

Play Frames and Social Identities

Vally Lytra



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Play Frames and Social Identities

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Vally Lytra

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Contact encounters in a Greek primary school

Vally Lytra

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*For my mother
my friend and colleague
for her unconditional love and support*

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Introduction

0.1 Setting the scene: Personal trajectories

The writing of this book was spurred by both personal commitment and academic interest. In the winter of 1996 a good friend and colleague, Costas Magos,¹ alerted me to the existence of a non-profit Athens-based volunteer organisation called “Πρόγραμμα Εθελοντικής Εργασίας του Δήμου της Αθήνας” <Volunteer Programme of the Municipality of Athens>. Among other activities this organization provided Greek language support classes to minority children living in Athens. It was particularly active in a socio-economically deprived but ethnically, linguistically and culturally rich urban neighbourhood where a substantial number of minority Turkish-speakers of Roma heritage had settled from northern Greece since the late 70s. More recently, from the early 90s onwards, similar to many inner-city neighbourhoods across Athens, this neighbourhood had experienced an influx of immigrants from the Balkans and the Middle East.

Intrigued by the ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity of the neighbourhood and its children and driven by my long standing interest in the study of Turkish language and culture I decided to give it a go and joined the ranks of volunteer tutors. Armed with a lot of enthusiasm and a Greek-Turkish bilingual dictionary, for the next 19 months, I regularly helped three boys – first Tamer and Levent and later on Sesgin – with their Greek and English homework (the first foreign language children are taught in Greek primary and secondary state schools). All three boys had been born in Athens but their families originally came from the outskirts of the city of Komotini in northern Greece (see map A of Greece, Appendix I). At the time, Tamer and Levent had just started going to the local secondary school while Sesgin was still in primary school.

What struck me quite forcefully during these 19 months was that Tamer, Levent and Sesgin socialized in almost exclusively homogeneous ethnic, linguistic and cultural groupings. I noticed that at the local community centre run by the Municipality of Athens where the language support classes were held, in

1. All names and place names are original, unless stated otherwise. I have avoided using pseudonyms respecting the participants' wish that names and place names are preserved.

the neighbourhood's streets, parks and other recreational spaces their interactions with majority Greek children or children from other ethno-linguistic backgrounds were few and apart. These observations intrigued me and I was keen to find out what was happening at the local primary school, where contact between majority Greek and minority children was expected to be the norm. The rationale for selecting the school as research site was further motivated by the fact that local state schools in Athens and elsewhere in Greece have been transformed into important arenas for extensive contact among school-age children from diverse backgrounds. Schools as sites for contact provide shared social spaces for majority and minority children to interact over extended periods of time. As a result, in such settings, it is possible to examine the children's social worlds not as self-contained, homogeneous entities, but in relation to and as they interact with one another (Pratt 1987: 57; see also Rampton 2006).

The book is based primarily on tape-recordings of spontaneous talk and ethnographic observations of eleven majority Greek and minority Turkish-speaking children attending the same class at a local state primary school in an Athens neighbourhood. Tape-recordings and observations were carried out between January 1999 and May 1999 and on subsequent short one-day visits to the school and the neighbourhood between 1999 and 2001. Additionally, I made use of semi-structured interview data as well as written and visual sources that became available to me over the years of contact with the school and the neighbourhood. The postscript draws upon in-depth semi-structured interviews (November 2005) with two of the minority children still living in the neighbourhood and the co-director of another local non-profit organization called "Δρόμοι Ζωής" <Paths of Life> who has watched closely the children's educational trajectories and life choices.

The book addresses three main aims: (a) examining the ways in which majority and minority children draw upon their rich interactional history and share, appropriate, transform and recontextualize linguistic and other semiotic resources in circulation to construct play frames and explore, adopt, resist available as well as novel social roles and identities; (b) showing the ways in which such instances of playful talk can provide a productive locus for the study of the constitution, representation and negotiation of social roles and identities in talk and (c) illustrating the links between the expression of roles and identities in playful talk and the children's lived experiences at a local level with the institutional order of the school. These links are analyzed and discussed in the context of recent changes in Greek society associated with immigration and the increasing mobilization of indigenous linguistic minority groups which is calling into question established ideologies about language, identity and the nation.

To address the three main aims above I have sought to draw upon different sources of data, namely field-notes, audio-recordings, interviews and other written and visual sources (for an overview of the data set see Table A, Appendix II). The rationale for combining different data sources is two-fold. On the one hand, I seek to explore the children's playful talk across school contexts by attending to micro-interactional detail. I am interested in unravelling the moment-to-moment construction of play frames and identity displays of these eleven ten-year olds as they go about their daily activities and routines at school. On the other hand, I seek to capture how identity negotiations and displays at a local level can be linked with the children's lived experiences and social worlds outside the school and how these in turn can be associated with the institutional order of the school. At the same time, I attempt to capture different timescales of change: while focusing primarily on change at a micro-interactional level, I seek to provide a snapshot of the children's personal, social and educational change six years after the initial fieldwork.

0.2 Linguistic minorities and multicultural schools in Greece

In this section, I would like to address two important preliminary questions that will help situate this book in the broader context of linguistic minorities and multicultural schools in Greece: (a) why is focusing my analytic and interpretative lens on linguistic minorities in Greece a timely task? and (b) to what extent have recent changes in Greek society associated with immigration and the increasing mobilization of indigenous linguistic minority groups shaped the study of multicultural schools and classrooms?

Triggered by the ever increasing cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity in present day Greek society a number of recent publications in the social sciences have stressed the urgency of studying indigenous and more newly established linguistic minorities in Greece (see relevant articles in Embeirikos et al. 2001; Lafazani 1997; Tsitselikis & Christopoulos 1997; also Asimakopoulou & Christidou-Lionaraki 2002; Troubeta 2001). Although immigration from Asia and Africa and the repatriation of Greeks (from the US, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Germany and Eastern Europe) had already begun since the early 70s, by mid-80s this population movement had gained significant momentum. It was further accelerated by socio-political and economic change in Eastern Europe and the former USSR in the early 90s. This allowed a large number of ethnic Greeks, especially from Albania and the former USSR to move permanently to Greece. As a result, while Greece had traditionally been the country of origin of scores of immigrants during the 50s and 60s, from the mid-80s onwards it was rapidly transformed

into the host country of thousands of immigrants and refugees from Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and the Balkans as well as repatriated Greeks from around the globe.² During the same period, large scale migration from abroad was coupled with the continual movement of people belonging to indigenous linguistic minorities from the periphery to urban centres across the country.

Surprisingly, regardless of these rapid changes in the country's demographic, cultural and linguistic landscape both indigenous and newly established linguistic minorities have received limited attention. Studies with an ethnographic and/or sociolinguistic perspective in particular have focused on two linguistic minorities, speakers of: (1) "Arvanitika", a dying variety of Tosk Albanian, spoken primarily in central and southern Greece (e.g. Trudgill & Tsavaras 1977; Tsitsipis 1998, 2003, 2004), and (2) Turkish in Western Thrace in the northeast of Greece (e.g. Sella-Mazi 1997a, 1999), Athens (e.g. Lytra 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2006) and the island of Rhodes in the Dodecanese in the southeast of Greece (Georgalidou 2003, 2004) (see Map A of Greece, in Appendix I). Two further studies have explored the linguistic vitality of indigenous ethno-linguistic minorities (Sella-Mazi 1997b; Trudgill 1992). Indeed, this line of research is in agreement with an already growing number of studies on linguistic minorities in continental Europe (e.g. Extra & Yağmur 2004; Jørgensen 2003; Hvenekilde & Nortier 2001) and the UK (e.g. Rampton 1995, 2006; Sebba 1993, 2000; Sebba & Tate 2002; Harris 2006).

The shift of focus to linguistic minorities in sociolinguistic research has provided valuable insights into their members' lived experiences, particularly processes of identity formation. It has highlighted the complexity of sharing multiple and, at times, conflicting personal and social identities and social roles and of constantly making border crossings (e.g. De Fina 2003; Norton 2000; also relevant articles in Heller & Martin-Jones 2001a; Norton 1997; Kanno & Norton 2003; Zantella 2005).

As Heller (1999) argues, linguistic minorities are accustomed to bridging the gap among the different worlds they inhabit by addressing tensions and contradictions that arise when these worlds come into contact (: 15–16). The investigation of their social realities allows us to understand the phenomenon of the "minority condition" which is no longer prevalent among relatively small or marginalized groups of people, but has become pervasive, especially in urban contexts where majority and minority groups are in constant contact (ibid: 16). Moreover, it can

2. The following figures are revealing of this transformation: according to the national census and other sources, since 1991 the immigrant population in Greece has increased from 270.000 to 1,15 million persons (roughly 10% of the total population). Most immigrants live in urban centres, in Athens (17% of the total population) and in Thessaloniki (7%) (reported in Pavlou 2007: 1).

help combat overgeneralization and stereotyping, by providing a voice to groups that are often ignored or largely misunderstood (De Fina 2003:3). Lastly, this line of inquiry can provide a productive point of departure in critically re-examining the role of the nation-state and its social institutions, where language teaching and learning traditionally takes place, as sites for the reproduction but also contestation of more established as well as novel social identities and roles among majority and minority children (cf. Heller 2002).

This point leads us to the second question posed at the beginning of the introduction, namely, to what extent have recent changes in Greek society associated with immigration and the increasing mobilization of indigenous linguistic minority groups shaped the study of multicultural schools and classrooms. In response to the growing numbers of children from linguistic minorities in Greek state schools, social scientists working in the fields of education, sociology of education, social anthropology and social psychology have shifted the research agenda to investigating linguistically, culturally and ethnically diverse schools and classrooms (e.g. Mavromatis 2002, 2003; see relevant articles in Govaris et al. 2007; Katsikas & Politou 1999; Tressou & Mitakidou 2003, 2004). This turn in the research agenda since the mid 90s co-occurred with the on-going debate in Greek mass media, political, academic and private circles over how to address the educational needs of children whose home language is one other than Greek with the purpose of integrating them successfully into mainstream Greek society.³ The constant influx of minority children in state schools from the early 90s onwards raised and continues to raise anxieties among mainstream Greeks. They often perceive these children as linguistically and culturally deficient, performing poorly at school, having high drop-out rates and low future aspirations and being primarily responsible for declining educational standards (see KEMO 2003). This deficit model of linguistic minority children is intimately linked to images and stereotypes of linguistic minorities and newly arrived immigrants in particular as taking over the country, engaging in criminal activities and not adapting to the majority language, culture and life style (ibid; see also Pavlou 2005; Pavlou & Christopoulos 2006).

To counter the pervasiveness of the deficit model in public and private debate, researchers started to critically examine the role of schools as social institutions

3. For instance, according to the survey data issued by the Institute of Greek Diaspora Education and Intercultural Studies (IPODE), for the school year 2003–2004, the number of immigrant pupils enrolled in nurseries was 9,22% (of the total pupil population), in primary schools 10,56%, in secondary schools 10,74% and in high schools 6,32% (reported in Pavlou 2007: 64). Anecdotal evidence, however, suggests that in some urban neighbourhoods immigrant pupils comprise up to ¼ of the local school population.

that promote, disseminate and reproduce a monolingual/monocultural Greek national identity. This identity is based on the assumption of the homogeneity of the Greek nation which inevitably excludes difference (whether in the form of indigenous minorities or newly arrived immigrants) (see the collection of seminal papers in Fragoudaki & Dragona 1997 for a critical discussion; also Millas 2001). As a result, minorities in general are seen as an anomalous phenomenon and national homogeneity becomes a historical fact which guides decision-making regarding how to integrate diversity and manage minority matters, including educational provision for minority children (Christopolous & Tsitsilikis 2003; see also Pavlou 2005 and relevant articles in Pavlou & Christopoulos 2006).

To combat these homogenizing tendencies in educational discourse, educationalists have increasingly started addressing the practical implications of teaching linguistic minority children. Recent research has focused among others on: (1) redesigning the curriculum based on the principles of intercultural education (e.g. studies in Vafea 1996 and Damanakis 2002; also Govaris 2001); (2) providing pre-service and in-service teacher training programs (e.g. studies in Swadener et al. 2001 and Androusou 2005; Magos 2006; Dragona 2004 respectively); (3) producing teaching materials for children whose home language is one other than Greek (e.g. studies in Tressou & Mitakidou 2002, 2003); (4) raising awareness in schools with linguistic minorities (e.g. Tsiakalos 2000; Tsokalidou 2005); and (5) exploring parental involvement of linguistic minority parents in their children's education (e.g. Hatzidaki 2007; forthcoming). This turn in the educational research agenda has been complemented by the initiation and implementation of four major educational reform projects jointly funded by the European Union and the Greek Ministry of Education (1997–2000 and 2002–2204). These were geared towards the educational needs of: (1) specific linguistic minority groups that have traditionally been marginalized within mainstream Greek society, (2) diaspora Greeks and (3) learners of Greek as a foreign language. They were jointly run by the Greek Ministry of Education and academic institutions across the country.⁴

4. More specifically, the target groups of these research projects were: (1) newly arrived immigrants and repatriated Greeks (see Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of Athens 1998a), (2) Greek citizens of Roma heritage (see Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of Ioannina 1998), (3) Greek citizens members of the indigenous Muslim minority of Western Thrace (see Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of Athens 1998b) and (4) Greeks of the diaspora and learners of Greek as a foreign language across the globe (see Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of Crete 1998). As indicated in the mission statements of these research projects, although they were designed to address the needs of different target groups, all four converged upon two main educational aims: (1) to provide in-service training to teachers instructing these target groups and (2) to produce, test and amend teaching materials making use of new technologies.

A shared goal of the projects focusing on linguistic minorities was the improvement of the target groups' educational opportunities and experiences with the purpose of promoting cultural and linguistic diversity and social inclusion and combating discrimination and institutional racism.

It is worth noting that this shift in the educational research agenda to the study of multicultural schools and classrooms since the mid 90s has had a slow uptake by researchers working in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. With few exceptions (e.g. Lytra 2003a, 2004; Sidiropoulou 2003), sociolinguistically and discourse analytically oriented research on Greek schools and classrooms has been concerned with monolingual/monocultural schools and classrooms (e.g. Archakis 2002; Pavlidou 1999, 2001).

0.3 Rationale for this book

By way of providing a rationale for the focus of this book on play frames and identity construction, I would like to introduce here an excerpt from one of the children's recordings during the break. Meltem, Tuncay, Maria, Giannis, Nontas and Vasia are hanging out in the classroom on a cold wet day. I am also there looking through my field-notes from the previous lesson. I have left the tape-recorder on and it's recording the children's talk as they are sharing and consuming food and drinks, drawing, chatting and generally doing what 10-year olds do best "being kids". Consider the following:

Excerpt 0.1 (18/3/99)⁵

- | | |
|------------|---|
| | ((ακούγονται πολλές φωνές)) |
| 1Μελτέμ | τις προτάσεις ((στα Αγγλικά)) δεν έκανες; |
| → 2Τουτζάι | ((τραγουδά)) <i>f</i> ω- . ω- . ω- |
| → 3Βάσια | <i>f</i> ((τραγουδά στο μικρόφωνο)) η καρδιά:: μου χτυπά::= |
| → 4Τουτζάι | = <i>acc</i> άντε φύγε . Βασιλόπιττα 999 [2 sec] |
| 5Γιάννης | για να δούμε ρε Νώντα ((τί έχεις κάνει)) |
| 6Μελτέμ | αυτό ((ο μαρκαδόρος)) είναι καλό .. <u>πάρε</u> κι εγώ μ' αυτό έκανα .. |
| 7 | <u>κοίτα</u> .. |
| 8Βάλλη | <i>p</i> (...) με μπλάκνο |
| 9Νώντας | <i>acc</i> δε <u>γίνεται</u> . τώρα που τόχει κάνει έτσι= |
| 10Μελτέμ | =ωραία είναι έτσι .. . |
| 11Νώντας | το ξαναγράφω . |
| → 12Βάσια | ((τραγουδά)) <i>f</i> ατσου <u>μεκέ</u> ::τι <u>μεκέ</u> ::τι .. |

5. See transcription key in Appendix III.

- 13Γιάννης ((τραγουδά)) *ff acc* τα::ράρα- τα::ράραν .
 14() ([)
- 15Μελτέμ [*f acc çinkil beli şok başkari::şi* .
 → 16 *çiligil* . ((τραγουδά και η Βάσια)) *ff acc beli şok başkari::şi* .
 → 17 *çiligit beli şok başkari::şi* . ((τραγουδά μόνο η Μελτέμ)) *ff acc çiligil*
 → 18 (hhh)=
 → 19Βάσια =*f* τσουκουλμπέ::=
 20Γιάννης =νά[το::
 → 21Τουτζάι [τσουγκουλγκέ:: [τσουγκουλγκέ::
 → 22Γιάννης [αλήθεια . *acc* καλά πας Μαρία; ..
 23Μαρία *f να::* ..
 24Γιάννης μόνο που χρειάζεται πράσινο εδώ ((στη σημαία που ζωγραφίζει))=
 25Μαρία =ε:: . πράσινο έχω βάλει .
- ((screaming in the background))
 1Meltem you haven't done the sentences ((in English))?
 ((screaming in the background))
- 2Tuncay ((sings in crescendo)) ο ο ο
 → 3Vasia ((sings in the mic)) my heart is throbbing=
 → 4Tuncay =beat it Vasipolita 999 [2 sec]
 5Giannis let's have a look (re) [Nonta ((what have you done))
 6Meltem [((this marker)) works take it I used the
 7 same one look
 8Vally erase it with type-ex
 9Nontas it can't be done now ((this way)) he's done it that way=
 10Meltem =it looks nice this way
 11Nontas I'm re-writing it
 → 12Vasia ((raps)) atsoumeketi meketi
 → 13Giannis ((breaks into a rock tune)) tin tin tin
 14() ([
- 15Meltem [((sings off-tune emphatically)) tsinkil beli shock
 → 16 bashkarishi tsingil tsingil ((Vasia joins in)) beli shock
 → 17 bashkarishi tsiligil beli shock bashkarishi ((Meltem sings solo))
 tsiligil
 → 18 (hhh)=
 → 19Vasia = ((sings solo high pitch)) tsukulbe=
 20Giannis =here [it is
 → 21Tuncay [((echoes the girls' melodies)) tsugulge [tsugulge
 22Giannis [what's your problem Maria?
 23Maria yeah?
 24Giannis you need to use green here ((for the flag she is painting))=
 25Maria =huh? I've used green

What struck me in this excerpt and many others I observed and recorded was the ubiquitous presence of instances of playful talk in the children's talk across contexts and participant configurations. Children's talk was saturated by the exchange of nicknames (e.g. "Βασιλόπιττα 999" <Vasilopita 999>, line 4), playful and less playful jibes and solo singing that would tail off and re-emerge later in talk or turn into multi-voiced full-fledged singing performances. Children experimented with rhyme and rhythm, differences in intonation contours, pitch, volume and repetition. They referred, alluded to and performed recyclable and recontextualizable fragments of talk from music, TV and film as well as mimicked, reconstructed and parodied the voices of their peers and teachers. However, with few exceptions, children's playful talk has rarely been a key focus of sociolinguistic investigations in schools and classrooms (see Lytra forthcoming 2008 for a review of the relevant literature). Mainstream accounts of schools and classrooms, as Maybin (2006) aptly argues, have tended to adopt an "educational gaze" concentrating on children's curriculum-orientated talk usually with their teachers.

In this book I seek to bridge this apparent gap by focusing on the resources, practices, ways of talk and conduct children regularly draw upon and orient to across school contexts: not only in curriculum orientated talk but also in off-task, undirected talk in the classroom, during the break or lunchtime, as children walk through the school corridors and hang out in the school playground. To do so, I construct an analytic framework based upon an ethnographically informed sociolinguistic approach. I use this framework to capture both the locally motivated linguistic and other semiotic choices and practices in children's talk and how these can be creatively associated with extra-situational social categories, meanings and understandings.

0.4 Overview of the volume

In the first chapter, I set out my conceptual framework to look into children's playful talk and identity work. I draw upon the sociolinguistic and discourse analytic traditions, specifically on the notion of playful talk as "performance" (Bauman 1986, 2000) to capture a range of verbal phenomena I observed in children's talk, notably teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. I combine playful talk as "performance" with Goffman's (1974) concept of frames and develop the idea of play frames in order to tap into the children's linguistic and other semiotic resources and explore their discourse and social identities. Additionally, I make use of Gumperz's (1982a) concept of "contextualization cues" and Goffman's (1981) notions of "participation framework" and "footing" to develop a more dynamic understanding of the inter-relationship between contexts and

processes of meaning making and identity formation. My conceptual framework is equally informed by ethnography as “a process of inquiry” (Le Vine 1988). This is based on an understanding of identity as process and culture as a system of practices. This view of identity is also compatible with the social constructionist perspective to identity I have adopted in this book. The latter views identities and their discursive constructions as emerging sequentially in discourse, where they accomplish local interactional projects that vary across interactional sites and can be reframed, transgressed and contested in unfolding communication (Androutsopoulos & Georgakopoulou 2003; Antaki & Widdicombe 1998). I conclude this chapter by presenting snap shots of the children, the protagonists of the book.

In Chapter 2, I set the scene for this book. I introduce the neighbourhood of Gazi where majority Greeks live side by side with minority Turkish-speakers and newly arrived immigrants primarily from the Balkans and the Middle East. I provide some historical background about the Turkish-speaking minority of Gazi, which paves the way for a discussion of majority-minority relations and some aspects of the every-day lived realities in the neighbourhood. I introduce the local state run primary school which is the main research site in this book. I bring to the fore some of its distinctive features that contributed to its multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic character and resulted in its transformation into one of the first “διαπολιτισμικά σχολεία” <intercultural schools> in Athens. In the final sections, I describe some of my choices regarding fieldwork and data collection, transcription and translation and critically examine my position as researcher in the data.

In Chapter 3, I explore the emergence and development of playful talk across two interactional contexts, namely instructional and recreational contexts at school. Drawing on Rampton, Harris and Dover (2002), I adopt the notion of an “episode” of playful talk to determine what counts as playful activities and routines in children’s talk and discuss structurally simpler and more complex episodes of playful talk in the data. I probe into the full range of the children’s linguistic and other semiotic resources by focusing on their out-of-school recreational and other practices and linguistic repertoires and expertise in different languages. The latter I situate in the context of dominant language ideologies in circulation in Greece. I provide a brief review of the literature with illustrative examples of the verbal activities and routines which the children engage in to set up play frames, notably teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. I elaborate on the various contextualisation cues the children use to frame their talk as play drawing on the distinction in the data between more established and indexical cues (contextualized cues) and more emergent and ambiguous ones (contextualizing cues).

In Chapter 4, I look into playful talk in recreational contexts focusing in particular on one recurrent verbal activity in children's talk, namely teasing episodes. I start off by exploring the sequential environment of teasing and the different kinds of "contextualisation cues" (Gumperz 1982a) – partly habitual partly creative – that the children draw upon to build their teases. I investigate the sequencing rules of teasing among peers and explore the "participation frameworks" the children develop, as they navigate different participant positions (Goffman 1981). For this purpose, I explore two-party and multi-party teasing episodes and discuss the range of interactional options available to the children to co-construct the teasing episodes and maintain the teasing frames. I discuss the children's responses to teasing which include the following options: (1) responding to teasing playfully, (2) keeping silent, (3) responding seriously and (4) calling an adult third party to intervene. I situate the discussion of sequencing and response work to teasing in existing literature on Greek and Turkish culture and discourse with special reference to verbal play, verbal duelling and humour.

In Chapter 5, I shift my analytical gaze from talk among peers in recreational contexts to classroom talk (i.e. teacher-pupil talk and informal pupil-pupil talk) and discuss the framing of playful talk during whole-class teacher fronted instruction and small group instruction. Drawing upon Goffman's (1971) dramaturgical metaphors of "backstage" and "frontstage", I explore informal talk among children that takes place in the periphery of classroom discourse (backstage playful talk). I investigate teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil talk that emerges in its very centre (frontstage playful talk). I look at teachers as initiators and respondents to playful talk and present and discuss examples of teacher-led frontstage playful talk or when teachers actively take part in the development of play frames. I also look into a small group of boys doing group work and compare the framing of playful talk during whole-class teacher fronted instruction with playful talk emerging during small group instruction. Throughout this chapter, I examine how children and teachers exploit playful talk to affirm, transform or contest social relations (including relations of power) and negotiate multiple and potentially conflicting roles and identities across instructional contexts.

In Chapter 6, I look at the relationship between playful talk, play frames and social identities in recreational and instructional contexts in more detail. I explore playful talk as a form of collective sociability. I investigate how through cross-sex teasing boys and girls signal contrasting aspects of their gendered identities and exploit teasing to exercise social control, negotiate leadership roles and position themselves and their peers in particular (favorable or unfavorable) ways. I examine how through the joint production of playful talk the children show off their knowledge of and expertise in the media saturated majority (Greek) popular culture and negotiate peer group membership by erecting boundaries of inclusion to

and exclusion from the group. I probe into how the children draw upon aspects of the minority (Turkish) language and culture in their playful talk to negotiate a linguistically and culturally mixed peer group identity and culture. I explore the different ways children and teachers draw upon playful talk as a resource to foreground alternative models of identity, social relationships and authoritative knowledge in the official classroom floor, thereby redefining what counts as classroom talk.

In the conclusion, I bring together some of the main findings of the book. In the postscript, I provide a snap shot of the children's personal, social and educational change six years after the initial fieldwork.

CHAPTER 1

Playful talk, play frames and identity work

An ethnographically informed sociolinguistic approach

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I set about to provide an overview of children's playful talk drawing on three research traditions, childhood literacy development studies, linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics. I identify key themes in these disciplines and call for the need to re-conceptualize the notion of playful talk to encompass a wider and more diverse range of verbal phenomena. I go on to develop my conceptual framework by drawing on Bauman's (1986, 2002) notion of "performance". I discuss how playful talk can be productively re-conceptualized as performance bound by convention but also open to innovation and change. I explain how playful talk as performance can be combined with Goffman's (1974) concept of "frames" and develop the idea of play frames and how they interact with other types of frames, namely instructional and socio-relational frames in children's talk.

Both playful talk as performance and play frames are used to examine the intersection of language and identity in children's talk. I see them as points of entry into the investigation of meaning making and identity work and as a basis for my understanding of the children's social lives and cultural worlds. I develop my analytic framework further by drawing on an ethnographic approach to examine the children's resources, practices and identity work. Ethnography allows researchers to investigate identity not as bound categories associated with gender, ethnicity, religion, class or age but as emerging in the social practices in which children participate and actively shape. Central to this approach to identity is an understanding of culture as "a system of practices" inspired by Bourdieu (1990) which I link with the notion of "small cultures" (Holliday 1999). This approach to identity is also compatible with the social constructionist perspective to identity I adopt in this book. The latter sees identities and meanings not as residing in the speakers' minds but articulated and constructed "in talk-in-interaction" where they can be negotiated, contested, imagined and re-conceptualised (Androutsos-

poulos & Georgakopoulou 2003; Antaki & Widdicombe 1998). I integrate the concept of the peer group as an instance of a situated “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger 1991) in my analytic framework to explore the children’s lived experiences and shared interactional history at school. I conclude this chapter, by presenting the children, the protagonists, of this book. My aim here is to provide snap shots of each child rather than full-fledged descriptions which will serve as an introduction to the complex individuals they are.

1.1 Investigating children’s playful talk: An overview

Children’s play and playful talk at school, at home and in the community has been extensively explored in a variety of research traditions, including childhood literacy development studies, linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics. In particular, childhood literacy development studies have looked at the intersection of children’s expressive repertoires (including various forms of playful talk and text production) popular culture and media and digital literacies (e.g. Dyson 1997, 2003; Merchant 2005; see also relevant articles in Marsh 2005; Marsh & Millard 2005; Marsh et al. 2005; Pahl & Rowsell 2006). A key theme that emerges from this line of research is that the children’s engagement with popular culture and new forms of media and digital literacies has opened up spaces for more polyphonic written and oral playful performances and the development of new semiotic and discursive practices. For instance, Dyson (2003) shows how school-age children draw on a shared socio-cultural landscape mediated through common out-of-school recreational media and digital practices and preferences which they re-fashion in novel and creative ways to construct their official and unofficial school worlds. This line of research has revealed the opportunities and challenges for meaning making, social affiliation and fun and has led to redefining how children position themselves and others in their peer-to-peer communication as well as in their communication with adults (e.g. parents and teachers).

While childhood literacy development studies have focused on children’s playful talk and text production in new patterns of communication in response to on-going innovation in media and digital technology, sociolinguistically and anthropologically minded research has been primarily concerned with the investigation of children’s talk-in-interaction. It has focused on how children exploit their linguistic and other semiotic resources to construct, maintain or subvert game and play activities and routines. These activities have ranged, for instance, from engaging in role-play while playing computer games at home (Hoyle 1998) to participating in pretend play and outdoor games in the neighbourhood playground (Goodwin 1990). In so doing, children playfully transform and actively

resist cultural categories and display themselves as agents in the constitution of their social worlds. More recently, it has looked into children's play activities from a multi-modal perspective paying close attention to their embodied practices (e.g. turn shape, intonation, body positioning, gestures, re-enactments of past moves), as children participate in linguistically, culturally and socially homogeneous and heterogeneous peer groups (Goodwin 1998; Goodwin et al. 2002).

In this context, there are two further strands of research that have contributed to the investigation of children's playful talk. The first draws upon the linguistic anthropological tradition and has looked into children's language socialization processes and playful talk at home. It has focused on verbal play and teasing routines and practices. These have been critically examined as a verbal means of social control to communicate messages about inter-personal relationships and social affiliation (e.g. Eisenberg 1986; Miller 1986; Réger 1999; Schieffelin 1986). The second strand has been influenced by sociolinguistically minded research and has examined children's playful talk among peers. Traditionally, these studies have focused on highly visible youth cultures, most notably peer street cultures, and have been pre-occupied with verbal play and ritual insulting routines. Building on the pioneering work of Labov (1972), Abrahams (1974) and Mitchell-Kernan (1972), they have probed into the children's rich linguistic repertoires and cultural practices in the context of closely knit peer groups. These studies have shown how through verbal routines and practices such as ritual insulting, signifying or nicknaming children and young adults establish and maintain their peer cultures, do identity work and resist adult cultures (e.g. Dundes, Leach & Özkök 1972; Kochman 1983; Leary 1980; Rymes 1996).

A common denominator of anthropologically and sociolinguistically informed studies thus far has been a strong bias towards investigating children's playful talk in non-institutional settings (i.e. at home and in the neighbourhood). Schools, community-based and other recreational organizations, after-school homework and other clubs, complementary schools (also known as supplementary or heritage schools), on-line discussion lists and newsgroups and other forms of digital communication are some of the sites that have received significantly less attention (but see Eder 1995; Maybin 2006; Tannock 1999; Tholander 2002). Moreover, within institutional contexts, researchers have tended to focus on children's talk in specific locales, notably school playgrounds, and have often ignored other potentially productive sites such as school corridors, cafeterias or classrooms during break time (but see Lytra 2003a, 2003b, 2006). Another significant bias of these research traditions has been an overwhelming concern with playful talk among linguistically, culturally, socially and ethnically homogeneous peer groups. These have been portrayed as sharing a common set of rules, understandings and linguistic and cultural repertoires. As Pratt (1987) argues in her article

on “linguistic utopias”, the underlying assumption of such research is that peer groups are seen as self-contained entities, thereby glossing over social difference on the basis of language, culture, ethnicity, class and failing to address the issue of the “blurry frontier” in instances of contact (:56). Nevertheless, increasingly studies in sociolinguistics has shown that playful routines and activities (such as teasing, swearing, telling jokes, using verbal aggression, music making) are also central social practices in the talk of multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic peer groups (e.g. Goodwin et al. 2002; Pujolar 2001; Rampton 2006).

As I mentioned earlier in this section, a key contribution of anthropologically and sociolinguistically minded research has been its commitment to investigating talk-in-interaction: playful talk has been examined as a social practice in its actual use and in the socio-cultural contexts in which it emerges. Researchers working in these traditions have attended to talk that surrounds play activities and routines and have attempted to capture the cultural history and social context(s) of these performances and the lived experiences and interactional histories of the performers. Nevertheless, an important limitation of anthropological and sociolinguistic studies on playful talk has been that research has generally been confined to the investigation of a restricted set of verbal activities and routines. Certain types of performances (e.g. teasing, ritual insulting, nicknaming, verbal play, joking) have tended to monopolize the researchers’ agenda (e.g. Tannock 1999; Tholander 2002; Pujolar 2002). Others (e.g. music-making, chanting and reciting), however, that tend to draw heavily upon quoted set phrases and other recyclable and recontextualizable fragments of talk commonly lifted from popular culture and mass media discourses have received less attention (but see e.g. Lytra 2003a, 2006; Rampton 1995, 2006; Rampton, Harris & Dover 2002). The limited focus on these activities and routines calls for the need to re-conceptualize playful talk in order to encompass a wider and more diverse range of verbal phenomena. I will now turn to this issue in the following section (Section 1.2).

1.2 Re-conceptualizing playful talk

An overview of the sociolinguistics literature strongly suggests that humour is the most common super-ordinate category to which researchers orient in order to group a wide range of playful routines and activities. For instance, researchers tend to favour humour to encompass verbal activities and routines such as teasing, the use of puns, sarcasm and mimicry, kidding and joking (cf. Beeman 2001; Holmes & Marra 2002; Antonopoulou & Sifianou 2003; Archakis & Tsakona 2005; Holmes 2006; Kotthoff 2006). In this book, I adopt the term “playful talk” as a super-ordinate category instead with the purpose of capturing a wider

and more complex range of verbal activities and routines that emerged in the children's talk at school. These include the following verbal phenomena: teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. Unlike humour, playful talk as a super-ordinate category is flexible enough to encompass both more fleeting and highly unstructured activities (such as private solo singing and humming of popular tunes in circulation) and more ritualised ones (such as cross-sex or same-sex teasing routines). By broadening the scope of what counts as playful talk, this concept can include verbal phenomena that require different understandings of local and global contexts and allow for varying audience roles and participant structures.

I combine playful talk as a super-ordinate category with the concept of "performance" (Bauman 1986, 2000). Performance has been employed as an all-encompassing analytical category to incorporate a set of phenomena that occur in different genres. Apart from story-telling (Georgakopoulou 1997) and joke-telling (Nardini 2000), it has been used to account for verbal phenomena, such as parody (Haney 2000), comic performances (Jaffe 2000; Pagliai 2000), verbal styles (Farr 2000) and folk songs (Dutkova-Cope 2000). Bauman (2000) understands the notion of performance as linguistic practice that is "situated, interactional, communicatively motivated" (: 1). He goes on to define verbal performances as,

... a special mode of situated communicative practice, resting on the assumption of accountability to an audience for a display of communicative skill and efficacy. In this sense of performance, the act of expression is put on display, objectified, marked out to a degree from its discursive surroundings and opened up to interpretive scrutiny and evaluation by an audience. (ibid: 1)

This conceptualization of performance highlights the centrality of both the act of expression (and its inherent qualities) and the performer. It calls for special attention to the performer's actions, verbal skills and effectiveness which are open to audience scrutiny and evaluation.

Bauman (1986) argues that performances are structured events that are produced by the interplay of the following situational factors: (1) participants' identities and roles; (2) the expressive means employed in performances; (3) social interactional ground rules, norms, and strategies for performance and criteria for its interpretation and evaluation and (4) the sequence of actions that make up the scenario of the event (: 4). Concurrently, performances have a unique and emergent quality in that they shape and are shaped by the situational contexts in which they are produced in ways consistent to local understandings. Therefore, performances are seen as,

... situated social accomplishments in which structures and conventions may provide precedents and guidelines for the range of alternatives possible, but the possibility of alternatives, the competencies and goals of the participants, and the emergent unfolding of the event make for variability. (ibid: 4)

Similar to the structure of performances, both texts and the social relations within and beyond the performance can be subject to variability and innovation. Performers can creatively manipulate conventional norms as well as audience expectations and associations, thereby influencing the emergent text of a given performance. In so doing, they can reconfigure the structure of social relations and participant roles (see relevant articles in Pagliai & Farr 2000).

The understanding of performance as both bound by convention and open to variability and innovation is closely linked to the notion of “entextualization”. Bauman & Briggs (1990) define “entextualisation” as “the process of rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit – a *text* [italics in the original] – that can be lifted out of its interactional setting” (:73). They recognise that entextualization processes involve both decontextualization from one social context and recontextualization into another (:74). Moreover, they argue that these processes are “transformational” in that the recontextualized text incorporates elements (associated with form, function, meaning etc.) from previous context(s) and accrues new ones as it is recontextualized, in other words, the recontextualized text may carry elements of its history within it (:75). By its very nature performance makes decontextualization possible. At the same time, decontextualization from one context involves recontextualization into another. These processes involve a dialogic vision of children’s talk at school: the children’s words, as Bakhtin (1986) would argue, “presuppose others – the others from whom they have learned the words and those whom, in the moment, they are addressing” (72: reported in Dyson 1997: 84).

Incorporating the dialogic nature of children’s talk in the analytic framework allows to further re-conceptualize playful talk as performance. Playful talk as performance then can be seen as a useful point of entry into the examination of the relationship between the children’s linguistic and other semiotic resources and their identity displays and positionings. As Bauman (2000) argues, because of its reflexive nature performance can “represent for participants an arena for the display, contemplation, and manipulation of salient elements, practices, and relationships that allow language to serve as a resource for the expression of identity” (:4). To address the intersection of playful talk as performance and identity work, I draw upon theories of contemporary selves which stress that identities and their discursive constructions are neither static nor fixed properties. Instead, they emerge sequentially in discourse where they accomplish local interactional

goals, vary across interactional sites and are dynamically constructed in that they can be reframed, transgressed, imagined and contested in unfolding communication. I will explore this issue in more detail in Section 1.4. In the next section (1.3), I introduce Goffman's (1974) notion of frames and address the relationship between playful talk, play frames and other types of frames.

1.3 Framing talk as play

In this book, playful talk as performance encompasses a wide range of verbal phenomena, notably teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. These verbal activities and routines in turn set up play frames. Frames, in general, are regarded as mechanisms through which participants structure their social and personal experiences, thereby providing us with an interpretation of what is going on in a given interaction (Goffman 1974: 10–11; see also Tannen & Wallat [1987] 1993; Straehle 1993). To achieve this understanding, interactants employ clusters of contextualization cues which function as framing devices to signal how utterances, movements or gestures are to be interpreted (*ibid.*). In doing so, they mark off periods of talk devoted to a particular verbal activity (e.g. teasing, music making) from talk about other matters (e.g. talk about a school task or curriculum orientated talk). Participants need to have a certain degree of meta-communicative awareness in order to distinguish between those signals or cues used for play and those used for combat, as they tend to be similar (Bateson 1972). Meta-communicative awareness can be created and constantly renewed against a backdrop of shared cultural assumptions, associations and background knowledge reflecting the participants' interactional histories and interpersonal ties (*cf.* Georgakopoulou 2005; Maybin 2006).

Frames are viewed as dynamic constructs. This conceptualization of frames highlights that meanings, understandings and ways of interacting are not static concepts. Instead, they are continuously placed under scrutiny against interactants' past experiences and current understandings and they are adapted and revised to fit new ones (see relevant articles in Tannen 1993). The dynamic nature of frames can become a productive point of entry for the investigation of how play frames are sequentially and interactionally produced in children's playful talk: how they are opened, developed and closed and the types of participant positions and roles they make available. One central feature of play frames is that they exploit the ambiguous nature and context-dependency of play. As research has shown, it is not always possible to discriminate between play and non-play regardless of the cues employed in playful talk and the participants' meta-communicative awareness (e.g. Holmes & Marra 2002; Antonopoulou & Sifianou 2003; Archakis

& Tsakona 2005 to mention a few). In this sense, I understand play as running along a continuum that spans from play to non-play. Play then can express positive affect or license more negative interpersonal communicative intent: it can be used to enhance group ties by signalling shared affiliation and common group boundaries but also to regulate the group members' conduct and talk (cf. Fine & De Soucey 2005). By exploiting the ambiguity and context-dependency of play, children can engage in meaning making and meaning negotiations to explore, adopt, resist available as well as novel social roles and social identities.

A second central feature of play frames is that like all frames they are interactively constructed and emergent constructs. Play frames can be juxtaposed against other frames, they can leak into other frames, they can shift from one frame to another, they can be juggled (when more than one frame needs to be concurrently oriented to) or they can be in conflict with other frames (see Tannen & Wallat [1987] 1993). This feature of play frames allow us to examine how play frames can be juxtaposed against other frames or what happens when more than one frame is attended to at the same time.

