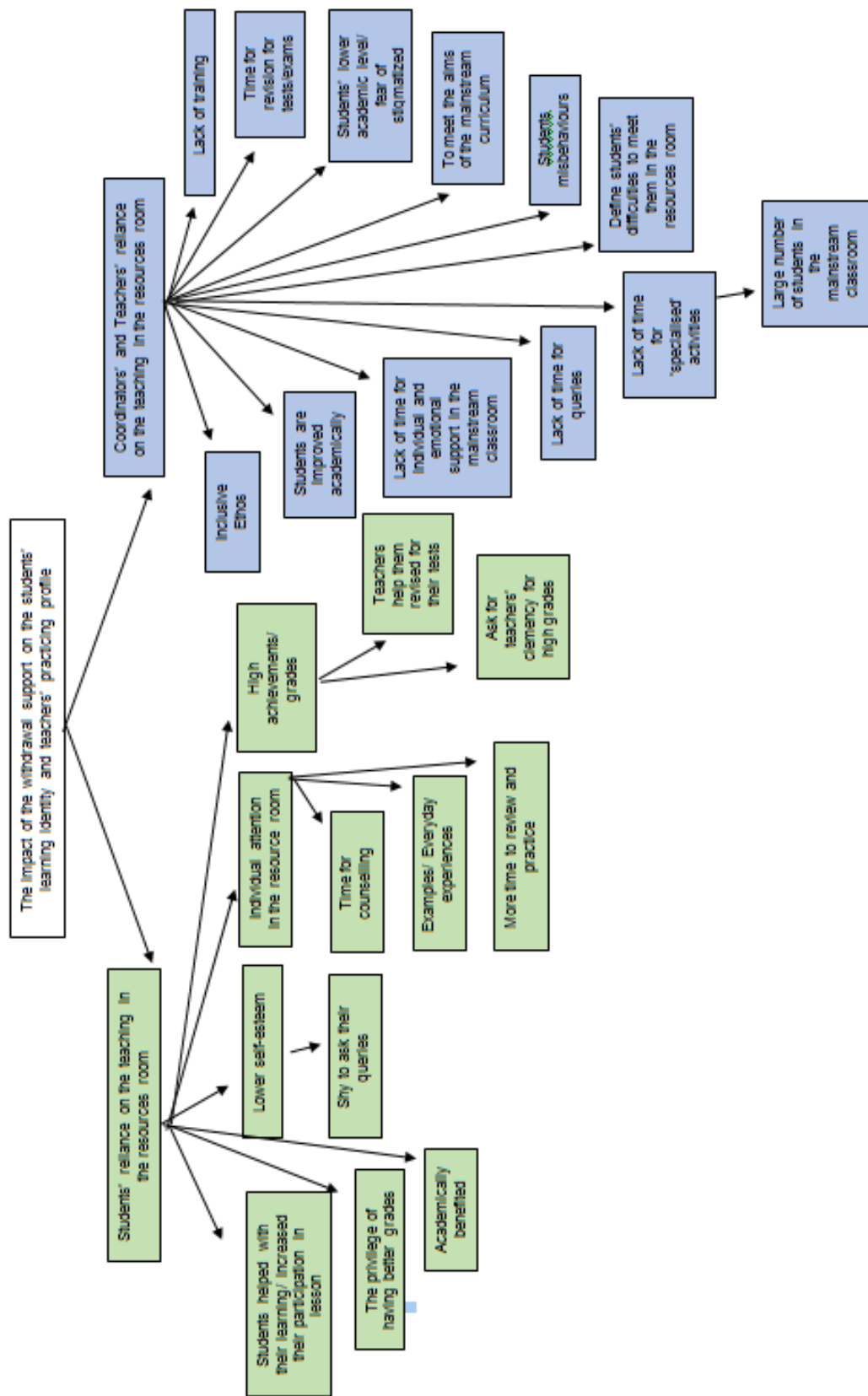
phenomenon (Vaismoradi et al.,2016). By using N-Vivo, the codes were applied through tagging and naming selections of texts within each data item. These series of databases were then compiled, each comprising data on one of the main research questions of the study. The more the data were examined, the more familiar those data became, with the result that it also became easier to engage in the process of coding (Braun and Clarke,2006).

The same process of storage and coding was also followed with the series of observations in the classroom. Firstly, the observation fieldworks were typed in a Microsoft Word file in Greek and then translated into English. The data of the observation series were recorded separately for each school. For the purpose of analysis, those conducted in mainstream classrooms were also recorded separately from those in the resource room. The data from the observational scales were coded in to subfolders regarding the data set related to students' behaviour, their response and participation in learning process, teaching materials and teachers' relation/ support to them. Towards the end of the observation analysis, the aim was not only to provide a description of the case but to offer explanations about the students' behaviour, their participation in the classroom and also about the emerging relationships between them and their teachers' beliefs and behaviour.