In this book, I focus on three types of frames that emerge in children's talk at school: (1) socio-relational, (2) instructional and (3) play frames. Children's talk is also generated within the context of the school as a social institution which imposes a larger frame of reference. The diagram below is a schematic representation of these different frames. Its purpose is to capture the interaction between them.

Socio-relational or personal frames signal casual talk or "ordinary conversation" (Drew & Heritage 1992). In the classroom setting, casual talk is often associated with "off-task" talk. Casual or "off-task" talk is frequently contrasted

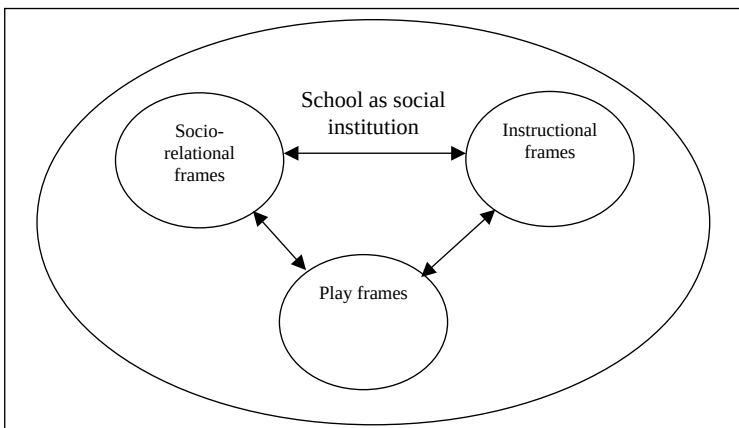


Diagram 1.1

with “purposive talk” or “task-focused talk” that addresses “the business at hand” (Tannock 1998:244). Purposive talk is usually associated with “institutional” frames (Coupland et al. 1994; Ribeiro 1993, 1996) or in our case with instructional frames. Instructional frames are related to curriculum-orientated talk and can include lesson, class management and task-related frames. The boundaries between socio-relational, instructional and play frames, however, are not always clearly delineated. The fact that each type of frame is represented independently in Diagram 1.1 does not imply fixed boundaries. Instead, frames can leak into or blend with one another. As Coupland et al. (1994) claim in their study on framing of medical consultations,

the ‘medical versus social’ dichotomy is, in fact, difficult to establish as an absolute distinction in medical discourse, not least because all talk, indeed all utterances, articulate socio-relational meanings which interact with and qualify ideational meanings (J. Coupland et al. 1992; Holmes 1990; Tracy & Coupland 1990). Even when a ‘medical frame’ apparently dominates in a specific medical encounter, participants will presumably pursue socio-relational goals in certain dimensions of their talk. (: 90)

As far as children’s talk at school is concerned, it is generated within the context of the school as a social institution which imposes a supra-frame. This supra-frame implies a two-way relationship between individual frames whether instructional, socio-relational or play frames and the institutional frame of the school in that individual frames shape as well as are shaped by the institutional frame. This dialectal relationship inevitably determines the framing of playful talk during instruction as well as across school contexts.

In the next section (1.4), I develop further my analytic framework by exploring identity as a process and locating it in playful talk.

1.4 Locating identity in playful talk

Identity is considered a complex construct that has been examined in a variety of research traditions. From a social psychological perspective, for instance, identity has been traditionally defined in terms of a sense of belonging to particular social categories or groups (e.g. Tajfel 1981). Rather than situating identity in the individual, linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists view identity as a process that is shaped by social interaction and social institutions. From a social constructionist perspective in particular, identity is seen as,

... an emergent construction, the situated outcome of a rhetorical and interpretative process in which interactants make situationally motivated selections from socially constituted repertoires of identificational and affiliational resources and craft these semiotic resources into identity claims for presentation to others. (Bauman 2000: 1)

From this perspective, language emerges as one of the central semiotic resources available to interactants to make identity claims. By focusing on the interactants' linguistic and other resources, we can then explore "when and how identities are interactively invoked by sociocultural actors" (Kroskrity 1993: 222). This understanding of identity is premised on a view of the self as an active agent in the interactively achieved social construction of meaning. Identity construction is, therefore, viewed as an on-going process that is constituted through daily interactions rather than a quality that a person has or does not have. Moreover, it implies that social realities are constructed rather than a priori-taken-for-granted-social-fact. Both premises underlie a social constructionist approach to identity where identity is seen as produced in response to ever changing social and cultural worlds. Consequently, instead of asking "how does a person having this social identity speak", social constructionists address the following question: "what kind of social identity is a person attempting to construct in performing this kind of verbal act or in verbally expressing this kind of stance?" (Ochs 1993: 296).

The conceptualisation of identity as process has shifted our analytical lens from studying "identity" as a single term to studying "identities" in the plural form. This reflects the notion that interactants have access to a repertoire of identities (Hall 2000). Identities can, therefore, be fragmented or "polyphonous" (Barrett 1999), they can coexist, evolve, change but can also be imposed or repressed. As a result, the identity(ies) an individual or a group may orient to or ascribe to others depends on contextual parameters, both those attributed to local/interactional contexts (e.g. interlocutors, setting) and those pertaining to global/societal ones (e.g. ideologies and discourses about gender, ethnicity, race). This implies that an individual or group may identify themselves and others by foregrounding particular aspects of their identity kit which may be potentially contradictory. Moerman (1974) aptly captures the context-dependency of identities, their multiplicity and interactivity in his study of Lue ethnic identity in the following remark: "the question is not, 'Who are the Lue?' but rather when and how and why the identification 'Lue' is preferred" (:62). This approach to identity emphasizes that identities are not given but actively produced and highlights the agency of speakers. At the same time, Kroskrity (2001) cautions researchers,

... against any approach to identity, or identities, that does not recognize both the communicative freedom potentially available at the microlevel and the political economic constraints imposed on processes of identity-making. (: 108)

With respect to studies on playful talk, a number of sociolinguistically minded studies have focused on specific activities and routines (e.g. humour, teasing, joking, self-mockery) to explore the intersection of language and identity construction. For instance, one productive strand of research has focused on institutional interactions and has investigated playfulness in talk to articulate particular aspects of the interactants' social and professional identities in the work-place (e.g. Holmes & Marra 2002; Holmes 2000, 2006) and in the classroom (e.g. Baynham 1996; Lytra 2004). An equally important strand has focused on playful talk among group members to establish and consolidate peer group ties and exclude non-group members often through social control (e.g. Archakis & Tsakona 2005, 2006; Kotthoff 2000; Fine & De Soucey 2005; Pichler 2006). A common concern shared by these studies is analysing playful verbal phenomena and playful practices in interaction, thereby emphasizing their dialogic and emergent nature and highlighting the co-articulation of particular identity aspects and their relevance in contextually different ways.

Besides sociolinguistics, childhood literacy development studies have addressed the relationship between identity and play in the development, for instance, of online communities and video gaming. They have shown that children playfully experiment with digital communication across settings to represent themselves in new ways and construct inter-personal relationships with peers with whom they may have limited or no face-to-face interaction (see Marsh 2005; Merchant 2005). Moreover, they have illustrated that children appropriate and transform a variety of play identities in their video gaming activities that allows them to experience and experiment with new and exciting possibilities for identity work, social affiliation and fun (Gee 2003).

A key contribution of the aforementioned research on language, identity and play has been to highlight the potential of playful interaction as a research focus in its own right. Playful talk can often be overlooked or simply dismissed as marginal and frivolous. In this book, I draw insights from previous research on language, identity and play to examine identity construction at two levels, the participants' discourse identities and their social identities.

- (1) discourse identities are intrinsic to talk-in-interaction (e.g. teaser, recipient of the tease, singer, orchestrator, co-producer or audience of the music making activity). They are "characterizations of participants' status in relation to the ongoing production of talk, and which arise from the trajectory and organization of talk" (Wooffit & Clark 1998: 110);

- (2) social identities derive from wider societal and institutional contexts, therefore going well beyond the talk itself (e.g. social identities can be associated with age, gender, race, religion, geographical region, education).⁶

I show how the study of identity work can benefit from attention to the often complex relationship between discourse and social identities by probing into the ways children exploit their diverse linguistic and other semiotic resources in playful talk. In particular, I explore the articulation of their discourse identities through the types of participation frameworks, frame shifts, responses to playful talk and shifts in footing in which they engage during the opening, development and closing of play frames. I go on to illustrate how through discourse identities children can make larger social identities salient in playful talk. One important underlying assumption is that children may invoke more than one identity aspect at any interactional moment and that these identity displays may shift or change even within a single turn.

In the next section (1.5), I introduce the notion of the peer group as an instance of a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger 1991) to explore further the intersection between language and identity.

1.5 The peer group as a community of practice

Group formations, whether these are based on ethnicity, age, language or gender and so on, presuppose that groups do not exist in vacuum. Instead, they exist in relation to other groups and it is via this relationship that groups are constituted. As Eriksen (1993) argues in his discussion of ethnic group formation processes, group construction is based on “contact and interrelationship” (:9). Past approaches to group formation have tended to conceive groups as having discrete and fixed boundaries: they included within them group members and inevitably excluded non-group members. More recent ones, however, have questioned the extent to which group boundaries are indeed as discrete and fixed as it had been assumed (ibid:9–10). Ethnographically orientated sociolinguistic research on children’s talk, in particular, has been heavily influenced by the latter line of inquiry. This has triggered the investigation of contact encounters among children sharing different ethnic, cultural, linguistic or gender affiliations (e.g. Heller 1999,

6. Merchant (2005) draws on a similar distinction between “anchored” and “transient” identities. He defines “anchored” identities as established through long socio-cultural and economic processes (e.g. identities associated with race, gender, social class, religion) and “transient” identities as more ephemeral positionings associated with particular cultural products and popular narratives (e.g. becoming a superhero).

2002; Harris 2006; Rampton 1995, 2006). These studies have revealed that group boundaries may in fact be permeable and negotiable. Moreover, they have foregrounded processes whereby children were engaged in exchanging, appropriating, transforming and at times subverting and resisting aspects of their resources and practices.

In sociolinguistics, the concept of the “group” as a unit of analysis has been widely employed in the study of peer groups and children’s peer talk. The focus on peer groups could be attributed to the fact that they have been identified as the locus for the investigation of peer cultures. Kyratzis (2004) identifies four ways in which children’s peer talk establishes and maintains peer cultures which are also relevant in this book:

- (a) how children elaborate games and codes (and ritualize the basis of inclusion in the peer group), (b) how conflict talk functions to elaborate peer culture, (c) how identities as peer group phenomena are talked into being through peer talk, and (d) how adult culture is resisted through peer talk. (:625)

This conceptualization of peer cultures assumes that peer cultures are not mere reproductions or imitations of the adult social worlds. Instead, they are regarded as autonomous, flexible and creative constructs produced among peers, by appropriating, localising and transforming the linguistic and other semiotic resources available to them (cf. Androutsopoulos & Scholz 2002; Bucholtz 2002).

A common critique of the concept of the “group” as the unit of analysis, however, is that it tends to focus on conformity among group members, while failing to capture difference at an intra-group level (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992:466). To provide a more fine-grained analysis of intra-group variation in children’s language use, I draw upon the notion of “communities of practice”. Lave & Wenger (1991) define “community of practice” as “an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour” (:464). Unlike traditional communities, communities of practice are simultaneously defined by membership as well as by the practices in which their members engage (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992:466). The definition highlights the importance of practices in building group membership and belonging without glossing over inequalities in social relations or difference among members within a community.

The concept of communities of practice has been productively extended to examine how language interacts with different social constructs including conflict, power, and the broader social context (see collection of studies in Barton & Tusting 2005). Researchers working in gender studies, for instance, have extensively employed the concept of communities of practice to explore the in-

teraction of language and gender (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992; see also Holmes & Meyerhoff 1999). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) argue that the focus of this research is on “how gender is constructed in social practice, and how this construction intertwines with that of other components of identity and difference, and of language” (:472). Taking their cue from gender studies, Androutsopoulos and Georgakopoulou (2003) put forth a similar case for the study of language and youth. They argue for a shift in our analytical lens to peer groups as instances of situated communities of practice whose members develop shared linguistic and other semiotic resources over a period of regular socialization. These shared resources emerge around particular recreational, media and digital practices and preferences (see, for instance, Gee 2003; Marsh 2005; Merchant 2005).

In this book, I view the peer group the children form at school as an instance of a community of practice. I use the notion to illuminate the processes whereby peer group members construct a common interactional history which functions as the backdrop to their daily exchanges and is strategically invoked to serve local interactional projects. I argue that the children’s shared interactional history can provide us with the necessary link between their linguistic and other semiotic resources and the articulation of their discourse identities as well as broader social identities and roles (cf. Androutsopoulos & Georgakopoulou 2003).

1.6 Towards a more dynamic analytic framework

As discussed in the previous sections, I develop my conceptual framework by drawing upon the notions of playful talk as performance and play frames to tap into the children’s linguistic and other semiotic resources and explore their discourse and social identities. I also adopt the concept of the peer group as a community of practice to unravel the children’s lived experiences and shared interactional history at school. Additionally, I draw upon the anthropological concept of “contextualization” and particularly the work of Gumperz (1982a) on “contextualization cues” and “contextual presuppositions” to which I now turn.

Gumperz’s work is based on the assumption that meaning making, structure and language use are socially and culturally bound (Gumperz 1982a). This premise becomes all the more relevant in present-day urban multilingual/multicultural/multiethnic societies. As Gumperz’s research has aptly demonstrated (1982a, 1982b), contact encounters can cause difficulties in communication and generate misunderstandings. These misunderstandings can lead to racial and ethnic stereotyping and to unequal access to valued symbolic and material resources. It is, therefore, crucial for interactants to share certain signalling devices or “con-

textualization cues” in order to avoid miscommunication (Gumperz 1982a: 131). Gumperz regards “contextualization cues” as linguistic, paralinguistic and extra-linguistic signs that cluster together and associate what is said to assumed background knowledge among conversationalists (ibid). Depending on interactants’ linguistic and cultural repertoires, these cues may be realised in terms of “code, dialect and style switching processes”, “prosodic phenomena”, “choice among lexical and syntactic options”, “formulaic expressions”, “conversational openings, closings and sequencing strategies” (ibid; see also Gumperz 1992). Conversationalists employ these shared cues to accurately inference the culturally relevant meanings of a text (cf. Basso 1992). During this process, they also have at their disposal assumed background knowledge or “contextual presuppositions”, which involve shared assumptions about “context, interactive goals and interpersonal relations” (ibid: 2).

Gumperz’s work on contextualization cues and contextual presuppositions can be fruitfully combined with Goffman’s (1974, 1981) notions of “frames”, “participation frameworks” and “footing”. I see contextualization cues as framing devices that signal the frame(s) in which an utterance should be interpreted. The investigation of contextualisation cues allows researchers to glean into the organisation of social interaction and the production of play frames in children’s talk. It also has implications for the conceptualization of the self as an active agent in the interactively achieved social construction of meaning. For Goffman (1981), the self is located within a “participation framework”, a set of positions or “participation status” which interactants take up in relation to an utterance produced within their perceptual range (:3). Each position interactants take up, Goffman further argues, is related to codified and normatively defined social conduct (:ibid). The examination of participation frameworks allows researchers to access the different participant positions available in children’s playful talk. Participants can also engage in shifts in “footing” or “participant alignments”. Goffman (1974) regards “footing” as “the alignment we take up to ourselves and the other present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance” (:128). Shifts in footing can be achieved through the manipulation of contextualization cues as framing devices. In other words, contextualization cues function as devices to convey shifts in footing, through which children can signal different changes in participation frameworks and frame development.

The insights from Gumperz and Goffman’s work results in producing “a richly textured view of the contexts in which inferences about speakers’ meaning are situated” (Schiffrin 1997:102). In particular, Gumperz’s work attends to how interactants’ make inferences about what is meant in a given utterance, by relying on interpretations of context seen as background socio-cultural understandings. Goffman’s work focuses on the organisation of social life and the ways it provides contexts for comprehending social interaction. Both Gumperz and Goffman

converge on a view of context as “a socially constituted, interactively sustained, time-bound phenomenon” (Duranti & Goodwin 1992: 6). In this view of context, Schiffrrin (1994) argues, language plays an indexical role (: 105). Language indexes background socio-cultural understandings that aid participants in inferring what is meant. In addition, it provides one of possible resources to index discourse and social identities in talk (: 105–106).

This conceptualisation of context can encompass aspects of both “local” or “interactional” contexts and “global” or “societal” contexts (Van Dijk 1997: 15). “Local/interactional” contexts and their relevance in discourse can be readily identified by examining contextual parameters, such as the participants, their actions and the setting. By manipulating contextual parameters, children can dynamically (re)shape context and exploit playful talk in more or less strategic ways to further local interactional projects. “Global/societal” contexts, on the other hand, may involve penetrating more complex and abstract macro-categories. These are larger extra-situational or exogenous categories, such as ideologies, broader personal, social, cultural identities, identities associated with class, gender, ethnicity, religion, “master narratives” or “capital D discourses” (Gee 1999) that have an existence well beyond the local interaction (cf. Duranti & Goodwin 1992). Children can invoke, index, orient to these macro-categories in playful talk. This understanding of context brings forth the following questions: (1) in what ways are “local” contexts embedded in more “global” ones and (2) in what ways do “global” contexts become relevant for understanding and interpreting instances of playful talk (cf. Van Dijk 1997). In this book, I seek to demonstrate that there is a strong inter-dependence between aspects of local and global contexts without, however, implying that the boundaries between contexts are always clearly demarcated.

The analytic framework is equally informed by an ethnographic approach in order to gain insights into the children’s meaning-making and identity work at school. In this book, I see ethnography as both “a process of inquiry” (Le Vine 1988: 67) and a set of “methods” (Duranti 1997: 84). As a “process of inquiry”, ethnography consists of providing “a written description of the social organization, social activities, symbolic and material resources, and interpretive practices characteristic of a particular group of people” (: 85).⁷ An important principle that guides ethnographic inquiry is “openness”: ethnographers do not approach a

7. In sociolinguistic research, ethnography as a process of inquiry has played a central role in the development of the Ethnography of Communication as an approach to the study of discourse (Hymes 1974, 1996). Moreover, it has been extensively employed by researchers from different discourse traditions to identify and foreground aspects of the material, symbolic and other resources and practices of the peoples they are investigating (e.g. Eckert 2000; Heller 1999; Goodwin 1990; Maybin 2006; Moerman 1988; Rampton 2006).

group's shared beliefs and practices with a set of a priori meanings regarding how the former should be understood and interpreted. Instead, they discover these meanings through the process of ethnographic inquiry (Hymes 1996: 10–15). During this process, ethnographers are required to distance themselves from their culturally biased interpretations of the phenomena they are examining and attain a certain degree of “objectivity”. Simultaneously, they are required to provide “an insider's perspective” concerning the people they are studying (Duranti 1997: 85). As Geertz aptly argues (1988), ethnographers produce,

... an interpretation of the way a people lives that is neither imprisoned with their mental horizons, as an ethnography of witchcraft as written by a witch, nor systematically deaf to the distinctive tonalities of their existence, an ethnography of witchcraft written by a geometer. (:125)

The two perspectives ethnographers need to successfully balance in their description bring to mind the “emic-etic” distinction in anthropology. The “emic” perspective refers to “the point of view of the members of the community under study and hence tries to describe how members assign meaning to a given act or to the differences between two acts”. The “etic” perspective, on the other hand, is “culture-independent and simply provides a classification of behaviours on the basis of a set of features devised by the observer/researcher” (: 172; also Hymes 1996).

Following Duranti (1997), I take it that a successful ethnography is not confined to adopting one single perspective – whether “emic” or “etic”. Instead, it is based on a dialogue between the different assumptions, viewpoints, voices and interpretations of the people being observed, those of the observer(s) and the latter(s)' methodological and analytical principles, as specified by their discipline(s) (:87). In this book, I take this premise a step further by challenging the centrality of “the native's point of view” in ethnographic inquiry. As Sharrock and Anderson (1982) convincingly argue, in reality “the native and the researcher co-produce fieldwork” (:133). “The native”, they further argue, should not be viewed as “an expert”, but as an “enquirer” into her own culture. Consequently, both the observers and the observed need to collaboratively find out what the meanings of the latter's shared practices, beliefs and activities are. This understanding of ethnography implies that meaning making is perceived as being achieved and negotiated. Meaning making does not exist independently in the minds or actions of the observed, which ethnographers are called upon to discover (ibid). In addition, this understanding brings forth the conditions of inter-subjectivity that connect the observers and the observed and highlights the dialogue that takes place between them.

The conceptualization of ethnography as a process of inquiry can be productively linked to an understanding of culture as a system of practices. The notion of culture as emerging through processes within social practice has been greatly influenced by the intellectual movement of post-structuralism. As Bourdieu (1990 reported in Duranti 1997) argues,

... culture is neither something simply external to the individual (e.g. in rituals or symbols handed down by older members of the society), nor something simply internal (e.g. in the individual mind). Rather, it exists through routinized action that includes the material (and physical) conditions as well as the social actors' experiences in using their bodies while moving through a familiar space. (:45)

This understanding of culture brings to mind Street's (1993) metaphor of "culture as verb" where cultures are seen as something people do. It is premised on the following assumptions: (1) cultures do not refer to an arbitrary collection of independent traits, patterns or products and (2) there is not a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning. Thus, language and culture are not regarded as autonomous systems, but are seen as being "actively defined by socio-political processes" (Bourdieu 1990 reported in Duranti 1997:45). These processes also inform the ways bureaucratic institutions, such as schools, function (*ibid*). Furthermore, shared meanings and interpretations are dialogically constructed and there is a general recognition that cultures are fluid and mixed (:43).

This dynamic understanding of culture as a system of practices is schematically represented in Diagram 1.2 below. The diagram attempts to capture the interaction of different cultures in which the children in this book draw their linguistic and other semiotic resources, routines and practices for play. I have identified the following cultures which are relevant here: (1) the majority (Greek) culture, (2) the minority (Turkish) culture, (3) the school's culture, (4) the classroom culture and (5) the children's linguistically and culturally mixed school-based peer culture. I do not view these cultures as self-contained entities. For instance, in the following chapters I show how the majority culture in which the children are immersed is saturated by aspects from mainstream youth/popular culture and mass media discourses. Similarly, I demonstrate how the minority culture draws on a trans-national Turkish culture (one that is disseminated mainly via satellite TV) as well as on its more localised manifestations through neighbourhood networks and friendship ties that stretch well beyond the neighbourhood. Moreover, these different cultures are inter-connected and inter-related. The fact that each culture is represented independently in the diagram does not imply fixed boundaries. Instead, cultures feed into each other thereby creating spaces for contact.

In this book, I link the concept of culture as a system of practices to Holliday's (1999) notion of "small cultures", a concept that originates from Applied Lin-

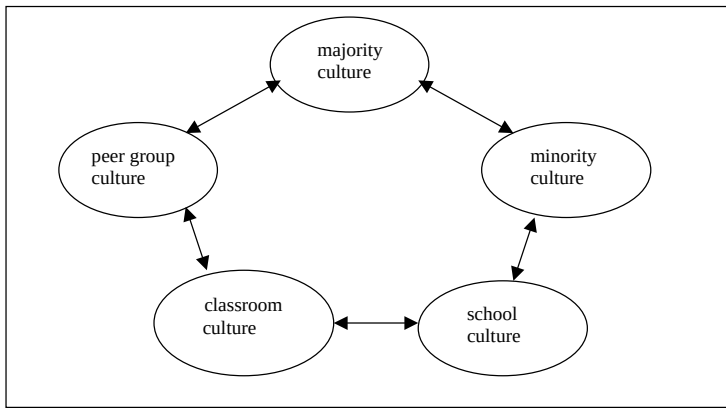


Diagram 1.2 The inter-relationship of cultures

guistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research. Holliday sees “small culture” as “a dynamic, ongoing group process which operates in changing circumstances to enable group members to make sense of and operate meaningfully within those circumstances” (: 248). A “small culture” perspective attaches culture to cohesive social groupings, their activities, routines and practices. It is opposed to a “large culture” perspective that identifies groups of people based on “ethnic”, “national” or “international” affiliations (: 237). A small culture paradigm is particularly productive for the study of localised classroom and peer group cultures and is in agreement with the idea of the peer group as a community of practice put forth in this book. As Holliday (1999) argues, a focus on small cultures can transform culture into “the location for research” making it “an interpretative device for understanding emergent behaviour” (: 237).

1.7 The protagonists

Writing up a person’s profile is not a straightforward task as there are no clear criteria according to which certain characteristics, traits or background information should be regarded as more relevant than other. Moreover, by isolating certain background information, one runs the risk of placing people in fixed categories and treating them as mere “data” that fall short of capturing the complexity and multiplicity of their daily lives, past experiences and future aspirations.

In this section, I attempt to provide snap shots of each of the children, the protagonists of this book. In brief, I met all 11 children in mid-January 1999 at the local primary school which I had chosen as the main site for my fieldwork. All

the children were about ten years old at the time. Most of the children had been together in the same class for almost four years. Here are some very early observations about the children of this class:

I have now observed the children in Miss Soula's class for almost two weeks. I've noticed that overall they are all quite fluent in Greek (in other classes the children's Greek is more uneven between majority and minority children). Miss Soula has been teaching this class for almost three consecutive years now. The children seem very comfortable with their teacher and peers and no one seems to be marginalized. I've noticed that they are keen to take part in the lesson but at the same time they engage in quite a bit of informal side-talk. Some of this is in Turkish. Everyone seems to treat the use of Turkish as something normal (unmarked). They have all been extremely welcoming, very interested in me and my work and have made me feel very much at home in their class.

(fieldnotes, 29/01/99)

The following snap shots clearly fall short of a full-scale description of each child. Rather, their aim is to provide a sketch of each child that serves as an introduction to the complex individuals they are.⁸ The children are presented in alphabetical order.

Babis

Babis is a majority Greek boy. He has been labeled by his class teacher and peers as academically the weakest pupil in the class (although admittedly other pupils were equally poor performers). Babis perceived failings as a pupil include among others: consistently failing to hand in his homework on time, having a backlog of unfinished homework which he promises to deliver but never does, regularly bringing the wrong school books to class and being frequently absent-minded during the lesson. Babis is frequently targeted by Miss Soula, the class teacher, who singles out his poor academic performance, practices and modes of talk and conduct. As a result, I observed that he often becomes the butt of jokes and jibes about his poor academic performance. When he grows up he wants to be a football player.

8. To represent the children, I draw upon participant observations, informal discussions and semi-structured interviews during the course of the fieldwork. I also make use of information from the questionnaires that the children completed for me towards the end of my initial fieldwork (May 1999) and the individual end-of school-year reports (1997–1998) that the class teacher had written up for each child (for further details see Sections 2.5–2.5.2).

Bahrye

Bahrye is a minority Turkish-speaking girl. I noticed that she comes across as articulate and strong-willed. Due to her plum physique, she often becomes the target of ruthless teasing by her male peers, especially Huseyin. The latter also coined the rather unsavory nickname “Σούμο” <Sumo> for her. She is immersed in popular culture, especially Turkish “arabesk” music and popular Turkish soaps which she watches with her mother, grandmother and other female relatives and friends. Unlike most minority children, she has close friendship ties with majority girls in the neighbourhood which explains to a large extent her fluency in colloquial Greek (as opposed to some of her minority peers whose fluency is more limited). When she grows up Bahrye wants to become an air hostess “γιατί μου αρέσει να ταξιδεύω” <because I like travelling>. She has indeed travelled once outside Greece to Germany with her family to visit relatives who have immigrated there and always talks about that trip very fondly.

Costas

Costas is another majority Greek boy. Unlike most majority parents in the neighborhood, I observed that his family encourages him and his older sister to have friends from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Costas is a bit of an odd man out in the class: he is academically very successful but does not actively participate in the class peer culture. He does not seem to be tuned into Greek popular culture which is saturated by a cluster of very popular singers and songs and inter-textual references to specific variety shows and Brazilian soap operas. Instead, he reports listening to Steve Wonder and watching American movies on television. Outside school he socializes regularly with Tuncay (perhaps not surprisingly as Tuncay also does not fit comfortably the profile of the prototypical minority boy). When he grows up he wants to be a football player too.

Fanis (Irfan)

Fanis is a minority Turkish-speaking boy. I noticed that he comes across as a very bright but also sensitive and perceptive child. No one quite knows when he decided to change his name from (Turkish) Irfan to (Greek) Fanis. When I asked him about the history and purpose of his name-changing he responded laconically that “Ιρφάν στα Ελληνικά Φάνης” <Irfan in Greek (is) Fanis>. Unlike many minority children and adults who make selective use of Turkish and Greek names, Fanis exclusively used his Hellenized name both inside and outside the school, across contexts and interactants. I can only speculate that his name-changing could have been partly triggered by racist and abusive comments he had to deal with and which were a consequence of his very dark complexion. During informal discussions, Fanis repeatedly complained to me that even some of his

close friends called him “αράπης” (a “black skinned person” which can have racist connotations) and that this name-calling caused him a lot of grief. He confided that even friends do not have the license to call one another such names. When he grows up he wants to become an accountant.

Giannis

Giannis is another majority Greek boy. He is thought of as rather opinionated and a poor sport by his peers. These character traits result in ambivalent and often competitive relationships with his peers, especially with Huseyin who does not mince his words. Very often Giannis makes hostile remarks targeting his fellow peers, newly arrived immigrants in the neighborhood and women. His remarks have resulted in repeated interventions by Miss Soula, the class teacher. Like most majority children, he avoids socializing with minority children and spends his free time at home, playing computer games and watching TV (e.g. variety shows and sports) alone or with his younger cousin. When he grows up he wants to become a football player too.

Huseyin

Huseyin is another minority Turkish-speaking boy. He is considered by his peers as hyper-active, outgoing and street-wise. To my mind he is the prototypical minority boy of his age: he maintains close friendship ties with an extended mixed-age group of Turkish-speaking minority boys who are older than he is and socializes almost exclusively with them (e.g. regularly venturing outside the confines of the neighborhood to visit game parlors as well as friends and acquaintances living in and around Athens, playing football for a local team and sometimes getting into trouble). Tuncay playfully refers to him as “yol kızanı” (literally a “street kid” but also implying of someone who is street-wise and cunning). He is also an avid consumer of Turkish popular culture (especially Turkish “arabesk” music); perhaps because his father owns the local video store featuring Turkish music and films. At school, I noticed that he likes acting out the class clown, always ready to launch into a teasing attack, mimic the voices of his teacher or one of his peers and initiate and actively participate in all kinds of playful activities and routines. When he grows up he wants to become a football player or a doctor.

Maria

Maria is a majority Greek girl and Costas’ first cousin. I observed that she is hard-working and quick-witted but less assertive than Bahrye and Vasia. She shares with the other three girls a pre-occupation with Greek popular culture, having similar tastes in music, TV and film. However, she appears to be a peripheral

member of the girls' clique and has extended social networks with older girls at school. When she grows up she wants to be a model.

Meltem

Meltem is one of the two minority Turkish-speaking girls in the class. I noticed that she is very artistic and creative and sings beautifully. Her father plays the bouzouki (a string instrument) at a local night club and sings and writes songs. Her parents are very concerned about their children's educational and other opportunities and her father has regular contact with the school (which is unusual for minority parents). Unlike most minority girls, she is involved in extra-curricular activities outside school (she attends a foreign language centre to learn English, goes to dance classes and her father wants to enroll her to take singing lessons at the conservatory where he also studies music). Meltem is equally immersed in Turkish and Greek popular culture. She is tuned into the latest music hits, Brazilian soap operas shown on Greek TV and variety shows. When she grows up she wants to be a hairdresser.

Nontas

Nontas is another majority Greek boy. I was told that his distinctly baby face features and white translucent skin with unusually long dark hair on his arms have earned him the nickname "Pamuk" ("Cotton"). He does not actively participate in the school's unofficial all-boys sports teams, which alienates him from his male peers. He prefers playing with younger children or alone. When he grows up he wants to become a police officer or a football player.

Tuncay

Tuncay is another minority-Turkish speaking boy. I observed that he comes across as cheerful, polite and studious. Like Meltem, his parents have regular contact with the class teacher and the school. Unlike most minority boys of his age, he is not allowed to roam the streets or travel to different parts of Athens to play football and electronic games. He is an avid television and electronic games fan. He regularly watches his favourite football teams Turkish Galata Saray and Greek AEK on television. He likes playing electronic games at home with Fanis or Costas. When he grows up, he wants to be "a manual laborer/εργάτης" because "my father is a manual laborer/γιατί ο πατέρας μου είναι εργάτης" (his father works in a factory).

Vasia

Vasia is the other majority Greek girl in the class. I noticed that she comes across as assertive and very competitive (not surprising as she has three male siblings to

compete with for attention at home). Her assertiveness, however, sometimes rubs her peers the wrong way, especially Bahrye with whom she has a very competitive relationship as the two girls wrestle to control the girl's clique. Like Meltem, she is tuned into Greek popular culture and is very well versed in the latest music hits, soap operas plots and stock expressions from variety shows. Unlike most girls at school, she's also a very keen sportswoman, always ready to play basket ball with or against the boys. When she grows up, she wants to become an air hostess and a dream of hers is to go the beauty pageant when she's 15.

1.8 Conclusions

In this chapter, I proposed a conceptual framework that draws equally upon socio-linguistic and discourse analytic traditions as well as ethnography. I argued for the need to re-think the notion of playful talk as a super-ordinate category of analysis to include a wider and more diverse range of verbal phenomena, notably teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. The broadening of the scope of what counted as playful talk allowed me to investigate under the same umbrella verbal phenomena that call for different understandings of local and global contexts, audience roles and participant structures.

I discussed how playful talk could be productively re-conceptualized as "performance" (Bauman 1986, 2000), a linguistic practice that was subject to convention but was also open to variability and innovation. I argued that the notion of playful talk as performance allowed us to examine how through play children could reconfigure social relationships and roles and make identity claims and displays. I briefly linked playful talk as performance to Bauman and Brigg's (1990) notion of "entextualization" in order to highlight the dialogic nature of children's talk.

I also discussed how playful talk as performance could be further combined with Goffman's (1974) concept of "frames" seen here as dynamic constructs which could provide a point of entry into the children's social worlds and lived experiences. I put forth the idea of play frames and explored how they interacted with other types of frames at school (notably instructional and socio-relational frames and the broader institutional supra-frame). I argued that the combination of playful talk as performance and play frames allowed us to examine the intersection of language, discourse and identity in children's talk.

Taking a social constructionist approach to identity construction, identities were seen as emergent, context-dependent and context-enabling constructs situated "in talk-in-interaction". I argued that this view was compatible with an ethnographically informed approach to identity. Both research traditions have conceptualized identity construction as a process premised on the notion that

interactants have access to a repertoire of identities, affiliations/disaffiliations and identifications which they can negotiate, contest and re-draft through playful talk.

My conceptual framework was further enhanced by focusing on the children's peer group which I viewed as an instance of a situated "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger 1991). I claimed that this allowed us to illuminate the processes whereby the children constructed a common interactional history which they strategically invoked in their playful exchanges at school. This in turn, I argued, served to link the children's linguistic and other semiotic resources with the articulation of their identities, roles, affiliations, stances, displays and positionings.

I discussed how central to my analytical apparatus were Gumperz's (1982a) concept of "contextualization cues" and Goffman's (1981) notions of "participation frameworks" and "footing". I argued that their work provided us with a multi-layered and nuanced understanding of the interplay between "local/interactional" and "global/societal" contexts that children invoked in their playful talk. I linked this view of context with an understanding of culture as "a system of practices" (Bourdieu 1990) and the notion of "small cultures" (Holliday 1999). I claimed that both paradigms were particularly productive for the study of localised classroom and peer group cultures which is the focus of this book. I concluded this chapter, by presenting snap shots of the children who are the protagonists of this book.

In the next chapter, I set the scene for this book. I provide an account of the neighbourhood and school as the two main sites of engagement between majority Greek and minority Turkish-speaking children. I then go on to discuss some of my choices regarding fieldwork and data collection.

CHAPTER 2

Setting the scene

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I set the scene for the book. I begin with an account of the neighbourhood of Gazi where majority Greeks live side by side with minority Turkish-speakers who have settled in the area since the late 70s and newly arrived immigrants primarily from the Balkans and the Middle East. I describe the transformations this linguistically, culturally and ethnically rich but socio-economically deprived neighbourhood in the very heart of Athens has undergone in recent years and their impact on local residents. I go on to provide some historical background about the Turkish-speaking minority of Gazi and discuss the issue of naming. I discuss majority-minority relations in the neighbourhood which I situate in the macro-historical context of Modern Greek nation building and identity formation. I also present some of the aspects of the daily realities of Gazi by focusing on issues of class, gender and religion. This focus on majority-minority relations and every day realities in Gazi aims to highlight some of the social practices, beliefs, attitudes and ways of life prevalent in the neighbourhood with the purpose of gaining insights into the children's lived experiences and cultural worlds.

I introduce the local primary school, the main research site in this book. I foreground some distinct features that differentiate this particular school from other state run schools and contribute to its multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic character. I discuss two initiatives and their impact on the school's ethos and daily educational practice: the change of status of the school into one of the first “διαπολιτισμικά σχολεία” <intercultural schools> in Athens and the implementation of an in-service teacher training programme coupled with the introduction of “ολοήμερο σχολείο” <extended school programme>. I ground my accounts of the neighbourhood and the school in prevalent political, media and educational discourses on national identity, linguistic minorities, immigration and educational policies and practices.

In the final sections, I elaborate on some of my choices regarding fieldwork and data collection by presenting the various audio, written and visual sources I draw upon in my attempt to explore the children's playful talk and identity work.

I comment on my position as researcher in the data and the different roles and identities I negotiated during fieldwork. Lastly, I explain some of my choices regarding the transcription and translation of the data.

2.1 Gazi: A neighbourhood under transformation in the heart of Athens

Gazi/Γκάζι (also known as Βοτανικός/Votanikos and affectionately called Γκαζοχώρι/Gazohori) is an inner-city neighbourhood in the centre of Athens. Geographically, it is defined by Peiraios Avenue, Konstantinoupoleos Street, Iera Odos and Petrou Rali (see Map B of Athens, in Appendix I). In the late 60s, this area started to decline. Many of its former residents abandoned their homes and moved to leafier parts of Athens and the suburbs. In the 70s, the first minority Turkish speaking families moved to Gazi from Western Thrace (in the north east of Greece) attracted by low rents and the type of housing accommodation offered in the neighbourhood (i.e. houses with open-air patios that could accommodate more than one family under the same roof). The population in Gazi steadily increased throughout the 80s due to a series of government sponsored economic incentives that provided minority members with mainly clerical jobs in banks and administrative institutions in Athens.

Since then although a few families or individual family members have moved back to Western Thrace and others have immigrated to Germany, most families who moved to Gazi came there to stay. When I casually asked a 2nd generation male resident of Gazi how often families would move back to Thrace after living in Gazi for a few years, he had the following to say: “δε θέλουν να γυρίσουν στη Θράκη εδώ είναι η πρωτεύουσα” <(they) don’t want to go back to Thrace here (Athens) is the capital>. He then added the following explanation “εμείς να ξέρεις ότι είμαστε σαν είμαστε Έλληνες πολίτες” <you should be aware that we are like all Greek citizens> implying that they too are attracted by the big city lights and unlike newly arrived immigrants they have not come to Athens just to work for a few years and then go back to their country of origin.⁹

Since the mid-90s, Gazi has attracted small numbers of newly arrived immigrants from the Balkans and the Middle East. Most importantly, however, it has been rapidly transformed from a small-scale industrial zone with mainly low income single or two story houses to an up market entertainment stronghold featuring exclusive nightclubs, restaurants and bars that most locals can not afford. This transformation from a quiet family and small-business orientated neigh-

9. All direct quotes are in the original.

bourhood to a buzzing nightlife strong hold where hoards of young Athenians descend upon after dusk from all parts of the city to party and have fun is aptly captured in the following vignette published in 2003 in “Η Φωνή των Δρόμων” <The Voice of the Streets>, the bi-annual newsletter of the local NGO “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life>:

... Αυτά το 1999 όταν πίσω από το Γκάζι και μέχρι τις γραμμές του τραίνου απλωνόταν το πάρκο που γέμιζε γυναίκες και παιδιά το καλοκαίρι, οι μπασκέτες με τα μεγάλα αγόρια να κάνουν κατάληψη κάθε απόγευμα και οι κούνιες δίπλα στις γραμμές ασφυκτικά γεμάτες μέχρι το βράδυ ... Το Σεπτέμβριο του '99 ο Αχμέτ, η Μπαχάρ και ο Ισάχ (τρία παιδιά) είχαν φύγει από τα σπίτια τους για να κάνουν χώρο σε μπαράκια και ταβέρνες ... Πλήθος πια τα μπαράκια. Ορδές προσπαθούν να παρκάρουν τα βράδια, να διασκεδάσουν, να νιώσουν ότι είναι ζωντανοί, λιγότεψαν οι γυναίκες που κάθονται στις πόρτες τα βράδια του καλοκαιριού ... Τα έργα του μετρό διέλυσαν το πάρκο ... Ξήλωσαν τις μπασκέτες ... Διέλυσαν τις κούνιες ...