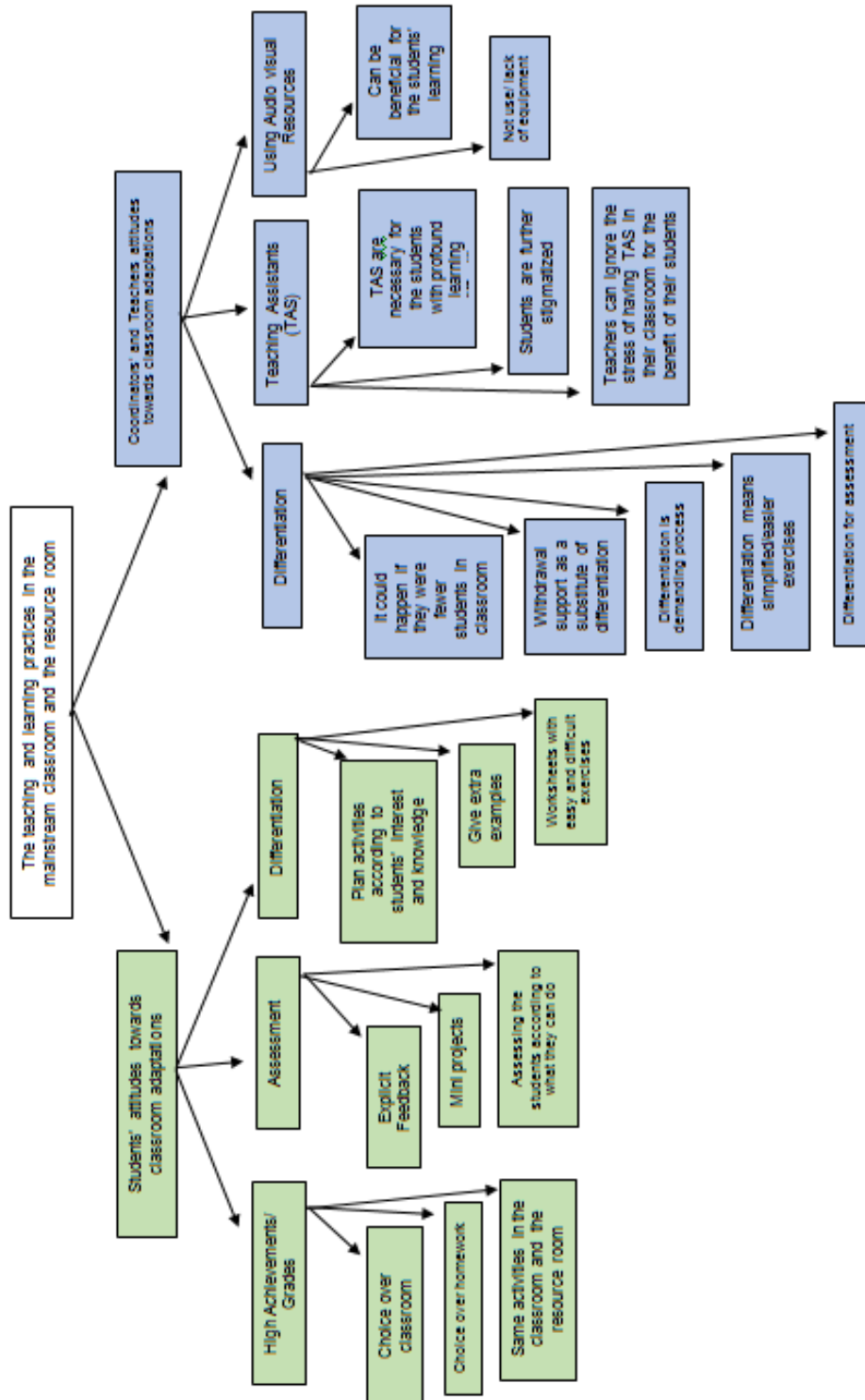
C.2. The Social Attitudes And Conceptions



C.3. The Impact Of Withdrawal Support



C.4. The Teaching And Learning Process In The Mainstream Classroom And The Resource Room



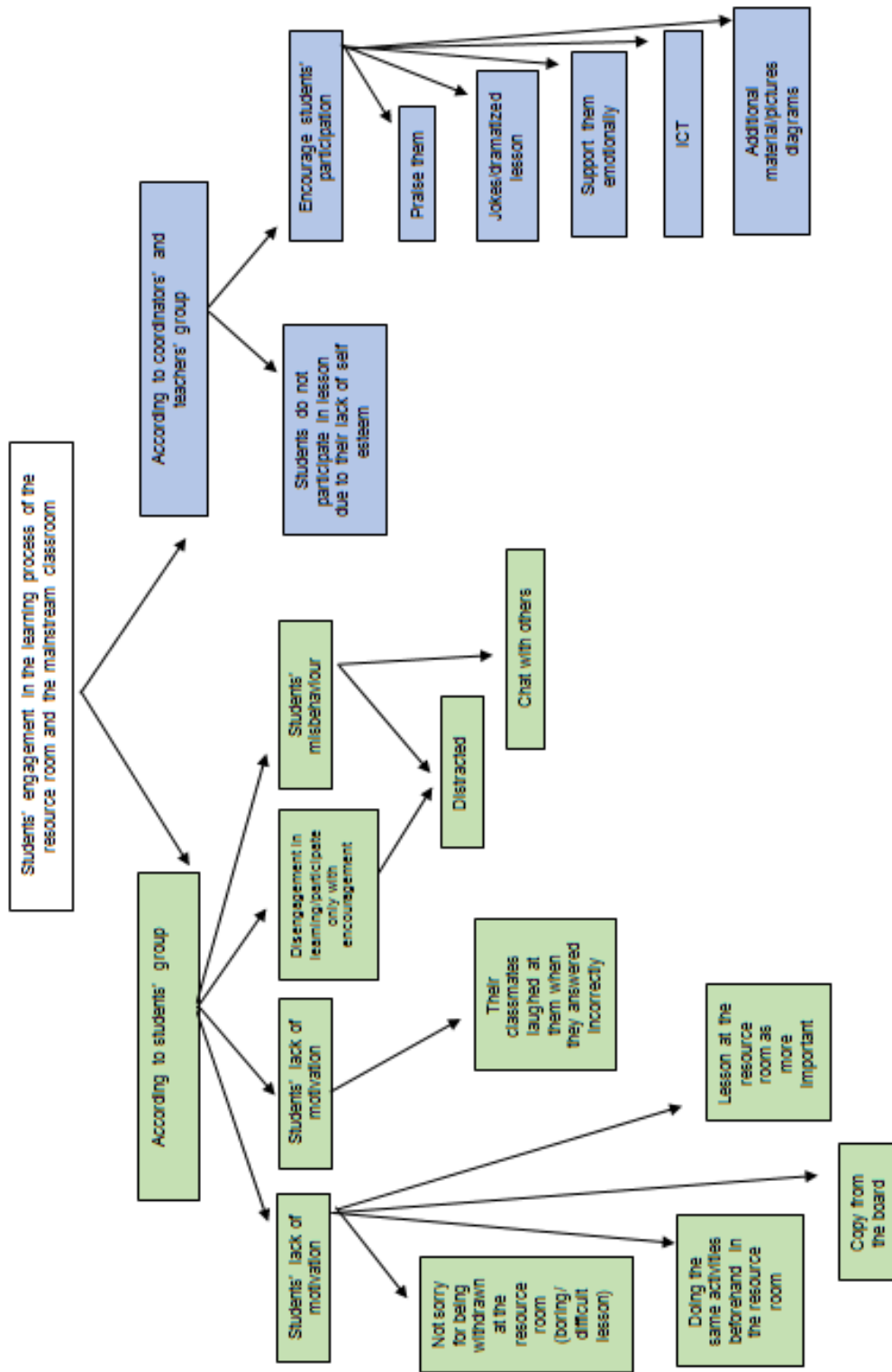
C.5a Students' Engagement In Learning

Theme 4a: Students' Engagement In The Learning Process In The Resource Room	
	Participant Students
<u>Participation In Learning</u>	
answer with no hand	13
answer orally	2
announce their answers	3
complete the answers of each other	6
participate by order	4
Participating actively	15
being shy	2
feel more confident	5
raise their hands to answer	1
reluctant to participate	6
<u>Students' Disengagement</u>	
waiting for the answers	2
ask queries	6
copy from board	6
write the answers on board	1
write with delay	3
<u>Students' Being Distracted/Misbehaved</u>	
ask irrelevant questions to the lesson	1
distracted	14
distracted from outside noise	3
being delayed to the class	3
misbehave	3
forgot their books	5
playing	5
students talk with each other	3
talking when the teacher is writing on the board	3
being bored	6
walking around with no permission	1
arguing while teacher is writing on board	2
being angry if they don't know or with their classmates	3
criticizing each other's behavior	4
talking about grades	2
<u>Students' Interactions</u>	
students work individually	14
they are helping another student	6
collaborating with their classmates	19
joking with each other	4
laugh at a particular student, who answered wrongly	5

C.5b. Students' Engagement In Learning

Theme 4b: Students' Engagement In Learning In The Mainstream Classroom	
	Participant Students
<u>Students' (Dis)Engagement</u>	
ask irrelevant questions to the topic of the lesson	1
asking queries-(homework)	2
take books out with delay	1
make excuses for not writing	7
not writing -they have from resource room	4
participating	9
they are concentrated	2
they are excited to participate	2
they are indifferent	4
they are lost in the lesson process	4
they are puzzled	2
they are reluctant/ refused to participate even when encouraged to	6
they are shy	2
write with delay	5
writing from the board	3
<u>Students' Distractions/Misbehaviours</u>	
being delayed in the classroom	3
doing call signs	1
forget books	3
going out of the class	3
imitate the others behaviour	2
move around in the classroom	4
sleeping on the table	1
talk with others-bother others	14
answer back to teachers' recommendations	2
talk/playing while teacher is writing on board	6
they are bored	2
they are distracted	12
they are playing /drawing –colouring	11
they rush to leave by the bell	3
<u>Students' Interactions</u>	
asking for help from others	5
they are angry with a student or teacher	9
laugh at a particular student(s)-(naughty-or if wrong answer)	5
make jokes with classmates-teacher	3
denounce other students	1
criticising other students' behaviour	1