(Ενας Εθελοντής, “Η Φωνή των Δρόμων”, Τεύχος 2, Ιούνιος 2003, σελ. 1)

<... This is how Gazi was in 1999. At the time in the summer months the local park which stretched all the way to the railway lines would be filled with women and children, every afternoon the basket ball courts would be populated by older boys and the swings would be full of younger children until late into the evening... By September 99 Ahmet, Bahar and Isaf (three children who attended Greek language support classes at the NGO's premises) had been forced to abandon their homes to give way to new bars and restaurants ... The neighbourhood is now full of bars, their patrons vying for a parking space at night, trying to have fun to feel alive. There are less and less women sitting at their doorsteps in the summer evenings... The local park, the basket ball courts and the swings have been leveled down to give way to the new underground station ... >

(A Volunteer, “The Voice of the Streets”, Issue 2, June 2003, page 1)

Inevitably these changes in Gazi have brought about a significant rise in property prices forcing some minority families and small-scale businesses to move out of the neighbourhood and seek accommodation and premises in other less gentrified neighbourhoods close by. All in all, local residents (majority and minority alike) see these changes as a mixed blessing: they lament the loss of homes and the closing down of small-scale businesses for those who can no longer afford the high rents and the levelling down of the local park and playground to give way to the brand new metro station. On the other hand, they view these changes as the golden opportunity for Gazi to shed away the stigma of an inner-city neighbourhood and to become gentrified. As the director of local NGO “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life> succinctly put it in a short article on the recent transformation of Gazi in “Η Φωνή των Δρόμων” <The Voice of the Streets>: “το Γκάζι αλλάζει από

την καλή και την ανάποδη” <Gazi is changing for better and for worse> (from Costas, “The Voice of the Streets”, Issue 2, June 2003, page 6).

2.2 The Turkish-speaking minority in Gazi: Historical background and the issue of naming

Historically, the members of the Turkish speaking minority in Gazi belong to the “Muslim minority of Western Thrace” [μουσουλμανική μειονότητα της Δυτικής Θράκης]. This is regarded as an indigenous religious minority whose origins can be traced back to the Ottoman conquest of the region of Thrace in the northeast of Greece (1354–1715) (see Map A of Greece, in Appendix I). During that period, various Muslim ethno-linguistic groups moved from Anatolia (Turkey) and settled in the fertile plains of Thrace along with a substantial military and bureaucratic apparatus which settled in its urban centres. In addition, local populations were Islamized (either through forceful or voluntary Islamization) which further consolidated Muslim rule in the region (Asimakopoulou & Christidou-Lionaraki 2002: 214–215).

The present legal status as well as the linguistic, cultural, educational and religious rights of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace are recognized and protected by the 1923 Lausanne Treaty. This was an international treaty signed by Greece and Turkey in the aftermath of the defeat of the Greek army by nationalist Turkish forces in 1922 in Asia Minor/Anatolia (Turkey). Known as the “Asia Minor Catastrophe” by the Greeks and “War of Independence” by the Turks, this culminated in the dismantling of the multiethnic Ottoman Empire, the establishment of the new Turkish Republic and the subsequent forced displacement of peoples on both sides of the Aegean. Indeed, the Lausanne Convention stipulated the first internationally ratified compulsory population exchange between two countries, based on the premise of promoting the establishment of ideally homogeneous nation-states (Hirschon 2003: 6). Exempted from the exchange were part of the Orthodox Greek population of Constantinople/İstanbul and the islands of Imvros [Gökçeada] and Tenedos [Bozcaada] overlooking the Dardanelles straits (numbering about 100,000) and an equivalent number of Muslims in Western Thrace.¹⁰ Following Laitin (1998), the Muslim minority of Western Thrace is considered a “beached diaspora” in the sense that its members never crossed interna-

10. In this respect, religious (rather than linguistic or ethnic) affiliation was the defining identity marker for the population exchange. The use of this criterion reflected the administrative structure of the Ottoman “millet” system where Ottoman citizens were administered in religious communities (Hirschon 2003: 8).

tional boarders. Instead, it is the result of the territorial expansion of a new nation state (Greece) out of the collapse of a former empire (the Ottoman Empire).

The exempted Muslims included the aforementioned Turkish ethno-linguistic groups (who represent approximately 50% of the members of the Greek Muslim minority) as well as Muslims of Pomak and Roma descent (who represent approximately 30% and 20% of the members of the Greek Muslim minority respectively). The Pomaks (an indigenous people traditionally residing on the Rodopi mountain range which cuts across the Greek-Bulgarian border) were Islamized during the 16th–17th centuries (Frangopoulos 1993, reported in Asimakopoulou & Christidou-Lionaraki 2002: 215). Their home language “Πομάκικα” [Pomakika] in Greek or “Pomahtsu” in Pomak is a primarily oral Slavic variety containing lexical influences from both Greek and Turkish (Sella-Mazi 2001: 194).¹¹ Although research on the Roma in Greece is still scant, it appears that the Roma settled in the region of Thrace during the Byzantine era (around the 11th century). Similar to the Pomaks, they seemed to have been Islamized during Ottoman rule (Zeggini 1993 reported in Asimakopoulou & Christidou-Lionaraki 2002: 216–217).¹² Although the home language of the overwhelming majority of the Roma of Greece is Greek Romany (a dialect of Romany with mainly Greek but also Persian and Armenian loan words), most Muslim Roma (including those who settled in Gazi) are Turkish-speaking.

Over the past 20 years, Turkish seems to have developed as the lingua franca of the minority. This has led to various degrees of Pomak-Turkish and Romany-Turkish bilingualism as well as instances of language change to Turkish, especially among the urban Pomak and Roma. The Turkish spoken in Western Thrace is a regional variety of Turkish referred to in the linguistics literature as “Θρακιώτικα” <Thracian Turkish> or “Δυτικοθρακιώτικα” [Batı Trakya Türkçesi] <West Thracian Turkish>. This variety is characterized by morphological simplification, especially in verb and noun formation, and phonological differences vis-à-vis Standard Turkish as well as a wealth of loan words from Greek (Sella-Mazi 1993). Thracian Turkish is mainly reserved for colloquial speech while Standard Turkish for formal occasions and written communication. Standard Turkish is also one of the two languages of instruction along with Modern Greek in Greek-Turkish bilingual schools (Embeirikos et al. 2001: 39).

As it becomes evident, the Muslim minority of Western Thrace is ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse and its members have different historical tra-

11. This variety was only recently codified (mid 90s) with the appearance of the first grammars and dictionaries written in Greek and/or in Latin script (Sella-Mazi 2001: 195).

12. Note that the majority of Roma living in Greece are Christian and therefore are not part of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace.

jectories. This diversity also extends to a certain degree to the minority members' religious beliefs and practices. Although most practice Sunni Islam, the majority of the Pomaks and Roma seem to practice some form of religious syncretism, influenced, it has been argued, by heterodox Islamic beliefs and practices, in particular the teachings of the Bektaşî religious order (Troubeta 2001: 93).

Presently, the members of the minority living in Western Thrace are estimated around 80,000 to 90,000. Traditionally, minority members migrated to Turkey in search of socioeconomic advancement and educational opportunities. Since the 70s-early 80s, a substantial number started migrating to urban centers in other parts of Greece and in Western Europe (especially Germany). This population movement was further accelerated from the early 90s onwards, when restrictions on the movement of peoples in the mountainous areas of Thrace adjacent to the Greek-Bulgarian boarder were finally lifted (Empeirikos et al. 2001).

According to Embeirikos et al. (2001) and Zeggini (1994), the minority Turkish-speaking residents of Gazi are officially identified as “Μουσουλμάνοι Τσιγγάνοι” <Muslim Roma/Gypsies> and number somewhere around 2,500–3,000.¹³ In this book, in line with my conceptual framework, I opt for the self- and other-categorizations children, teachers, parents and other informants use in talk and text. None of the minority members identified themselves using the official term “Μουσουλμάνοι Τσιγγάνοι” <Muslim Roma/Gypsies> and only one person openly admitted that he and other residents of Gazi were in fact “Τσιγγάνοι” <Roma/Gypsies>. Indeed, the people I spoke to strongly resisted the ethnic/cultural categorisation “Τσιγγάνοι” <Roma/Gypsies>. This identity marker is heavily racialised and stigmatised. It reflects the negative stereotyping and the continual marginalisation of a significant portion of Greek gypsies in present day Greece (cf. Pavlou 2005).

Moreover, for minority Gaziotes it suggests an unsavoury on their part affiliation with local Romany-speaking Muslim Roma who live in separate but adjoining neighbourhoods (in the area of Metaxourgio north of Iera Odos, see Map B of Athens, in Appendix I). Minority Gaziotes repeatedly sought to differentiate themselves from their Romany-speaking neighbours by claiming that they speak Turkish, have a fixed domicile and permanent employment, send their children to school and admittedly share much better living conditions (Houndoumadi 2002). They consistently referred to their next-door neighbours by degradingly calling them “γύφτοι” <gypsies> and complained when they were equated with them by other minority members from Western Thrace who to their minds did not know better (cf. Avramopoulou & Karakatsanis 2002; Houndoumadi 2002).

13. This is an estimate due to the absence of any official census information.

Indeed, the association of the Turkish-speaking residents of Gazi with their “gypsy” neighbours appeared to be wide-spread among other minority members from Western Thrace. The following comment was made by a teacher teaching in one of the minority primary schools in the city of Komotini (see Map A of Greece, in Appendix I). It is revealing of these enduring perceptions. During an informal discussion in the context of a teacher training programme on the education of Muslim minority children, it was reported that the teacher in question dismissed comments by another teacher teaching children from Gazi by saying: “Εσάς οι μουσουλμάνοι σας μη βγάξετε συμπεράσματα από τους δικούς σας (για την μειονοτική εκπαίδευση) γιατί είναι τσιγγάνοι” <Your Muslims you shouldn’t reach any conclusions (about the education of minority children based on the children you teach in Gazi) because they are Gypsies> (see also Madianou 2005 for similar comments).

It is not surprising, therefore, that depending on context minority residents in Gazi oscillated between the terms “Μουσουλμάνοι” <Muslims>, “Έλληνες Μουσουλμάνοι” <Greek Muslims> (where “Greek” connotes Greek citizenship), “Έλληνες πολίτες” <Greek citizens>) and “Τούρκοι” <Turks>. The extent to which the use of the self-ascription “Τούρκοι” <Turks> denotes ethnic affiliation with the most vocal group of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace has not been clearly established (cf. Avramopoulou & Karakatsanis 2002; Maratzides & Mavromatis 1999). As Troubeta (2001) illustrates in her study on ethnic/cultural identity construction among the Pomaks and Roma of Western Thrace, there is significant internal differentiation within these groups. This depends on differences at a socio-cultural level, in their belief system, practices, access to material and symbolic resources and ways of life (: 163). More often, however, minority residents of Gazi tended to use personal pronouns to distinguish themselves from the majority along the lines of “εμείς” <we> – “εσείς” <you>. Or, they prefaced what they wanted to say with “σ’ εμάς τους Μουσουλμάνους” <as far as we Muslims are concerned>.

In informal conversations, majority Greeks living in Gazi referred to their Turkish-speaking neighbours as “Τούρκοι” <Turks> by virtue of the fact that they are Turkish-speaking. In more formal contexts, such as at school, they usually referred to them as “Μουσουλμάνοι” <Muslims>, positioning them in contrast to the “Χριστιανοί” <Christian> majority.

In this book, I also use the term “Turkish-speaking”, because language is a salient identity marker. It distinguishes the residents of Gazi from other Muslim Roma who are not Turkish speaking and live in the adjacent neighbourhood. Moreover, I use the term “residents of Gazi” or “Gazioties” because they live in a particular Athens neighbourhood. Lastly, I use the terms “majority” – “minority” instead of the religious categories “Muslim” – “Christian” because they represent the unequal power relations and access to material and other resources between

the two groups better. I only use the term “Muslim minority of Western Thrace” when I refer to its official name.

2.3 Living together but mostly apart

To understand majority-minority interactions at a micro-interpersonal level in Gazi, it is necessary to ground them in the macro-historical context of Modern Greek nation building and identity formation. After the establishment of the Greek state (1830), the newly founded state engaged in successive wars to incorporate Christian Greek-speaking lands still under Ottoman rule. Given the multilingual/multicultural/multiethnic composition of the Ottoman Empire, these new lands were populated by peoples of diverse religious affiliations (e.g. Muslim, Christian, Jewish) and linguistic backgrounds (e.g. Albanian, Bulgarian, Turkish, Armenian, Ladino).

As minorities emerged synchronously with the establishment and the subsequent territorial expansion of the Greek state, the new state also started engaging in processes of national identity formation. Scholars who have explored these processes have identified two significant parameters in the shaping of the Greek national “self”: (1) the legacy of ancient Greece and (2) the role of Greek Orthodoxy (e.g. Fragoudaki & Dragona 1997; Pollis 1992; Troubeta 2001; Koulouri 2002). Taking these two parameters as a point of departure, the Greek self-image is based on the superiority, homogeneity and continuity of Greek civilization. This has remained unchanged throughout the centuries, from antiquity until the present. The conceptualisation of the national “self” has shaped the ways that both Western European and non-Western European “others” are perceived: modern Greeks are seen as sharing with Western nations a common Greco-Roman heritage, while simultaneously being at a distance, due to the Greek-Orthodox faith and their Ottoman past. For modern Greeks, the “Turk” emerges as the significant non-European “other” (Millas 2001; Soysal & Antoniou 2001). The positioning of the undifferentiated “Turk” as the significant non-European “other” has led to denying or downplaying the extensive contact between Ottoman and Turkish cultures and Greek culture over time and place. This portrayal of the national “self” and the quintessential national “other” has had significant implications for the often negative stereotyping of Turkish language and culture in Greece (Asimakopoulou & Christidou-Lionaraki 2002; Tsitselikis & Mavromatis 2003). Moreover, it has been instrumental in shaping dominant political, educational and media discourses and the worldviews of local actors regarding the possible representations of the “Turk” in public and local conversation in Greece (Chouliaraki 2003; see also the collection of papers in Theodossopoulos 2007).

Nevertheless, anthropological investigations of the use of the notion of the “Turk” in private and public discourse caution us against seeing the “Turk” as a unitary, straightforwardly defined category of identification. In his illuminating introduction about the “Turks” and the Greek imagination, Theodosopoulos (2007) argues that “their (Greeks’) use of the notion of the Turk evokes numerous, but diverse, associations and serves manifold purposes. It depends on particular circumstances, contexts and strategies, different historical instances or personal histories” (: 1). He then goes on to argue that the notion of the “Turk” could thus be seen as a “hollow category”. He borrows this term by Ardener (1989) and Chapman (1978, 1992) who coined it to refer to “the image of an ethnic group as this is forged or reinvented by its neighbours, who impose upon it from outside their own meanings and categorical distinctions” (Theodosopoulos 2007: 1). Therefore, Greeks use the notion of the “Turk” to account for what they perceive as “several possible identities *for the Turks* [*italics in the text*] ... a conceptualisation of Turkishness broad enough to accommodate the imagination of those who see the Turk as their significant Other” (ibid).

At a local level, the self- and other-identity ascription of minority Turkish-speaking residents of Gazi as “Turks” have the effect of identifying them with the linguistic, cultural and ethnic “other”. The positioning of minority Gaziotes as the national “other” has been played out by restricted inter-personal contact and limited friendship ties between majority and minority residents. As I will discuss in the Post-script, however, infrequent encounters with the majority until recently are slowly giving way to more sustained contact. Over the past five years the younger male generation in particular has actively sought access to educational and job opportunities and the establishment of friendship ties outside the confinements of the neighbourhood.

In the neighbourhood, at the time the fieldwork started, the absence of sustained inter-personal contact seemed to be symbolically enacted through the occupation of different spaces for recreation among children. I observed that the local park, playground, basketball courts and local community centre ran by the Municipality of Athens, for instance, were almost exclusively populated by minority children who played side by side with children of recently arrived immigrant families till late in the evening. Majority children rarely ventured to play in these areas, unless they were accompanied by their mothers or other adults. Moreover, the scarcity of close friendships between majority and minority Gaziotes in Gazi was clearly reflected in the guest list during wedding celebrations. Minority weddings in Gazi were a grand affair which consistently attracted 500–600 guests and took place in large halls that were rented out for the occasion by the bride’s family. Although weddings were always well-attended by a high proportion of major-

ity Greeks (e.g. teachers, work colleagues, volunteer tutors and other community workers), these guests were almost always outsiders to Gazi.

Restricted contact also meant that mixed marriages were discouraged and romantic ties with girls from the majority were generally frowned upon (although attitudes towards the later also seem to be slowly shifting over the past five years and have become more ambivalent) (cf. Petronoti & Papagaroufali 2006). During the fieldwork, I came across only two cases where minority men had married majority women. Reflecting upon the prevailing negative attitudes towards mixed marriages, a minority young man I was interviewing attributed them to differences in life styles and gender socialization between minority and majority Gaziotes. He said the following which I found quite telling:

“Είναι θέμα ζωής. Εμείς αλλιώς θέλουμε τη γυναίκα, αλλιώς θέλει να ζει η Χριστιανή γυναίκα. Δεν είναι θέμα θρησκείας, (αλλά) ζωής. Δηλαδή εγώ ένα βράδυ θα προτιμούσα να βγω μ’ ένα φίλο μου να κάτσω στο καφενείο παρά να πάρω τη γυναίκα μου. Δηλαδή η γυναίκα μου να πει ‘πάω με τις φίλες να πιω ένα καφέ’ δεν μπορεί να το πει σε μας.”

(συνέντευξη με Τουρκόφωνο Γκαζιώτη, 7/9/99)

<It’s a matter of different life styles. We want our women to live in a certain way. Christian women want to live differently. It’s not a matter of different religions but of different life styles. For instance, I would prefer going out with a male friend of mine and go and sit at the local coffee shop rather than take my wife out in the evening. For instance, if my wife were to say “I’m going out with my girlfriends for a cup of coffee”, well she can’t say that in our culture.>

(interview with minority Gazioti, 7/9/99)

Although majority and minority Gaziotes had lived side by side for the past almost thirty years their attitudes towards each other at the time when the fieldwork started revealed a high degree of polarisation, stereotyping but also ambivalence (Avramopoulou & Karakatsanis 2002). Majority Gaziotes frequently complained that the presence of their minority neighbours reinforced the neighbourhood’s inner city status restricting its access to funds from the Municipality of Athens and the Greek state and discouraging large-scale business investment. While this assertion might have been true for many years, recent changes in Gazi accelerated during the last five years attest to the opposite. Besides bars, restaurants and clubs, Gazi has attracted a number of cutting edge theatrical and dance companies. Coupled by the restoration of the old gas factory (which also gave the neighbourhood its name) and its subsequent transformation into a multi-purpose state of the art exhibition centre, the neighbourhood has been turning into an artistic hub. Moreover, majority Gaziotes frequently complained about their neighbours’ persistence to speak in Turkish in their presence, lack of interest in the affairs of

the neighbourhood and the local primary school, lack of respect for public order (by ubiquitous highlighting their children's unruly conduct and noisy wedding celebrations) and alleged abuse of state and other benefits.

At the same time, however, majority Gaziotes were willing to acknowledge that their minority neighbours were slowly tuning into what they saw as a more “mainstream” Greek way of life. For instance, in informal discussions, they admitted that minority children were in fact becoming more well behaved at school and in the neighbourhood park and other public spaces and commented on what they perceived as a dramatic change of conduct as follows: “Αυτά τα Τουρκάκια βρε παιδί μου σα να αρχίζουνε να είναι πιο συμμαζεμένα” <These Turkish kids they seem to be somewhat more well behaved>. Such comments revealed an ambivalence on the part of majority Gaziotes vis-à-vis their minority neighbours allowing some space for negotiation of their attitudes and worldviews. In other words, they revealed that majority Gaziotes’ attitudes and worldviews were both heavily shaped by national discourses of the “other” but also had a life of their own inevitably influenced by their diverse encounters with their minority neighbours across time and space (cf. Theodosopoulos 2007).

On their part, minority Gaziotes complained that their majority neighbours treated them like “ξένοι” <foreigners> because they were Muslim, even though they and their parents and grandparents were born in Greece, were Greek citizens and their men served the mandatory, at the time of the fieldwork, eighteen month military service. Moreover, in informal discussions, minority Gaziotes revealed that they had been the targets of racist comments and abusive remarks and discriminated against by their neighbours with whom they shared the same public spaces, shopped in the same stores and street markets and sent their children to the same primary school for years. They observed that discrimination and racism against them became particularly acute during periods of political confrontation between Greece and Turkey. Indeed, it appeared that relations between majority and minority Gaziotes followed the ebbs and flows of Greco-Turkish relations in general. Tensions rose during periods of political confrontation between Greece and Turkey (e.g. during the conflict over the uninhabited island of Imia/Kardak in 1996 or the capture of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999) and subsequently waned during periods of political stability.

The following excerpt is indicative of how many minority Gaziotes feel they are often perceived by the majority. It is part of a more extended piece of prose entitled “Πατσιμός” <Racism> and it was written by 16 year old Fatme (a minority girl attending the local state high school). It was published in “Ονειρόδρομος του Γκαζίου” <Streetdreams of Gazi>, the newsletter written by children participating in the activities of the neighbourhood-based NGO “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life>.

Το θέμα μου είναι ο ρατσισμός. Το διάλεξα επειδή το έχω νιώσει προσωπικά και με πληγώνει πολλές φορές. Είμαι μουσουλμάνα και νιώθω ότι οι γύρω μου με κατατάσσουν σε μια άλλη κατηγορία και με βλέπουν αλλιώς. Και απορώ: γιατί; Δε θέλω να λέω το όνομά μου, ντρέπομαι. Υπάρχουν βέβαια και εξαιρέσεις, δεν είναι όλοι το ίδιο. Μερικοί πιστεύουν πως αυτή η εδω ή χώρα τους ανήκει. Ωραία! Τους ανήκει! Εγώ όμως που να πάω; Εδώ γεννήθηκα, και οι γονείς μου εδώ, μόνο το θρήσκευμά μου αλλάζει...

(Φατμέ, "Ονειρόδρομος του Γκαζιού", Τεύχος 1, Μάιος 2004)

<My topic is racism. I chose it because I have felt it personally and I have been hurt many times. I'm Muslim and I feel that the others around me pigeonhole me and see me differently. And I wonder: why? I don't want to say my name, I'm embarrassed. There are of course exceptions, not everyone is the same. Some believe that this country belongs to them. Fine! It belongs to them! But where should I go? I was born here and my parents were born here, only my religion is different ...>

(Fatme, "Streetdreams of Gazi", Issue 1, May 2004)

Fatme's account of how she is often perceived by fellow Gaziotes and other majority Greeks highlights the naturalising power of generalisations: she is pigeonholed and treated differently because of her religious affiliation and Turkish name which she is embarrassed to reveal. At the same time, it puts forth a counter-script to the dominant model of Greek national identity: Fatme and her family belong in Greece just as much as any other Greek.

Since the summer of 99, bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey have on the whole improved, subsequent to the so called "earthquake diplomacy" which was inaugurated when a series of earthquakes hit the two countries. This has been complemented by Greece's support of Turkey's efforts to join the European Union. Moreover, since 2005 there has been an upsurge of interest of all things Turkish spurn by the airing of the Turkish TV soap "Yabancı Damat" <Foreign Groom> translated into Greek as "Τα Σύνορα της Αγάπης" <The Borders of Love>. The soap which became an instant hit among Greek TV audiences is about the tides and tribulations of the culturally and religiously "forbidden" love between Nazlı (a young Turkish woman) and a Nikos (a young Greek man). As Papailias (2005) aptly argues,

what really made the serial feel new what the fact that it portrayed the taboo relationships of Turk and Greek, Orthodox and Muslim, through Turkish eyes. The serial offered Greek viewers the rare opportunity to peek into Turkish homes, to overhear their conversations, to glimpse their, perhaps unexpected, nostalgias, insecurities, and desires, and above all, to find out how they imagine and remember 'us Greeks'.

(:2)

This interest has been partly encouraged by and has partly contributed to a boom in the translation industry of Turkish literature (especially contemporary Turkish novels) into Greek during the last five years or so. One further point worth making here is that there seems to be a parallel interest in contemporary Greece and the former ethnic Greeks of Turkey which has manifested itself in contemporary Turkish cultural products (e.g. in publishing and music production) (see İğsüz 2006). Inevitably this extended period of *détente* and media consumption across the Aegean has had some spill over effect in local relations in Gazi too (see the Post-script for further discussion).

2.3.1 Every day realities: Class and gender

Gazi is a predominantly working class and lower middle class neighbourhood with pockets of severe deprivation and poverty especially among minority and immigrant families. At the time when the fieldwork started, unemployment was rife particularly among its young unskilled male generation. Regardless of the influx of state and private investment in recent years, most residents of Gazi do not seem to have benefited directly by the boom in the entertainment and catering industry in the area. This is especially true for minority Gaziotes. Indeed, most minority Gaziotes continue to work either as skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled workers in small-scale factories and local crafts workshops or they are employed as labourers on a seasonal or part-time basis. Some have secured full-time employment in clerical positions in banks and other state-owned institutions. Very few are self-employed (e.g. musicians) or run local businesses (e.g. coffee shops, kebab shops, small convenience stores, a video club specialising on imported Turkish films and Turkish music and a martial arts school). The poorest and more deprived families collect and sell recyclable material such as aluminium, paper and glass. At the time when the fieldwork started, most families rented out the old one-story houses with small patios that dotted the neighbourhood or small flats where all three generations tended to live under the same roof. Few families owned their own apartments. Following the gentrification of the neighbourhood, many of the old one-story houses were converted into restaurants and bars. Their former residents moved into similar housing accommodation or flats in adjoining neighbourhoods. More recently, younger couples in full-time employment tend to take out a mortgage and buy their own homes rather than continue living with the parents and grandparents of the groom.

Till present, women rarely seek work outside the home. Minority Gaziotes have very strict gender based patterns of division of labour. Those who do work usually work in unskilled factory jobs or clerical positions in state-owned institu-

tions. A very small number are self-employed (e.g. hairdressers and seamstresses) and work at home. Women are discouraged from seeking employment, unless they have strong financial incentives or job security (e.g. imminent needs, permanent employment in the state sector). Otherwise, their primary responsibility is to attend to the daily needs of their families (e.g. housekeeping, shopping, cooking) and child rearing.

The following excerpt is revealing of the prevailing discourses on gender and employment minority children are socialised in. It comes from a semi-structured interview with Fanis, Tuncay, Bahrye, Huseyin and Ahmet (a younger boy who was also present in the interview) in the school dining hall at the end of the school day. The children and I have been talking about their future employment prospects at which point I introduce the topic of women and employment. Note that the mothers of both Fanis and Tuncay work outside the home.

Excerpt 2.1 (interview with minority children, 21/09/99)

- Βάλλη Είναι καλό να δουλεύει η μαμά;
 Φάνης και είναι και δεν είναι καλό να δουλεύει
 όταν έχει οικονομικά προβλήματα είναι καλό για να δουλέψει
 όταν δεν έχει οικονομικά προβλήματα γιατί;
 Θα δουλέψει και θα βγάλει λεφτά
 όμως σπίτι θα κάνει φαγητό;
 Βάλλη δεν προλαβαίνει να κάνει φαγητό
 Φάνης ναι
 Βάλλη εσύ Τουτζάι θα θέλεις η γυναίκα σου να δουλεύει;
 Τουτζάι αν έχουμε λίγα λεφτά τότε να δουλέψει
- Vally Is it good when mum goes to work?
 Fanis it's both good and bad for mum to work
 when the family has financial problems then it's good that she works
 if the family doesn't have any problems then why should she work?
 She will work and make money
 but at home who's going to cook dinner?
 Vally she won't have time to cook dinner you mean
 Fanis yeah
 Vally what about you Tuncay would you like your wife to work?
 Tuncay if we have little money then she should work

This discourse on gender and employment needs to be situated in gender relations among minority Gaziotes in general (cf. Mavromatis 2004). These were characterised by a high degree of conformity to shared norms and expectations.

Individual or family conduct and women's reputation in particular is still relentlessly scrutinised, criticised or applauded leading to the reproduction and reinforcement of these norms. This is best articulated in the marriage imperative. At the time when the fieldwork started, young men and women were expected to marry young (boys in their late teens and girls in their mid-teens) and start a family immediately, regardless of employment prospects of the newlyweds or whether the prospective groom had completed his compulsory military service or not. More recently, however, young men and women tend to get married slightly older (boys in their early twenties and girls in their late teens). Prospective grooms are expected to have done their military service and have regular employment. Also, the size of families has been reduced over the years with most young families opting for two or three children rather than the five or six their parents had.

As I mentioned earlier in this section, gender relations are determined by a strict division of labour which also reinforces segregated modes of socialization between men and women. Informal discussions revealed that the latter proved to be a constant point of discontent especially among younger brides who found themselves stranded with their mothers-in-law all day and often late into the evening. Women tended to socialise exclusively with other women at home, while men spent considerable part of their free time after work and their hard earned cash with their male peers in local coffee and kebab shops. Occasions for mixed-sex socialisation were restricted to weddings, circumcisions and religious holidays and occasionally informal visits to the homes of relatives and friends. In the interview I discussed earlier in this section, I was struck by a side-comment Huseyin made while we were talking about gender and employment.

Excerpt 2.2 (interview with minority children, 21/09/99)

Χουσεΐν εγώ όταν θα παντρευτώ δε θα την αφήσω να περνάει από καφενείο

Βάλλη γιατί

Χουσεΐν γιατί δε γίνεται

Huseyin when I get married I won't allow (my wife) to walk past the coffee shop

Vally why is that?

Huseyin because it can't be done

At the time, I was struck that such a young boy (ten years old at the time of the interview) would have such strong views about this issue to make such an unequivocal statement. On the other hand, it made me realize that this comment mirrored prevailing discourses among minority male Gaziotes. These discourses revealed the ubiquitous presence of what Connell (1995) has referred to as overt macho "policing procedures". Indeed, these discourses went hand in hand with

reports of minority Gaziotes' conduct that they preferred socializing with their mates in the local coffee and kebab shops than take their wives out to dinner or to a café or spend their evenings at home with their women folk (mothers, younger sisters, wives all living under the same roof) and children (cf. minority young man's comments in Section 2.3).

While I seek to stress commonalities in the lived experiences and prevailing attitudes and discourses among minority Gaziotes, I do not wish to suggest that all families were the same across the board nor that all men and women conformed to strict social control. Indeed, families differed in terms of the expectations they had and the possibilities they offered to their female members. Some parents encouraged their daughters to continue school and learn a trade in order to become financially independent. They, also, dissuade them from getting married young and having many children. Some husbands did not object to their wives working outside the house. Others actively supported their wives' efforts to learn how to read and write in Greek, with the help of a volunteer tutor or gave their consent for them to attend a weekly women's support group ran by the local NGO "Δρόμοι Ζωής" <Paths of Life>.

2.3.2 Islam in Gazi

Although to outsiders most Gaziotes self-identified as "Μουσουλμάνοι" <Muslim> (cf. excerpt from Fatme's narrative in Section 2.3), the use of this category of description did not seem to reflect a strong engagement with specific Islamic practices nor a particularly Islamic way of life. Discussions with young and old revealed that most families in the neighbourhood were non-practicing Muslims. Islamic rituals and practices regarding prayer, fasting and other dietary habits were seldom observed with the exception perhaps of some older women. The following comment made by a young man is revealing of most minority Gaziotes' detached attitudes towards Islam: "εμείς έχουμε ξεφύγει από τη θρησκεία και οι πιο πολλοί έχουν την ίδια αντίληψη. Μόνο οι μεγάλοι ασχολούνται μόλις πλησιάζει να φύγουν από δω" <Most people here are non-observant. Only the older folk are concerned with religion, especially when they are about to die>. Indicative of this attitude was that most minority children had visited a mosque only once or twice in their lives, even though they spend all their summer holidays in their towns and villages of origin in Western Thrace where mosques were easily accessible and Friday prayer was generally observed by local residents.

At the same time, most Gaziotes seemed to practice various forms of religious syncretism (cf. Troubeta 2001). This perhaps could explain their belief in the powers of supernatural beings, both malevolent and benevolent, vying to control

people's lives. In particular, informal discussions about religious beliefs and practices revealed traces of influences from the beliefs of the Bektaşî religious order.¹⁴ Minority Gaziotes I talked to did not make any explicit references to Bektaşî religious beliefs and practices in their talk. I inferred traces of these beliefs in their narratives about encounters with supernatural beings and in their description of specific practices (see also Troubeta 2001; Zeggini 1988).

One of the most common narratives children told me about were encounters they or their family members had had with the “tekke baba” or “tekke babacık” <the father of the tekke> and his role in reaffirming social order.¹⁵ The “tekke baba” was described to me as the spirit of a departed holy person or of a pious and just relative. It had the power to protect the house and its residents and reward them for their good deeds, provide advice in times of need but also highlight misconduct and punish those who misbehaved. In one such story involving the regulatory powers of the “tekke baba” Huseyin revealed how the spirit had appeared to his grandmother to warn her that her teen age grand daughter was wearing skirts that were too short to appear in public. The grandmother informed the family of the warning from the “tekke baba” and the young girl was promptly ordered to stop wearing the offending skirts. Thus, with the intervention of the “tekke baba” order was restored.

While most minority Gaziotes desisted adhering to strict Islamic practices and avoided praying in mosques, I was told that many appeared to use a small room in the court yard of an old one-story house as a make-shift prayer house. The children referred to this small room as the “tekke” where women mainly went “to pray and light a candle” (“κάνει ναμάς και ανάβει κερί”) in honour of the “tekke baba”. Moreover, minority Gaziotes would sometimes visit the neighbourhood church to light a candle. Tuncay explained these religious practices to me once by way of a family narrative: “ξάδελφῃ μου πανρεύτηκε. Του άνδρα του η μητέρα είπε ότι είδε στο όνειρο του ότι ο Θεός του είπε ό,τι η θρησκεία σου και να είναι πρέπει πηγαίνεις στην εκκλησία να ανάψεις ένα κερί και μου έδωσε τρία κα- ταστάρικα. Πάρε τρία κατοστάρικα να ανάβεις. Και εγώ πήγα και άναψα” <when

14. This religious order is associated with Shi'ite Islam and is regarded as heterodox Islam. It was founded by Hacı Bektaş Veli in the 13th century and its tenets had rapidly spread in the Balkans in the aftermath of the Ottoman conquest in the 15th century (see Zeggini 1988: 21–26 for more details).

15. The “tekke” is equivalent to the Christian monastery complex. It was the religious, political and educational centre of the Bektaşî religious order. In Western Thrace, such complexes first appeared in the 15th century (Zeggini 1988: 175–179). Nowadays, most Muslims in Western Thrace are Sunni. However, there still seem to be Muslims that follow at least some of the tenets and practices of the Bektaşî order.

my cousin got married her husband's mother said that she had had a dream. In the dream God told her that she should go to church and light a candle regardless of her religion and she then gave me three hundred drachma. 'Take this three hundred drachma and go and light a candle' she told me. And I went and lit a candle>.

In addition, even though minority children were relieved of religious instruction at school and attending mass once a term with the rest of their majority classmates, I observed that they tended to stay in class and actively participate in religious education (which was mainly about the Greek Orthodox faith) as well as join their classmates to church. Fanis' account of minority children's attendance in church services is telling: "μια μέρα η κυρία μας είπε 'νάρχεστε θα πάμε εκκλησία' και ήρθε μόνο η Μελτέμ και εγώ" <one day the teacher said 'we will go to church tomorrow' and only Meltem and I came to school that day>. To which Tuncay added "ήτανε Μουσουλμάνοι δεν ήτανε Χριστιανοί ο Κώστας ο Γιάννης δεν ήτανε" <the Muslim children were there but some of the Christian children, Costas, Giannis, weren't there>.

In the following sections, I shift my focus from the neighbourhood to the primary school and discuss distinctive features that contributed to its multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic character.

2.4 The primary school

The multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic character of the primary school was the product of a dramatic shift in patterns of registration and attendance among minority children in Gazi that took place from the late 80s – early 90s onwards. During the same period, immigrant families who had settled in the neighbourhood also started enrolling their children to the school. As the number of minority and immigrant children steadily increased, majority parents started pulling out their children from the school and sending them to other nearby schools with a lower percentage of minority and immigrant children. At the time when the fieldwork started, the number of minority and immigrant children and that of majority children was roughly equal with some annual variation. In recent years, however, the number of majority children has declined with minority and immigrant children now constituting well over half of the school population.

Due to the unusually high numbers of minority and immigrant children, in the school in 1996 the Ministry of Education took the initiative to change the status of the school into one of the first "διαπολιτισμικά σχολεία" <intercultural schools> in Athens (Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of Athens 1998: 14). To date there are 26 such intercultural schools in Greece which

provide Greek language support classes by teachers trained in the principles of intercultural education serving the educational needs of minority children as well as newly arrived and second generation immigrant children (Pavlou 2005). Intercultural schools acknowledge the pupils' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and prior intercultural experiences as positive and constructive components for language teaching and learning (Androussou 1996: 11). By promoting more learner-centred approaches, these schools seek to increase intercultural awareness and guide children to accepting, respecting, understanding and appreciating diversity at school and in society at large and overcoming racism in all forms and expressions (*ibid*).

The establishment of the intercultural school in Gazi needs to be situated in the context of educational provision for minority and immigrant children. In 1996, intercultural education was adopted as an educational modal to guide national educational policies (see relevant law, Law 2413/1996). Its aim was equal opportunities for all children through mainstreaming by providing Greek language support (Pavlou 2005). At the time, special reception classes were introduced in primary and secondary schools around the country (not only in intercultural schools) to address the educational needs of mainly newly arrived immigrant children with no or very limited proficiency in Greek. In recent years, these special reception classes have been steadily decreasing. They have been replaced by additional instruction support programmes targeting low-achieving pupils in general and are not limited to minority and immigrant children (*ibid*).

A common critique of past and current educational policies is that although they have been designed with the view of combating discrimination and providing equal opportunities for all, in practice they do not challenge structural inequalities. As Pavlou (2005) aptly argues educational provision in Greece is "still based on exclusion rather than inclusion and ethnocentrism rather than multiculturalism" (:22; see also Damanakis 2005). This dissonance between educational rhetoric and educational practice is reflected in the marginalisation of children's home languages and the lack of recognition of their cultural capital in schools and classrooms (Sidiropoulou 2003: 3595). It is perhaps indicative of this dissonance that although there is legislative provision for the teaching of children's home languages in reception classes, this has never come into effect. On the contrary, children and their families often choose not to maintain the home language because they fear it will undermine Greek language learning and subsequent successful integration in Greek society (*ibid*).¹⁶

16. It is worth noting, however, that the first "community" schools (also known as "complementary", "supplementary" or "heritage" schools) have been established in the north of Greece. From 2000 onwards Albanian immigrants who represent the largest immigrant community in

The state's decision to change the status of this particular school in Gazi into an intercultural school was seen as a response to the following social, educational and psychological conditions. Teachers teaching in this school reported: (1) high levels of absenteeism among minority children; (2) negative attitudes towards schooling by both minority and majority children; (3) low levels of active participation in class and lack of motivation to do so among minority and majority children; (4) inadequate concentration on schoolwork and (5) overall high levels of underachievement by both majority and minority children (Vafea 1996: 29). It is important to stress here that the aforementioned social, educational and psychological conditions were not endemic to minority children in Gazi only. High levels of underachievement and lack of interest in school were prevalent among majority children too, perhaps reflecting the socio-economic deprivation and low educational capital of many majority Gaziotes. For minority children these conditions were further accentuated by the fact that most were first exposed to Greek when they went to primary school. This meant that most minority children had difficulties coping with the level of proficiency in Greek (and as they grew older with more academic Greek) that was required in order to successfully follow the school curriculum. As a result, more and more minority children were being excluded from the learning process and increasingly becoming marginalised within the school.

Subsequent to the change of status of the school, the following year (1997–1998) the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of Athens introduced a three-year pilot programme. The expressed goals of the pilot programme were to: (1) provide in-service training for teachers teaching at this school following the principles of intercultural education and (2) introduce the concept of “ολοήμερο σχολείο” <extended school programme> (Ministry of Education and University of Athens 1998: 14).¹⁷ The extended school programme consisted of an optional afternoon homework club run by teachers teaching in the school followed by music, drama and painting classes taught by qualified professionals (artists and musicians). This after-school programme was open to all children even though it was mainly minority and immigrant children who participated. This second top-down initiative was part of a larger project on education reform for Muslim minority children in Western Thrace I mentioned in the introduction of this book.

Greece have started three “community” schools with the purpose of Albanian linguistic and cultural maintenance among the younger generation (Maligkoudi 2007).

17. State-run primary schools in Greece operate from 8.30am to 13.30pm. “Extended schools” operate till 5.30pm in response to growing demands by working parents. In recent years, most state schools have adopted the extended school programme.

Both top-down initiatives and their subsequent implementation were influenced by emergent educational discourses in Greece aiming to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and pluralism (see relevant articles in Damanakis 2002, 2005; Fragoudaki & Dragona 1997; also Sella-Mazi 2001). They aimed at countering dominant political and media discourses that tend to construct linguistic and cultural diversity in mainstream Greek schools and Greek society at large as a problem. Bilingual/multilingual minority and immigrant children are often positioned as suffering from a linguistic deficit which has led to the suppression of the use of languages other than Greek at school (ibid). The two top-down initiatives sought to promote an alternative view of linguistic diversity, one that sees multilingualism/multiculturalism as a resource, as valuable intellectual, economic, cultural and social capital. They, thus, played a central role in re-shaping the school as a social institution and a site for learning and communication among children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They also fostered a specific intercultural regime: this, in the words of Miss Vicky, one of the class teachers, created a “προστατευμένο περιβάλλον” <sheltered environment> for all pupils. The purpose of this learning environment was to support social inclusion, communication, mutual respect and understanding across languages and cultures not only for minority and immigrant children but for majority children too.

The intercultural regime not only affected the school's ethos but also the teachers' daily educational practice. I observed that teachers tended to support experiential approaches to teaching and learning. They actively encouraged the use of the children's minority and immigrant languages and bilingual dictionaries and sought to make links with the children's cultural worlds and lived experiences with the purpose of legitimating all children's socio-cultural and linguistic resources. Children were encouraged to engage in collaborative learning contexts to develop small-scale and large-scale projects and cooperate in linguistically and culturally diverse, mixed-sex and mixed-age groups. At the same time, while working within this intercultural pedagogic framework, teachers acknowledged in informal discussions that they had to follow the uniform national curriculum. Indeed, the majority of the teachers sought to balance the demands of the national curriculum with the school's intercultural ethos and practice, although they felt that sometimes the two were at odds. Only very few followed the national curriculum exclusively.

Initially, many majority parents and a small number of teachers felt threatened by the changes in the school and spoke vociferously against them. Informal discussions with teachers who supported these changes at the time revealed that many majority parents were specifically concerned about the implementation of new teaching and learning methods and the piloting of new teaching materials. They saw these initiatives as deviating from the national curriculum by explicitly

favouring minority children's learning needs while jeopardizing their children's educational objectives. Although resistance gradually subsided, tensions between those parents in favour and those against the initiatives continued for much of the duration of the pilot programme.

With few exceptions, the overwhelming majority of minority parents did not participate at all in the debate, even though these initiatives were designed to help primarily their children. This lack of engagement reflected to a large extent the absence of home-school interface before the implementation of the initiatives. Minority parents seldom ventured into the school premises to inquire about their children's progress and rarely if ever participated in the meetings of the Parents' Association. Their absence was always dully noted by majority parents who frequently complained to teachers that:

“τόσα τους κάνετε εδώ πέρα και κοίτα δεν πέρνουν χαμπάρι και έχουμε συγκέντρωση (γονέων) και πρέπει να είναι όλες εδώ πέρα και δεν είναι καμία άρα δεν ενδιαφέρονται για τα παιδιά τους”.

(συνέντευξη με την κυρία Σούλα δασκάλα της 4ης τάξης, 28/8/99)

<“you (teachers) do so many things for them (minority parents) here (at the school) and look at them they are clueless. We have a parents' meeting and all the mums should be here but none of them (the minority mums) comes so they don't care about their kids”>. (interview with Miss Soula, the class teacher, 28/8/99)

What majority parents failed to see was the school had made very few inroads into the minority children's homes. Minority parents often felt alienated by the school and most importantly many (especially young mothers) felt their Greek was inadequate to inquire about their children's progress or attend meetings of the school's Parents' Association (cf. Hatzidaki 2007, forthcoming). Indeed, one further aim of the aforementioned three year pilot project was to foster links with the children's homes and encourage minority parents in particular to become more involved in their children's education. Over the next few years, subsequent to the implementation of the school's intercultural regime, minority parents became more visible at school by starting to attend school sponsored events and teacher-parent meetings more regularly.

The changes in the school's status, ethos and educational practice highlight the particularities of this school. While sharing some key characteristics of many inner-city neighbourhood schools (in terms of its linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity and high turn-over of pupils and teachers), the school was unique in that it served a large pupil population with the same ethno-linguistic background. While the particularities of the school make it worth documenting, it could also be argued that because of them this school was not perhaps representative of most mainstream primary schools in Athens. Nevertheless, it is worth keeping in mind

that what constitutes a prototypical “mainstream inner-city” school may not be as straightforward an issue as it appears. Even the most linguistically, culturally and ethnically “homogeneous” schools, for instance, can reveal an enormous range of diversity in terms of the children’s individual experiences and ways of inhabiting the same social identities and roles associated with gender, age, class, ethnicity and so on (cf. Maybin 2006).

2.5 Notes on methodology and data

The data for this book come from focused ethnographic observations and tape-recordings of eleven ten-year olds’ talk-in-interaction in different school settings carried out between January 1999 and May 1999 and on subsequent short one-day school visits between September 1999 and June 2001. I have complemented them with insights from ethnographic observations in the neighbourhood park and streets where I hang out with the children, in the premises that local NGOs used and where I taught and observed Greek and English language support classes as well as at children’s homes where I was invited for coffee with their mothers and other female relatives and family friends. This larger pool of data was collected during intervals from 1996 when I first got involved with tutoring minority Turkish-speaking children in the context of the local NGO “Πρόγραμμα Εθελοντικής Εργασίας του Δήμου της Αθήνας” <The Volunteer Programme of the Municipality of Athens> until present. For the post script of the book in particular I draw upon in-depth semi-structured interviews with Tuncay and Fanis two of the minority children who still live in Gazi and Costas Varlas the co-director of the local NGO “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life> who has watched closely the children’s educational trajectories and life choices (November 2005). The ethnographic and tape-recorded data have been further complemented by semi-structured qualitative interviews and informal discussions with children, teachers and majority and minority Gaziotes that took place during the initial part of the fieldwork (January–May 1999) as well as informal discussions at subsequent phases of the data collection.

Moreover, I have drawn on a variety of additional written and visual sources that have become available to me over the years. These include: (1) written questionnaires completed by the children towards the end of the initial fieldwork (May 1999), (2) end of year pupil reports written up by Miss Soula, the class teacher, for the academic years 1996–1997;¹⁸ (3) the bi-annual newsletter “Η Φωνή των

18. I thank Soula Dimitriou for generously sharing the pupils’ annual reports with me.

Δρόμων” <The Voice of the Streets> of the local NGO “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life> (2003 till present); (4) the children’s newsletter “Ονειρόδρομος του Γκαζιού” <Streetdreams of Gazi> written by children participating in the NGO’s activities and (5) the film “Το Σχολείο” <The School> (2001) directed by an independent film maker about the school and the neighbourhood (for an overview of the data set see Table A, Appendix II).¹⁹

2.5.1 Ethnographic observations and tape-recordings

My involvement as a volunteer tutor to minority Turkish-speaking children in Gazi paved the way for the fieldwork and data collection in the school. Through the establishment of close ties with some children and their families as well as other volunteers I had developed a network of friends and acquaintances in the neighbourhood which I was able to call upon to gain access to the school and classrooms in January 1999.²⁰ To teachers, I assumed the culturally recognised social role of “a friend of a friend” with the additional roles of “fellow teacher” and “post-graduate student”. Indeed, teachers introduced me to their classes by highlighting these two additional roles and usually saying something along the lines: “η κυρία Βάλλη είναι δασκάλα και κάνει μια έρευνα” <Miss Vally is a teacher and she is working on a research project>. Children were familiar with outsiders to the school (e.g. other teachers, teacher-trainees, researchers from Greece and abroad) observing their classes because of the intercultural status of the school and its after-school clubs. This precedent made my ascribed roles of “teacher” and “researcher” relevant to the children’s past experiences and perhaps could explain why teachers felt comfortable highlighting these roles.

Ethnographic observations and data collection were divided into the following stages: (1) preparing the groundwork (2) immersing myself in the field (January 1999 – May 1999). These two stages consisted of the initial fieldwork and were particularly labour intensive. They were followed by a third stage that was less labour intensive but more focused. During the third stage of data collection, I

19. I am indebted to Mata and Costas Varlas, directors of “Paths of Life”, for providing me with back issues of both “The Voice of the Streets” and “Streetdreams of Gazi” and a copy of the film.

20. I am grateful to the Ministry of Education for granting me written permission to gain access to the school in order to do my fieldwork. I also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the University of Athens and in particular Professors Anna Fragoudaki and Thalia Dragona and Assistant Professor Alexandra Androussou in giving me the opportunity to observe the extended school programme which the University of Athens was running at the time.

revisited the school and the neighbourhood in subsequent short one-day visits (September 1999 – June 2001).

Preparing the groundwork lasted for a little less than a month. My primary objective was to become acquainted and start forming interpersonal relations with the older children (ten to twelve year olds) and their teachers. From the onset of the fieldwork, I decided to focus on this particular age group because at this point in their lives children experience the transition from childhood to adolescence and start exploring new kinds of identities, roles and knowledge (cf. Maybin 2006). My second objective was to ascertain which children I would go on to tape-record, when, where and how much in the most effective and less intrusive manner.

Immersing myself in the field was punctuated by the beginning of the tape recordings. It lasted for three months and was labour intensive. During this stage, ethnographic observations were closely connected to the tape-recording process. I systematically contextualised the recorded data by providing seating plans, marking the movements of children, taking notes on aspects of non-verbal communication and noting down responses (or lack of) to my clarification questions. I also jotted down notes of illuminating naturally occurring exchanges which I had not been able to record and started identifying possible interpretations of the children's activities and routines I wanted to explore further.

The subsequent one-day visits to the school took place after the initial fieldwork was completed. These visits consisted of observing the eleven children I had worked with more closely during the initial fieldwork in their last two years in primary school (I made five such visits all in all).

Overall, throughout my initial fieldwork (January–May 1999), I was exposed to a wealth of teaching and learning contexts. I observed: (1) a wide variety of lessons during teacher fronted whole-class instruction and some instances of small-group instruction; (2) reception classes specifically designed for in-coming children with limited proficiency in Greek; (3) additional support classes aiming to remedy specific needs of particular children; (4) the after-school homework club and other extra-curricular activities and (5) unsupervised informal learning contexts such as peer tutoring during break-time. Moreover, I observed the children play in the school playground before and after school and during the break as well as having lunch and chatting with their friends in the school dining hall and corridors. I observed the teachers at the teachers' lounge where they tended to aggregate or in the school playground while they were supervising the children's play. I also attended all school-sponsored events such as national holidays and other school celebrations that were organised while I was there and participated in visits to museums and archaeological sites.

Outside the school, I continued to hang out with some of the minority children at the local park and playground. I was eager to take up their invitation to join their mothers and other female friends and relatives for “καφεδάκι” <a cup of coffee> at their homes. Mothers were always extremely welcoming perhaps secretly relishing the fact that they could show off to their girlfriends that they had contacts with majority Greek women. Male family members were usually absent those afternoons, either at work or at the local coffee shop. With the exception of one father, when fathers did show up they greeted me politely but promptly disappeared to other parts of the house and I suspected re-emerged after I was gone. Given the gender segregation in work and recreation among adult minority Gaziotes, the fathers’ nonchalant conduct towards me did not surprise me.

My observations led me to tape-record children across a wide variety of settings at school. This decision reflected my belief that much of children’s socialisation at school takes place in informal settings outside the classroom (cf. Maybin 2006).²¹ I tape-recorded the children in the following settings: (1) in their classroom during whole-class and small-group instruction and during the break; (2) in the schoolyard and school corridors where they played and hung out during the break as well as before and after school; (3) in the dining hall during lunchtime and (4) in the assembly hall during national celebrations and other school-sponsored events as well as in settings outside the school (e.g. visits to museums and archaeological sites). Tape-recording the children across settings exposed me to a wide range of linguistic and cultural contact encounters and allowed me to explore the children’s playful talk in a wealth of contexts. I was present in most of the recordings. Some I did myself, while for others I relied on the children. Children were generally all too keen to have the clip microphone attached to their cloths and carry the small tape-recorder I was using in their pockets. Indeed, they directed quite a bit of their playful jibes and singing to the microphone, invited their friends to say something or sing in it and made explicit references to it in their on-going talk.

All in all, I collected approximately fifty-three hours and forty minutes of talk from children between ten to twelve years of age mainly in mixed-sex same-age groupings (see Table B, in Appendix II). Teachers were also present in most of the exchanges that were recorded during the lesson. In this book I focus mainly on the tape-recordings of the eleven children which comprised the ten year old cohort (approximately thirty-three hours and fifty five minutes of talk). My decision to narrow down the children to the ten year old cohort stemmed from both situational and interpersonal reasons: (1) from the beginning of the fieldwork I

21. Even though initially I had planned to do video recordings in order to supplement the tape recordings I finally decided against it because I felt it would be extremely intrusive.

was repeatedly told by other class teachers that the children in this class “λειτουργούν σαν ομάδα” <function well as a team> and that this class was supposed to be “η καλύτερη τάξη του σχολείου ως τάξη πούχει δουλευτεί προς μία εννιαία κατεύθυνση διαπολιτισμική” <the best class in the school in terms of successfully implementing the school’s intercultural approach to teaching and learning> and (2) I established very good relations with the class teacher, Miss Soula, and the children early on during the fieldwork which facilitated tape-recordings and created suitable conditions to investigate the childrens’ contact encounters.

2.5.2 Interviews and other sources of data

I started formally interviewing children and teachers towards the end of the initial fieldwork and in subsequent visits to the school in the next two years. Before that I had relied exclusively on engaging in informal chats whenever I wanted to clarify, double-check or get additional information. I hesitated doing interviews before getting to know well and establish rapport with my interviewees. I was particularly mindful of issues of intercultural variation and asymmetries of power, status, age and education between interviewer and interviewees that researchers have repeated pointed out and which can have important implications for the data and the types of generalisations that can be made (cf. Miller & Glassner 1997). For this purpose, I conducted semi-structured interviews: I had drafted a list of topics I wanted to explore, but allowed interviewees to select and initiate their own topics. Some were individual interviews (all the interviews with the teachers) while others were group interviews (mainly the interviews with the children). Group interviews proved particularly conducive to encouraging interviewees to converse but also contradict and argue with one another.

Overall, I did not conduct many interviews (see Tables C–D in Appendix II for more details). This reflected the effectiveness of clarification questions and informal discussions with children, teachers and majority and minority Gaziotes at various stages of the fieldwork. The majority of the interviews resembled what Miller and Glassner (1997) refer to as “survey interviews” (:105). Their purpose was to gather information concerning a range of themes and issues that had emerged during the fieldwork in a more organised and detailed manner. In addition, I did one “follow-up interview” where I played four short excerpts to a few children from the ten-year cohort with the purpose of eliciting information about specific cultural practices and socialisation routines. I also did one “in-depth interview” focusing exclusively on the children’s nicknames, history and use. All three types of interviews yielded rich data.

Besides interview data, in this book I also draw upon a number of written and visual sources that became available to me during and after the initial fieldwork. Towards the end of the initial fieldwork, I devised a written five-part questionnaire for all the children aged ten to twelve to complete (see questionnaires in Greek and English in Appendix II). Its purpose was to elicit short responses quickly and effectively from a large number of children on issues, such as family histories, patterns of primary and secondary socialisation, language attitudes and future aspirations. Moreover, I made use of the class teacher's written, end of year school reports in which she assessed the eleven children academic performances one year before the fieldwork took place (1997–1998) (see pupil profiles in Greek and English, Appendix II). More recently, I was given back issues of the biannual newsletter "Η Φωνή των Δρόμων" <The Voice of the Streets> (2003 till present) and the children's annual newsletter "Ο Ονειρόδρομος του Γκαζιού" <Streetdreams of Gazi> (2004 till present) published by the local NGO "Δρόμοι Ζωής" <Paths of Life>. This NGO was formally established in the neighbourhood in 2000. It uses hired premises close to the school where it provides Greek, maths, science and foreign languages support classes and extra-curricular activities to minority and immigrant children drawing on a network of 50 volunteer tutors. Lastly, I have drawn valuable insights about majority-minority relations and attitudes inside and outside the school from a 55-minute documentary film entitled "Το Σχολείο" <The School> (2001) which was directed by Marianna Oikonomou and produced by Amalia Zepou.²²

2.6 The researcher in the data

Throughout the fieldwork, I always made it a point to address the children's queries about who I was and what I was doing at their school. Indeed, once I became a permanent fixture in the school landscape I was flooded with personal questions about my age, marital status and family as well as my research project. Children who knew me from the neighbourhood park and the homework club had already spread the word that I spoke some Turkish and very often minority children of various ages would come up to me and invariably ask me the following set of questions in Turkish: "adın ne?" <what's your name?>, "kaç yaşında?" <how old are you?>, "nerelisin?" <where are you from?>. After my credentials as somebody who spoke some Turkish were established, I was temporarily left in peace.

22. Note that the film received critical acclaim in Greece and won 1st prize in the International Film Festival in Thessaloniki the same year.

It should be noted, however, that besides these mini Turkish comprehension tests, I was mainly addressed in Greek rather than Turkish. I discussed this issue with other teachers and researchers who also had some knowledge of Turkish and they all confirmed that they too were almost exclusively addressed in Greek. Perhaps to the mind of the children I was too closely associated first with the local NGO “Πρόγραμμα Εθελοντικής Εργασίας του Δήμου της Αθήνας” <Volunteer Programme of the Municipality of Athens> as a volunteer tutor and then with the school as a teacher and researcher. Both were regarded as majority Greek institutions. By being addressed in Greek, I was squarely identified with other majority Greeks inside and outside school which did not leave much space for alternative identity negotiations. This was clearly indicated to me in one of my first encounters with one of the older minority children. After observing her class that day, Bahar (a very outspoken twelve year old Turkish-speaking minority girl) came up to me during the break and asked me: “κυρία Türk mü Rum mu?” <(in Greek) Ms (switching to Turkish) are you Turkish or Greek?>. To which I answered “Rum” <Greek>. At the time, Bahar’s either-or question had taken me by surprise. I was struck by the mutually exclusive identity positions on offer: one could be either Greek or Turkish. Upon more sombre consideration, I realised that these mutually exclusive identity positions reflected dominant discourses in circulation about language, identity and minorities in Gazi and Greek society at large (see earlier discussion in Sections 2.2–2.3).

At school, I sought to actively participate in the daily activities and routines of the children and teachers in order to minimise the impact of my presence and reduce the possibility of contrived or artificial talk and conduct on their part. Before going into the field, I had read widely about issues of intrusiveness and the effect my presence and that of the tape-recorder could have on the data (see, for instance, articles in Cameron et al. 1992). I took on board Duranti’s (1997) claim that:

“perhaps with the exception of obvious camera behaviors (e.g. certain kinds of camera-recognitions or salutations like staring into the camera and smiling), people do not *invent* [italics in the text] social behavior, language included out of the blue.” (:118)

My guiding assumption was that children and teachers would be far too involved in their daily routines and activities to make significant alternations for my sake or for the sake of the tape-recorder.

Although this was mostly the case, children were also keen to manipulate the tape-recording equipment and use it for play. They removed the external microphone I used to record whole-class instruction from its base in order to perform a passionate singing routine or play a variation of the truth or dare game. They also directed teasing jibes and snappy retorts into the clip microphone they or one of

their friends were wearing. Moreover, they never failed to make fleeting remarks about the fact that their talk was being recorded, ask me questions about the microphone or for permission to speak in it (see for instance excerpt 2.3 below). They recorded funny messages and sang snippets from popular at the time of the field-work Greek and Turkish love songs for me. Sometimes, they would go as far as to seek out friends in the playground and prompt them to “say something into the microphone” to which their peers unflinching obliged drawing on their unlimited repertoire of playful high-pitch cries, nicknames and mild terms of verbal abuse.

In excerpt 2.3, I am setting up the tape-recording equipment to record the lesson, while the children are settling in class after the break. I am using a large external microphone attached to a pocket tape-recorder in order to capture as much as possible of the whole-class talk. Meltem, Babis and Nontas are hovering about watching me at work.

Excerpt 2.3 (15/3/99)

- (φασαρία)
- 1Μελτέμ αι κυρία μου . κυρία μου γιατί πήρες αυτό το μικρόφωνο;
2Βάλλη για να σε πιάνει καλύτερα . [ν' ακούει καλύτερα
- 3Μελτέμ [να μιλήσω;=
→ 4Νώντας =(hh)μεγαλόφωνο εί[ναι
→ 5Μελτέμ [από [κει;
6Μπάμπης [τί είναι;=
→ 7Νώντας =(hhh)μεγαλόφωνο είναι . είναι μεγαλόφωνο
((φασαρία))

((background noise))
- 1Meltem ai Miss Miss why are you using this microphone?
2Vally so that I can record you better . [it records better
→ 3Meltem [can I talk ((in it))?=
→ 4Nontas =(hh)it's a mega[phone
→ 5Meltem [[(can I talk)) through there?
6Babis [what did you call it?=
→ 7Nontas =(hhh)it's a megaphone . a megaphone
((more background noise))

There are two points worth making about this excerpt. First, undoubtedly the microphone is a salient artifact that children engage with: they talk about and talk into it (lines 1, 3, 5). Secondly, the microphone can trigger playful talk (in this case word play between the words “microphone” and “megaphone”) (lines 4, 7). While admittedly the tape-recording equipment played a central role in trigger-

ing a lot of the playful talk in the data, the playful exchanges also seemed to have a life history of their own: children hummed and sang snippets of songs in solos and duets, teased, joked and called each other by their nicknames regardless of the presence of the tape-recording equipment. In other words, the children had already developed a rich repertoire of playful activities and routines over four years of daily contact at school (cf. Dyson 2003). What the tape-recording equipment seemed to do was to provide them with new and exciting possibilities to experiment with sound and movement and enrich their existing repertoires.

I also sought to minimize the impact of my presence at school by making a consistent effort to redress asymmetries of power, knowledge and other forms of capital associated with age, education and status. I dressed casually, kept up with the twists and turns of popular soap operas and diligently followed the latest music charts. I played basketball with the boys and had a go at the hula-hoop or chatted quietly with the girls at the corner of the school playground. The purpose of my engagement with the children's daily recreational activities at school was not to become an "insider", which would have been impossible, but rather to disqualify "obvious reminders of status differences" (Eckert 2000: 71).

Indeed, downplaying "obvious reminders of status differences" was paramount. As I soon realised, the success of my fieldwork hinged on the willingness of the children and teachers to accept my presence in their daily lives. Ethnographic research has repeatedly shown that "the relationship between researcher and researched cannot be depicted as a straightforward hierarchical one in which the researcher simply imposes an agenda" (Harvey 1992: 75). On the contrary, research has demonstrated that the parties under investigation have an important say both in the types of data and the occasions where these data will be collected (ibid: 74). As I was frequently inquiring into aspects of the children's lives at home and at school, I was often treated as a "learner", "novice" or even an "ignorant newcomer". Inevitably, this led to renegotiations of the assumed hierarchical relationships between the researcher and the researched.

After the four-month initial fieldwork and for the next two years, I returned to the school and the neighbourhood five times for short one-day visits. The purpose of these meetings was two-fold. On the one hand, as I started carefully listening to and analysing the data questions and points of clarification emerged that I needed to address. On the other hand, and, more importantly, I strongly felt that a certain bonding had taken place and certain friendship ties had developed during the period of the initial fieldwork that I was keen to maintain. In this respect, I saw the researcher in the data along the lines of Narayan's proposal (1993):

... what we must focus our attention on is the quality of relations with the people we seek to represent in our texts: are they viewed as mere fodder for professional-

ly self-serving statements about a generalized Other, or are they accepted as subjects with voices, views and dilemmas – people to whom we are bonded through ties of reciprocity and who may even be critical of our professional enterprise? (: 672)

2.7 Notes on transcription and translation

The transcription system I use in this book draws on Tannen (1984) (see the key to transcription convention in Appendix III). Additionally, for the transcription of laughter I make use of the transcription conventions proposed in Norrick (1993) (see additional transcription conventions in Appendix III). I chose these two systems because they are reader-friendly and straight-forward systems of representation that can adequately complement one another in capturing the complexities of playful talk. Because of the nature of the data, it has not been possible to render all the extra-linguistic and paralinguistic cues. However, I selectively mark in the transcripts those cues that have an interactional import on the on-going talk and the subsequent data analysis.

Regarding the translation of the Greek excerpts, I have avoided transliteration and have opted to preserve the original text in Greek throughout. It is my belief that preserving phonetic detail with respect to the rules of Greek pronunciation and the particulars of the local articulatory context does not enhance the reader's understanding of the original text. In cases where phonetics plays an important role in comprehending the data, as in the case of word and sound play, I highlight this aspect in the analysis.

With respect to the English translation of the Greek excerpts, I have changed word order where necessary reflecting differences in word order rules between the two languages and I have put untranslatable lexical items, such as particles, in single brackets. In the English translation, I have only marked latches, overlaps and laughter. The same translation and transcription decisions apply for the translation of the Turkish data into English. In general, I have chosen to translate the data by being as faithful as possible to the original text. Admittedly, the most demanding task has been translating words and expressions that are part of registers other than the standard, whether Greek or Turkish (e.g. youth varieties, media talk), idioms and colloquial speech.

I have left Greek, Turkish and English as in the original and have not made any attempts to correct the children's language use.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the neighbourhood where majority and minority Gaziotes and newly arrived immigrants lived side by side. I focused on the “gentrification processes” that have radically transformed its urban landscape since the late 90s and how these have affected the lives of local residents. I commented how these transformations were viewed as a mixed blessing: revitalizing an inner-city neighbourhood through investment while eroding local social networks.

I provided some historical background about minority Turkish speaking Gaziotes. I explained that they are part of an indigenous linguistically, ethnically and culturally diverse minority which is officially referred to as “Μουσουλμανική μειονότητα της Δυτικής Θράκης” <Muslim minority of Western Thrace>. I then discussed the various self- and other- identity ascriptions of minority Gaziotes and the terms I have adopted in this book to refer to members of the majority and the minority.

I situated minority-majority relations in Gazi in the macro-historical context of Modern Greek nation building and discussed its impact on the conceptualization of the “self” and “other”. I focused on how the “Turk” has been constructed as the quintessential non-European “other” in the Greek imagination and how by being positioned as “Turks” minority Gaziotes were identified as the linguistic, cultural and ethnic “other”. At the same time drawing on more recent anthropological studies on identity work, I interrogated the assumed homogeneity of the label “Turk” and argued that majority-minority relations in Gazi while often polarized exhibited certain ambivalence.

I went on to discuss the every day realities in Gazi by focusing on issues of class, gender and religion. I argued that what perhaps distinguished minority Gaziotes from the majority was a strict division of labor and segregated modes of socialization between men and women. According to minority Gaziotes, these practices were attributed to differences in majority-minority life styles rather than differences between a Christian majority and a Muslim minority. In fact, I showed that minority Gaziotes did not exhibit a strong engagement with specific Islamic practices nor did they adopt a particularly Islamic way of life.

I presented the multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic primary school where the fieldwork and data collection took place. I described two top-down initiatives: the change of status of the school into one of the first “διαπολιτισμικά σχολεία” <intercultural schools> in Athens and the implementation of the in-service teacher training programme coupled with the introduction of the “ολοήμερο σχολείο” <extended school programme>. I grounded these two initiatives in the context of emergent educational discourses in Greece aiming to promote linguistic

and cultural diversity and pluralism and I critically discussed how they impacted upon the school's ethos and the teachers' daily educational practice.

I discussed the various audio, written and visual sources of data I have made use of in this book. Moreover, I critically explored my role as researcher in the data. I described the strategies I used to gain access to the school, the ways I positioned myself vis-à-vis the children, teachers and local Gaziotes but also the ways I was positioned by them and how these positionings were not fixed but under negotiation. I concluded this chapter with a discussion of some of my choices regarding transcription and translation.

In the next chapter, I set out to explore the emergence and development of playful talk across contexts at school.

CHAPTER 3

Playful talk across contexts at school

Emergence and development

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the emergence and development of playful talk across contexts and participation at school. I identify two main interactional contexts, namely instructional and recreational contexts and discuss the institutional constraints impinging upon them in relation to the emergence and development of playful talk. This discussion leads to identifying what constitutes playful talk in the data. Drawing on Rampton, Harris and Dover (2002), I adopt the notion of an “episode” of playful talk in order to identify what counts as playful activities and routines in children’s talk. I present and discuss structurally simpler episodes (e.g. singing the refrain of a popular song in circulation that is not followed by an uptake) and more complex ones (e.g. a series of teases followed by a series of responses).

I explore the full range of the children’s linguistic and other semiotic resources, since they play a central role in the emergence and development of playful activities and routines and are a common point of reference for the peer group as a community of practice. I look into the children’s out-of-school recreational and other practices. I discuss their media engagement and media preferences (e.g. TV, film and music) and reflect upon differences in: (1) the forms of media-involvement between boys and girls; (2) the centrality of Greek, Turkish and globalized American-English media in children’s talk and (3) the visibility of TV, film and music in recreational and instructional contexts. I probe into the children’s linguistic repertoires and expertise in different languages. I situate the discussion of their linguistic repertoires in the context of powerful language ideologies in circulation in present day Greece that promote Greek monolingualism for minority and immigrant children and favour foreign language learning but disregard the learning of minority and immigrant languages.

I provide a brief review of the literature with illustrative examples of the verbal activities and routines which the children engage in to set up play frames, namely teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. I present the various contextualisation cues the children use to frame their talk as play and mark off periods of talk devoted to a particular verbal activity from talk about other

matters. In this context, I discuss an important distinction in the data between more established and indexical cues (contextualized cues) and more emergent and ambiguous ones (contextualizing cues). I round off this discussion by looking at nicknames as contextualized cues and quoted set phrases from Greek and Turkish media sources as contextualizing cues.

3.1 The contexts of playful talk: Instructional and recreational contexts

In this book, I explored children’s playful talk in two main interactional contexts: instructional and recreational contexts. The first context featured primarily teacher-fronted whole-class instructional exchanges and some informal small-group interactions. The second context comprised of playful exchanges that took place during the break, in the school yard and school corridors where children played and hang out as well as in the school dinning hall during lunchtime. Table 3.1 provides a breakdown of instructional (whole-class and small group instruction) and recreational contexts over approximately 25 hours and 40 minutes of tape-recorded children’s talk among the ten year old cohort.

Instructional and recreational contexts where playful talk emerged differed in terms of setting (where and when the various exchanges took place) and participant configurations (whether they were generated exclusively among peers or whether teachers and other adults including myself were present and/or actively participated in them). Instructional contexts also differed depending on the type of instructional format, teacher-fronted whole-class instruction as opposed to small group instruction.

At the same time, instructional and recreational contexts were subject to common institutional constraints. Classroom life and school life more generally was punctuated by “its temporal character” (Mehan 1985: 120). Life at school was segmented into different activities and routines with diverse purposes and goals which were by and large orchestrated by the teachers. These constraints also had a bearing on the physical environment at school (e.g. children’s seating and spatial arrangements and their degree of mobility inside and outside the classroom) (ibid). Inevitably, these institutional constraints influenced the emergence of spe-

Table 3.1 Overview of instructional and recreational contexts

Instructional contexts	Instructional contexts	Recreational contexts
During teacher fronted whole-class instruction	During small group instruction	During the break and during lunchtime
18hs 10min	2hs 5min	5h25min
70.8%	8.1%	20.1%

cific playful activities and routines over others in children's talk across contexts and the kinds of participant configurations as well as linguistic and other semiotic resources available for play (see Chapters 4–6 further discussion).

Perhaps the most influential institutional constraint on the emergence of playful talk was associated with children and teachers' roles, rights and obligations and how these in turn had a bearing on the organization of social interaction at school in general and in the classroom in particular. These institutional constraints reflected, but also reproduced asymmetries in status and power between children and teachers, which were intricately linked with their respective institutional roles and identities (e.g. teachers reproached and disciplined children and children had to ask for permission to leave the classroom and provide a sufficient warrant).²³ For instance, I observed that institutional constraints were at play in the way the turn-taking system was organised during teacher-fronted whole-class instruction. Unlike everyday conversational discourse that is characterized by "local allocation means" (Sacks et al. 1974: 729), the rules for turn-taking in teacher-fronted whole class instruction revealed what McHoul (1978: 183) has referred to as "differential participation rights". Similar to McHoul's findings from linguistically, culturally and ethnically homogeneous classrooms, teachers in the classrooms I observed often acted as distributors of turns, which restricted pupils from self-selecting first-starters. I also noticed that teachers initiated, maintained, shifted or changed conversational topics, did most of the classroom talk and sanctioned instances, when a single conversational floor split into secondary ones by resorting to repair mechanisms (cf. studies of multilingual/multicultural classrooms in Heller & Martin-Jones 2001; Martin-Jones & Saxena 2001).

At the same time, it should be noted that teachers departed from these predominantly pre-allocated turn-taking rules allowing for the emergence of more relaxed rules that tolerated self-selection, topic initiations and frame shifts to play during teacher-fronted whole class instruction (cf. Cazden 1988; Maybin 1994; MacBeth 1990). These observations concurred with recent research in classrooms that has highlighted children's resistance to teacher control and has questioned the omnipotence of teachers and the assumed lack of power of children (e.g. Candela 1999). I will explore these departures from the norm in relation to playful talk and discuss their implications for redefining what counts as classroom talk in more detail in Chapters 5–6.

23. I do not wish to suggest here that teacher roles, identities, rights and obligations were uniform across interactional contexts and participation. As I will illustrate in Chapters 5–6, the extent to which they played a central role in the emergence of playful routines and activities in children's talk varied both across and within contexts and participant configurations.

In the next section I explore what constitutes playful talk and present structurally simpler and more complex examples of playful talk in the data.

3.2 Identifying playful talk in the data: Structural characteristics

As I discussed in Section 1.2, I have adopted the term playful talk as a super-ordinate category with the purpose of capturing a wider and more complex range of verbal activities and routines that emerged in children’s talk at school. These include the following verbal phenomena: teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. I have argued that playful talk as a super-ordinate category is flexible enough to encompass both more fleeting and highly unstructured activities (such as private solo singing and humming of popular tunes in circulation) as well as more ritualised ones (such as cross-sex or same-sex teasing routines). Moreover, I have argued that by broadening the scope of what counts as playful talk, this concept can include verbal phenomena that require different understandings of local and global contexts and allow for varying audience roles and participant structures.

In this book, playful talk is measured in episodes. Drawing on Rampton, Harris and Dover’s (2002) discussion of media related activities, I take an episode to be a sequence of talk introducing and often sustaining a play frame that is bounded by talk and activity devoted to other matters (:3). Overall, I identified approximately 229 episodes of playful talk in the data. A survey of all 229 episodes of playful talk revealed the following findings with regards to the emergence of playful talk across instructional and recreational contexts (Table 3.2).

Drawing on the distinction proposed by Rampton, Harris and Dover (2002) between “performative” invocations and explicit references to media culture as a topic, all 229 episodes of playful talk in Table 3.2 refer to “performative” invocations of playful talk (e.g. teasing, music making, chanting). Explicit references to playful talk as a topic were significantly less frequent.

Table 3.2 Raw numbers of episodes of playful talk across interactional contexts

Contexts	Instructional contexts	Instructional contexts	Recreational contexts
	During teacher-fronted whole-class instruction	During informal small group instruction	During break-time and lunchtime
Raw number of episodes of playful talk per context	134	21	74
Frequency of playful talk per half hour	3.69	5.04	30.28

Structurally, episodes of playful talk could be minimal (i.e. one utterance long such as an initiation without an uptake) or more complex, where an initiation was followed by any number of uptakes often engaging more than two participants. It is worth noting that a single episode could contain one or more verbal activities.

First, episodes of playful talk could be comprised of an initiation with no uptake. For instance, in excerpt 3.1 below, Tuncay, Babis, Giannis and Huseyin are about to embark on a collaborative writing task set by their class teacher, Miss Soula. Giannis is negotiating with the other three boys who will take up the role of secretary and write down their ideas for the task. While this negotiation is in progress, Tuncay attempts to tease Babis, who is sitting next to him. Tuncay builds his tease, by playfully referring to Babis' nickname "Μπεμπιλίνο" / "Bebilino" (line 3). Tuncay's attempt to shift the interactional frame to play fails, as neither Giannis nor Babis respond to his playful jibe in the subsequent turns. Perhaps this lack of immediate update is also due to the sudden appearance of Miss Soula on the scene who asks the children if they have decided on who will act as the group secretary, thereby refocusing the interaction back to the writing task.

Excerpt 3.1 (30/3/99)

- | | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| 1 | Κυρία Σούλα | <i>f</i> Νώντα: . πήγαινε εκεί με τον Κώστα |
| 2 | Γιάννης | ((προς Τουτζάι)) κάτσε ναρχίσω εγώ ((να γράφω)) |
| → 3 | Τουτζάι | Μπεμπιλίνο::[:
((η κυρία Σούλα πλησιάζει την ομάδα)) |
| 4 | Κυρία Σούλα | [[((προς τα μέλη της ομάδας)) <i>p</i> παιδιά ποιός θα |
| 5 | | γράψει; ... αποφασίσατε; |
| | | ... |
| 1 | Miss Soula | Nonta go and sit next to Costas over there |
| 2 | Giannis | ((to Tuncay)) I'll start ((writing)) first |
| → 3 | Tuncay | Bebilino::[:
((Miss Soula approaches the small group of boys)) |
| 4 | Miss Soula | [[((to the boys)) children who will |
| 5 | | be the group secretary? ... have you decided among yourselves? |
| | | ... |

Second, playful episodes could consist of an initiation followed by one or more response(s). In the following excerpt 3.2, Tuncay, Vasia, Giannis, Meltem and some other children are hanging out in the classroom during the break on a wet day. There is a lot of shouting and screaming as well as intermittent singing and chanting in the background as children engage in different activities (e.g. exchanging sweets and biscuits, painting and drawing, finishing up homework). In the

midst of this commotion, Tuncay introduces music making in discourse by singing loudly in crescendo (line 2). Vasia follows suit. She produces a loud and passionate rendition of a snippet from an unidentifiable Greek love song (line 3). Vasia's singing efforts, however, dovetail into a playful jibe (line 4). Tuncay teases Vasia by referring to one of her nicknames ("Βασιλόπιττα 999" <Vasilopita 999>) and ordering her to stop singing ("άντε φύγε" <beat it>). Vasia refrains from responding to the teasing and the playful episode is promptly brought to a close.

Excerpt 3.2 (18/3/99)

- 1Μελτέμ ((φωνές))
 τις προτάσεις ((στα Αγγλικά)) δεν έκανες;
 ((φωνές))
 → 2Τουτζάι ((τραγουδά)) *f* ω- . ω- . ω-
 → 3Βάσια ((τραγουδά στο μικρόφωνο)) *ff* η καρδιά:: μου *p* χτυπά::=
 → 4Τουτζάι = *acc* άντε φύγε . Βασιλόπιττα 999 [2 sec]
 5Γιάννης για να δούμε ρε Νώντα ((τί έχεις κάνει))
 6Μελτέμ αυτό ((ο μαρκαδόρος)) είναι καλό .. πάρε κι εγώ μ' αυτό έκανα ..
 7 κοίτα ..
 ((screaming in the background))
 1Meltem you haven't done the sentences ((in English))?
 ((screaming in the background))
 → 2Tuncay ((sings in crescendo)) ο ο ο
 → 3Vasia ((sings in the mic)) my heart is throbbing=
 → 4Tuncay =beat it Vasipolita 999 [2 sec]
 5Giannis let's have a look (re) [Nonta ((what have you written))
 6Meltem [((this marker)) works take it I used the
 7 same one look

Third, episodes of playful talk could be more complex and involve more than two participants. For instance, an episode could include an initiation followed by any number of co-initiation(s) and a response. Responses could be provided by any of the participants regardless of whether they were the recipients of playful talk in the first place or not. A case in point is excerpt 3.3 below. In this excerpt, Maria, Nontas, Vasia, Tuncay and the rest of the class are slowly settling down after the break. Nontas is complaining that his classmates are being too loud and threatens to tell them off to the teacher. Upon hearing Nontas' unwarranted threats, Maria challenges him for what she sees as a rather high-handed remark (after all children should know better than to expect their classmates to settle down quietly after the break!): "τί θες ρε Νώντα εσύ τώρα;" <what's your problem (re) Nontas?>

(line 2). In the next turn, Vasia latches onto Maria's talk and maintains the teasing: she repeats Maria's mock challenge to Nontas, while mitigating her co-initiation with laughter (line 3). The episode is further sustained by Tuncay who addresses the teasing on behalf of Nontas (in line 4). In the following turns, however, this episode is brought to an end, as Nontas fails to take part in the teasing and introduces an abrupt topic/frame shift complaining about Babis' not having done his homework (lines 5–6).