C.5c. Students' Engagement In Learning



C.5d.Theme 4: Students' Engagement In Learning

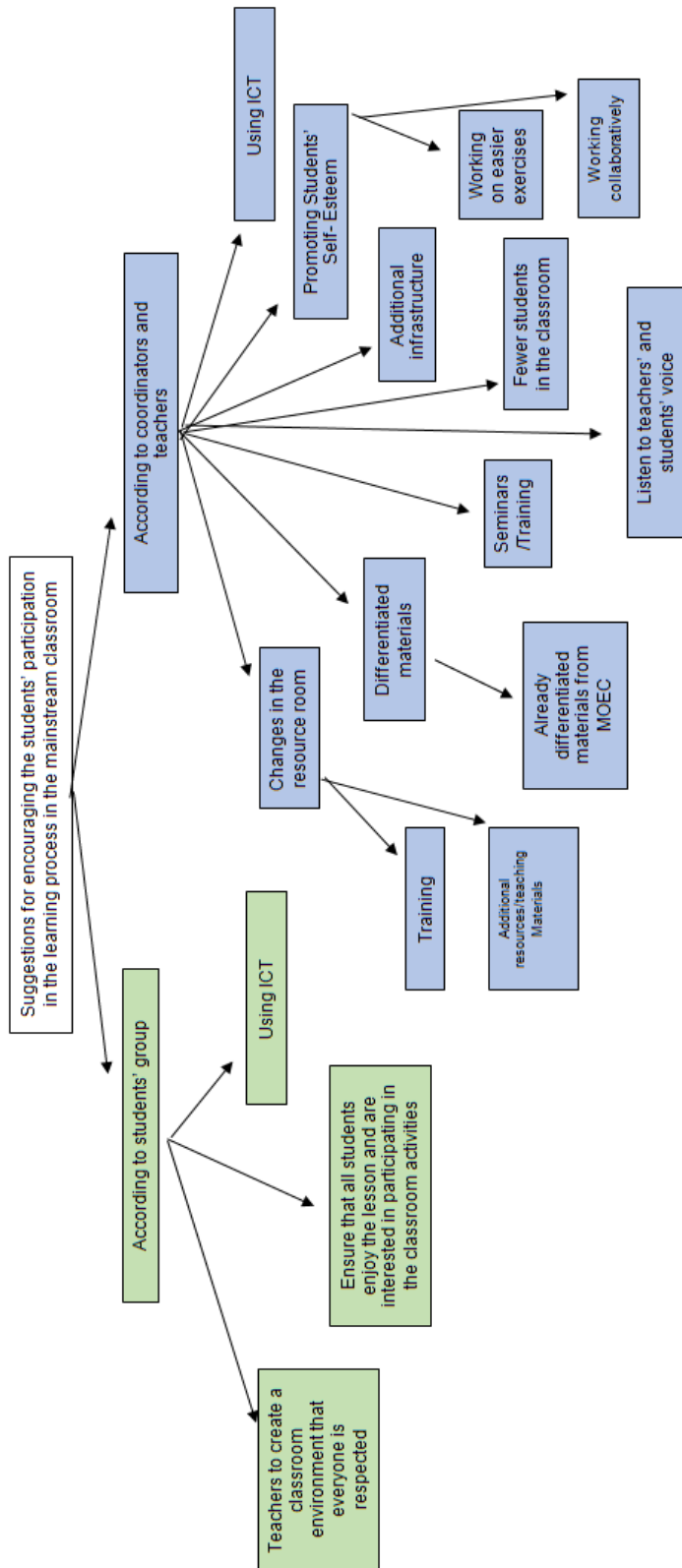


Table C.8: The Coordinators' and Teachers' Inclusive Ethos

Protogorio		Aristotello				Participant Schools	
	Zinovia	Roxani	Andromache	Alkmini	Evriklia	Total	
Meropi	strongly agree	strongly agree	disagree	agree	Strongly agree	Total	
not sure: it depends on the individual and his/her capacities	strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	agree	Strongly agree	5/14 disagree	All the students 'with learning difficulties' should be withdrawn
disagree	disagree	disagree	strongly disagree	agree	strongly disagree	7/14 not sure	Some students 'with learning difficulties' should be withdrawn
agree	not sure	agree	strongly agree	agree	disagree	12/14 disagree	Students 'with learning difficulties' should be supported only in the mainstream classroom
agree	disagree	agree	strongly agree	agree	disagree	5/14 disagree	Helping a student dealing with their learning difficulties can be also helpful for the learning of the other students
						4/14 disagree	The 'learning difficulties' of the students can be supported in the mainstream classroom by differentiating the classroom activities according to their educational possibilities
agree	strongly agree	disagree	strongly agree	agree	agree	3/14 disagree	The 'learning difficulties' of the students cannot be supported in the mainstream classroom because students want to work with the same activities like their classmates
strongly agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	disagree	agree	2/14 disagree	The 'learning difficulties' of the students cannot be supported in the mainstream classroom, because of the pressure of time the teachers to cover the context materials needed for the students' exams
strongly agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	Strongly agree	disagree	agree	1/14 disagree	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room because teaching is concerned with identifying the 'strengths' of students and their possibilities to build their learning development
strongly agree	disagree	disagree	strongly agree	agree	agree	2/14 disagree	The 'learning difficulties' of the students should be supported in the resource room because teaching is aimed to help students to achieve the goals of the mainstream curriculum
agree	agree	disagree	strongly agree	agree	agree	2/14 disagree	Students 'with learning difficulties' cannot be supported in the mainstream classroom because of the large number of students in the classroom

Thalio

Mikini	Ely	Charidemos	Aiolos	Evdoxia	Semeli	Pandora	Tireas
strongly agree	agree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	agree	agree	strongly agree	agree
strongly disagree	disagree	disagree	disagree: students should go to the resource room for support because they	disagree	not sure	disagree	disagree
strongly disagree	not sure	disagree	disagree	agree	not sure	disagree	agree
not sure	not sure	not sure	disagree	agree	not sure	disagree	agree
agree	not sure	agree	disagree	agree	strongly disagree	agree	disagree
disagree	agree	strongly agree	agree: it depends on the sensitivity of the teacher	strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	agree
strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	agree
agree	agree	agree	agree	agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	agree
strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	strongly agree	disagree

Table C. 9: Coordinators' And Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Classroom Adaptations

Protagorio					Aristotelio					Participant Schools
Evdoxia	Semeli	Pandora	Tireas	Meropi	Zinovia	Roxani	Andromache	Alkmimi	Evrikia	Using differentiation worksheets to meet and extend the learning of students
Very important	Very important	Very important	Very important	very important	Not sure	important	Little important	important	important	
important	very important	very important	very important	Very important	very important	important	Little important	important	important	Giving students choice over their classroom activities
Important	very important	Important	very important	very important	Not sure	very important	Little important	very important	important	Giving students choice over their homework exercises
very important	very important	very important	very important	very important	very important	very important	important	important	important	Giving direct instructions and extra explanations to students who need them to complete their work
not sure	very important	very important	important	Not sure	very important	very important	not important at all	little important	Important	Using teaching assistants to help the mainstream teachers check the progress of all students in the mainstream classroom
very important	very important	very important	important	Very important	very important	very important	little important	very important	important	Using audio visual material and technology during the learning process in the classroom
important	very important	very important	important	Very important	very important	important	important	important	important	Involving students in group projects research discussions

Thalio

Mikini	Ely	Charidemos	Aiolos
Very important	Very important	Very important	very important
important	important	Little important	<u>Very important:</u> teachers are helped to differentiate their teaching material by the program leader of the MOEC and by taking instructions notes
very important	Important	Important	very important
very important	not sure	very important	very important
very important	not sure	little important	Little important
very important	important	very important	Very important
very important	important	important	Very important

Table C. 10: Coordinators' And Teachers' Remarks On Students' Engagement In The Learning Process Of The

Protagorio			Aristotello			Participant Schools
Semeli	Merope	Zinovia	Roxani	Andromache	Alkmini	Evrilkia
very important	very important	important	very important	not important at all because they are not done in practice	very important	not important at all
very important	very important	important	very important	not important at all because they are not done in practice	not sure	Little importance
very important	very important	important	very important	not important at all because they are not done in practice	important	Little importance
very important	very important	important	very important	important	important	very important
Very important	very important	important	Very important	important	very important	very important
8.5	To ask help from their teachers and their classmates when they are in the mainstream classroom because it means that they have overcome any of their fears	8.5	Students to have self-esteem	8.5	8. 1. to have self-esteem in order to succeed , to express their feelings	Students overcome the fear of being identified for their 'learning deficiencies' in front of others Little important: Students can meet the standards of the mainstream curriculum
	very important: Students can meet the standards of the mainstream curriculum					What do they consider as the main aims for the learning of these students
						8.1. Students develop high self-esteem
						8.2 students develop their learning styles and techniques
						8.3. students value their skills and experiences to learn
						8.4. students overcome the fear of being identified for their 'learning deficiencies' in front the others
						8.5. Students overcome the fear of failing in mainstream classroom and exams

Thalio						
Mikini	Ely	Charidemos	Aiolos	Evdoxia	Pandora	Tireas
very important	very important	very important	important	very important	very important	very important
very important	not sure	important	important	important	important	important
very important	important	very important	very important	important	important	important
very important	very important	important	important	important	very important	important
very important	Very important	important	not sure	important	Very important	important
important because having high self-esteem helps students definitely to learn	should overcome their fears and hesitation and they should behave in the classroom completely normally like the other students	8.1	it should be given attention to all the goals, to the cognitive, learning, personal, social and emotional development of the students. Also to what the teachers suggest as the most important for their students.	way these students become confident and they are not stressed about failing	is the A to Z (the most important). If the student believes in him/her self all the others can follow	8.1. In order to overcome the fear and the hesitation in case of failing
		Important : Students can meet the standards of the mainstream curriculum				