Excerpt 3.3 (18/3/99)

- 1 Νώντας *f acc* στη κυρία στη κυρία που κάνετε τόση φασαρία
 → 2 Μαρία *ff acc* ή θες ρε Νώντα εσύ τώρα::=
 → 3 Βάσια =τί θες ρε Νώντα::; .. (hh)θέ(hh)λεις τί(hh)ποτα; hhh=
 → 4 Τουτζάι =*acc* σκάσε ρε Βά[σια]
 5 Νώντας [*f* δεν έχει κάνει τις εργασίες του . που τούχει
 6 βάλει η κυρία .. εντά:ξει;
 ...
 1 Nontas I'll tell the teacher you are making so much noise
 → 2 Maria what's your problem (re) Nontas?=
 → 3 Vasia =what's your problem (re) Nontas? You (hh) got a (hh) problem?=
 → 4 Tuncay =zip it (re) Va[sia]
 5 Nontas [he ((Babis)) hasn't done the homework Miss
 6 told him to do ok?=
 ...

Fourth, episodes of playful talk could take the form of an initiation followed by any number of co-initiations and co-responses. As mentioned earlier in this section, an episode of playful talk may contain a single activity (e.g. a teasing activity) or any number of activities (i.e. it may start off as a music making activity and dovetail into a teasing activity). Activities in turn may succeed one another even within a single turn. Moreover, activities may target a particular peer(s) (e.g. a jibe aimed at a specific child) or they can be diffused (e.g. chanting a fragment of media-oriented talk).

For instance, in excerpt 3.4 below, Giannis, Tuncay, Babis and Huseyin are working together on a class project. Their on-task talk has been interspersed with a considerable amount of off-task peer talk, including negotiating who will play on the class football team during the break as well as references to media talk and other recyclable and recontextualizable fragments of talk. As the four boys plough through the class project, Giannis exploits one such fragment of talk (a quoted set phrase from a popular at the time of the fieldwork comedy show, “καλό ε;” <cool huh?> (line 5) to shift the interactional frame from a minor dispute between

Tuncay and Babis to lighthearted play. Tuncay picks up and repeats Giannis' set phrase very much in the spirit of the original comedy show where a set phrase can be repeated and creatively manipulated by any number of characters. In the next turn, Giannis repeats the same set phrase once again before shifting gear and teasing Tuncay ("ο Τουτζάι είναι αράπης" <Tuncay is black skinned>, lines 7–8). Tuncay partly maintains the teasing and responds by playfully manipulating Giannis' surname/nickname "Κόλλια" <Kollia> (lines 9–10) before complaining to Miss Soula, the class teacher that Giannis is calling him names.

Excerpt 3.4 (30/3/99)

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1Τουτζάι | <i>f</i> θα κοπεί .. ((το χαρτόνι που γράφουν)) |
| 2Μπάμπης | ναι- καλά ... |
| 3Τουτζάι | <i>dec</i> θα δεις ... <u>δε</u> θα σε παίζω μπάλα .. |
| 4Μπάμπης | <i>acc</i> δε με νοιάζει .. |
| → 5Γιάννης | <i>p</i> κα-κα-κα <u>λό</u> ε-;= |
| → 6Τουτζάι | = <i>p</i> κα <u>λό</u> ::: ε-; |
| → 7Γιάννης | <i>p</i> κα <u>λό</u> : ε::; ... μόνο μόνο .. ((στο μικρόφωνο)) ο Τουντζάι |
| → 8 | είναι::: <i>pp</i> α <u>ρά</u> πης |
| → 9Τουτζάι | α:: <i>acc</i> Π <u>ιά</u> -νη <u>Κ</u> όλλιαντα . <u>Κ</u> όλλια <u>Κ</u> όλλια <u>Κ</u> όλλια |
| → 10 | <u>Κ</u> όλλια::: hhhhh . <i>acc</i> <i>f</i> κυρία <u>π</u> ες το .. (hh)Κυ(hh)ρί(hh)α |
| 11 | <u>π</u> ες το αυτουνού α:- |
| 12Κυρία Σούλα | ((προς Τουτζάι)) <i>f</i> δε μου λες .. κάτσε να σκεφτείς |
| 13 | σε παρακαλώ .. |
| ... | |
| 1Tuncay | you'll tear it ((the piece of paper they are writing on)) |
| 2Babis | yeah- right |
| 3Tuncay | you'll see I won't play with you football |
| 4Babis | I don't care |
| → 5Giannis | c- c- cool huh?= <i></i> |
| → 6Tuncay | =cool huh? |
| → 7Giannis | cool huh? but but ((talking directly into the mic)) Tuncay is |
| → 8 | black skinned ²⁴ |

24. I grappled with how to best translate the word "αράπης" [arapis] into English. When I looked it up in the Tegopoulos-Futrakis Greek dictionary (1989), the word "αράπης" was defined as a person who is black or has very dark features. It can also be used to refer to somebody who is Arab or Egyptian (: 109). Nevertheless, I was acutely aware of the potential pejorative connotations associated with calling somebody "αράπης" [arapis] in everyday Greek language use. In the end, I opted for translating the word "αράπης" [arapis] as "black skinned [person]" although I am aware that it does not capture some of the potential pejorative connotations associated with

- 9Tuncay a Gianni Kollianda Kollia Kollia Kollia Kollia
 → 10 Kollia hahahaha Miss say something to him (hhh)Mi(hh)ss he's
 11 calling me names
 12Miss Soula ((to Tuncay)) can you do me a favour and concentrate on your
 13 work please

In the next sections, I discuss the children's linguistic and other semiotic resources by considering their out-of-school recreational and media practices and linguistic repertoires.

3.3 The children's linguistic and other semiotic resources

The focus on the children's resources provides a point of entry into the emergence and development of playful talk among the members of this close knit peer group. In fact, these resources are integral to the constitution of the peer group as a community of practice sharing similarities with other school-based peer groups as well as bringing to the fore important differences. As I will show in the ensuing Chapters 4–6, children draw upon these resources in various more or less strategic ways in their playful talk to negotiate a range of identities, roles, stances and positionings.

3.3.1 Playful talk and children's recreational and media practices²⁵

Watching Brazilian soap operas dubbed in Greek and popular variety and comedy shows with family and friends, following closely the latest music hits, renting

the word "αράπις" [arapis]. I decided against translating it as "nigger" because of the centrality of this word in race relations in North American history and politics (associated with the subjugation of African-Americans and racial segregation), of its multiple uses and controversies around these uses. As Kennedy (2003) argues in the introduction of his book "Nigger: the strange career of a troublesome word", the word "nigger" can be "said in many ways, put to many uses, and mean many things" depending on context and participant configurations (:xv). For some it may be unambiguous regarded as a racist slur while others may experiment with its non derogatory versions (e.g. in the way it has been transformed through hip hop culture) (:xvii). In the Greek socio-cultural landscape, the word "αράπις" [arapis] does not carry the same import. Nevertheless, it can be potentially offensive and hurtful. I would like to thank Elaine Richardson for sharing her thoughts with me on how to best translate this word into English.

25. A more concise version of this section appears in Lytra (2006a) "Mass media, music making and identities in an Athens primary schools". In: Trends and Developments in Youth Language Research. Christa Dürscheid and Jürgen Spitzmüller (eds.) Frankfurt/M.u.a.: Lang, 239–257.

American block-busters from the neighbourhood video store, playing electronic games were some of the children's principle out-of-school recreational and media practices and activities. These practices and activities provided the children with a rich repertoire of linguistic and other resources (e.g. dress, style) to draw upon in their talk at school in general and in their playful talk in particular. Snippets of songs, fragments of talk from comedy shows singing routines from variety shows, chants from football matches were constantly recycled, recontextualised and transformed into cues for play to suit the children's local interactional projects (e.g. engaging in singing and humming, teasing and role-playing to mention a few) (cf. Dyson 2003; Rampton 2006).

The following account comes from some initial observations regarding the children's rich out-of-school recreational and media practices. These observations were not confined to the ten year old cohort that is the focus of this book but seemed to apply to most majority and minority children in the school.

I am surprised by how tuned into the latest Greek music hits, comedy shows and Brazilian soaps the children are, especially the girls. They seem to be up to speed with the latest twists and turns in the lives of Brazilian soap queens, "Maria" and "Mari Mar" and closely follow the music careers and tempestuous lives of the likes of Triandafilos, Notis Sfakianakis, Labis Livieratos, Sakis Rouvas, Angie Samiou and Angela Dimitriou (all popular Greek pop singers, the last two are female singers). I think what surprised me the most was when yesterday I saw a group of eight year old girls acting out scenes from "Maria", as they explained to me, in the school playground during the break. (fieldnotes, 1/2/99)

As it became evident early on in the initial fieldwork, the children's recreational and media practices were saturated by various forms of media consumption associated with aspects of the majority (Greek), minority (Turkish) and globalized American-English youth/popular cultures and media talk. Forms of media consumption associated with other minority languages and cultures in the school (e.g. Albanian, Bulgarian, Romany) did not emerge in their talk. This perhaps was the outcome of the relatively small number of minority children with a non-Turkish speaking background in this particular school. Moreover, it may have reflected the overall limited contact outside school among children of diverse linguistic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds in general.

Among the ten year old cohort at the time of the initial fieldwork I identified the following patterns of media consumption that were closely tied to their daily out-of-school recreational practices and routines. Through these practices and routines children signalled their participation in various social realms, including family, peer group, school and neighbourhood and social networks that extended well beyond the neighbourhood setting (e.g. trans-national diasporic networks)

(cf. Dyson 2003; Spilioti 2007). Children were avid consumers of TV (including Turkish satellite TV for minority children), films (mainly in the form of video viewing) and music (especially keeping abreast with the top-ten music charts). Telecommunications (i.e. mobile phones, the internet), electronic games, newspapers and magazines featured less prominently in their lives. Children reported watching TV every afternoon after school and in the mornings and afternoons on weekends. Watching TV tended to be a communal affair rather than a solitary pursuit. It involved watching Brazilian soaps dubbed in Greek, comedy and variety shows along with younger and older siblings, parents (especially mothers and their female friends or relatives), school friends and friends from the neighbourhood or living in the same block of flats.

At school, I observed that children were keen to share comedy routines in peer talk from a cluster of favourite comedy shows they all seemed to watch regularly. For instance in excerpt 3.5 below, Vasia and Babis are discussing a comedy routine from the Greek comedy show “Κατά Μάρκον Ευαγγέλιο” <The Gospel according to St. Mark>. The main character of this comedy show (not surprisingly called Mark) was notorious for concocting snappy retorts, witty punch lines and stock phrases with sexual innuendo. In this excerpt, Vasia reproduces one of these stock phrases “ω ρε μια μολυβάρα” <oh what a huge pencil> and asks Babis if he watched the latest comedy show where this phrase was used.

Excerpt 3.5 (15/3/99)

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--|
| 1 | Βασία | ((προς Μπάμπη)) κάνε- <u>ντου</u> = |
| 2 | Μπάμπης | = <i>f</i> <u>ου</u> ... <u>μανούλα ντουρού</u> |
| → 3 | Βασία | ντουρούρου ντουρού . ω ρε μια μολυβάρα hhhh |
| → 4 | | <i>acc</i> (hh)Μπάμπη (hh)Μπάμπη . ω- . ρε- . μια- . μολυβάρα hhhh |
| 5 | | στο “Κατά Μάρκον Ευαγγέλιο” ... τόχεις δε; ... ε; |
| 6 | Μπάμπης | ποιό; |
| 7 | Βασία | στο “Κατά Μάρκον Ευαγγέλιο”= |
| 8 | Μπάμπης | <i>acc</i> δε το βλέπω ρε συ . δεν πρόλαβα να το δω το μεσημέρι= |
| 9 | Βασία | =πλάκα έχει hhhhh .. |
| 10 | Μπάμπης | <i>p</i> το ξέρω .. |
| 1 | Vasia | ((to Babis)) do ntou= |
| 2 | Babis | =ou manoula ntourou |
| → 3 | Vasia | dourourou dourou oh what a huge pencil hhhh |
| → 4 | | (hh)Babi (hh)Babi oh (re-) what- a HUGE pencil hhh |
| 5 | | “The Gospel according to St. Mark” did you watch it? Did you? |
| 6 | Babis | what? |
| 7 | Vasia | “The Gospel according to St. Mark”= |

- 8Babis I don't watch it (re) I missed it ((yesterday)) afternoon=
 9Vasia =it's very funny
 10Babis I know

The sharing of such comedy routines as well as chatting about and exchanging bits of gossip about favourite actors and singers lifted from variety shows (see excerpt 3.6 below) created a sense of “participatory experience” (James 1995:46) which was potentially open to all regardless of linguistic, cultural and ethnic background (including the researcher). For instance, in the next excerpt (excerpt 3.6), Bahrye, Meltem, Vasia and I are hanging out in the classroom during the break chatting about favourite actors and singers. Babis is hovering about, solo singing and humming and occasionally joining in our conversation. At some point, Vasia asks me whether I like Sakis Rouvas (a young male Greek pop singer and heart throb) (line 1). When I reply that I don't (line 2), Bahrye introduces the latest piece of gossip about Sakis Rouvas namely that he appeared on stage wearing a tartan skirt (line 4). In the ensuing exchange, she reveals that had she been there (at the club where he sings and appeared dressed like that) she would have gone up to him and told him to take the skirt off because it didn't look good on him, perhaps implying that it made him look like a girl (lines 10, 12).

Excerpt 3.6 (15/3/99)

- 1Βάσια =κυρία εσάς σας αρέσει ο Σάκης Ρουβάς;=
 2Βάλλη =όχι δε μ'αρέσει=
 3Βάσια =ούτε και μένα=
 → 4Μπαχριέ =γιατί [κυρία είχε φοράσει ΕΙΧΕ ΦΟΡΕΣΕΙ φού[στα] . και είχε
 → 5 βγει έτσι=
 6Βάσια [[[στη Βάλλη]]] ο Λεονάρντος (σας αρέσει); [φούστα
 7Μπάμπης =μια χαρά είναι ο Ντι Κάπριο . ε- οο Λ-=
 8Μπαχριέ =ο Σάκης Ρουβάς=
 9Μπάμπης =ναι=
 → 10Μπαχριέ =αφού είναι [κορίτσι . να ήμουν εκεί και να του
 11Μπάμπης ρ ((τραγουδά)) [αρινταριντοο . εμένανε
 → 12Μπαχριέ έβγαζα τη φούστα και τα και να του έλεγα ότι δεν του
 πηγαίνουνε .
 13Μπάμπης ρ ((τραγουδά)) μ' αρέσουνε κάλλα πουλιά ωωω
 → 1Vasia =Miss do you like Sakis Rouvas?=
 2Vally =no I don't=
 3Vasia =I don't either=
 → 4Bahrye =because [Miss he wore he wore a [skirt and went on stage like
 → 5 that=

- 6Vasia ((to Vally)) [what about Leonardo ((di Caprio))]? [skirt
 7Babis =di Caprio is fine . ee L-=
 8Bahrye =Sakis Rouvas=
 9Babis =yes=
 → 10Bahrye =because he's a girl . [I wish I were there
 11Babis ((sings quietly)) [aridaridoo I
 → 12Bahrye I would get him to take it off and tell him it doesn't look good on him
 13Babis ((sings quietly)) I like the birds ohohoh

As excerpt 3.6 strongly suggests, by engaging in different forms of this shared “participatory experience” majority and minority children were able to demonstrate their knowledge of the latest comedy routines and gossip from chat shows. Moreover, they were able to show off their knowledge of the latest music hits, the ownership of a cool new song or demonstrate their worldly ways by improvising or experimenting with tunes already in circulation (e.g. Babis’ music making in lines 11, 13 above) (cf. Dyson 2003).

Subsequent visits to the school over the next two years revealed that TV, music and film continued to provide a wealth of linguistic and other semiotic resources for children to draw upon in their peer talk. This inevitably led to the constant renewal of resources in peer talk, as new snippets of music and novel quoted set phrases from popular comedy shows replaced old ones at a fast pace. At the same time, forms of media consumption which had not infiltrated peer practices at the time of the initial fieldwork, such as mobile phones and electronic games, gradually began to become more visible (cf. Spilioti 2007).

Although both boys and girls were avid producers and consumers of TV, film and music, at the time of the initial fieldwork, their media engagement took different forms. Boys, for instance, favoured chanting football cries in Greek and Turkish as well as singing and humming snippets from Greek rap and English rock songs. For example, in the following excerpt, Huseyin is racing along the school corridor during the break. The clip microphone is attached to his cloths. At the end of the corridor, he continues racing down the stairs singing softly with a strong rap beat a snippet from the song “Με Λένε Πόπη” <My Name is Popi> sang by Giorgos Dalaras.

Excerpt 3.7 (15/3/99)

- 1Χουσεϊν ((τραγουδά σε ρυθμό ραπ)) ρ γει-α σας με λένε Πό-πη
 → 1Huseyin ((sings with a strong rap beat)) hel-lo my name is Po-pi ((Popi is the pet name for Kaliopi, also the name of the female character whom the song is about))

Girls, on the other hand, favoured singing the refrains of Greek pop love songs that were in wide circulation at the time of the initial fieldwork. Minority girls also sang Turkish arabesk songs which they picked up from Turkish satellite TV and imported tapes from Turkey. They featured the latest hits by İbrahim Tatlıses, Küçük İbo, Kader and Emrah and were repeatedly played in weddings and other public and private celebrations they attended with their families. For instance, in excerpt 3.8 below, Meltem and the rest of the children are slowly settling down in the classroom after the break. In the midst of this on-going commotion, Meltem passionately sings solo a snippet from the popular love song “Στο Ασανσέρ” <In the Elevator> sang by Greek male teen idol Valandis.

Excerpt 3.8 (15/3/99)

- 1Μελτέμ λάι λάι λάι λα λα στ’ ασανσέρ που συναντιώ-μαστε
 → 1Meltem laililai lala in the elevator where we meet

In addition, as I discussed earlier in this section, girls seemed to engage more readily in media talk than boys (e.g. exchanging gossip about popular singers and actors, see excerpt 3.6 earlier in this section) and mimic and parody the talk and conduct of popular singers and actors. These practices conferred them more expertise on issues of media talk than the boys. But their very engagement in them also earned them the collective attribute “ψωνάρες” <very stuck-up> and triggered teasing remarks. In the following excerpt 3.9, the girls (Vasia, Maria, Meltem and Bahrye) and I are talking about their favourite songs. Tuncay and Giannis intervene and tease them about their preoccupation with popular culture icons: Sakis Rouvas (Greek male singer and heart-throb), Leonardo di Caprio and the “Titanic” (the film di Caprio starred in and was responsible for his admittedly overwhelming popularity with the girls) (lines 1, 3, 4, 6, 7).

Excerpt 3.9 (15/3/99)

- 1Τουτζάι =όλο ψωνάρες λέει Σάκη Ρουβά α-α- αυτή ((Βάσια)) όλο-
 2Βάσια χιχιχι
 → 3Γιάννης Λεονά[ρντο ((Ντι Κάπριο))
 → 4Τουτζάι [Λεονάρντο
 5Μελτέμ f κυρία=
 → 6Τουτζάι =“Τιτανικό” λέει
 → 7Γιάννης ε::: κά::λα
 8Μαρία ((στον Τουτζάι)) acc ναι γιατί εσένα ποιά σ’ αρέσει; ..
 9 η Γαρμπή;

- 10Μπάμπης ρ ναι
 11Βάσια ((στον Τουτζάι)) *φ* δεν κοιτά τα μούτρα του .
 12Μαρία και τι μούτρα ε; . τεράστια hhhh
- 1Tuncay =they are so stuck-up all she ((Vasia)) talks about is Saki Rouva
 2Vasia hhh
- 3Giannis Leona[rdo ((di Caprio))
 → 4Tuncay [Leonardo
 5Meltem Miss=
- 6Tuncay =((she)) talks about the “Titanic”
 → 7Giannis of course what else?
 8Maria ((to Tuncay)) what’s your problem? who do you like?
 9 Garbi? ((popular female singer))
 10Babis yes
 11Vasia ((to Tuncay)) has he seen his face in the mirror?
 12Maria and what a face huh? Huge hhh

There are two points worth making about this excerpt. First, Tuncay, Giannis and to a lesser extent Babis collude to tease the girls (Meltem, Vasia, Bahrye and Maria) who have been talking to me about their music and film idols. They build their teases by complementing each other’s talk and skilfully listing the girls’ favourite conversation topics (Sakis Rouvas, Leonardo di Caprio and the “Titanic”). At the same time, the girls (Maria and Vasia) are quick to retaliate by teasing them back. Maria and Vasia single out Tuncay who initiated the teasing routine in the first place and tease him about his music and personal tastes (liking Kaiti Garbi) and whether perhaps given his looks he is aiming a bit too high (see lines 8–12). Second, this teasing routine highlights the differences in media involvement between boys and girls by representing their musical and personal preferences in binary opposition: girls like Sakis Rouvas and Leonardo di Caprio and boys like Kaiti Garbi.

Differences in media engagement and media preferences between boys and girls perhaps reflected broader gendered differences in the forms of media-involvement between boys and girls. Although, for example, both boys and girls frequently referred to their favourite football team, boys were keener to watch and discuss football and delve into the prowess of particular football players in the field than girls. These differences seem to point to different out-of-school recreational practices and routines strongly associated with gender socialization and gender expectations (cf. Dyson 2003; Connell 1996; Praechter 2003). For instance, with the exception of Nontas, majority and minority boys reported playing football and basketball regularly during after-school hours and many participated in organised sports teams. None of the girls, on the other hand, mentioned taking

part in team sports outside school. Vasia and Maria did, however, report going to folkdance classes at the local community centre (the same centre where I had previously tutored minority children in Greek and English prior to the fieldwork at the school) and Meltem added that she went to ballet classes. The children's out-of-school involvement in what appeared to be gender-specific recreational activities seemed to encourage or restrict access to particular linguistic and other semiotic resources which in turn seemed to filter through their playful talk at school (e.g. in their teasing routines and music making).

Besides keeping up to speed with Greek TV and music, minority children reported watching endless hours of Turkish satellite TV: all time favourites included comedy and variety shows, old films made in the 50s and 60s, sports programmes, especially football matches (featuring Istanbul's popular football teams, Galata Saray, Beşiktaş and Fener Bahçe) and occasionally the news. Indeed, one of my earliest observations during a stroll in the neighbourhood of Gazi in the mid- 90s was the preponderance of satellite dishes precariously perched on the roof tops of one-storey houses and on the balconies of flats. When I started visiting the children's homes, I noticed that Turkish satellite TV (and occasionally Greek TV) was always on in the background as women talked or did their house chores and children played close by. On these occasions TV seemed to be used primarily aurally, usually tuned into one of the music channels playing Turkish "pop" or arabesk music. This could be partly explained by the absence of local Turkish radio or Turkish-language programmes on Greek radio stations. Given the additional absence of Turkish-language newspapers, magazines and books available locally, TV had become the most important tool for the dissemination of (mainland) Turkish culture in Gazi (cf. Madianou 2005; see also Sella-Mazi 1999; Embeirikos & Mavromatis 1998/1999).

It is worth noting that there was not anything particularly ethnic in the patterns of media consumption among minority Gaziotes (cf. Kenner 2004). As Madianou (2005) has pointed out in her study of minority Gaziotes uses of Turkish and Greek media, their media practices and preferences were shaped by social rather than ethnic parameters (:529–531).²⁶ Instead, she identified generational and gender differences that were reflected in divergent uses of space and the me-

26. Researchers, however, have critically examined the centrality of satellite TV (and home video viewing) as "a response to the social and cultural marginalisation of minorities" within majority cultures (Gillespie 1995:79). It has been argued that through satellite TV, minority members isolate themselves from the majority and seek to recreate their homeland in another place (*ibid*). While this side effect of satellite TV cannot be dismissed, such a link between Turkish satellite TV and the marginalisation of minority Gaziotes was not established – perhaps because minority Gaziotes are not a diaspora in the traditional sense but have always lived in mainland Greece.

dia: younger generations (who tended to be more fluent in Greek) seemed to prefer Greek TV while older generations (who tended to be more fluent in Turkish) had a preference for Turkish TV (ibid). Similar to Madianou's (2005) findings, I noticed that women tended to watch soap operas, old Turkish films and video-clips in Turkish during the day while drinking coffee and chatting in the company of other female friends, relatives and children. Men tended to watch the news, sports and Hollywood films dubbed in Turkish in the evenings at the local coffee shops.

Majority children gained access to Turkish satellite TV, films and music indirectly, through their peers' references in peer talk at school. Since out-of-school mixed friendships were rare and visits to each other's homes were restricted to birthday parties, this meant that minority children had exclusive authority and control over access to Turkish media consumption and media talk. Overall, I observed that majority boys seemed to be more tuned in and willing to experiment with aspects of the minority (Turkish) media culture and media talk than majority girls who were perhaps more conservative on this matter. Although certain linguistic resources such as Turkish nicknames (i.e. "Meltem Cumbul" alluding to a popular Turkish female actress and "Pamuk" which meant "cotton") and football chants (e.g. "Çimbom Galata Saray" <Cheers for Galata Saray>) had become normalized through repeated use boys tended to use them more widely than girls in a variety of interactional contexts. The same was the case with less established and more emergent linguistic resources which tended to change over time, such as quotable set phrases and one-liners from Turkish media sources. Once again I noticed that boys seemed more inclined to experiment with them than girls as well as ask clarification questions regarding their meaning or use.

For instance, in the following excerpt (3.10), Giannis, Tuncay, Huseyin and Babis are collaborating on a writing task. While Huseyin who is acting as the secretary for the group is struggling over the spelling of the word encyclopaedia (line 1), Giannis initiates a frame shift to play by repeating a playful transformation of the Turkish quotable set phrase "gel bana" <come to me> he had heard Tuncay use earlier. His playful transformation "γκένη μανά" <geni mana> (line 3) is indeed spot on and elicits Tuncay's approval who repeats it in the next turn (line 4).

Excerpt 3.10 (30/3/99)

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--|
| 1 | Χουσεΐν | ((καθώς προσπαθεί να γράψει τη λέξη "εγκυκλοπαίδεια")) f'α:..... |
| 2 | | acc μπερδέφτηκα και εγώ τώρα:: = |
| → 3 | Γιάννης | ff γκένη μανά::.. ((έλα σε μένα)) |
| 4 | Τουτζάι | ff γκένη μανά::.. ((έλα σε μένα)) |
| 5 | Χουσεΐν | acc ((στη Βάλλη)) κυρία μπερδεύομαι::= |
| 6 | Τουτζάι | = p κυρία:: . μπερδεύομαι:: |
| | ... | |

- 1Huseyin ((he is trying to spell the word 'encyclopaedia')) a
2 I'm all confused now too=
→ 3Giannis geni mana ((i.e. come to me))
4Tuncay geni mana ((i.e. come to me))
5Huseyin ((to Vally)) Miss I'm confused=
6Tuncay =Miss I'm confused
...

The majority boys' experimentations with Turkish media material perhaps reflected broader differences in the forms of media-involvement between boys and girls mentioned earlier in this section. Moreover, they may be related to differences in friendship patterns at school and the sort of linguistic and other semiotic resources that became available to boys and girls respectively.

While Greek and to a lesser extent Turkish media played a central role in providing the necessary linguistic and other resources for play, English and in particular various aspects of globalized American-English media culture did not seem to have wide spread currency among the ten year old cohort. Although children reported watching Hollywood blockbusters (e.g. the "Titanic"), marshal arts films featuring Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee and action films (e.g. "Robocop") on video and on TV and listening to American pop and rock bands on MTV, film and music in English did not figure largely in peer talk at school. The somewhat limited presence of aspects of globalized American-English media and technopopular culture in peer talk and peer practices was in stark contrast with its high visibility in Greek society at large and among young people in particular (e.g. Koutsogiannis & Mitsikopoulou 2003). This discrepancy could be associated with the particular age group of the children (pre-adolescents) and perhaps by the fact that their recreational practices were already saturated by Greek (and Turkish) TV, film and music. Indeed, subsequent visits to the school over the next two years strongly suggested that as children grew older and more culturally experienced various forms of globalized American-English media culture started gaining more currency.

Besides differences in the centrality of Greek, Turkish and globalized American-English media in peer talk, I observed a significant difference in the presence of TV, film and music in instructional and recreational contexts. Unlike the preponderance of TV, film and music in peer talk during recreational contexts, media culture and media-talk did not figure large during teacher-fronted whole-class instruction. Instead, I noticed that there seemed to be quite a clear separation between curriculum material and media culture and media-talk during the lesson. Indeed, the treatment of curriculum material and media culture as almost two separate cultural domains appeared to be (re)produced in teacher talk: references

to media culture and media-talk were shunned and when they did emerge in classroom talk (almost exclusively by the children) they did not seem to be treated as legitimate curriculum material. The following account is revealing of the teachers' stance towards references to media culture and media-talk in the main classroom floor. This account took place during literacy hour with the class teacher, Miss Soula, who was an experienced teacher with a reflective disposition:

Miss Soula and the children are reading aloud a chapter from the book they read once a week during literacy hour. In this episode, one of the protagonists, Paul, plays truant. Instead of going to school he goes to the neighbourhood playground where he meets a girl (also playing truant). They start playing together and the girl tells him that she is an "adopted child". At this point, the teacher stops the reading and asks the children what to be "adopted" means. Vasia takes the floor. As she is trying to explain the meaning of the word, Meltem shouts out "η Μαρία" <like Maria>. The teacher looks confused and asks Meltem who she is talking about (the teacher thinks Meltem is referring to her class-mate Maria). Meltem explains that she is talking about "Maria" the heroine of the Brazilian soap opera. Vasia, Bahrye and Babis confirm that "Maria" (the heroin of the Brazilian soap) is indeed an adopted child. All of a sudden there is a lot of commotion and side-talking. The children are noticeably more excited and physically animated as they talk about the Brazilian soap (it seems everyone watches it -apart from the teacher and me). The teacher does not try to incorporate this reference into the official classroom space but resumes story reading. (fieldnotes, 17/3/99)

The fragment above appears to suggest that a particular kind of pedagogic regime was in place, one that seemed to disqualify references to media culture and media-talk as a possible option within the unfolding of the lesson in the main classroom floor (cf. Rampton, Harris & Dover 2002; Rampton 2006). This is further collaborated by the fact that only occasionally did teachers make aspects of media culture and media-talk the focus of the lesson or made incidental references. Nevertheless, in spite of the teachers' attempts to segregate curriculum transmission and media culture, as I will show in Chapters 5–6, the latter consistently leaked into the classroom setting (cf. Dyson 2003; Maybin 2006; Rampton 2006). For instance, a closer look into children's side-talk during teacher-fronted whole-class instruction revealed that children frequently oriented to media culture and engaged in practices such as singing and humming within earshot of their peers and teachers. Moreover, as shown in Table 3.2 (Section 3.2), small-group learning contexts were more likely to trigger playful routines and activities, such as teasing and references to media-talk than teacher-fronted ones. I explore these variations further in Chapter 5.

3.3.2 The children's linguistic repertoires

Children reported having diverse linguistic repertoires and expertise as well as varying levels of proficiency in different languages including Greek, Turkish, English, German, French, Italian and Albanian. More specifically, minority children had divergent perceptions about their language proficiency in Greek and Turkish. The following snippet comes from a semi-structured group interview with Tuncay, Fanis, Bahrye and Huseyin. We have been talking about how well the children speak Greek and Turkish. Tuncay claims that he speaks better Greek than Turkish. Fanis, on the other hand, explains that he understands better Turkish than Greek TV because he has had more exposure to it:

Excerpt 3.11 (interview with minority children, 21/9/99)

- Τουτζάι εγώ πιο καλά Ελληνικά ξέρω να μιλάω
Βάλλη είναι πιο εύκολο να καταλάβεις τα Ελληνικά ή τα Τουρκικά στην
 τηλεόραση;
Φάνης Τουρκικά γιατί είμαι συνηθισμένος

Tuncay I speak better Greek
Vally do you understand better Greek or Turkish on TV?
Fanis Turkish because I'm more used to it

Although all minority children apart from Meltem claimed that they had learned how to read and write in Turkish from their parents or older siblings or on their own by watching endless hours of Turkish satellite TV they seemed to be less keen on learning Turkish formally at school. As Fanis and Tuncay counter-argued in the interview excerpt below, this would either hinder their language development in Greek or it was deemed as completely unnecessary as to their mind they already knew how to read and write in Turkish.

Excerpt 3.12 (interview with minority children, 21/9/99)

- Βάλλη εάν κάνανε Τουρκικά απογευματινά μαθήματα στο σχολείο να μάθετε
 να γράφετε και να διαβάζετε
Φάνης δε θέλω Τουρκικά μαθήματα τώρα δε θέλω θα τα μπερδέψω
Τουτζάι εγώ ξέρω και να γράφω και να διαβάζω
Βάλλη ξέρεις;
Τουτζάι η μαμά μου έμαθε
Βάλλη ξέρεις καλά;
Τουτζάι ξέρω αλλά την αλφαβήτα λίγο ξέρω
Φάνης ((αρχίζει να λέει την αλφαβήτα στα Τουρκικά)) a be ce de ee

- Μπαχριέ και εγώ ξέρω
 Βάλλη τί ξέρεις;
 Μπαχριέ στα Τουρκικά την αλφαβήτα λίγο ξέρω
 Φάνης ((αρχίζει να λέει την αλφαβήτα στα Τουρκικά)) a be ce ce de
 Μπαχριέ ((αρχίζει να λέει την αλφαβήτα στα Αγγλικά)) a be ge de
 Τουτζάι ((στη Μπαχριέ)) όχι έτσι ((αρχίζει να λέει την αλφαβήτα στα Τουρκικά)) a be ce ce Αγγλικά δεν είναι αυτό ((νομίζει ότι η Μπαχριέ μπερδεψε την Τουρκική με την Αγγλική αλφαβήτα))
- Vally if Turkish classes were provided during after-school hours would you like to learn how to read and write in Turkish?
- Fanis I don't want to go to any Turkish classes now I don't want any lessons ((in Turkish)) I'll get confused
- Tuncay I know how to read and write in Turkish
- Vally you do?
- Tuncay my mum taught me
- Vally how well can you read and write?
- Tuncay I know how to read and write but I know the alphabet just a little bit
- Fanis ((starts reciting the Turkish alphabet)) a be ce ce de ee
- Bahrye I know it too
- Vally what do you know?
- Bahrye I know the Turkish alphabet a little bit
- Fanis ((starts reciting the Turkish alphabet)) a be ce ce de
- Bahrye ((starts reciting the English alphabet)) a be ce de
- Tuncay ((to Bahrye)) not like that ((recites the alphabet)) a be ce ce this isn't like the English alphabet ((he thinks that Bahrye is confusing the Turkish alphabet with the English one))

There are two points worth making regarding interview excerpt 3.12 above. The first is that by claiming he will get confused if he starts learning Turkish formally at school Fanis seems to be reproducing a common theme that permeates dominant Greek educational discourses. This theme is premised on the value ascribed to Greek as the majority language and the marginalization of all other minority and immigrant languages at school. As I discussed in the introduction to this book, minority children are often seen as suffering from some form of linguistic deficit because of their home language(s). To counter-balance this effect it has been argued that minority children should only be exposed to learning Greek (and perhaps other foreign languages) at school while home language provision can only result to more confusion hindering language development in Greek (see also Section 2.4). Although a wealth of studies attest to the opposite (e.g. Kenner 2000, 2004), this line of research has been systematically ignored.

The second point is one related to the children's literacy in Turkish. I observed that minority children would often lay claim to Turkish literacy by reciting the beginning of the Turkish alphabet to me. However, besides being able to identify the letters of the Turkish alphabet, only Tuncay, Huseyin and Bahrye attempted to spell (though not always accurately) some words in Turkish (particularly the names of their favourite football teams, football players, singers and actors). Fanis and Meltem, on the other hand, used Greek characters to write in Turkish. In other words, there seemed to be a significant gap between the children's reported literacy in Turkish and what appeared to be rather limited literacy practices in the minority language. Literacy practices in their home language were further restricted by the complete absence of newspapers, books, magazines and other printed material in Turkish as well as the lack of access to Turkish web-sites at home and in the neighbourhood.²⁷

As I discussed in 2.2, minority Gaziotes spoke a regional variety of Turkish referred to in the literature as “Θρακιώτικα” <Thracian Turkish> or “Δυτικοθρακιώτικα” [Bati Trakya Türkçesi] <West Thracian Turkish>. Although minority children referred to their home language as “Τούρκικα” <Turkish>, they were very much aware of the difference between the Turkish they spoke and what they and other minority Gaziotes referred to as “κιμπάρικα” or “kibarca” (i.e. “polite” Turkish or Standard Turkish). “Kibarca” was ubiquitously associated with friends and relatives living and working in Turkey, people of higher educational and socio-economic standing and Turkish satellite TV. Children, however, were ambivalent about the merits of actually speaking “kibarca”, as interview excerpt 3.12 below reveals.

Excerpt 3.13 (interview with minority children, 21/9/99)

Βάλλη	τα Τούρκικα που ακούς στην τηλεόραση είναι τα ίδια με αυτά που μιλάς εσύ με τη μαμά σου;
Φάνης	όχι αυτά ((στην τηλεόραση)) είναι κιμπάρικα
Τουτζάι	((γελώντας)) κιμπάρικα
Βάλλη	θα ήθελες να μάθεις κιμπάρικα;
Τουτζάι	όχι

27. Note that minority children presumably would have access to Turkish books, newspapers, magazines and other printed material in Turkish in Ksanthi and Komotini, their towns of origin, in Western Thrace where they spent a significant part of their holidays every year (see Map A of Greece, in Appendix I). None of the children, however, reported engaging in any particular Turkish literacy practices when in Western Thrace either. This perhaps was a reflection of the low socio-economic and educational capital of their parents and other community members in Gazi (cf. Mavromatis 2004).

- Βάλλη ((στον Τουτζάι)) γιατί δε θέλεις να μάθεις κιμπάρικα
 Φάνης εγώ θέλω να πω γιατί θέλω;
 Βάλλη για πες
 Φάνης όταν έρθει κάποιος από κάπου Τουρκία κάποιος συγγενής μου πρέπει να του μιλήσω ευγενικά
 Βάλλη ((στην Μπαρχιέ)) εσύ θέλεις να μάθεις *kıbarca* ή δε σε πειράζει όπως μιλάς;
 Μπαρχιέ κυρία κοίτα *kıbarca* μαθαίνουν αυτοί που κάνουν τους όμορφους μερικοί που είναι στην Τουρκία
 Βάλλη εσύ θα ήθελες να μιλάς;
 Μπαρχιέ εμένα φτάνει αυτή η γλώσσα
- Vally is the Turkish on TV the same as the Turkish you speak with your mum?
 Fanis no that ((on TV)) is “polite” Turkish
 Tuncay ((laughs)) “polite” Turkish
 Vally would you like to learn how to speak “polite” Turkish
 Tuncay no
 Vally ((to Tuncay)) why not?
 Fanis I want to say can I say why I want ((to learn to speak “polite” Turkish))?
 Vally go ahead
 Fanis when some relative comes from Turkey I need to be able to speak “polite” Turkish
 Vally ((to Bahrye)) would you like to learn how to speak “polite” Turkish or are you happy with the way you speak now?
 Bahrye look Miss people who learn “polite” Turkish they do it to show off ((also)) some speak it because they are from Turkey
 Vally would you like to speak it?
 Bahrye I’m happy speaking what I speak

For Fanis being able to speak “*kıbarca*” or “polite” Turkish was regarded as an asset, a resource, as it allowed him to communicate with relatives and friends across communities and countries. On the other hand, Bahrye highlighted that the use of “*kıbarca*” was associated with individuals who tried to put on airs (although she did add as an after-thought individuals who came from Turkey could also speak it). Bahrye and Tuncay’s positive attitude towards the regional variety of Turkish they spoke was not surprising but concurred with the linguistic loyalty other minority Gaziotes reported about their spoken language. For minority Gaziotes, their home language had important symbolic and instrumental value. It distinguished them from Romany-speaking Muslim Roma and symbolically united them with other Turkish-speaking minority members living in Greece and

abroad (e.g. Germany) who use Turkish as the intra-minority code (cf. Maradzides & Mavromatis 1999; Mavromatis 2004; Sella-Mazi 1999).²⁸

While minority children placed a high value in their home language they also acknowledged the importance of learning Greek. In the excerpt below (3.14), Fanis and Huseyin share their views on this subject with me.