Table C. 11: Teaching Practices In The Mainstream Classroom And In The Resource Room

Teaching Practices In The Mainstream Classroom	Teaching Practices In The Resource Room
Aristotelio	
<p>Alkmini Teacher is revising what they have been taught in the previous period. She is asking questions to help the students make revision. She is giving instructions what to consider about the new text .She is introducing the historical background of the text. Using the book, exercise sheets and pictures. She is reading the text. Reading the footnotes. She is asking questions to make the students find the key issues. She is guiding the students and she is helping them to participate. She is appraising the students for their participation. She is asking students to complete their working exercises and she is explaining what to do. She is asking students to take the role of the teacher and them to write the notes on the board (teacher is giving her notes to each student each time) Teacher is guiding them to complete their exercises and she is correcting the notes from the board. She is making jokes and she is using examples of their everyday life .She is giving choice over their homework .There is a choice if somebody wants to draw. She is concluding the main points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking questions to help them understand • listen their answers , correct them, add more things • introduce new context • encourage them to participate • Teacher is reading the text and asking them to say that they believe • explain what they didn't understand • Introduce difficult terms • concluding main points • make comparisons • remind new vocabulary • guiding how to think-being critical • examples from their experience • drawing diagram • express their ideas orally • give advice how to behave • repetition-consolidation • make jokes • Second session aims to support them emotionally to develop high self-esteem. She asks them to say something positive for each other.
<p>Andromache Teacher is revising the previous lesson. She is asking questions to help the students remember what they have done. Teacher is concluding the main point from the previous lesson and she is introducing the new section. Teacher is giving working exercise sheets with supplementary materials. She is writing questions on the board to help them understand the reading. She is writing the question of the exercises sheet by phrasing more simply. She is giving the questions for the homework.she is giving group exercises and the students have to work in pairs. Teacher is reading aloud the text to the students and she is explaining the key points. She is linking the current section with what they know from other lessons. She is asking guiding questions to students. She is drawing a diagram on the board. The same exercise sheet and the students notebook are used. Teacher is asking questions by mentioning the main points. She is encouraging the students to criticizing the supplementary material. Teacher is using the pictures to help the students understand their lesson. She is asking questions about the pictures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision • asking questions , critical questions • guiding students to understand • encourage them to participate • Ask to draw conclusions • Drawing diagram • Appraise them when answer correctly • Summarizing key points • Criticizing students behaviour • Describing pictures • tell them notes to write them down • ask them to read by order • examples from everyday life • Say the events in narration • explain what they didn't understand • building on previous knowledge
<p>Roxani Teacher is continuing explaining the literature text. She is highlighting quotations to talk about .She is giving a team question to find the answer from the text. She is giving comparative questions to choose one of them to do in their team. She is explaining how to answer to this kind of questions and she explains what it is common type of questions in tests .Teacher is asking students to read their answers. She is giving additional information .And she is explaining what the students have misunderstood. She is giving the answer on the board. She is explaining the type of the text .She is asking the students to compare this text with what they have done in another class. She is highlighting the symbolism and the literature expressions .She is giving homework and she is explaining what they can write .She is revising the main points /conclusions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind what they know • explaining definitions which are relevant to the topic • links with what they know • encourage them to participate • write the main ideas on board • appraise students to participate • give them bullet points to write a paragraph • explain how to work, explain ideas and what to write • revise main points • encourage to think from their experience • to justify their arguments • give them parallel text one 'difficult' (even for good students) similar with classroom and an easy one • asking students to read the text –teacher is reading what is difficult for them • Revision for test • easy text to give them ideas for the essay • explain questions of text • new vocabulary • explain how to write 3-4 paragraphs about the topic • give them time to think • passing around helping them individually , give them individual advice , ideas , remind to use the new vocabulary • restate their arguments grammatical and

	<p>syntactical (divide board in three ask students to read one by one what they have written and help them to restate their arguments.</p>
<p>Zinovia Teacher is giving instructions about what to read for the test next week .She is distributing working papers. She is reminding what they have learnt previously for the same topic. They are going to do tests in writing essays .She is asking questions to explain to them the meaning of the unknown words She is explaining some types of exercise they are going to have in the tests by giving them examples. Teacher is introducing the comprehensive text by using their experiences- relevant with the general topic of essay to give them ideas of what arguments they can use. Teacher is reading the text. Teacher is asking the students to read silently the text and she is giving questions to think about. She is asking questions about the context Teacher are asking questions about the ideas of the text. Teacher is reminding students the forms of writing. She is asking questions to the students about the type of the text. She is giving examples from the text (Writing a letter formal or informal). Teacher is highlighting to students some ideas for the essay. She is giving a paper with the answers and the analysis as an example of how they should answer these types of questions at the tests. She is giving homework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doing the same literature text with the classroom • teacher is reading the text and asking questions • explain new vocabulary • guiding questions the students to say the summary • highlighting quotations to help them find the answers • individual help • giving them instructions how to find answers • advise how to improve their reading • highlighting key points to be underlined • appraising when they answer correctly • giving examples • ask them to draw a picture of what they have understood –as a homework • encourage them to think critically and develop complex arguments • analyze the text paragraph by paragraph • encourage to use their imaginations • encourage to concentrate • works for their portfolio • exercise sheets about grammar from the book of primary school • pass around and give to students individual help • check their answers –notice their mistakes and ask them to correct them • ask them to read loudly their answers • peer assessments • Give instructions what to read in tests – (similar exercises like these)
<p>Protogorio</p>	
<p>Evdoxia She is asking them to say their homework. She is writing in her grade book who has done the homework. She is correcting their answers. She is saying what she wants to have the answers. She is returning the tests to the children. She is allocating new exercises sheets to the students. She is asking questions about the context of the new literature text. She is giving instructions –she is asking the students to read the text and where to focus. She is helping the students to understand the context. She is reading the poem and she is giving explanations .She is asking questions about the context. She is asking questions about the symbolism. She is writing notes on the board. She is giving instructions how to complete the exercise sheet.. She is using their experiences. She is giving examples from other countries. She is asking guiding questions. She is saying the answers to the students. She is asking questions with different ways. She is saying to students to find the symbolism. She is writing on the board the key points and explains them .She is appraising the students who are answering correctly. Comparing two poems. She is giving homework and she is reading the homework questions .She is explaining the questions of the homework and she is helping them to answer them orally by asking guiding questions to the students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revision for test • correcting their spelling mistakes • notes on board • giving instructions , help for the tests • help students individually (spelling mistakes) • asking questions • appraise students for their participation • ask students by order • give them a parallel text for the test • recommend to be well behaved • ask to give their opinion • give them time to work individually • correct their mistakes and explain them how to be improved • ask similar questions to answer like those at tests <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the text for the test answer the questions and correct their mistakes but she didn't let them have their notes with them • encourage to be well behaved • teacher help Marinos because he has more difficulties than Giorgula • explain terns • repeat question for Marinos • read the relevant quotations to help them find the answers • say the correct answers to write them down

<p>Pandora She is using the books and her notes. She is listening to the questions of the homework. She is revising the main points of the answers and she is giving examples. She is explaining again what they had to write. In addition, she is reading the answer they should have written. She is giving guidelines how to write notes and the exercises at their notebook. She is introducing the new section with questions, she is making jokes about the behavior .She is writing notes of the key points on the board .She is connecting with the everyday experiences. She is dramatizing the examples. She is giving examples from the landmark places of their hometown. She is reading from the book. She is reading the resource material of the book. She is using the pictures of the book to help them understand. She is explaining them and she is writing her notes. She is highlighting the key points that the students have to underline. She is asking guiding questions. She is answering to the queries of students. She is explaining the historical terms. She is giving homework. She is writing the question on the board because they did not bring their book. She is explaining what to read for their test .She is asking the students to say the homework question orally and she is explaining briefly the answer. She is discussing with them the news about the economic crisis and that they should work really carefully at the lesson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revision for test • instructions for help • students to answer by order • repeating things • guiding questions • help individually • give advice for their behavior • pictures and jokes to help them remember • appraise their participation • encourage them to participate • advice how to prepare for tests • key notes on board • examples from everyday life • teacher commended the results of their tests • explained their mistakes • give them chocolate for x-mas • advise how to memorize • tell them the correct answers • advice to Minas for his nutrition • comment spelling mistakes • guiding what to be careful for the final exams • at test give choice over questions and pictures • advice to be well-behaved • comment about timeline news
<p>Semeli Teacher is continuing with the analysis of the text. She is asking guiding questions .She is trying to help students using their imagination and encourage their critical thinking. She is asking comparing questions. Teacher is letting the students time to fill the exercise. They are working with the same working exercises the children have done in the resource room. She is giving instructions how to complete their working exercises. She is reading the exercises and completing them with the help of the children. She is writing notes on the board. She is reading the notes from the board. She is asking them to find the quotations that answer to the questions. She is letting them talk .She is giving them homework .She is explaining what to do for homework and she is giving time to start answer it .She is asking to read their homework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision • appraise them to participate • explain to Antonakis who is delayed what they do • highlighting key points • asking guiding questions to help them understand • guiding to find the answers • key points on board • ask them by order • give them instructions how to correct their spelling mistakes to • individually help the girls • time to find answers – work individually • individually help the boys • reading examples • give examples from their experience • comparison with text they know • instructions on grammar , vocabulary • comment pictures • check if everyone is writing and correct their answers • criticizing behaviors • concluding main points • general subtractive questions
<p>Tireas Revision from the previous lesson .He is asking guiding questions .He is writing notes on the board and he is asking students to read their homework. He is introducing the new section .He is reading from the book He is stopping and giving explanations and highlighting the key points .He is drawing a diagram on the board . He is using pictures and maps. He is writing the key points on the board. He is giving examples from their experiences. He is reading the extra resource material to comment. He is explaining the terms. He is giving examples from their everyday life. They are doing a dialogue. He is highlighting the key points. He is making conclusions from what they have said. He is asking comparative questions. He is using the same pictures with the resource room. He is giving more instructions and questions to concentrate on while they are reading. He is helping students individually He is asking the same questions with classroom. He is giving instructions about the test. He is giving choice over the homework and he is explaining what they have to write. He is helping students fill the exercise as a revision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher read from their book what they have done • read and explain • guiding questions • comparisons • pictures • key notes on board • instructions to highlighting key notes in the book • ask student by order • individual help • ask them to work in group or in pair • examples • explain terms • guiding to find the answer • summarizing points • links with previous • discuss other personal topics • correct spelling mistakes • write a paragraph • help more girl by saying ideas to write • criticizing boys behavior • peer assessment • feedback how to improve • explain metaphors