Excerpt 3.14 (interview with minority children, 21/9/99)

Βάλλη	είναι σημαντικό να ξέρει κανείς καλά Ελληνικά;
Φάνης	είναι σημαντικό
Χουσεΐν	είναι σημαντικό γιατί πάρει χαρτιά και γίνεται
Φάνης	σοφός γίνεται
Χουσεΐν	και γίνεται σοφός
Vally	is it important to know Greek well?
Fanis	yes it's important
Huseyin	yes it's important because then you get qualifications and you become
Fanis	you become wise
Huseyin	yes you become wise

In this excerpt, Huseyin is echoing prevailing discourses about the importance of Greek language learning for instrumental purposes which I encountered among most minority Gaziotes. For minority Gaziotes, Greek was associated first and foremost with access to valuable material resources and the job market and then fuller participation in and better understanding of the majority language and culture. Unlike Fanis' assertion about "becoming wise", for most minority Gaziotes one's personal development did not figure large in the language learning equation (cf. Mavromatis 2004).

28. The high prestige afforded to Turkish by the members of the Muslim minority of Western Thrace can be attributed to at least main three reasons: (1) Turkish is the established intra-minority code in Western Thrace and one of the three languages of instruction (along with Greek and some Qu'ranic Arabic) in dual medium minority schools in Western Thrace; (2) it is the home language of the numerically largest, wealthiest and most educated group of the Muslim minority and (3) it is the majority language of neighbouring Turkey, with which many minority members have strong affiliations (Embeirikos et al. 2001). Regardless of the significant linguistic and cultural differences among members of the Muslim minority I discussed in Section 2.2, Turkish has played a central role in creating a sense of an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991) across communities and national borders. Naturally, I do not wish to claim that language alone can create this. But it can be one of its most salient features in unifying and politically mobilising minority groups (cf. Heller 1999, 2002). This sense of an "imagined community" is intensified by the popularity of (mainland) Turkish satellite TV and the wide dissemination of (mainland) Turkish popular cultural products (cf. Madianou 2005).

Overall, (oral) competence in Greek depended upon the frequency and intensity of contact with the majority: in general I observed that children and men who had access to Greek-speaking networks at school and in the work-place spoke better Greek than women who were primarily confined to work and socialise in and around the home. Many especially older mothers of school-age children repeatedly vented their frustration to me in dealing with social services, for instance, because of their limited competence in Greek and reported feeling embarrassed that they had to rely on their school-age children to act as “bilingual brokers” on their behalf (cf. Heller 1999). These observations, however, may not capture fully the extent of language shift from Turkish monolingualism in first generation Gaziotes (especially among older women) to various forms of bilingualism in Turkish and Greek among the second and third generation Gaziotes. This process, I noticed, has been further accelerated via extensive schooling and exposure to Greek media (in particular TV, newspapers and magazines) among the third generation younger parents and their children.

Majority children were exposed to Turkish at school through intensive contact with their Turkish-speaking peers. I observed that majority children were familiar with the meaning of some Turkish words (e.g. “dede” <grandfather>, “nine” <grandmother>, “pamuk” <cotton>, which was also one of Nontas’ nicknames), football cries (e.g. “Çimbom Galata Saray” <Cheers for Galata Saray>) and fragments from (mainland) Turkish media culture (e.g. quotable set phrases such as “gel bana” <come to me> and “çiçi meme” <cute boobs>) and would occasionally use them in peer talk. Moreover, they seemed keen to find out more and would inquire about the meaning of new Turkish words. The following excerpt is revealing of majority children’s attempts to grapple with the meaning of Turkish words. Huseyin and Giannis are mucking about while Miss Eleni, the English language teacher, is talking privately with one of the children. Huseyin has been calling Giannis “piç” (which means “illegitimate child”, “bastard” or “brat” in Turkish). At some point, Giannis turns to Vasia and then to the teacher asking them what the word means. It is worth noting that Giannis mispronounces the Turkish word “piç” as near homophonous to the English word “peach” (which may explain why he asks Vasia what the word means besides “peach”).

Excerpt 3.15 (18/3/99)

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| → 1 Γιάννης | Βάσια; κυρία; τι είναι “πι:τς”; εκτός το::: “ροδά[κινο” |
| 2 Χουσεΐν | [f piç |
| → 3 Βάσια | acc είναι χωρίς πατέρα και μητέρα |
| 4 Κυρία Ελένη | λοιπόν . όταν τα μάθαιτε όλα ό::σα έχει το βιβλίο θα σας τα μάθω κι αυτά . |

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| → 1Giannis | Vasia? Miss? What does “pich” mean? [besides “peach”? |
| 2Huseyin | [piç |
| → 3Vasia | it means not having a father and a mother |
| 4Miss Eleni | so when you learn everything there is to know in your book |
| | I will teach you these words too |

There are three points worth making about this excerpt. First, I find it particularly interesting that instead of turning to one of his Turkish-speaking peers for an explanation of the meaning of the Turkish word “piç”, Giannis asks first Vasia and then the teacher. Although Vasia had reported that she did not know any Turkish in this excerpt she is quick to answer Giannis’ clarification request and provide what she thinks or has been told by her Turkish-speaking peers is the meaning of the word in one breath. In other words, here Vasia seems to be staking a claim to linguistic authority and expertise in Turkish which on another occasions she had flatly denied. This apparent incongruity between reported language use and actual language use perhaps reflects the marginalised status of Turkish (and admittedly other minority and immigrant languages) in Greek schools and Greek society at large. Regardless of the school’s effort to raise the profile of Turkish and other immigrant languages through an intercultural approach to teaching and learning, majority children seemed to have ambivalent attitudes towards minority languages.

Second, as far as Miss Eleni is concerned, she dismisses the relevance of this word for learning purposes by evoking the curriculum as the ultimate authority regarding what does and does not count as legitimate classroom talk. The teacher's response here is consistent with other teacher responses I noticed to linguistic and cultural references to Turkish introduced in the main classroom floor (see Lytra 2006b for discussion). I will return to this point in Chapter 6 where I discuss instance of playful talk with reference to Turkish linguistic and cultural items during instruction and the different teacher responses they elicited.

Third, none of the Turkish-speaking children intervene to correct Vasia or supply the meaning of the word. The silence on the part of Huseyin and Meltem who are co-present in the exchange above perhaps reflects a more general unwillingness I noticed to reveal the meaning of Turkish words when asked. As I will show in Chapter 6, this could be interpreted as an attempt to almost safeguard their linguistic capital and expertise in Turkish from majority peers and adults (sometimes including the researcher).

Besides Greek and Turkish, children were exposed to English and other foreign languages (German, French and Italian) through formal instruction at school or in local fee-paying foreign languages centres (called in Greek “φροντιστήρια” [frontistiria]). Although all majority children studied English and other foreign

languages in these private after-school languages centres, none of the minority children apart from Meltem were enrolled there. All the children, however, were keen to report any foreign language they might know regardless of the degree of proficiency. They were less keen to report any knowledge of other minority languages, with the exception of Fanis who claimed to have learned a little bit of Albanian from Albanian-speaking school mates. These observations may reflect the prestige attached to foreign language learning, especially English, in Greek society at large and the concomitant marginalisation of minority and immigrant languages (cf. Makri-Tsilipakou 1997). As a result, these dominant language ideologies would have made revealing one's knowledge of minority and immigrant languages unfavourable. At the same time, these observations may reflect the children's out-of-school friendship groups. In the neighbourhood, children tended to stick to linguistically, culturally and ethnically homogenous groupings and extended contact among children from diverse backgrounds was rare.

In the next section, I go on to explore the children's playful verbal activities and routines and the contextualisation cues they use to construct play frames and do identity work across contexts and participation.

3.4 Playful verbal activities and routines: An overview

In this book playful talk is seen as a super-ordinate category that encompassed the following activities and routines: teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. In the following sub-sections, I provide a brief review of the literature with some illustrative examples for each of these activities and routines. These sub-sections have a stage-setting function against which I go on to discuss the various contextualisation cues children use in their talk to build play frames (Section 3.5).

3.4.1 Teasing, joking and verbal play²⁹

Teasing is perhaps one of the best researched verbal activities: anthropological studies have probed into verbal play and teasing between children and their caregivers (whether parents or older siblings) as a socialisation practice at home across different cultures (e.g. Eisenberg 1986; Miller 1986; Régier 1999; Schieffelin 1986).

29. An earlier version of this section with reference to teasing also appears in Lytra (2007) "Teasing in Contact Encounters: Frames, Participant Positions and Responses" published in *Multilingua*.

These studies have focused mainly on teasing as verbal means of social control to achieve particular goals (e.g. to send messages regarding the children's inappropriate behaviour or the nature of social relationships with caregivers and other adults). While anthropological studies on teasing exhibit a strong bias towards investigating adult-child interactions and focus on adult initiations of teasing exchanges at home, sociolinguistic ones have shifted the research agenda to exchanges among peers in the school setting. Overall, the focus of these studies has been to unravel and shed light on teasing practices among peers as means of accomplishing "multiple peer objectives, such as strengthening female friendships, communicating liking to males, and experimenting with gender roles" (Eder 1993: 18; see also Eder 1995; Scarborough Voss 1997; Tholander 2002). Moreover, teasing among peers has been explored as means "to convey social concerns and norms" by bringing to the fore violations of normative conduct (Eder 1991: 185; also Tholander & Aronsson 2002).

A review of the literature on teasing demonstrates that it has been invariably subsumed under the super-ordinate categories of "humour" (Antonopoulou & Sifianou 2003; Archakis & Tsakona 2005), "joking" (Boxer & Cortés-Conde 1997; Norrick 1993) and "insulting" (Tannock 1999). Nevertheless, all understandings of teasing as a social practice whether among peers, adults or in interactions among children and their caregivers converge on its multi-functionality in discourse and highlight its dependency on shared assumptions and associations among interactants for interpretation.

According to Eisenberg (1986), teasing is defined as "any conversational sequence that opened with a mock challenge, insult or threat" (:183–184). A central feature of teasing is that "the teaser did not intend the tease to be understood as true" (*ibid.*). On this issue, Drew (1987) points out that "teases are designed to make very apparent what they are up to – that they are not intended as real or sincere proposals – by being constructed as very obviously exaggerated versions of some action" (:232). Based on the sequential analysis of a rich corpus of naturally occurring conversations over the telephone and in informal settings (e.g. dinner table conversations, visits to relatives or friends' homes), Drew identifies certain features that make teases recognisable. Teases can be built around the selection of specific lexical items used in an exaggerated manner (e.g. "yacking" instead of talking). The recognisability of teases can also depend on the overdone formulaic character of the whole turn (e.g. "you probably got at least a week [to live]" is an exaggerated prognosis for a minor illness). Lastly, teases may be designed in such a way so as to exhibit a certain degree of "contrastiveness" (e.g. teasing that one will be home at nine in the evening contrasts with the proposal to get home at a decent hour for a family function that starts at seven) (:231–232).

Designing teases as humorous rather than sincere proposals is due to the fact that if taken literally, the recipient could regard the content of teasing as hostile or negative: this implies that teasing is considered as an inherently ambiguous activity and one that can produce uncertainty in talk. As Schieffelin (1986) notes, “teasing creates tension, as one is never completely sure which way an interaction might swing, owing to the unstable nature of the teasing frames” (: 166–167).

In this book, an important criterion for identifying teasing in the data is that teases were always directed at a present party.³⁰ For instance, in excerpt 3.16, Bahrye and Vasia are giving Babis a much needed hand with his overdue grammar homework. Prior to the frame shift to teasing, Bahrye is going through Babis’ folder filing past grammar exercise sheets, when she teases him for the poor condition it is in (line 2). In this short teasing episode, Bahrye marks off the tease from the preceding talk by pumping up the volume and making use of a mock challenge coupled with the use of the untranslatable particle “re”. Her tease, however, does not elicit a response by Babis. Instead, Vasia shifts the topic back to Babis’ unfinished grammar homework by volunteering to write the answers on the blackboard for him to copy.

Excerpt 3.16 (15/3/99)

- 1Μπαχρίέ ((στον Μπάμπη)) για φέρε εδώ .. να βάλλω αυτό ((στο ντοσιέ))..
→ 2 .. *ff* τι ντοσιέ είναι αυτό ρε . για πέταμα [3 sec]
3Βάσια εγώ θα σου γράψω το συντελεσμένο στο μπίνακα ... το πρώτο
4 ((ρήμα)) ... ποιά είναι ποιό είναι; .
- 1Bahrye ((to Babis)) give me this ((folder)) I’ll put this ((grammar
→ 2 exercise sheet)) in there your folder (re) it’s a real mess [3 sec]
3Vasia ((to Babis)) I’ll write the tense for you on the blackboard
what’s the first ((verb in the grammar exercise sheet))?

It is worth noting that some teasing routines resembled agonistic discursive phenomena commonly referred to in the literature as “verbal dueling” and “ritual insulting” (e.g. Dundes, Leach & Özkök 1972; Leary 1980; Kochman 1972, 1983; Labov 1972). Verbal duelling and ritual insulting have been traditionally characterised by the playful exchange of ritual insults. Murray (1983) distinguishes ritual insults from literal or personal ones “by the greater outlandishness of characterization, and by the chaining of successive insults” of the former (: 189). He claims that in ritual insults “each retort is linked to the preceding insult, prototypically by

30. Overall, I identified 127 teasing episodes. These were sub-divided into the following contexts: 63 episodes during instruction and 64 during recreation.

rhyme, but also by building on the semantic foundation of the first insult or making a ‘play’ on its words” (:189). Following Labov (1972) and Kochman (1983), Eder (1995) further differentiates between ritual and personal insults on the basis of their truth validity and the types of participant responses they elicit. In the case of ritual insulting, she argues, the initiator of the insulting routine employs insults that the recipient is not likely to take as true and is to answer in a ritual way. In the case of personal insulting, on the other hand, the initiator can use any insult and it depends on the recipient to interpret it as true or not and to respond accordingly (:73).

In this book, rather than treat them as separate discursive phenomena, I have sought to subsume activities that resemble “verbal duelling” and “ritual insulting” under teasing routines (cf. Lytra 2003, 2007; Tannock 1999). The rationale for categorising them as teasing activities rests in the fact that unlike “verbal duelling” and “ritual insulting” these activities do not rely on the assumption that children employ only ritual insults (they can employ personal insults too) nor that their ritual insults will be subsequently interpreted as such (they can also be interpreted as personal insults). Moreover, these activities are organised around more flexible interactional ground rules as opposed to the more regimented ones that apply to “verbal duelling” and “ritual insulting” routines (see Chapter 4 for more details).

Although teasing and joking has often been used interchangeably in the literature, Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) distinguish between the two activities on the basis of whether they are directed at someone present or not. Jokes are aimed at an absent third party, while teases target a participant(s) who is present. This basic distinction between joking and teasing is also adopted in this book. Nevertheless, a closer look at children’s playful talk indicates that joking need not only be directed towards an absent third party: children may joke about an object, a situation or at oneself- skilfully using language to that end. Regardless of who or what their target is, children consistently exploit exaggeration, hyperbole and laughter and coin new words to build their jokes.³¹

For instance, in excerpt 3.17 below the children are engaged in an identification and matching task during whole class English language instruction. The purpose of the task is to identify and match successfully the map of a country of the European Union with its name in English. The next item in the task features Italy. Miss Eleni, the English language teacher, prompts the children by pointing out that this country looks like a boot. Taking his cue from the teacher, Tuncay quietly jokes about the country looking more like a shoe instead (line 5).

31. Overall, I identified 44 joking episodes. These were further divided into 39 episodes during instruction and 5 episodes during recreation.

Excerpt 3.17 (18/3/99)

- 1Κυρία Ελένη *f* πάμε στο νούμερο δύο αυτή η χώρα μοιάζει με μπότα ..
 2Τουτζάι (hh)μπότα; ..
 3Κώστας *p* ε- κα::λά- .. η Ιταλία=
 4Κυρία Ελένη *f* ποιά χώρα [είναι;
 → 5Τουτζάι [*p* α::- (h)παπουτσι είναι(hh) .
 6Κώστας *f* Ιταλία::
- 1Miss Eleni ok let's move on to number two now this country looks
 like a boot
 2Tuncay a boot?
 3Costas well that's easy it's Italy
 4Miss Eleni which country [is it?
 → 5Tuncay [ah it's a (h)shoe(hh)
 6Costas ((it's)) Italy

When children joke about themselves they occupy the centre stage of verbal playing (Boxer & Cortés-Conde 1997:281). Such instances of joking are commonly referred to in the literature as “self-denigrating humour” or “self-teasing” (ibid). For example in the following excerpt 3.18, Bahrye and Babis are working hard to finish some overdue homework under the watchful eye of Vasia before the end of the break. Bahrye breaks the silence by turning to Babis and teasing him in a provocative manner that she is well ahead of him in finishing the homework (lines 1, 3).

Excerpt 3.18 (15/3/99)

- 1Μπαχριέ *f* ωχ Μπάμπη εγώ σε περν.
 2Μπάμπης α; ...
 3Μπαχριέ εγώ σε περνώ παιδά=
 → 4Μπάμπης =δεν πειράζει .. δεν κάνουμε αγώνες . άμα κάναμε αγώνες θα σ' είχα
 → 5 περάσει με δύο χιλιάδες λάθη
 [4 sec]
- 1Bahrye oh Babis I'm ahea-
 2Babis huh?
 3Bahrye I'm ahead of you du=
 → 4Babis =that's ok we're not competing if we were competing ((to finish
 → 5 our homework)) I would have won by two thousand mistakes
 [4 sec]

On this occasion, rather than shifting to non-play, Babis plays along with Bahrye's teasing by resorting to self-denigrating humour. In instances of self-denigrating humour the target not only accepts being cast in the participant position of the recipient of the teasing but also reinforces this through self-directed remarks (cf. Boxer & Cortés-Conde 1997; Drew 1987). Indeed, Babis acknowledges the teasing and further elaborates on it by claiming that "if we were competing I would have won by two thousand mistakes" (lines 4–5).

Besides teasing and joking, children engage in verbal play. By verbal play I take to mean the conscious or unconscious manipulation of elements of languages (i.e. Greek, Turkish and English) to create a comic effect.³² One common type of verbal play is punning. Puns exploit similarities in sounds among words that have different meanings, but share identical or near-identical pronunciation (Cook 2000; Sherzer 1993). For instance, in excerpt 3.19 below, the children are settling down after break-time. Vasia, Babis, Huseyin and Giannis are trying out the microphone I have set up on their desk to record peer talk: Vasia sings a loud falsetto (line 1) and Babis teases Huseyin by playfully referring to one of his nicknames "Χουσεΐνα Σαλίνα" <Huseyina Salina> (line 2). Prompted by Babis, Huseyin enters the teasing full on first by targeting Vasia and then Giannis (lines 4–6). Huseyin's reference to what I later found out was Giannis' surname/nickname "Κόλλια" <Kollia> triggers my interest and I ask him what the word he is referring to means (line 7). Instead of addressing my clarification question, Huseyin's response seems to suggest that he is alluding to the meaning of the homophonous word "kolya" meaning "necklace" in the local Turkish variety of Gazi (line 8).

Excerpt 3.19 (15/3/99)

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--|
| 1 | Βάσια | <i>ff</i> ε:::μαμα:: . |
| 2 | Μπάμπης | <i>f acc</i> Χουσεΐνα Σαλίνα . |
| 3 | () | [hhh |
| → 4 | Χουσεΐν | [<i>acc f</i> Βάσια Πολυκαδρίτη <u>Κό:λλια</u> <u>Κό:λλια</u> . <u>Κό:λλια</u> |
| → 5 | | <u>Κό:λλια</u> <u>Κό:λλια</u> <u>Κό:λλια</u> ((τραγουδιστά)) <u>Κό:λλια</u> <u>Κό:λλια</u> |
| → 6 | | <i>ff</i> <u>Κό:λλια</u> :: <u>Κό:λλια</u> ::= |
| 7 | Βάλλη | =((προς Χουσεΐν)) τί θα πει αυτή η λέξη ((Κόλλια)); |
| → 8 | Χουσεΐν | Κόλλια/ <i>kolya</i> αυτό φοράς |
| 1 | Vasia | e mama |
| 2 | Babis | Huseyina Salina |
| 3 | () | [hhh |

32. Overall, I identified 13 verbal play episodes. These were further divided into 10 episodes during instruction and 3 during recreation.

- 4Huseyin [Vasia Polukadriti Kollia Kollia Kollia
 → 5 Kollia Kollia Kollia ((singing)) Kollia Kollia
 → 6 Kollia Kollia=
 7Vally =((to Huseyin)) what does the word ((Kollia)) mean?
 → 8Huseyin Kollia/*kolya* that's what you're wearing

Admittedly this particular pun was rather obscure to majority children and adults. Its appreciation required some background knowledge that was not accessible to all. However, it may explain why Huseyin and other minority children relished repeating Giannis' surname/nickname and exploiting it as a cue in teasing routines.

Other types of verbal play seemed to be more transparent. They could consist of adding suffixes and prefixes to words or manipulating stress and pronunciation. For instance, in excerpt 3.20 below, the children are engaged in a silent reading task amid occasional whispering and private peer talk. Towards the end of the reading task, Tuncay and Costas who are sitting side by side devise an impromptu language play activity by adding the suffix [-ε / -e] to the word roots of male proper names (lines 1–4).

Excerpt 3.20 (30/3/99)

- 1Τουτζάι ρ Πράτερ . Δήμητρα . Τάσε . Χρήστε .
 → 2Κώστας ((hhh)) Τζώρτζε ..
 → 3Τουτζάι Νίκε(hh) ..
 → 4Κώστας Νώ(hh)ντε ..
- 1Tuncay Prater Dimitra Tas[e] Christ[e]
 → 2Costas Georg[e]
 → 3Tuncay Nik[e](hh)
 → 4Costas No(hh)nt[e]

While such types of verbal play were popular and generated sustained giggling between perpetrators, others, such as puzzles, riddles or formal language games in the form of Pig Latin or talking backwards (Crystal 1998) did not emerge in children's talk at all. The absence of these types of word play perhaps needs to be seen in the context of the absence of other highly routinised activities, such as joke-telling and story-telling among peers. The occurrence of some verbal activities but not others may in turn reflect practices, preferences and the establishment of interactional norms specific to this group of children as a particular community of practice.

3.4.2 Music making and chanting³³

Although the centrality of mass media and multi-media communication in the life and talk of young people has been repeatedly highlighted (see, for instance, articles in Marsh 2005; Marsh & Millard 2005; Marsh et al 2005; Pahl & Rowsell 2006; also Merchant 2005; Kenner 2004), few studies have actually looked into specific media-related activities, such as music making in children's talk at school (but see Dyson 2003; Lytra 2006a; Rampton 2006; Rampton, Harris & Dover 2002). For instance, in their final report of their project on media culture and adolescents at school, Rampton, Harris and Dover (2002) observe that impromptu music making during instruction emerged as the most common media-related activity among adolescents in the two schools they studied (:5). They identified a particular "disciplinary regime" which tolerated musical outbursts often in the centre of classroom talk and discussed how music making fitted within the more general dynamics of classroom interaction in these two schools by providing children with "opportunities for a particular kind of sociability" (:6–7).

For the children in this book music making and chanting were characterized by a high degree of references to shared texts, especially those associated with the children's out-of-school media-related practices (e.g. watching variety and comedy shows on Greek and Turkish satellite TV, video viewing of American blockbusters and keeping up to speed with the latest Greek and Turkish music hits) (cf. Dyson 2003). Music making in children's playful talk took the form of singing and humming snippets of popular, at the time of the fieldwork, Greek (and occasionally Turkish and English) songs as well as other unidentified tunes alluding to various Greek, Turkish and English songs. Such outbursts of music making were based on variations on part of the refrain or opening lines of songs. They were often accompanied by tapping, clapping, exaggerated gesturing and the manipulation of the researcher's microphone or the clip microphone the performer was wearing. The children's music making exhibited variation in loudness, pitch, duration and interactional timing as well as in the degree to which performers faithfully reproduced the original song or tune (e.g. by abiding to rhythm, pitch and pace) or improvised on a tune in circulation (e.g. by adding new lyrics, exaggerated pitch and accelerated pace).³⁴

33. An earlier version of this section with reference to music making also appears in Lytra (2006a) "Mass media, music making and identities in an Athens primary schools" In: *Trends and Developments in Youth Language Research*. Christa Dürscheid and Jürgen Spitzmüller (eds.) Frankfurt/M.u.a.: Lang, 239–257.

34. Overall, I identified 29 singing episodes – 9 episodes took place during instruction and 20 during recreation.

For instance, in excerpt 3.21 below, Babis experiments with rhyme and rhythm: he abides to the original tune but improvises on parts of the lyrics. In this excerpt, Babis, Tuncay, Vasia, Barhye, Meltem, Giannis and I are hanging out in the classroom on a wet day during break-time. The children are dabbling in a series of drawing and writing tasks from their English language exercise book while exchanging, savoury snacks and comments about the progress of each other's work. It is against the backdrop of these leisurely activities that Babis' experiments with a snippet of the popular song "Με λένε Πόπι" <"My Name is Popi">. In his rendition, Babis substitutes the names in the original lyrics ("Popi" and "Kaliopi" as in "my name is Popi like my grandmother Kaliopi") with made-up names "Itsa" and "Kapitsa".

Excerpt 3.21 (30/3/99)

- 1Μπάμπης ((τραγουδά σε ρυθμό ραπ)) ff με λέ-νε Ι-τσα
- 2 σα τη γιαγιά μου την Κα-πίτσα
- 1Babis ((sings with a strong rap beat)) my name is I-tsa
- 2 like my grandmother Ka-pitsa

While solo singing of rap and rock tunes and snippets of popular at the time of the fieldwork Greek and Turkish love songs was common, one person's solo singing would sometimes catch on and spread. When others "joined in", solo performances gradually turned into a multi-voiced performance potentially drawing on several, at a time, different tunes. Besides these impromptu episodes, girls in particular jointly produced more planned episodes of music making. These were based on the imaginative production of variety shows that saturated at the time both Greek and Turkish satellite TV. Variety shows as a TV genre exhibit a fixed participant structure with well-determined roles: they feature a hostess, who is responsible for orchestrating the show, along with an aggregate of glamorous and more obscure media personalities. The latter always include some popular singer who is invariably asked to perform live for the audience during the show (see Chapter 6 for further discussion of multi-voiced performances and planned episodes of music making).

Similar to music making which relied on shared tunes in circulation, chanting relied on readily identifiable and recyclable fragments of talk (e.g. chants, cries, nicknames, stock phrases) which were drawn from the children's recreational and other lived experiences and out-of-school media practices. Moreover, like music making, chanting included both solo routines and multi-voiced performances that attracted the participation of more than one child often drawing on several

different chants.³⁵ For instance, the following excerpt takes place during lunch-time in the school's dining hall. The three girls, Vasia, Bahrye and Meltem (who usually did not have lunch at school but had stayed for lunch that day) are sitting around the table having lunch. The consumption and sharing of food and drinks seems to be conducive to the emergence of peer talk. In between bites, the girls exchange bits of gossip, talk about food and engage in various playful routines including intermittent music making and chanting, which is of interest to us here.

Excerpt 2.22 (15/3/99)

- 1Βάσια *f* ναι:: .. *ff* εί:στε χαζά . εί:στε χαζά και τρελά .
 2Μελτέμ μαμά::=
 → 3Βάσια =τζι::τζι με::μέ=
 4Μελτέμ =μαμά::=
 → 5Βάσια =hhh . είσαι τζι::τζι με::μέ . τζι::τζι με::μέ . τζι::τζι με::μέ ..
 6 *f* λοπόν . ποιός είναι- . *acc* τζι::τζι με::μέ; ..
 7 *ff* γκο γκο γκο . σι σι σι . το γου-ρού-νι εί-σαι 'συ .
 8 άρα εσύ 'σαι hhh hhh
 9Μελτέμ *acc* βγαίνω 'γώ . αυτή είναι .
- 1Vasia yes ((she chants)) you are silly you are silly and loony
 2Meltem oh my gosh=
 → 3Vasia =((she chants)) tsitsi meme=
 4Meltem =oh my gosh=
 → 5Vasia =((she chants)) hh you are tsitsi meme tsitsi meme tsitsi meme
 6 so who is tsitsi meme?
 7 eenie meenie minie mow you're "it"
 8 so you are "it" hhh hhh
 9Meltem I'm out she's "it"

In the excerpt above, Vasia initiates the chanting by calling the other girls "χαζά" <silly> and "τρελά" <loony> (line 1). It is not clear whether her chants are aimed exclusively at Meltem and Bahrye or whether they are more diffused (not aimed at a particular recipient). Following her initial chant, Vasia continues chanting this time drawing on a quoted set phrase from Turkish media sources. She chants the hellenized version "τσιτσι μεμέ" of the Turkish set phrase "çiçi meme" (loosely translated as "cute boobs") a number of times (lines 3, 5), before introducing a common children's rhyme "γκο γκο γκο σι σι σι το γουρούνι είσαι 'συ" (which

35. Overall, I identified 114 chanting episodes – 62 episodes occurred during instruction and 52 during recreation.

would be the equivalent of “eenie meenie minie mow you’re ‘it’ ” in English) (lines 7–8). Similar to music making routines I observed, Vasia’s chanting in this excerpt is characterised by certain exuberance and experimentation with languages (here Greek and Turkish).

In the final section below, I explore the different kinds of contextualization cues children used in their talk to construct play frames.

3.5 Play frames and contextualization cues: Contextualized and contextualizing cues

As I discussed in Section 1.6, contextualization cues are regarded as linguistic, paralinguistic and extra-linguistic signs that co-occur and associate what is said to assumed background knowledge (Gumperz 1982: 131). These cues may be realised in terms of “code, dialect and style switching processes”, “prosodic phenomena”, “choice among lexical and syntactic options”, “formulaic expressions”, “conversational openings, closings and sequencing strategies” and are employed to inference the meaning of a message (*ibid*; see also Gumperz 1992). To maximize this inference process, interactants also need to share some assumed background knowledge or have certain “contextual presuppositions”, which involve having shared assumptions about “context, interactive goals and interpersonal relations” (*ibid*).

The ten year old cohort employed clusters of the following contextualisation cues to frame their talk as play and mark off periods of talk devoted to a particular verbal activity (e.g. teasing, joking, music making) from talk about other matters (e.g. talk about a school task): (1) nicknames; (2) mock challenges, threats, commands and insults; (3) prosody (shifts in volume, pitch, rhyme and rhythm, sing-song intonation, overdone or exaggerated speech), laughter, giggling, clapping; (4) snippets of songs; (5) repetition; (6) code and style switches; (7) formulaic expressions and other recyclable fragments of talk (one-liners, punch lines, chants, catchy phrases); (8) terms of verbal abuse; (9) mock acts of aggression (hair pulling, nape slapping, pushing) and (10) untranslatable particles (“re”, “vre”).

The co-occurrence of these cues aimed at signaling to participants the meta-message that “this is play” and should be taken as such (Bateson 1972). An important distinction between the different contextualization cues presented above was that some cues had become more established and indexical through a long history of repeated use across contexts (contextualized cues). Others were more emergent and ambiguous being more recently introduced in peer talk (contextualizing cues). In the remaining of this section I will present and discuss examples of both types of cues, focusing on nicknames as contextualized cues par excellence and

quoted set phrases from Greek and Turkish mass media sources as contextualizing cues.

Nicknames were identified as one of the most salient linguistic resources used as cues in children's playful talk. By nicknames, I take to mean those names that have been given to children by classmates and peers at school and reflected the way their bearers were perceived (Morgan, O'Neill & Harré 1979). As Morgan, O'Neill and Harré (1979) argue, nicknames (and names in general) are neither arbitrary labels nor neutral descriptors but are "rich in content and many kinds of associations" (ibid: 10). Similar to names, nicknames refer to the "indexical here and now" (Silverman 1993: 38, reported in Rymes 1996: 242). They "serve to describe individual traits; they index familiarity, kinship, and group membership; they pick out entire worlds of cultural significance" (ibid). Therefore, similar to names, nicknames, "are a repository of accumulated meanings, practices, and beliefs, a powerful linguistic means of asserting identity (or defining someone else) and inhabiting a social world" (Rhymes 2001: 160). Indeed, as a brief examination of the history of nicknaming among this group of children illustrates, their nicknaming practices heavily drew on rich and varied sources, were closely linked to their shared past interactional history at school and positioned their bearers in particular favourable or less favourable ways (cf. Fine 1987; Lytra 2003b; Rymes 1996, 2001).

The practice of nicknaming among the children in this book seemed to be a unique characteristic of this peer group and was in contrast with either the complete absence of nicknames among younger children or their selective use among older ones. All children had at least one nickname. An examination of the history of nicknaming among this group of children revealed that at some point in the past Costas and Giannis inaugurated this practice by calling each other "Τιαννούλα" <Giannoula> (the female equivalent of Giannis) and "Κωσταντινούπολη" <Constantinople> (present day İstanbul) respectively. Initially, the exchange of nicknames was confined to the two boys only. Quickly it began spreading among other children, who started calling Costas and Giannis by their nicknames, partly perhaps because of their novelty effect and/or partly perhaps because the two nicknames were associated with a feminine identity. One of the first children to experiment with the new, at the time, practice of nicknaming was Meltem. She began referring to herself as "Τρελή Αγελάδα" <Mad Cow> after a class discussion about the mad cow disease that dominated the Greek press at the time and "Meltem Cumbul" after the popular Turkish actress. The subsequent appropriation of Meltem's self-references as nicknames by her peers paved the way for the coining of a flurry of new nicknames making it very difficult to identify who the name-givers for all these nicknames were.

At the time of the initial fieldwork a number of nicknames had become sedimented and in wide circulation. Some nicknames were accepted by their bearers while others were hotly contested (see Section 4.3 for more details). Even though teachers were familiar with some of the most commonly used nicknames, nicknames were primarily employed by the children in peer talk. Moreover, their use seemed to point to a strong association between nicknaming and group membership. Nicknames have been shown to function as a means of signalling shared membership among a particular group while excluding all others by explicitly marking their lack of membership status (e.g. Fine 1987; Lytra 2003b; Morgan, O'Neill & Harré 1979; also de Klerk & Bosch 1999). Therefore, for the children in this book the pervasive use of nicknames appeared to have a barrier maintenance purpose aiding in producing and sustaining the social order that they had created in the context of their school-based peer group.

Following Morgan, O'Neill and Harré (1979), I classify the various nicknames the children used based on how they were coined. I distinguish between those coined by using: (1) internal methods of formation and (2) external methods of formation. By internal methods of formation, I refer to nicknames that were constructed by making use of alliteration, rhyming and the addition of a suffix on the name or surname of the bearer. By external methods of formation, I take to mean nicknames that were triggered by references to the bearer's physical traits, character attributes or allusions to TV characters and so on (: 36; see also de Klerk & Bosch 1999). A quick glance at the children's nicknames revealed that most of them had been formed by employing internal methods of formation, in particular, some kind of word play on their given names or surnames (cf. Morgan, O'Neill & Harré 1979: 38). In the following Tables (3.2–3.3), I present the children's nicknames, their bearers and their meanings.

There are two points worth making regarding the nicknaming practices of this peer group. First, besides the nicknames presented above, I identified a case of nickname formation where a child's surname doubled as his nickname. This posed difficulties in classifying the nickname in question under the existing categories developed by Morgan, O'Neill and Harré (1979) and was therefore treated as a separate case. The nickname in point is Giannis' surname "Kollias" (vocative case "Kollia" stressed on the first syllable). Based on the local Turkish variety spoken in the neighbourhood, the homophonous word "kolya" was used to refer to a "necklace" (note that it is also phonetically close to the equivalent Greek and Standard Turkish words for necklace "kolye" stressed on the last syllable and initial syllable respectively) (see Section 3.4.1 for further discussion). It was perhaps because Giannis' surname was homophonous to a readily available Turkish word that it became transformed as a nickname and was widely used as such. Indeed, as indicated in Tables 3.2–3.3, using Turkish words and names as nicknames seemed

Table 3.2 Nicknames formed by internal methods

1. Abbreviations of a peer's surname	Σπηλιοπούλου (Spiliopoulou: Maria's surname)> “Σπηλιά” (“Spilia”: “cave” in Greek)
2. Addition of a suffix or word on the root of a peer's name or surname	Βάσια (Vasia)> “Βασιλόπιττα (1)999” (“Vasilopita (1)999”: Vasilopita is a special cake made in Greece for New Year's. The number of the new year is marked on the cake with almonds or icing, which explains why the year 1999 or 999 was part of Vasia's nickname) Φάνης (Fanis)> “Φανικό” (“Faniko”: may be a word play on “faniko-foniko” the latter meaning “murder”)> “Φανούκλα” (“Fanoukla” may be a word play on “fanoukla – panoukla” the latter meaning “plague”) Κώστας (Costas)> “Κωσταντινούπολη” (“Constantinople”)> “Κωνσταντινουπόλεως” (“Constantinoupoleos”: this is the genitive case of “Constantinoupoli”, “Constantinople” in English)> “Κωσταντίνα” (“Constantina”: the female equivalent of Costas) Γιάννης (Giannis)> “Γιαννακόπιττα” (“Giannakopita”: literally “Giannis-pie”)> “Γιαννούλα” (“Giannoula”: the female equivalent of Giannis) Βαμβακούσης (Vamvakousis: Nontas' surname)> “Βαμβάκι” (“Vamvaki”)> “Μπαμπάκι” (“Babaki”: both “Vamvaki” and “Babaki” mean “cotton”. [V] and [B] are allophones. [V] is viewed as a more prestigious form, while [B] as a less prestigious one)> “Pamuk” (i.e. “cotton” in Turkish) Χουσεΐν Σαλί (Huseyin Sali: Sali is Huseyin's surname)> “Χουσεΐνα Σαλίνα” (“Huseyina Salina”: Huseyin's first and last names are transformed into female names by adding the vowel [a] at the end)
3. Rhyme and rhythm	Τουτζάι (Tuncay)> “Τούτζα Μούτζα” (“‘Tundza ‘Mundza”: The first syllables of ‘Tundza ‘Mundza are stressed for rhythm. Also, “mudza” in Greek is a gesture that consists of opening one's palm and stretching out all five fingers. It is regarded as very rude)
4. Pun with some phonic link	Μπάμπης (Babis)> “Μπεμπιλίνο” (“Bebilino”)> “Μπείμπιλίνο” (“Babyilino”: after the nappies brand)
5. Literal translation	Τουτζάι / Tuncay: his name consists of the Turkish words “tunç” (“bronze”) and “ay” (“moon”)> “Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι” (“Broudzino Fegari”: bronze moon)

to be an already established practice among the children in the ten year old cohort (see “Pamuk” and “Meltem Cumbul” respectively).

The second point is that four of the boys were given nicknames that were associated with a feminine identity: Giannis was nicknamed “Giannoula”, Costas

Table 3.3 Nicknames formed by external methods

1. References to physical traits	Μπαχριέ (Bahrye)> “Σούμο” (“Sumo”) referring to her weight (Note that whenever Huseyin used her nickname, he would accompany it with stamping his feet on the ground and enacting the way sumo fighters move on stage)
	Βάσια (Vasia)> “Πολυκατοικία” (“Polikatikia”: block of flats in Greek) referring to her height
	Φάνης (Fanis)> “Σπανιόλα” (“Spaniola”: a woman from Spain in Greek) alluding to his dark complexion
	Νώντας (Nontas)> “Βαμβάκι” (“Vamvaki”)> “Μπαμπάκι” (“Babaki”)> “Pamuk” referring to his very soft white skin
2. Allusions to TV personalities	Μελτέμ (Meltem)> “Meltem Cumbul” (popular Turkish actress)
3. References to biographical events	Χουσεΐν (Huseyin)> “Κασσέττα” (“Kassetta”: “tape” in Greek, alluding to the family business selling videos and tapes from Turkey)> “Αντρέα” (“Andrea”: this is the vocative case of the name ‘Andreas’. Huseyin’s father also went by the Christian name Andreas)
	Μελτέμ (Meltem)> “Τρελή Αγελάδα” (“Trelī Agelada”, “Mad Cow” following a class discussion on the mad cow disease)
	Κώστας (Costas)> “Κωσταντινουπόλεως” (“Constantinoupoleos”: one of the main streets in the neighbourhood)

“Constantina”, Fanis “Spaniola” and Huseyin “Huseyina Salina”. Only Bahrye was given a nickname which was associated with a male identity (“Sumo”). Although their use was restricted, their very existence is intriguing given the absence of all other references to the children’s sexuality in peer talk. Research into children’s talk seems to suggest that explicit references to cross-sex relations and sexuality emerge among slightly older children (see Eder 1993). Indeed, observations of older children’s talk at school seemed to corroborate these findings: there was a marked increase in the children’s preoccupation with and explicit references to cross-sex relations and sexuality as they grew older. Perhaps then this group of children’s use of nicknames associated with a feminine or masculine identity could be seen as an early attempt by children of a particular age group to deal with issues of gender and sexuality.

The fact that nicknames were more established or functioned as contextualised cues for play can be gleaned upon their use in non-play contexts too. Nicknames could be employed as terms of address, interchangeably with first names, with the purpose, for instance, of attracting a child’s attention or acknowledging

such an attempt. In excerpt 3.23 below, Tuncay is looking for a book and calls out Maria who is at the other side of classroom asking after its whereabouts. Instead of using her name, he calls her by her nickname “Σπηλιά” <Spilia> (lines 1, 3). Maria acknowledges the attention getter and promptly responds to Tuncay referring to one of his nicknames “Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι” [Broutzino Fegari] <Bronze Moon> (line 4).

Excerpt 3.23 (18/3/99)

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| → 1Τουτζάι | <i>p</i> Σπηλιά . |
| 2Γιάννης | <i>ε-</i> [ε- ε- |
| → 3Τουτζάι | <i>f</i> [Σπηλιά εεε . Σπηλιά εε |
| → 4Μαρία | <i>f</i> Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι; |
| → 5Τουτζάι | που είναι το βιβλίο Σπήλια; |
| 6Μαρία | εδώ |
| → 1Tuncay | Spilia |
| 2Giannis | <i>e-</i> [e- e- |
| → 3Tuncay | [Spilia eee Spilia eee |
| → 4Maria | Broutzino Feggari? |
| → 5Tuncay | where's the book Spilia? |
| 6Maria | here it is |

Admittedly this short exchange about identifying the whereabouts of a book between Tuncay and Maria has an underlying playfulness which is compounded by the use of nicknames. At the same time, it reveals a certain normalization of the use of nicknames in peer talk through repeated use in different contexts (including non-play contexts as in excerpt 3.23 above).

As I mentioned earlier in this section, other contextualisation cues were more emergent and ambiguous and functioned as contextualising cues for play. Contextualising cues included recyclable and recontextualisable fragments of talk such as stock expressions and quoted set phrases from Greek and Turkish media sources, especially Greek and Turkish satellite TV.

Children drew liberally upon popular at the time of the initial fieldwork Greek comedy shows such as “Κατά Μάρκον Ευαγγέλιο” <The Gospel according to St Mark> and “AMAN” <Aman> (an exclamation meaning in Greek “for goodness sake”, “mercy”). They also drew upon the Turkish high school slap-stick comedy sequel “Hababam Sinifi” (freely translated as “The Unruly Class”) which had been filmed in the late 70s early 80s, starring the famous Turkish comedian Kemal Sunal in the role of “Şaban” (see Table 3.4 below).

Table 3.4 Stock expressions and fixed phrases from Greek and Turkish media sources

Comedy shows	Quoted set phrases	Users
“Κατά Μάρκον Ευαγγέλιο” (“The Gospel according to Mark”)	“χαχαχούχα” <haha ‘houha>; “καλόσο εεε;” <that’s a good one, right?>; “τί λες ρε Καραγκιόζη;” <what are you talking about you clown?>; “σκουλήκι θα μιλήσεις σκουλήκι” <will you talk to me you scum>; “σωστός!!!” <thumbs up!!!>	Vasia, Giannis, Babis, Tuncay, Huseyin, Bahrye, Maria
“A.M.A.N.” (“Aman”)	“ευθυμήσαμε πάλι” <oh aren’t we all happy now>; “εεε δεν το πιστεύω” <I just DO NOT believe this>; “σωστός!!!” <thumbs up!!!>	Giannis, Babis, Vasia
“Hababam Sınıfı” (“The Unruly Class”)	“çiçi meme” <cute boobs>; “gel bana” <come to me> and its variants: “gee bana”, “gee mana”, “gei mana”; “inek Şaban” <Saban you cow>; “esoğluesek” <son of a donkey>	Tuncay, Huseyin, Babis, Giannis, Vasia, Meltem, Bahrye

As with all other linguistic resources from Turkish popular culture and the media (e.g. arabesk songs, comedy and variety shows, old films made in the 50s and 60s) access to Şaban’s pearls of wisdom was restricted to minority children. Majority children became familiar with these fragments of talk only indirectly, through their use by their peers at school. This meant that stock expressions and quoted set phrases from Turkish comedy shows were less readily available as cues for play. Moreover, there was a certain aura of ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding their use as majority children were not always aware or certain of their meaning or connotations in Turkish. This was reflected in their more limited use by majority children: only Giannis, Babis and Vasia ventured to use these cues for play (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

Unlike nicknames which had an enduring presence in peer talk and whose origins and interactional history could be traced over time, stock expressions and quoted set phrases from media sources tended to have a more ephemeral, here-and-now quality. Most such intertextual references seemed to be constantly updated and renewed based on the latest TV comedy hits in circulation. This meant that there was a constant flow of new material into children’s talk every season, with new stock expressions and fixed phrases replacing old ones at a fast pace. A smaller number had remained constant reflecting perhaps the enduring popularity of particular comedy shows over time and generations, such as the quoted set phrases “inek Şaban” <Saban you cow> and “esoğluesek” <son of a donkey> from the Turkish slap stick comedy “Hababam Sınıfı” <The Unruly Class>.

As Marsh (2001) has argued, the media environment provides children with rich “textual, musical and movement material” they can creatively draw upon and refashion for play, talk and work (:81). As a result, children engaged in dialogic

processes with media sources, during which they appropriated and transformed media materials and forms to suit their local interactional projects and do identity work as they moved across the social worlds of their peer group and the school (cf. Dyson 2003; Maybin 2006; Minks 1999). In so doing, children, Dyson (2003) argues, do not reproduce the voices of others; rather “they give the expected words their own accent, infuse them with their own intention as they reach out to particular other(s)” (:13). Through the appropriation of available media sources and voices children developed their relationships with the particular others and position themselves and those others in particular ways (e.g. as boys and girls, as experts and novices, as majority and minority members, as pupils and teachers, as children and adults).

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I investigated the emergence and development of playful talk across two interactional contexts (i.e. instructional and recreational contexts) and identified the institutional constraints that impinged upon them. I started off by arguing that perhaps the most important institutional constraint on the emergence of playful talk was related to the children and teachers’ roles, identities, rights and obligations inside and outside the classroom. This discussion led to identifying what constitutes playful talk in the data. Drawing on Rampton, Harris and Dover (2002), I took on board the notion of an episode of playful talk in order to determine what counted as playful activities and routines in children’s talk. I then presented and discussed structurally simpler as well as more complex episodes of playful talk in the data.

I looked into the full range of the children’s linguistic and other semiotic resources and interrogated their role in the emergence and development of playful activities and routines across contexts and participation. I probed into the children’s out-of-school recreational and other practices. I discussed how boys and girls engaged in different forms of media-involvement. Boys, for instance, preferred chanting football cries and singing and humming snippets from rap and rock songs while girls had a preference for media talk and mimicking and parodying the talk and conduct of popular singers and actors. I argued that these differences in media engagement and preferences seemed to reflect what appeared to be gender-specific out-of-school recreational and other activities between boys and girls. Moreover, I discussed differences in the centrality of Greek, Turkish and globalized American-English media in children’s talk. I claimed that while Greek and to a lesser extent Turkish media had high currency among the ten year old cohort globalized American-English media played the least prominent role in

their talk. This divergence could perhaps be associated to the children's age group and the fact that their recreational practices were already saturated by Greek (and Turkish) TV, film and music. Lastly, I identified differences in the visibility of TV, film and music between instructional and recreational contexts. I observed that there was a clear separation between curriculum material and media culture and talk during lessons in the main classroom floor suggesting perhaps a particular kind of pedagogic regime in practice.

I investigated the children's linguistic repertoires and expertise in different languages, including Greek and Turkish (Standard Turkish and the Turkish variety spoken in Gazi), various foreign languages taught at schools or in private language centres (e.g. English, German, French and Italian) and immigrant and other minority languages (e.g. Albanian and Romany). I grounded this discussion in the context of dominant language ideologies in circulation in the media as well as social, political and educational circles in Greece that valued Greek as a majority language and foreign language learning (especially European languages) but marginalised minority and immigrant languages. I discussed how these language ideologies had a bearing on children's attitudes towards their peers' linguistic repertoires and expertise.

Taking the children's rich kit of linguistic and other resources as a point of departure, I set out to explore the playful verbal activities and routines they engaged in, namely teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting. I provided a brief review of the literature with illustrative examples for each of these activities and routines which children exploited to set up play frames. I presented the various contextualisation cues children used to frame their talk as play and put forth the distinction in the data between more established and indexical cues (contextualized cues) and more emergent and ambiguous ones (contextualizing cues). In this context, I looked at nicknames as contextualized cues par excellence. I investigated their life circle that is how nicknaming practices started, developed and spread among the members of this peer group over time revealing a certain normalization of nicknames in peer talk. Following Morgan, O'Neill and Harré (1979), I went on to classify the children's nicknames based on how they were formed (i.e. using internal or external methods of formation). In contrast to nicknames, I explored recyclable and recontextualisable fragments of talk such as stock exchanges and quoted set phrases from Greek and Turkish media sources as contextualizing cues. I argued that because of their emergent and fleetly character there was a certain ambiguity and uncertainty in the use of such cues, especially whenever majority children used quoted set phrases from Turkish media sources.

In the next chapter, I will explore further the emergence and development of play frames by focusing on one particularly salient verbal activity in children's talk in recreational contexts, namely teasing episodes.

CHAPTER 4

Sequencing and response work

Teasing in children's talk in recreational contexts

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on teasing as a locally-structured recurrent social activity in children's talk in recreational contexts. My focus on teasing is motivated by the fact that it emerges as one of the most salient practices in the children's talk. I explore the sequential environment of teasing by probing into its initiation, development and closing. I demonstrate how this is achieved by drawing upon the children's rich linguistic and other semiotic resources as framing devices or "contextualisation cues" (Gumperz 1982a) for play. As I show, these cues can be partly habitual and established through continuous use across contexts and participation and partly creative, thereby requiring further interactional work to compensate for their emergent quality. I investigate the sequencing rules of teasing among peers which I compare and contrast with other verbal phenomena, namely ritual insulting and verbal duelling that have a similar agonistic quality.

I explore the "participation frameworks" the children develop, as they navigate different participant positions (Goffman 1981). In particular, I look into two-party teasing episodes where teasing is confined to two antagonists only who alternate in the position of the target. I go on to probe into multi-party teasing episodes which attract the participation of co-initiators and co-respondents. I discuss the range of interactional options available to the children to co-construct teasing episodes and maintain teasing frames (e.g. self-selecting, soliciting the participation of a third party, making collective bids for the interactional floor). I discuss the children's responses to teasing. These include the following options: (1) responding to teasing playfully (via playful retaliations and playing along), (2) keeping silent, (3) responding seriously (via frame shifts) and (4) calling an adult third party to intervene on their behalf – keeping silent and calling an adult party to intervene in particular has received limited attention in teasing research. I show how through these different responses to teasing children develop play frames and/or bring them to a close, show case their competence and expertise in playful talk and ultimately negotiate social relations and status hierarchies among peers in recreational contexts. I conclude this chapter by grounding the discus-

sion of sequencing and response work to teasing in existing research on Greek and Turkish culture and discourse with special reference to verbal play, verbal duelling and humour.

4.1 Teasing as a socially recurrent activity in children's talk

As discussed in Chapter 3, teasing emerged as one of the most salient social practices in children's talk. Overall, I identified 127 teasing episodes: 62 of these episodes took place in recreational contexts (i.e. during break time and lunchtime) which is of interest to us here and 63 in instructional contexts (i.e. during teacher fronted whole-class instruction and small group instruction).

From the onset of the field-work I observed that the children routinely engaged in both same-sex and cross-sex teasing during the break. The following vignette is based on early observations about the children's teasing practices in recreational contexts:

The bell has just rung signalling the beginning of the mid morning thirty minute break. It's a cold but sunny February morning. Huseyin, Giannis and Meltem rush out of the classroom and race down the staircase and up to the school canteen on the ground floor. I follow them and line up with them along with a few more early birds from other classes. As we cue up, Huseyin and Giannis start playfully pushing and shoving each other under the watchful eye of Meltem. Huseyin starts teasing Giannis by calling him "Γιάννη Κόλλια" <Gianni Kollia> (Giannis' name and surname which doubled as his nickname). Huseyin repeats "Γιάννη Κόλλια" <Gianni Kollia> loudly a number of times in a mocking sing-song intonation. Giannis answers back by calling Huseyin "αράπη Χουσεϊν" <black skinned Huseyin>. Initially, I am taken aback by the terms of verbal abuse Giannis hurls at Huseyin and surprised that they do not seem to lead to some kind of confrontation between then two boys. Instead, there is something habitual about this exchange. It looks like the two boys have performed this teasing routine many times in the past. Meanwhile, Meltem is quietly giggling at the boys' exchange of taunts. Then, Huseyin turns to Meltem who is standing behind him and directs his jibes towards her by calling her "Τρελή Αγελάδα" <Crazy Cow> (one of Meltem's nicknames). The teasing between the two boys looks like it has tailed off and it appears that Meltem is now Huseyin's new target. Meltem turns to me (I'm cueing behind the three children) and complains that Huseyin is calling her "Τρελή Αγελάδα" <Crazy Cow>. Huseyin gives me a mischievous grin. I'm reluctant to interfere in the children's play. Fortunately, Huseyin's turn is up in the cue which directs his attention from the teasing exchange to the business at hand. He asks Mrs Loula (the middle aged lady running the school canteen) for "μια λουκάνικο και ένα milko" <a sausage pie and chocolate milk>. He takes the

sausage pie and chocolate milk and goes off to eat it. Feeling somewhat guilty for not intervening on Meltem's behalf I remark how shiny her hair look. She looks pleased that I have noticed and explains that her mother dyes her hair with henna which gives it a soft red sheen. (fieldnotes, 08/02/99)

Two points worth making here. First, building on Kotthoff's discussion of conversational humour (2006), teasing is seen as "situated practice resting on inference based interpretations" (:6). Similar to other playful activities discussed in this book, inference making is guided by recurring clusters of "contextualisation cues" (Gumperz 1982a). In addition to teasing names and in particular nicknames (e.g. "Γιάννη Κόλλια" <Gianni Kollia>, "Τρελή Αγελάδα" <Crazy Cow>), terms of verbal abuse (e.g. "αράπη" <black skinned>, "αγελάδα" <cow>) and mock acts of aggression (playful pushing and shoving) described in the vignette above, the children exploited recurring clusters of the following contextualisation cues in their teasing: (1) mock challenges, threats, insults and other forms of marked wording produced in an exaggerated manner, (2) mimicry, (3) overdone formulaic expressions (e.g. one-liners, recyclable and recontextualisable fragments of talk), (4) prosody (e.g. volume, pitch, rhyme and rhythm, sing-song intonation), (5) laughter, giggling, clapping, (6) code and style switches and (7) untranslatable particles (e.g. "re", "vre"). Such cues as Kotthoff (2006) argues, "index the continually changing contextual presuppositions necessary for situated interpretations in oral discourse" (:7). As we shall see in this chapter, during this inference process, the children made use of shared background knowledge about local as well as supra local contexts and discourses, interactive goals and interpersonal relations to interpret teases.

Second, although children sometimes complained to adults (e.g. their teacher or me) about this perpetual exchange of taunts, I noticed that teasing very seldom if ever led to real falling out regardless of the potentially explosive taunts being used (such as potentially offensive and hurtful terms of verbal abuse, see the vignette above). Moreover, I observed that rarely the children resorted to making use of disclaimers, such as "just joking" or "I was only teasing", to downplay the negative or even hostile content of these taunts (contra other studies on teasing, such as Eder 1991, Eisenberg 1986, Réger 1999). Réger (1999) classifies disclaimers as "discourse-related" contextualization cues whose purpose is to make apparent that the tease is not intended to be true and resolve any possible ambiguity regarding its interpretation (:291). The rarity of such disclaimers is not surprising when seen in the context of research on Greek verbal play in general. More specifically, Hirschon (1992) argues that "in the case of Greek the explicit setting up of a [play] frame is rarely done" and one does not often hear disclaimers, such as "σου κάνω πλάκα" <just kidding>. Instead, interactants need to decipher

the relevant contextualization cues in order to understand and interpret playfully what has been said (:42). This line of argument points to the existence of specific cultural norms regarding the framing of verbal play in Greek that discourage the use of disclaimers. As we shall see in this chapter, however, such practices leave interactants to their own devices in negotiating possible ambiguities and dealing with confusion and misunderstandings.

Besides the existence of such norms, the rarity of disclaimers can be further attributed to the pervasiveness of teasing as a socially recurrent activity among the children. In her discussion of the use of disclaimers in teasing among peers, Eder (1991) asserts that making intent more explicit becomes pertinent in cases where interactants are not close friends and do not know each other well enough to know how the tease will be interpreted (:189). In the case of the members this close-knit peer group, however, teasing can be seen as a relatively “safe” activity, rendering such disclaimers superfluous (Eisenberg 1986: 193; see also Holmes 2000). This observation points to the development of what Norrick (1993) refers to as “customary joking relationships” among peers in which active engagement in teasing emerges as a habitual activity (:6; see also Archakis & Tsakona 2005; Fine & De Soucey 2005).

4.2 Sequencing rules

The examination of the sequential environment of teasing revealed that teasing episodes emerged as topic-initial utterances as well as seconds or responses to a prior turn. Teasing episodes such as the episode I witnessed between Huseyin, Giannis and Meltem when they were cueing up at the school canteen (in Section 4.1) can be considered as a prototypical teasing activity which is not anchored onto prior talk. Such teasing episodes occur at transition points or interactional junctions. The concept of “liminality” (Turner 1974) is very useful here in understanding how these transition points or interactional junctions give license to the emergence of teasing as topic-initial utterances in discourse. Interactional junctions generate “liminal” moments, that is moments outside normal social structures during which individuals pass from one social status to another (:58). Standing in line at the school canteen to buy a midday snack or settling in the classroom after the break can be seen as in-between periods, that is interactional moments between “leisure” and “snacking” (break time) or “work” (the lesson).

The following excerpt (excerpt 4.1) occurs during one such transition moment. Huseyin, Giannis, Nontas and Tuncay have just stormed the classroom after the thirty minute midday break. They look breathless like they have been racing up the stairs competing to see who will come into the classroom first. Their

teacher, Miss Soula, hasn't arrived yet. In the midst of considerable noise and commotion the four boys start settling down, when Huseyin initiates a teasing activity in talk (line 1).

Excerpt 4.1 (17/3/99)

- 1Χουσεΐν *f acc Κόλλια Κόλλια*
 ((πολλες φωνές))
- 2Γιάννης ((στη Βάλλη)) *κυρία .. acc κοίτα κοίτα . καλό ε-;*
 ((πολλές φωνές))
- 3Χουσεΐν *έλα . f Κόλλια . Κόλλια acc Κόλλια Κόλλια .*
- 4 *έλα . f Κόλλια . Κόλλια acc Κόλλια [Κόλλια*
 5Νώντας *[acc Κόλλια Κόλλια=*
- 6Τουτζάι *=f εγώ λιέω=*
- ...
- 1Huseyin Kollia Kollia
 ((background noise))
- 2Giannis ((to me)) Miss look look that's a good one right?
 ((background noise))
- 3Huseyin come Kollia Kollia Kollia Kollia
- 4 come Kollia Kollia Kollia [Kollia
- 5Nontas [Kollia Kollia=
- 6Tuncay =I say=
- ...

Huseyin attempts to introduce the teasing activity in discourse twice by marking it off from the surrounding talk and commotion. To this end, he pumps up the volume, accelerates the delivery of his turn and exploits the following cluster of contextualization cues: he repeats Giannis' surname/nickname "Κόλλια" <Kollia> emphatically stressing its first syllable and manipulates rhythm and pace alternating between faster and slower pace (see lines 1, 3–4). Through the use of these cues, Huseyin signals to Giannis and the other two boys present that a teasing activity is being introduced in talk and that a play frame is about to be initiated.

Teasing activities were also triggered in discourse by prior talk and were "in some way a second, or a next, or a response to a prior turn" (Drew 1987:233). In this context, teasing episodes tended to follow other playful activities that the children took up or oriented to as "non-serious" (e.g. music making, joking, verbal play, chanting or other teasing activities). These playful activities set up play frames. They were keyed as humorous or play-related and were often accompanied by sustained laughter and/or giggling.

Similar to excerpt 4.1, in the next excerpt (excerpt 4.2), the children are settling in the classroom after the thirty minute midday break. Miss Soula hasn't arrived yet. Meltem is in a great mood. She is singing snippets from popular at the time of the fieldwork songs and reciting fragments of a poem they had learned at school in a loud over done manner (lines 1–2). Huseyin is chanting what appear to be a string of sounds (line 3). In the midst of all this exuberance, Giannis who has been privy to Meltem's music making and Huseyin's chanting starts teasing the latter by calling him "τούρμπο" <dumb> (line 4).

Excerpt 4.2 (13/3/99)

- | | | |
|-----|---------|---|
| 1 | Μελτέμ | <i>f</i> γλυκοχαράζει η χαραυγή . λάμπουν ο ουρανός και η γη. |
| 2 | | λάμπουν και βρον <u>τούν</u> ταηδόνια και γλυκο <u>λαλούν</u> ταηδόνια= |
| 3 | Χουσείν | = <i>ff</i> αμπιατό:::= |
| → 4 | Γιάννης | = <i>p</i> ο Χουσείν είναι <u>τού</u> :ρμπο |
| 5 | Μπαχριέ | ο Γιάννης είναι- . (h)να-(hh)νάι hh= |
| 6 | Χουσείν | = <i>f</i> ο Γιάννης είναι <i>acc</i> (h) <u>Κό</u> (h)λλια . (h) <u>Κό</u> (hh)λλια . <u>Κό</u> λλια .
<u>Κό</u> λλια |
| ... | | |
| 1 | Meltem | a new day is breaking the sky and the earth are shining |
| 2 | | the nightingales are shining the nightingales are singing= |
| 3 | Huseyin | = abiato= |
| → 4 | Giannis | = Huseyin is dumb |
| 5 | Bahrye | Giannis is nanai = |
| 6 | Huseyin | = Giannis is Kollia Kollia Kollia Kollia |
| ... | | |

Giannis' taunt (line 4) is latched onto Huseyin's turn (line 3). As in excerpt 4.1, Giannis manipulates prosody (vowel elongation, stress and shift of volume) to mark off the teasing from the preceding talk. Moreover, Giannis' initial tease sets the stage up for the ensuing teasing activity and the maintenance of the play frame. In the next turn (line 5), Bahrye uses "syntactic repetition with minimal semantic shifts" (Tannock 1999: 329) building on the form of "x" (e.g. Huseyin, Giannis) is "y" ("dumb", "nanai") to sustain the teasing.

There are two points worth foregrounding here. The first is related to the clusters of contextualization cues the children used in teasing episodes. As in the case of other playful activities, the contextualization cues they employed were partly habitual and partly creative. As discussed in Section 3.5, cues such as nicknames were regarded as habitual cues (contextualized cues). For instance, the rhythmic repetition of nicknames in teasing encounters (e.g. excerpts 4.1–4.2) had become established and indexical through a long history of continuous

use across contexts. Other cues, such as mock orders, commands or challenges, however, were less habitual and more emergent (contextualizing cues). The inherent ambiguity of teasing and its context-dependency required that children engaged in additional interactional work in order to compensate for the emergent quality of these cues. As a result, children needed to provide multiple cues in their talk to mark their teases as playful. Otherwise, they risked their taunts to be taken seriously by their peers. For instance, in excerpt 4.3 below, Tuncay dismisses Vasia's music making by complementing his mock order "άντε φύγε" <beat it> with a reference to her nickname "Βασιλόπιττα 999" <Vasilopita 999>.

Excerpt 4.3

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1Μελτέμ | τις προτάσεις ((στα Αγγλικά)) δεν έκανες; |
| 2Τουτζάι | ω- . ω- . ω- |
| 3Βάσια | f((τραγουδά στο μικρόφωνο)) η καρδιά:: μου χτυπά::= |
| → 4Τουτζάι | = acc άντε φύγε . Βασιλόπιττα 999 [2 sec] |
| ... | |
| 1Meltem | you haven't done the sentences ((in English))? |
| 2Tuncay | o o o |
| 3Vasia | ((sings in the mic)) my heart is throbbing= |
| → 4Tuncay | =beat it Vasipolita 999 [2 sec] |
| ... | |

In this teasing episode, Tuncay resorts to multiple cues to reinforce the playful nature of his tease which is embedded in the existing play frame (i.e. the music making he introduced in discourse, line 1). On this occasion he makes use of a mock order closely followed by Vasia's nickname. The use of Vasia's nickname which is linked to the children's past shared interactional history alludes to their close peer ties and helps to convey the message that Tuncay's mock order should be interpreted playfully.

The second point worth raising is associated with the emergence of what appear to be particular sequencing rules for teasing. The excerpts discussed so far in this section, especially 4.1–4.2, seem to have a certain agonistic quality reminiscent of other discursive phenomena widely reported in the literature, namely verbal duelling and ritual insulting (e.g. Labov 1972; Kochman 1983). In the ensuing section, I demonstrate how the sequencing rules of teasing among this group of peers shared similarities but also departed from this line of research.

Sequencing rules of ritual insulting and verbal duelling reported in the literature adhere to strict adjacency rules. For example, in the case of sounding between African-American youths, one sound must be immediately followed by another

sound. If one of the two antagonists does not respond to the previous sound, then the sounding activity is terminated and the antagonist, who addressed the sounding activity last, is proclaimed the winner (Labov 1972: 128–131; also Abrahams 1974; Kochman 1983). Similar to sounding, in verbal duelling among Turkish boys reported in Dundes, Leach and Özkök (1972) a rhymed insult must be followed instantly by another rhymed insult and if one of the antagonists fails to provide a retort, then he has lost the dual (: 135–136). Sequencing rules in discourse are not only confined to how one turn succeeds the next, but also how each turn is constructed. In his study on sounding, Labov (1972) has this to say:

... sequencing involves the substance of sounds which succeed each other – how one sound is build on another, and how a series of sounds are brought to a conclusion. Above all, we are concerned with the standards of excellence in sounding – what makes one person a better sounder than another, and how the group evaluates the performance of an individual. (: 160)

The sequencing rules of the teasing episodes explored in this chapter collaborate to some extent the rules identified in sounding and verbal duelling research. A turn *x* can indeed be immediately answered by a turn *y* which can be followed by a turn *z*. One major point of departure, however, is that teasing is not confined to two antagonists only who are trying to outperform each other in game fashion. Instead, as I shall discuss in the following Section 4.3, more than two participants can take part in these teasing encounters. For instance, any member of the audience can intervene while the teasing activity is in full swing and address the teasing on behalf of the party being teased.

Another important point of departure has to do with the contextualization cues the children employ to frame their talk as play. Unlike the cues habitually used in verbal duelling and ritual insulting routines (e.g. Dundes, Leach & Özkök 1972; Labov 1972), the cues the children use are not part of a pre-established set of cues which they have memorised and learnt to reproduce on the spot. Although the children certainly seem to share what appears to be a fine-tuned repertoire of cues for teasing, they can also manipulate these cues in novel and creative ways to suit their local interactional projects. For example, instead of simply repeating each other's nicknames in fast pace – a common cue children use to tease one another – they may creatively allude to them.

A case in point is the excerpt below. Here Huseyin and Tuncay are locked into a teasing routine. This has been triggered by Tuncay's comments to me about Huseyin's mischievous behaviour. Tuncay has been recounting how earlier that day Huseyin managed to convince his peers that their teacher, Miss Soula, was on her way to class and that they should all keep quiet. Huseyin's antics were dully exposed when Miss Soula failed to show up. Tuncay continues his exposé

of Huseyin's antics by recounting how on another occasion he tricked Fanis into believing that their teacher would be going to teach at another school. Tuncay rounds off his exposé by calling Huseyin "ψεύτης" <liar> (line 3). Not surprisingly, this last remark generates a response by Huseyin who kicks off the teasing by referring to Tuncay's least favoured (due to its romantic undertones) nickname "Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι" <Bronze Moon> (line 5).

Excerpt 4.4

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 1Τουτζάι | <i>acc</i> ((στη Βάλλη)) όλο ψέματα λέει ((ο Χουσεΐν)) και ο Φά- |
| 2 | και <u>στο Φάνη</u> . που ήρθε χτες .. <i>f</i> λέει ότι . η κυρία πήγε σ' <u>άλλο</u> |
| 3 | σχολείο . (hh)όλο (hh)ψεύ(hh)της είναι αυτός .. |
| 4Γιάννης | ο Χουσεΐ::v= |
| → 5Χουσεΐν | = <i>acc</i> Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι .. |
| → 6Τουτζάι | α- <i>acc</i> <u>Κασσέττες</u> . <u>Κασσέττες</u> πουλάει αυτός . |
| 7Γιάννης | ο Χουσεΐ::v= |
| → 8Χουσεΐν | = <i>acc</i> έχει Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι σήμερα .. |
| | ... |
| | |
| 1Tuncay | ((to Vally)) he ((Huseyin)) lies all the time and to Fa and to Fanis |
| 2 | who came ((back to school)) yesterday he said our teacher had |
| 3 | gone to another school he's such a liar he is |
| 4Giannis | Huseyin= |
| → 5Huseyin | =Bronze Moon |
| → 6Tuncay | a- Cassettes he sells Cassettes |
| 7Giannis | Huseyin= |
| → 8Huseyin | = there is a Bronze Moon tonight |
| | ... |

Huseyin's taunt "Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι <Bronze Moon> which incidentally was the literal translation of Tuncay's first name into Greek (see Table 3.2 in Section 3.5) generates a counter tease. Tuncay responds to the teasing by alluding to one of Huseyin's nicknames "Κασσέττα" <Cassette> and firing back "Κασσέττες Κασσέττες πουλάει αυτός" <Cassettes he sells Cassettes>. Here Tuncay's taunt alludes to Huseyin's family business, the neighbourhood video store which also sold cassettes (line 5). Huseyin counter-attacks with the playfully poetic phrase "έχει Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι σήμερα" <there is a Bronze Moon tonight> (line 6), alluding once again to Tuncay's nickname "Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι" <Bronze Moon>.

At this point it is worth reiterating that sharing common assumptions and associations for meaning making and meaning negotiation becomes paramount. This is particularly true among the members of this peer group because the children did not rely on a pre-established repertoire of taunts (as in the case of ver-

bal duelling for instance) which they faithfully recycled. Drawing on their past interactional history and experiences, children needed to be skilful enough to manipulate their cues (whether novel or more conventional ones) in ways that were immediately recognisable as meaningful and playful by their peers (cf. Alberts 2000). This becomes all the more significant when children make use of cues that have not been incorporated into the group's repertoire of cues yet and can, therefore, be highly ambiguous. In fact, the higher the degree of ambiguity, the more sophisticated metacommunicative skills children need to develop to convey both the content of their message and the message "this is play" (Bateson 1972). This means that for outsiders to the peer group, who do not share common assumptions and associations, the content and message of cues can be even more opaque. As Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) rightly claim, shared assumptions and associations can serve to create "a special in-group terminology that bonds the participants and unites them against the 'others'" (:281), by sharing what Fine and De Soucey (2005) refer to as a common "joking culture" (:1). Those excluded may be other children, teachers, the researcher or other adults at school (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

At the same time, departure from more conventional cues and experimentation with novel ones reveals verbal skill, flexibility and imagination as well as the ability to set new trends (cf. Goodwin 1990; Dyson 2003). It is, therefore, not surprising, that Huseyin and Tuncay played an instrumental role in introducing new and creative cues in teasing episodes. As I shall demonstrate, both boys actively engaged in teasing routines with their peers, by alternating among different participant positions (e.g. co-initiator, target and co-respondent) and negotiating leadership roles.

Overall, the sequencing rules of teasing discussed in this chapter seem to be more flexible and less formulaic both in terms of participation rights and contextualization cues than those which have been identified in verbal duelling and ritual insulting. These observations seem to suggest that discursive phenomena such as ritual insulting and verbal duelling may not, in fact, be totally distinct from other forms of less stylised talk, as it had been originally claimed (cf. Goodwin 1990). The blurring of boundaries between more and less stylised forms of talk is collaborated by the fact that both forms of talk share a range of features including similar contextualization cues.

4.3 Participant positions in teasing encounters: Two-party and multi-party participation³⁶

Goffman's notion of "participation framework" (1981) is particularly useful in order to probe into the different participant positions available to the children in teasing activities. A "participation framework" is taken to mean the "participation status" or participant positions of all those who happen to be in the perceptual range of a spoken event relative to that event (:3). Children can, therefore, take up the following participant positions: (1) initiator, (2) target or recipient (these two terms are used interchangeably) and (3) audience. In the case of the audience, they can be co-participants and take up the participant positions of co-initiators or co-respondents, or they can have limited or no participation (i.e. act as over-hearers). Limited participation refers to instances when the children align themselves with the teasing without, however, taking sides (i.e. siding with the initiator or the target). They can do so by exploiting verbal (e.g. giggling, laughter, whistling) and non-verbal cues (e.g. clapping and other gestures). Drawing on the participant positions available, two key participation frameworks emerged: (1) two-party participation (featuring an initiator and a target alternating in these positions) with no or limited audience participation and (2) multi-party participation (including a host of (co-)initiator(s), multiple target(s) and (co-)respondents).

In two-party participation, teasing can be strictly confined to two children only with no audience participation or it can trigger limited audience participation, as in excerpt 4.5 below. On this occasion, Tuncay and Nontas are playing a game of tag in the playground during the break. Bahrye has the microphone and is hovering about. The subsequent teasing episode is triggered by her request to Tuncay to speak into the microphone. Tuncay obliges and in line 4 embarks on teasing Nontas. The teasing is based on the lexical repetition of nicknames, a common cue used in teasing among peers (see also excerpts 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4). Tuncay makes references to Nontas' nickname "Μπαμπάκι" [Babaki] <Cotton> and its more genitified phonetic variant "Βαμβάκι" [Vamvaki] (lines 1, 6, 9, 12) (cf. Kazazis 1992) while Nontas exploits references to Tuncay's nickname "Τούτζα Μούτζα" <Tudza Mudza> (lines 3, 7, 14).

36. An earlier version of Sections 4.3–4.4 appears in Lytra (2007) "Teasing in Contact Encounters: Frames, Participant Positions and Responses", *Multilingua*.

Excerpt 4.5

- 1Μπαχριέ *ff Tuncay . acc konuş konuş ..*
 Τουτζάιμίλαμίλα ((στο μικρόφωνο))
- 2Τουτζάι ((στο μικρόφωνο)) *f* Κουρδιστάν=
- 3Μπαχριέ =hhhhhhh
 ((Ο Τουτζάι πλησιάζει πιο κοντά στο μικρόφωνο))
- 4Τουτζάι ((στη Μπαχριέ)) *acc έλα έλα ff* [Μπαμπάκι: hhhh
 5Μπαχριέ [hhhhhhh
- 6Νώντας *acc* (h)Τού(hh)τζα Μού(hh)τζα .
- 7Μπαχριέ *Tunca . a- . sen (...) birakmayın ben birakmacayım=*
 Τουτζα α εσύ (...) δεν μ' αφήσεις ούτε εγώ θα σ' αφήσω
- 8Τουτζάι =Βαμ [βάκι .
- 9Νώντας *acc* [Τούτζα Μούτζα=
- 10Μπαχριέ =hhhhhh .
- 11Τουτζάι Βαμ[(hh)β_ά(h)κι
- 12() (...)
- 13Μπαχριέ [hhhh .
- 14Τουτζάι Μπαμπάκι:: .
- 15Μπαχριέ hhhh
 ((Ο Νώντας φεύγει τρέχοντας))
- 16Νώντας *pp* Τούτζα Μούτζα .
- 17Τουτζάι *pp* ((στο μικρόφωνο)) ο Νώντας είναι πολύ καλό παιδί
- 18Μπαχριέ *f* αα- . ξέρεις τί είπε; .. *ff* ο Νώντας είναι πολύ καλό παιδί ..
- 19Τουτζάι ((προς τον Νώντα)) *f* ξέρεις τί είπα;
 ((Ο Τουτζάι απομακρύνεται από τη Μπαχριέ και τρέχει προς τον Νώντα))
- 1Bahrye ((holding the mic)) *Tuncay . konuş konuş ..*
 Tuncay talk talk ((in the mic))
- 2Tuncay ((speaks in the mic)) Kurdistan³⁷=
- 3Bahrye =hhhhhhh
 ((Tuncay moves closer to the mic))
- 4Tuncay ((to Bahrye)) come on come on [Babaki hhhh
 5Bahrye [hhhhhhh
- 6Nontas (h)Tu(hh)dza Mu(hh)dza .
- 7Bahrye *Tunca a- sen (...) birakmayın ben birakmacayım=*
 Tudza a- you (...) don't let me neither shall I=

37. "Kurdistan" refers to a chant protesters of Kurdish origin used in marches against the capture of their leader Abdullah Öcalan (see footnote 43 for a detailed discussion).

- 8Tuncay =Vam[vaki
 → 9Nontas [Tudza Mudza=
 10Bahrye =hhhhhh
 → 11Tuncay Vam[(hh)va(h)ki
 12() (...)
 13Bahrye [hhhh
 → 14Tuncay Babaki
 15Bahrye hhhh
 ((Nontas goes off))
 → 16Nontas ((towards Nontas' direction)) Tudza Mudza
 17Tuncay ((directly into the mic)) Nontas is a really nice kid
 18Bahrye aa- do you know what he said? ((he said)) Nontas is a really nice kid
 19Tuncay ((to Nontas)) do you know what I said?
 ((Tuncay moves away from Bahrye and runs after Nontas))

Here the teasing is clearly confined to two antagonists (Tuncay and Nontas), who alternate in the positions of the target. To signal their mutual engagement in the activity, the two antagonists do not focus so much on the content of their cues (each other's nicknames), but on the mode of delivery (pace, volume and laughter) of their contributions. As a result, the mode of delivery sets the playful, yet competitive tone of teasing, as one turn quickly succeeds the next, thereby aiding in maintaining the teasing frame (cf. Lytra 2003b). As far as the role of the audience is concerned, while not contributing actively in the teasing as a co-participant, Bahrye plays an important role in sustaining the activity, by interspersing it with giggling and laughter.

The fast pace and high volume in the delivery of the retorts between Tuncay and Nontas and the use of highly routinised cues (the repetition of each other's nickname) is reminiscent of verbal duelling activities discussed earlier in Section 4.2. While the antagonists in the data are not obliged to use a rather limited set of traditional retorts (as in the case of verbal duelling) and can creatively appropriate or make up new retorts, the emphasis of such teasing seems to be on outperforming one's opponent in a game fashion. This chimes with Dundes, Leach and Özkök (1972) observations on Turkish boys' verbal duelling rhymes that "the actual communicative intent seems to be to put one's opponent down or to test his ability to maintain presence of mind in interaction" (: 131).

Moreover, the importance of the audience as witness and evaluator of the on-going activity is another common theme that emerges both in two-party teasing episodes and in verbal duelling research. In his discussion on ritual sounding among African-American young males, Labov (1972) observes that audience response can take the form of laughter as well as positive or negative evaluations of a

preceding retort and that it is sequentially positioned right after each of the antagonist's turn. Lack of audience response, on the other hand, is usually interpreted as negative evaluation and a clear indicator that the antagonist in question is losing ground (:146–147). In the teasing episode above, although Bahrye overwhelmingly refrains from joining in and evaluating the boys' performance (positively or negatively), she consistently makes use of laughter and giggling to signal her engagement in the teasing and indirectly evaluate the antagonists' performance.

Multi-party teasing, however, appeared to be the norm in peer talk. Out of the 127 teasing sequences produced across school contexts, two thirds elicited the participation of co-initiators and/or co-respondents. Unlike two-party teasing episodes, multi-party teasing activities opened up participation for co-initiators and co-respondents to make bids for the interactional floor. This resulted in co-constructing the teasing activities and maintaining the teasing frames.

There are two points worth raising here. First, co-participants have free-for-all participation rights. This means that children can take part in the development of teasing at any point in the interaction, giving rise to the following interactional options: (1) a child can self-select and take up the participant position of co-initiator or co-respondent with the purpose of collaboratively teasing the same target, (b) a child can self-select becoming a co-respondent and addressing the teasing on behalf of the target, (c) the initiator of the teasing can call in another child to take part in the teasing, (d) more than one child (e.g. a co-initiator or co-respondents) can self-select and take part in teasing simultaneously. By overlapping with one another, children can join forces against a common target.