Thalio	
<p>Charidemos Revision of the previous lesson .Teacher is asking questions about the key points. Teacher is asking questions –they are talking about the architecture in Ancient Greece .Teacher is using power point And he is describing the pictures by showing what was 'special to these buildings)Teacher is asking questions about the pictures .He is clarifying the definitions .He is trying to build on the students' previous knowledge .He is using maps Teacher is trying with the pictures to help the students recognize the Doric and Ionic rhythm of the buildings by showing them pictures of building we have in our town imitating these rhythms .Teacher is using a digital educational game to motivate students .The teacher is showing a picture and asking them to say what is the correct sentence given below and clarifying their answer .He is revising as well things they already know from previous lessons .He is giving examples from their everyday life. He is asking guiding questions to help all students answer. Finished with revision –consolidation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing what they have done • asking questions • appraising their correct answer • ask by order • encourage all to participate • relevant quotation to find the answers • guide them to find the answers • examples from their experience • examples from their life • jokes • showing a film, but tell them where to focus on • discuss orally what they have seen • comparison <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diagram on board • help them individually each one to find answer • explain definitions • notes on board • revising key points • parallel text question to be considered about • teacher read the text and give time to students to read again and write the answer pass around to help them
<p>Mikini Teacher asked the students to say the prayer. Teacher is asking about the absent students. Teacher is listening to the answers of the homework .Teacher is concluding and adding main points to the students' answers –she is highlighting the points their answer should have . Teacher asking questions to remind the students about the literature text they have taught. Teacher is saying the context to remind to the students. The teacher is giving information about the historical period and the writer of the novel. Teacher is reading the text to the students. She is giving time to the students to read again silently the text. She is asking the students to talk about the context of the text by asking them guiding questions. Teacher is writing the main points that the students should find in detail from the text .She highlights, which symbols to consider. Teacher is asking guiding questions to the students in order to enrich the notes on the board. She is giving clarifications and is explaining the symbols to the students but first she is asking questions to guide them to think what these mean. Teacher is writing the symbolisms on the board and their explanations. She is encouraging the students to try even though it is hard to understand them. She is giving clarifications and possible explanations to make students agree or disagree with. Teacher is explain the poem by trying to make the context as a picture in the mind of students .Teacher is making connections of the context of the text with the historical background .Another teacher is interrupting the class to announce the fundraising will take place in and out the school for the support of cancer patients. She is asking volunteers to help. Teacher is concluding the key notes on the board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explanations • examples • appraise when they participate , when they answer correctly • recommend how to participate • encourage to answer correctly • help individually • ask them to work individually • check what they didn't understand • jokes to make them concentrate • ensure if they write by asking one by one • correct the answers • ignore their misbehaviors • ask as competition to encourage answer • revision • say the answers who didn't know • encourage to answer easy ones • help them to find the answers • remind vocabulary rules • encourage to find difficult • say the correct answers • jokes to criticize their behaviour • breaks 5 minute • answers on board • ask them to repeat the grammatical rules • finish 5 minutes earlier
<p>Ely Announcements/ reminders to the students (about contests).Teacher is encouraging students to participate in the school contests (essays contests). She is giving instructions and she is listening to the answers of the homework exercises. Using the books –doing syntactic exercises .Teacher is asking questions to help students explain the syntactic phenomenon and she is appraising the students when they answer correctly.</p> <p>-Listen to homework exercises .Teacher is giving the correct answers of the literature text. Distributing working exercises –a poem to be analyzed at first and some other papers with the questions and the answers at the end of the paper .Introduction to the new teaching topic –teacher is asking questions to be answered by the students (giving the historical background of the poem).Teacher is reading the poem again and give instructions to students where to focus and what to recognize (double reading of the text). Concluding the main points of the poem analysis –the moral teaching of the poem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information about the literature text • examples • build on what they know • appraise correct answers • dramatize • give instruction where to focus on while reading • write notes • pass around giving individual help • appraise their work • revising key points • guiding questions to understand context • individual help to Chara • appraise her answer correctly • symbolism • ask by order • answer homework • encourage to participate • write the answer of homework on board