Second, the target in multi-party teasing episodes does not remain fixed throughout the teasing but is under constant negotiation. Children can opt for the following options to shift the target of the teasing activity: (1) the target can self-select and introduce a new target in discourse and (2) a co-respondent can address the teasing on behalf of the recipient, thereby shifting the target either to the (co-)initiator(s) or to a third party.

The following teasing episodes (excerpts 4.6–4.7) illustrate some of the above-mentioned interactional options available in peer talk in recreational contexts. Maria, Vasia, Tuncay, Nontas, Meltem and their classmates are settling down in the classroom after the break. The noise levels are exceptionally high: there is intermittent banging on desks, shouting, the loud singing of snippets from popular songs and the humming of various rock tunes. The teasing episode is triggered by Nontas' threat to tell on his classmates, because they are making too much noise. In the teasing that ensues we trace how Vasia first sides with Maria to tease Nontas and then with Meltem to tease Tuncay and how Tuncay comes twice to Nontas' rescue from the girls' (Vasia, Maria and Meltem's) taunts. Moreover, we see how the target for teasing alternates among Nontas, Vasia, Tuncay and Meltem.

Excerpt 4.6

- 1Nώντας *f acc* στη κυρία στη κυρία που κάνετε τόση φασαρία
→ 2Μαρία *ff acc* τί θες ρε Νώντας εσύ τώρα::=
→ 3Βάσια =τί θες ρε Νώντας:: .. (hh)θέ(hh)λεις τί(hh)ποτα; hhh=
→ 4Τουτζάι =acc σκάσε ρε Βά[σια]
5Nώντας [f δεν έχει κάνει τις εργασίες του . που τούχει
6 βάλει η κυρία .. εντά:ξει:=
→ 7Μελτέμ =και σένα να μη σε ενδιαφέρει ... ρ τρελο::=
8Μαρία =αυτός θάρει αδιάβαστος . δε θάρθεις εσύ .
→ 9Τουτζάι ρ ά:ντε ρε Cumbul=
→ 10Μελτέμ =f άσε μας ρε Τούντζα Μούντζα:: Μούντζα Μούντζα::
11Τουτζάι =be:n mi suledim? .
εγώ είπα αυτό;
→ 12Βάσια μπέ::μι σουλέ .. μπεμί σουλέ; [4sec]
13Τουτζάι κοίτα .. πολύ ωραίο σημαία έκανα ..
- 1Nontas I'll tell the teacher you're making so much noise
→ 2Maria what's your problem (re) Nontas?=
→ 3Vasia =what's your problem (re) Nontas? (hh)you have problem (hh)?=
→ 4Tuncay = zip it (re) Va[sia]
5Nontas [he ((Babis)) hasn't done the homework
6 the teacher told him to do ok?=
→ 7Meltem =and that's none of your business you nutty=
8Maria =he hasn't done his homework not you
→ 9Tuncay come off it (re) Cumbul=
→ 10Meltem =get lost (re) Tunzda Mundza Mundza Munzda=
11Tuncay =ben mi suledim?
=did I say that?
→ 12Vasia bem sule bemi sule? [4sec]
13Tuncay look I painted a very nice flag

Nontas' unwarranted threat triggers Maria's teasing remarks (line 2). Based on informal discussions with the children telling on one's peers was viewed very unfavourably. There was general consensus that children deal with any inter-personal problems directly rather than seek teacher or adult mediation. By threatening to tell on his peers, Nontas was seen as violating peer group norms. It is not surprising, therefore, that his threat triggers teasing remarks as a means of regulating peer conduct and talk (cf. Archakis & Tsakona 2005; also Chapter 6 for further discussion).

In the next turn, Vasia reinforces Maria's teasing as co-initiator by making use of lexical repetition and recycling her position (cf. Tannock 1999). Vasia also intersperses her mock challenge with laughter, thereby somewhat lightening up her tease (line 3) (cf. Norrick 1993). Instead of Nontas, it is Tuncay who responds to the successive teasing and retaliates on his behalf (line 4). Tuncay directs his teasing to Vasia, thereby opening up the floor for the re-negotiation of the target for teasing. In the next turn, however, Nontas puts his foot in his mouth again. His alleged interest in Babis' unfinished homework (lines 5–6) generates a dismissive remark on Meltem's part. Her taunt squarely places Nontas once more in the position of the target (line 7). Again, Tuncay takes the floor to respond on behalf of Nontas. In the following turn, Meltem latches onto Tuncay's talk and issues a counter-tease in a loud declarative voice, thereby shifting the target for teasing to Tuncay. In response to Meltem's teasing, Tuncay makes a code-switch to Turkish that marks a clear shift from the teasing frame. In the following turn, however, Vasia makes a bid for the floor, by taking up the position of co-respondent and siding with Meltem against Tuncay. She builds her tease, by trying to imitate twice Tuncay's previous utterance in Turkish (line 12) (cf. Tannock 1999).

While self-selecting to participate in teasing is the most common interactional option (as Tuncay, Meltem and Vasia did in excerpt 4.6 above), initiators of teasing activities may occasionally invite available peers to join in. Such direct solicitations have the effect of transforming the existing two-party teasing activity into a multi-party one. For instance, in excerpt 4.7 below, Vasia is lending Babis and Bahrye a helping hand with their incomplete grammar homework during the break. As she is checking through one of Babis' grammar sheets she comes across a gross spelling mistake. It appears that Babis has misspelled the 1st person plural personal pronoun “εμείς” [emeis] <we> and has written instead “εμίζ” [emis] <we>. Vasia's mock threat “αχ θα τον σκοτώσω” <uh I'm gonna kill him> produced in an overdone manner generates a teasing activity and a shift of frame from the serious business of checking Babis' homework to play (line 6). In the subsequent turn, Vasia repeats her mock threat, while simultaneously inviting Bahrye to join in and see for herself Babis' gross spelling mistake: “αχ αχ Μπαχριέ θα τον σκοτώσω αχ αχ έλα να δεις πώς έχει γράψει το ‘εμίζ’” <uh uh Bahrye I'm gonna kill him ((Babis)) uh uh come and see how he's spelled “we”> (lines 8–9).

Excerpt 4.7

- ...
 6 Βάσια *f* εμείς . ΕΜΕΙ:::Σ; .. *acc* αχ- θα τον σκοτώσω αχ-=
 7 Μπάμπης =*p acc* ((διαβάζει ό,τι έχει γράψει)) εγώ εσύ εμείς ..
 → 8 Βάσια αχ- αχ- *f* Μπαριέ θα το σκοτώσω .. αχ- αχ-
 → 9 *acc* έλα να δεις πως έχει γραψει το “εμίζ” .. .

- 10Μπαχριέ *ff* E::MEI::Σ;
 11Βάσια εσείς; . *p* έλα .
 12Μπαχριέ *f* το “εσείς”; .
 13Βάσια πάλι ((το ίδιο λάθος))
 14Μπαχριέ *ff* ε:::; .. δεν είναι με::: . έτσι((το γράφει στον πίνακα))
 ...
 ...
 6Vasia we [emeis] we [emeis]? ah- I’m gonna kill him ah-=
 7Babis =((reads what he has written)) I you we [emeis]
 → 8Vasia uh uh Barhye I’m gonna kill him uh uh
 → 9 come and see how he’s spelled “we” [emeis]
 10Bahrye we [emeis]?
 11Vasia you? come
 12Bahrye ((how has he spelled)) “you” [eseis]?
 13Vasia again ((the same mistake))
 14Bahrye uh? isn’t it spelled like this ((she writes on the blackboard))
 ...

As the following turns illustrate (lines 10–14), Bahrye quickly obliges and the two girls jointly tease, assess and correct Babis’ spelling mistakes. Therefore, the resultant effect of Vasia’s solicitation is to open up participation to include a third party (Bahrye), who takes up the role of the co-respondent.

Occasionally more than one child self-selected and simultaneously took part in teasing. By overlapping with one another, children joined forces against a common target. Such overlaps, however, were frequently limited to one turn only, which seemed to suggest that overlapping speech was a dispreferred option. Overwhelmingly children tended to make individual rather than collective bids for the interactional floor. It is worth noting that when such instances of overlapping speech did occur, they were usually triggered by what appeared to be a limited set of contextualization cues, notably the rhythmic repetition of the target’s nickname, for instance, “Κόλλια” <Kollia> or “Μπεμπιλίνο” <Bebilino> (Giannis and Babis’ nicknames respectively). In fact, it would appear that such nicknames lent themselves well to rhythmic repetition which led to introducing and sustaining (albeit briefly) overlapping speech in teasing encounters.

For instance, excerpt 4.8 below takes place at the end of the break. The children are mucking about in the classroom waiting for their teacher, Miss Soula, to come. Meltem is parodically reciting snippets from a poem they had learnt at school, while Huseyin and Giannis are engaged in yet another verbal tag of war. In the midst of the teasing activity, Huseyin introduces the rhythmic repetition of Giannis’ surname/nickname “Κόλλια” <Kollia> in discourse (lines 7–9). This

instigates the brief participation of two unidentified peers, who join in on their own accord and act as co-respondents (see line 7).

Excerpt 4.8

- ...
 3Χουσείν =ff αμπιατό::=
 4Γιάννης =p ο Χουσείν είναι τού:ρμπο
 5Μπαχριέ ο Γιάννης είναι- . (h)να-(hh)νάι hh=
 6Χουσείν =f ο Γιάννης είναι acc (h)Κό(h)λλια . (h)Κό(hh)λλια . Κόλλια .
Κόλλια
 → 7 ((συμμετέχουν και άλλοι)) f Κό::λλια Γιά::ννη:: .. Κό::λλια
 8 Γιά::ννη:: ..((μόνο ο Χουσείν)) f Κό::λλια Γιά::ννη .. (h)Γιάνν(hh)ιη::=
 9Γιάννης = p acc αράπη Χουσεί:v ..
 10Χουσείν hhhh . hhh=
 ...
 ...
 3Huseyin = abiato=
 4Giannis = Huseyin is dumb
 5Bahrye Giannis is nanai =
 6Huseyin = Giannis is Kollia Kollia Kollia Kollia
 → 7 ((others join in)) Kollia Gianni Kollia
 8 Gianni ((only Huseyin)) Kollia Gianni Gianni
 9Giannis = black skinned Huseyin
 10Huseyin hhhh hhh=
 ...

The contribution of the two unidentified peers (line 7) has the effect of sustaining the teasing rather than bringing it to a close. This observation seemed to diverge from reports on collective bidding in verbal duelling and ritual insulting routines. In particular, Labov (1972) discussed the case of “group sounding” as a mass attack on one of the two antagonists in verbal duelling by members of the audience (: 152). He considered group sounding as a break in the sequential rules of sounding and argued that such breaks could have interactional consequences for the activity. They may produce angry responses by the target or may cause confusion as to who was saying what to whom, thereby leading to a breakdown of the activity (ibid) (cf. Kochman 1983; Abrahams 1974). In this case, collective bidding seemed to have the opposite effect in that it contributed to the maintenance of the play frame rather than precipitating an interactional break-down. Perhaps this has to do with the fact that children used a limited set of cues in such instances of overlapping speech which over time seemed to have become

normalised. This implies that contra Labov (1972) such collective bids did not seem to be interpreted as a mass attack by the target.

One last point worth raising here regarding multi-party teasing has to do with the negotiation of the target. As mentioned earlier in this section, the position of the target was not fixed; rather it could be (re-)negotiated throughout the teasing activity. While this seemed to be the norm, there were occasions when the target did indeed remain constant throughout. One such case occurred with Tuncay. The following excerpt (4.9) is part of a longer teasing sequence which skilfully drew upon the refrain of a popular, at the time of the fieldwork, love song called “Ίθυροι Καρδιάς” <Whispers of the Heart> (written by Christos Nikola-kopoulos and performed by Dimitris Bassis) and Tuncay’s nickname “Βρούτζινο Φεγγάρι” <Bronze Moon>. The song was played during the closing credits of the romantic drama “Ίθυροι Καρδιάς” <Whispers of the Heart> which recounted the tides and tribulations of the love affair between a majority Greek young male professional, and a free-spirited young Roma woman. The teasers exploited the close phonetic association between Tuncay’s nickname “Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι” [Broutzino Fegari] <Bronze Moon> and the opening words of the refrain of the song in question “καράβι το φεγγάρι” [karavi to fegari] <the moon like a boat>. They built their teases by substituting the phrase [karavi to fegari] with Tuncay’s nickname [Broutzino Fegari]. This substitution was extremely successful not only due to the lexical repetition of the word “φεγγάρι” [fegari] <moon> in both the refrain and Tuncay’s nickname, but also because it was in keeping with the romantic theme of the original song: a declaration of love. At the same time, this creative substitution lent itself nicely to the incorporation of the original sound track in the teasing. The success of this tease was further compounded by the fact that this romantic drama enjoyed, at the time of the fieldwork, huge popularity in Greece and a strong following among the children, especially (and perhaps not surprisingly) the girls. Therefore, the children were familiar with both the lyrics of the song and its catchy tune.

As it becomes evident in excerpt 4.9 below, the high degree of familiarity with the lyrics of the song and its tune opens up access to teasing to potentially all present. This has the effect of eliciting a number of participants (here Maria, Giannis, Meltem) over several turns but also making the re-negotiation of the target for teasing for Tuncay very difficult indeed. Excerpt 4.9 follows a series of teasing sequences where Tuncay is consistently positioned as the target of his peers’ taunts.

Excerpt 4.9

- ...
 56Τουτζάι *f* αυτό ((ο μαρκαδόρος)) είναι χαλασμένο .. α- . *acc* ποιανού 'ν' αυτό;
 [2sec]
 → 57Μαρία *p* ((τραγουδά)) 'Μπρούτζινο Φεγγά::ρι=
 → 58Γιάννης =κα-ράβι το φεγγά::ρι=
 → 59Μαρία =((τραγουδά)) 'κα::ράβι το φεγγά::ρι ..
 → 60Μελτέμ ((τραγουδά)) κα[ράβι το φεγγά::ρι .
 → 61Μαρία ((τραγουδά)) [' κα::ρα- [γγά::ρι .
 62Γιάννης *acc* έλα Τουντζάι .. (...) .
 63Μαρία *ff* ((στριγγλιές))=
 64Μελτέμ ='ff α::: .
 ...
 ...
 56Tuncay this ((marker)) has dried up oh whose is this?
 → 57Maria ((she sings)) Bronze Moon=
 → 58Giannis =the moon like a boat=
 → 59Maria =((she sings)) the moon like a boat
 → 60Meltem ((she sings) the [moon is like a [boat
 → 61Maria ((she sings)) [moon [boat
 62Giannis come on Tuncay (...)
 63Maria ((shrieks))=
 64Meltem =aouch
 ...

Excerpts such as excerpt 4.9 seem to suggest that for a successful re-negotiation of the target to take place the recipient needs to elicit the support of other co-participants. The latter must be willing to shift the target to somebody else. While children may offer their unsolicited support to the party being teased (e.g. Tuncay coming to Nontas' defence in excerpt 4.6 in this section), there is no guarantee that this will always be the case. It would appear that to maximise the possibility of a re-negotiation of the target, recipients may well need to engage in some interactional work themselves, such as initiating a target shift or perhaps responding to the teasing seriously, thereby discouraging any further uptakes.

In conclusion, excerpts such as 4.6–4.9 discussed above strongly suggest that multi-party teasing episodes were characterised by a high degree of joint construction and participant collusion. Teasers and targets alternated in different participant positions (e.g. teasers, co-teasers, targets, co-respondents coming to the target's defence) through a series of shifting alignments which took place in quick succession. These observations strongly suggest that teasing as a versatile

discursive resource provided peer group members with a particular kind of sociability, one that allowed children to join in of their own accord by making full use of the various participant positions available to them. Moreover, the investigation of multi-party teasing activities and the types of speaker alignments they generated aided in probing further into the nature of the children's personal and social relationships, roles and social identities (see Section 4.4 below and Chapter 6 for further discussion). Observations corroborated the cross-sex teasing practices discussed in this section: girls usually sided with girls against their male peers and vice-versa (e.g. excerpts 4.6, 4.7). At the same time, co-respondents addressed teasing remarks on behalf of same-sex targets (often against a teaser(s) of the opposite sex) (e.g. excerpt 4.6). In this context, multi-party teasing episodes seemed to become the arena where cross-sex teasing practices were (re-)produced, thereby reinforcing the children's gendered identities (cf. Archakis & Tsakona 2005; Fine & De Soucey 2005; Holmes & Marra 2002). I will return to the issue of teasing and gender in Chapter 6.

4.4 Responses to teasing

As it has been repeatedly stressed in this chapter, teasing is a highly ambiguous and context-dependent activity and it is not always possible for the recipients of teases and other co-participants to distinguish between combat and play. How a tease is interpreted, however, can be gleaned by the types of responses it elicits. Kochman's (1983) research on sounding among African-American young males provides useful insights into the targets' response work to teasing. Building upon and extending Kochman's study in this section I focus on both target and co-participant uptakes to teasing. The underlying assumption here is that target and co-participant responses will determine whether a teasing frame is sustained or whether the activity is redefined and/or brought to a close.

Children made use of the following options to respond to their peers' taunts: (1) responding playfully (via playful retaliations and playing along), (2) keeping silent (3) responding seriously (via frame shifts) and (4) calling an adult third party to intervene on their behalf. It is perhaps worth noting that these interactional options were not mutually exclusive. Children could exploit any combination of responses to address teasing remarks often within the same teasing episode. Observations of children's talk revealed that they seemed to favour responding to teasing playfully. The second most common option was keeping silent, while the third and fourth options (responding seriously and calling an adult party to intervene) appeared to be the least preferred ones. These observations were corroborated by the recorded interactions of children's talk in recreational contexts:

out of the 127 teasing episodes 167 teases were addressed playfully and 45 teases elicited silences. Only 30 teases triggered serious responses and 10 teases were responded to by calling for adult intervention. While the figures above attest to a preference for addressing teasing playfully this does not imply that children's responses were in any way predictable. Instead, as we shall see in the ensuing sections (4.4.1–4.4.4) their talk had an emergent locally occasioned quality. Moreover, it was not possible to establish a correlation between specific interactional options and particular children, nor did any responses seem to be particularly gender-specific – with the exception perhaps of girls calling for adult intervention more frequently than boys. The preference for this option, however, should not be seen to imply that girls were less competent than boys in dealing with teasing.

4.4.1 Responding playfully

The preponderance of playful responses to teasing is not surprising when seen in the context of research on the centrality of humour, joking and verbal play in Greek society in general (e.g. Hirschon 1992; Mackridge 1992) and in Greek oral and written discourse in particular (e.g. Antonopoulou & Sifianou 2003; Archakis & Tsakona 2005; Canakis 1994; Gavriilidou & Tsakona 2004; Georgakopoulou 2000; Tsakona 2004). More specifically, in their study on humour in Greek telephone opening exchanges, Antonopoulou and Sifianou (2003) identify a certain “readiness to play” on the part of callers and answerers, who are close friends (:747–748). This is manifested from the very first opening sequences of the telephone exchange. For instance, answerers who are expecting a call from a close friend may answer the phone playfully (e.g. by using a summons in Italian rather than in Greek). Callers on these occasions rarely ignore this invitation to play and respond equally playfully (e.g. by teasing the answerer for attempting to adopt an Italian identity) (:748).

Responding playfully to teasing can take the form of a playful retaliation directed at the teaser(s). Playful retaliations have a combative, agonistic quality in that children strive to outperform one another by engaging in a game of sorts over who produces the last turn. Such playful retaliations echo verbal duelling contests discussed in the previous sections (4.2–4.3) and reveal the adversarial nature of children's talk (cf. Goodwin 1990). As I showed in excerpt 4.5 (Section 4.2), for instance, the two antagonists (Tuncay and Nontas) tried to score over one another in the presence of an appreciative audience (Bahrye). In the end, Nontas sought to have the final say in this contest of sorts by running off and physically removing himself from where the three children were temporarily standing immediately after uttering his last turn.

Such playful retaliations between antagonists coupled by audience participation highlight the entertainment value of play in general and teasing in particular. The shared enjoyment seems to be manifested in the recurring clusters of contextualization cues the antagonists use, in this case the exchange of nicknames at a fast pace, and the elicitation of giggles and laughter on the part of the audience. As a result, such playful retaliations strongly suggest that the content of teasing may be less important than simply having the pleasure of engaging in the activity with one's peers.

At the same time, playful retaliations point to the performative aspect of teasing. Teasing episodes provide children with a rich interactional arena where they can show off their linguistic and cultural competences and expertise as they verbally bat it out with their peers. Moreover, playful retaliations can provide children with the opportunity to side with particular peers against others (see, for instance, excerpt 4.10 below). Children then join in the banter on their own accord without needing to state explicitly "we are only teasing".

One point worth highlighting here is that during playful retaliations the target of the teasing may resort to cues such as terms of verbal abuse which (if taken literally) can cause potential conflict (Tannock 1999). Observations, however, reveal that such terms of verbal abuse do not seem to be taken as personal insults. Instead, they are responded to playfully serving to reaffirm the maintenance of the existing play frame. For instance, in the next excerpt (4.10), Giannis and Huseyin are engaged in verbal warfare as they are settling in the classroom after the break. Prior to the introduction of the terms of verbal abuse, Giannis has managed to successfully elicit the support of Bahrye and two other unidentified children who join in and tease Giannis. Following the group teasing (line 6–8), Giannis retaliates by calling Huseyin "αράπη Χουσείν" <black skinned Huseyin> (line 9).

Excerpt 4.10

- ...
- 3 Χουσείν =ff αμπιατό::=
- 4 Γιάννης =p ο Χουσείν είναι τού:ρμπο
- 5 Μπαχρίε ο Γιάννης είναι- . (h)να-(hh)νάι hh=
- 6 Χουσείν =f ο Γιάννης είναι acc (h)Κό(h)λλια . (h)Κό(hh)λλια . Κόλλια .
Κόλλια
- 7 ((συμμετέχουν και άλλοι)) f Κό::λλια Γιά::ννη:: .. Κό::λλια
Γιά::ννη:: ..
- 8 ((μόνο ο Χουσείν)) f Κό::λλια Γιά::ννη .. (h)Γιάνν(hh)ιη::=
- 9 Γιάννης =p acc αράπη Χουσεί:ν ..
- 10 Χουσείν hhhh . hhh=

- 11Μπαχριέ =acc σταματήστε ρε
 12Γιάννης [p acc αράπη Χουσεί:ν
 → 13Χουσείν [p acc αράπικο σα[λάτα
 14Μπαχριέ [acc κοίτα κει=
 15Χουσείν =p η Μελτέμ είναι αγελάδα
 ...
 ...
 3Huseyin = abiato=
 4Giannis = Huseyin is dumb
 5Bahrye Giannis is nanai=
 6Huseyin = Giannis is Kollia Kollia Kollia Kollia
 7 ((others join in)) Kollia Gianni Kollia Gianni
 8 ((only Huseyin) Kollia Gianni Gianni
 9Giannis = black skinned Huseyin
 → 10Huseyin hhhh hhh=
 11Bahrye =cut it out re
 12Giannis [black skinned Huseyin
 → 13Huseyin [Egyptian/Arab sa[lad
 14Bahrye [look there=
 15Huseyin = Meltem is a cow
 ...

Although the use of the cue “αράπη Χουσείν” <black skinned Huseyin> could have been construed as a personal insult, Huseyin’s sustained giggling in the next turn indicates that he has not taken it as such (line 10). In fact, unheeded by Bahrye’s order to stop the teasing “σταματήστε ρε” <cut it out (re)> (line 10), Giannis reiterates the cue “αράπη Χουσείν” <black skinned Huseyin> (line 12). On this occasion, Huseyin engages in a form of language play. He creates a semantic tie between Giannis’ and his cue and produces the phrase “αράπικο σαλάτα” [arapiko salata] <Egyptian/Arab salad> (line 13) as a counter-response. His response could be triggered by the phrase “αράπικο φιστίκι” [arapiko fistiki] <Egyptian/Arab peanut> which refers to a specific kind of much loved peanut.³⁸

38. I deliberated how to translate the phrase “αράπικο σαλάτα” [arapiko salata]. According to the Tegopoulos-Futrakis Greek dictionary (1989), “αράπικο” [arapiko] is the adjective of “αράπης” [arapis] and can mean something which belongs to a person who is black or has very dark features or something that originates from Egypt, the Arab world or the African continent more generally (: 109). I decided to translate the phrase “αράπικο σαλάτα” [arapiko salata] <Egyptian/Arab salad> because of the semantic tie with the phrase “αράπικο φιστίκι” [arapiko fistiki] <Egyptian/Arab peanut>.

Both of Huseyin's responses (giggling and shift to language play) seem to suggest that he has not interpreted the use of the cue "αράπη Χουσείν" <black skinned Huseyin> as a personal affront (cf. Kennedy 2003). Instead, his responses reaffirm the maintenance of the existing teasing frame as the two antagonists alternate in the position of the target. This is further reinforced by other prosodic cues the two boys use. They deliver their turns in a low almost conspiratorial voice, as if this particular stretch of talk were for their ears only. These prosodic cues are in contrast with the loudness of the preceding and subsequent talk as well as with Bahrye's unsuccessful attempt to put an end to the teasing (line 11).

The use of terms of verbal abuse as cues in playful retaliations reveals that certain discourse contexts (teasing being one of them) appear to give licence to children to use terms of verbal abuse as cues for play (see also the vignette in Section 4.1 for similar observations) (cf. Kennedy 2003). Drawing again on Kochman's (1983) research on verbal duelling, it appears that during such teasing episodes normal conditions of accountability are relaxed allowing for forms of talk that would otherwise cause offence. This means that children need to be operating within this discourse context (i.e. engaging in teasing) to make sure that such cues will in fact be interpreted as play. This resonates with Mitchell-Kernan's (1972) observations that speakers will make use of black speech features when employing the term "nigger" in signifying routines among African-Americans in order to signal to the recipient that they should see their utterances as "an instance of black verbal art" rather than an insult. Its use with standard English, on the other hand, represents "the wrong tone of voice" and may be regarded as "abusive" (:175). Outside this discourse context, in casual peer talk terms of verbal abuse invariably triggered complaints to Miss Soula, the class teacher.

In addition to playful retaliations, children responded playfully by playing along with their assailants. Tholander and Aronsson (2002) discuss instances of playing along in teen talk. They report that targets showed "unperturbed by avoiding displaying recognition of the teasing" (:158). In his continuum of serious–non-serious responses to teasing, Drew (1987) situates "playing alone" on the non-serious end. This means that playing along is positioned in opposition to "po-faced" responses (i.e. serious responses) and is characterised by the target's implicit or explicit acceptance of the tease (e.g. the target may laughingly agree with the teasing and even go so far as to add something more to the teasing) (:225).

The following excerpt provides a good example of this type of response. Prior to the frame shift to teasing, Bahrye and Babis, who are sitting next to each other, have been working fast to complete unfinished school homework before the end of the break. This is taking place under the watchful eye of Vasia who is hovering over them ready to dispense help and constructive criticism (but who does not feature in this excerpt). At one point, Bahrye breaks the silence by turning to

Babis and teasing him in a sing-song intonation produced in a loud provocative manner that she is well ahead of him in finishing the homework on time (line 1).

Excerpt 4.11

- 1Μπαχριέ *acc* ωχ Μπάμπη εγώ σε περν.
 2Μπάμπης α; ...
 3Μπαχριέ *acc* εγώ σε περνῶ παιδά=
 → 4Μπάμπης =*acc* δεν πειράζει .. δεν κάνουμε αγώνες . f άμα κάναμε αγώνες θα
 → 5 σ' είχα περάσει με δύο χιλιάδες λάθη
 [4 sec]
- 1Bahrye oh Babis I'm so well ahead-
 2Babis huh?
 3Bahrye I'm so well ahead of you du-=
 → 4Babis =that's ok we're not competing if we were competing ((to finish
 → 5 the homework)) I would have won by two thousand mistakes
 [4 sec]

In response to Bahrye's initial taunt (line 1), Babis asks a clarification request (line 2), which results in Bahrye repeating her tease in a louder, more provocative tone (line 3). Babis plays along with Bahrye's teasing by resorting to self-denigrating humour. He acknowledges the teasing and further elaborates on it by claiming that "if we were competing I would have won by two thousand mistakes" (lines 4–5). By playing along with the teasing and acknowledging his shortcomings as a pupil, Babis successfully brings the teasing to a close (as indicated by the four second pause succeeding his self-directed remark). In this respect, playing along seems to have the effect of "protecting" so to speak the target of any further assaults (cf. Tholander & Aronsson 2002).

4.4.2 Keeping silent

As research in pragmatics and sociolinguistics has clearly demonstrated, silence is multi-functional and can thus serve a variety of communicative purposes across discourse contexts (e.g. Jaworski 1993; Sifianou & Tzanne 1998). Giles et al. (1992) argue that silence is frequently seen as a marker of embarrassment, shyness or even hostility and may be interpreted as unwillingness from the part of the silent party to communicate or as exhibiting lack of verbal skill (reported in Sifianou & Tzanne 1998: 299). Due to its multi-functionality, however, silence can be ambiguous. This indicates that rather than treating silence as "a monolith and

absolute”, it would be more fruitful to differentiate among “many types of silence” (Jaworski 1993:24).

Silence as response to teasing can be seen as perhaps talk not taken seriously enough to warrant a response. This interpretation becomes evident when one examines the talk preceding and subsequent to the response work. For instance, in excerpt 4.12 below, a group of children and I are hanging out in the classroom. The children are dabbling in a series of drawing tasks from their English language exercise book while exchanging sweets and comments about the progress of each other’s drawings. It is in the backdrop of these leisurely activities that Vasia’s exaggerated singing emerges (line 3). Vasia’s music making which is amplified by being produced directly into the microphone that was in front of her triggers Tuncay’s teasing remarks “άντε φύγε Βασιλόπιττα 999” <beat it Vassilopita 999>.

Excerpt 4.12

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1Τουτζάι | τις προτάσεις ((στα Αγγλικά)) δεν έκανες; |
| 2() | ω- . ω- . ω- |
| 3Βάσια | <i>f</i> ((τραγουδά στο μικρόφωνο)) η καρδιά:: μου χτυπά::= |
| 4Τουτζάι | = <i>acc</i> άντε φύγε . Βασιλόπιττα 999 |
| → | [2 sec] |
| 5Γιάννης | για να δούμε ρε Νώντα ((τί έχεις κάνει)) |
| 6Μελτέμ | αυτό ((ο μαρκαδόρος)) είναι καλό .. <u>πάρε</u> κι εγώ μ’ αυτό έκανα .. |
| 7 | <u>κοίτα</u> .. |
| 8Βάλλη | <i>p</i> (...) με μπλάκνο |
| 9Νώντας | <i>acc</i> δε <u>γίνεται</u> . τώρα που τόχει κάνει έτσι= |
| 10Μελτέμ | =ωραία είναι έτσι .. |
| 11Νώντας | το ξαναγράφω . |
| 12Βάσια | ((τραγουδά)) <i>f</i> ατσουμε <u>κέ</u> ::τι με <u>κέ</u> ::τι .. |
| 13Γιάννης | ((τραγουδά)) <i>ff acc</i> τα:: <u>ράρα</u> - τα:: <u>ραράν</u> . |
| ... | |
| 1Tuncay | you haven’t done the sentences ((in English))? |
| 2() | ο ο ο |
| 3Vasia | ((sings in the mic)) my heart is throbbing= |
| 4Tuncay | =beat it Vasipolita 999 |
| → | [2 sec] |
| 5Giannis | let’s have a look re Nonta |
| 6Meltem | this ((marker)) works take it I used the same one too have |
| 7 | a look |
| 8Vally | (...) with typ-ex |
| 9Nontas | it can’t be done now ((this way)) . he’s done it that way= |

- 10Meltem =it looks nice this way ..
11Nontas I'm re-writing it .
12Vasia ((she sings)) *atsoumeketi meketi* ..
13Giannis ((he sings)) *tarara- tararan*
...

Unheeded by Tuncay's taunts, Vasia ignores the teasing and continues drawing instead. In fact, later in the interaction, she produces another spurt of loud singing, this time eliciting the participation of Giannis (lines 12–13). By keeping silent yet reverting back to music making further along, Vasia appears to be treating Tuncay's tease (line 4), as if it never occurred. Vasia's silence seems to suggest a willingness to continue with the drawing task rather than respond to the teasing, thereby bringing the teasing frame to a close (Jefferson 1972). This does not mean, however, that by ignoring the tease she does not recognise it as such. As Drew (1987) persuasively argues, recognizing a tease and displaying recognition of it can be two separate activities (:230). By suspending usual conversation rules according to which a reply is very often expected to a prior turn, Vasia treats the prior turn as not requiring a response, perhaps as if it were not worth addressing.

Indeed, Vasia's silence appears to imply an unwillingness to engage in play and attempt to top Tuncay in a game fashion with a suitable response. When juxtaposed to her overall volubility and active participation in teasing episodes elsewhere, her silence on this occasion should not be interpreted as a marker of embarrassment, shyness or hostility towards teasing. Rather, it can be seen as a lack of interest in the activity at that particular point in time. Indeed, as the following vignette from observations of children's talk during lunchtime demonstrates, Vasia was a prolific teaser who frequently conjured up teasing alliances with other girls against her male peers as well as skilfully initiated and responded to teasing on her own:

I've noticed that Vasia is a very articulate girl, quick to reciprocate any taunts, especially by her male peers, and speak up for herself. Today during lunchtime she is sharing the same table with Tuncay, Fanis and a new girl who just joined the class, Elona. Elona speaks very little Greek and I'm told she has been placed in this class because it's age appropriate. Vasia has just come back from getting a second helping. As she makes herself comfortable in her seat Tuncay gives her a side look and asks her playfully “σαλάτα γιατί δεν πήρες” <how come you didn't get any salad>. I'm curious to see how she will respond to this jibe as I can see that her plate is completely full with a huge portion of rice and a piece of chicken. Vasia keeps her cool and quickly snaps back: “ρύζι γιατί δεν πήρες” <how come you didn't get any rice>. Tuncay doesn't respond to this. Instead, he shifts his focus on Elona asking Vasia why the former isn't eating any chicken. Vasia shrugs her shoulders and digs into her lunch. A little later, as the children are taking their dirty plates and cutlery to the designated area in the dining hall, I hear one of the teachers

loudly exclaiming “θέλω πριν φύγετε τα τραπέζια να είναι γυαλισμένα” <before you leave make sure your tables are crystal clean>. Vasia gives Tuncay a side look and repeats the order parodying the teacher’s voice “γυαλισμένα Τουτζάι” <crystal clean Tuncay>. Tuncay grins but surprisingly he seems unwilling to take on the challenge and respond to Vasia in kind. (fieldnotes, 17/2/99)

Besides registering one’s lack of interest in the teasing activity at hand, children can use silence as means of responding strategically to teasing. Children may exploit silence to “get back at” their peers at another point further along the interaction, when they have thought of an appropriate comeback, or they may use silence to elicit the support of their peers (Tholander & Aronsson 2002). A case in point is Vasia’s initial silence followed by her swift retaliation in excerpt 4.13 below. At the beginning of this excerpt, Vasia refrains from responding to Tuncay’s taunt (“zip it re Vasia”, line 4).

Excerpt 4.13

- | | | |
|------|---------|--|
| 1 | Nώντας | <i>f acc</i> στη κυρία στη κυρία που κάνετε τόση φασαρία |
| 2 | Μαρία | <i>ff acc</i> τί θες ρε Νώντας εσύ τώρα::= |
| 3 | Βάσια | =τί θες ρε Νώντας::; .. (hh)θέ(hh)λεις τί(hh)ποτα; hhh= |
| → 4 | Τουτζάι | = <i>acc</i> σκάσε ρε Βά[σια] |
| 5 | Nώντας | [f δεν έχει κάνει τις εργασίες του . που τούχει |
| 6 | | βάλει η κυρία .. <u>εντά:ξει</u> ;= |
| ... | | |
| 9 | Τουτζάι | <i>p</i> ά:ντε ρε Cumbul= |
| 10 | Μελτέμ | = <i>f</i> άσε μας ρε Τούντζα Μούντζα:: Μούντζα Μούντζα::= |
| 11 | Τουτζάι | = <i>be:n mi suledim?</i> . |
| 11 | | εγώ είπα αυτό; |
| → 12 | Βάσια | <u>μπέ::μι</u> σου <u>λέ</u> .. <u>μπεμί</u> σου <u>λέ</u> ; |
| → | | [4sec] |
| 13 | Τουτζάι | κοίτα .. πολύ ωραίο σημαία έκανα .. |
| ... | | |
| 1 | Nontas | I’ll tell the teacher you are making so much noise |
| 2 | Maria | what’s your problem (re) Nontas?= |
| 3 | Vasia | =what’s your problem (re) Nontas? You (hh) got a (hh) problem?=- |
| → 4 | Tuncay | =zip it (re) Va[sia] |
| 5 | Nontas | [he ((Babis)) hasn’t done the homework Miss |
| 6 | | told him to do ok?=- |
| ... | | |
| 9 | Tuncay | come off with it re Cumbul= |
| 10 | Meltem | =get lost re Tunzda Mundza Mundza Munzda= |

- 11Tuncay =*ben mi suledim?*
 =did I say that?
→ 12Vasia bem sule bemi sule?
→ [4sec]
13Tuncay look I painted a very nice flag
...

In the subsequent turns, however, she seizes the opportunity to side with Meltem when Tuncay teases the latter (line 9). Similar to the example I recounted in the vignette during lunchtime, Vasia exploits Tuncay's previous turn (line 11), by imitating what he says. In other words, Tuncay's prior turn seems to furnish her with the necessary contextualization cues to build her tease and ultimately outperform him. At the same time, her response in line 12 could be seen as belatedly "getting back at" Tuncay for his taunt at the beginning of the teasing episode (line 4) and standing up for herself (see Chapter 6 for further discussion of the gender politics of teasing among peers).

Excerpts, such as excerpt 4.13 above, however, seem to suggest that silence as response to teasing can also occur when, through repetition, majority Greek children appropriate and transform linguistic elements from Turkish into contextualization cues for teasing. These occasions tend to generate what Tholander and Aronsson have aptly called "notable unresponsivity" (: 156). Both the target and the co-participants ignore the taunt rather than use it as a spring-board for a counter-attack or for corroborative response work as would be expected.

As we saw in excerpt 4.13 above, Vasia is quick to align herself with Meltem (Tuncay's target) and respond to the teasing on her behalf by echoing Tuncay's prior Turkish utterance twice: "bem sule bemi sule?" (line 12). Although imitations of a language style, dialect or language have been shown to function as contextualization cues in teasing and insulting routines among peers (Tannock 1999), on this occasion, Vasia's shadowing of Tuncay's utterance does not trigger any uptake at all. Instead, it is followed by silence (four seconds pause) and Tuncay's frame shift back to the drawing task at hand, which brings the teasing to a close.

The absence of a distinct response to Vasia's imitation of Tuncay's prior Turkish utterance seems to suggest that utterances in Turkish as contextualization cue for play in general and teasing in particular can be highly ambiguous. As Norrick (1993) postulates, sometimes repetition in the mouth of the second speaker "skews the frame introduced by the original speaker" and "the words come out as caricature or a sarcastic comment" (: 16). In this respect, repetition could be interpreted as caricature or sarcasm. By keeping silent and avoiding to sustain the teasing frame, targets and co-participants appear to be signalling their discontent vis-à-vis the teasing as well as perhaps implicitly indicating the unsuitability of

such cues for teasing. In this context, silence can function in a similar manner to serious responses to teasing: by keeping silent children can signal their resistance to the appropriation and transformation of particular cues for play. In this respect, silence closely resembles Drew's (1987) "po-faced" (i.e. serious) responses to teasing (see Chapter 6 for further elaboration).

4.4.3 Responding seriously

In his seminal study on response work, Drew (1987) observes that overwhelmingly targets tend to take teasing remarks seriously through what he refers to as "po-faced" responses even though teases are designed as playful jibes in the context of mainly informal encounters and seem to be recognised as such. He notes that recipients frequently resort to rejections or corrections and that although these are often couched with laughter and a jokey mode of delivery, they are immediately followed by serious accounts and explanations (:222–223). Similar to Drew, Tholander and Aronsson (2002) record the use of accounts and denials as serious responses to teasing among teenage peers (:148).

In the ten year old cohort's talk during recreational interactions, serious responses to teasing seemed to take the form of frame shifts to non-play. Children who were positioned as targets tended to initiate topic shifts to a previous task, activity or topic or introduced a new topic in discourse. Such topic shifts and changes suggest that children avoided openly going on record and acknowledging the teasing, either by defending themselves against it (via an account or a denial) or by counter-attacking (via playful or serious retaliations). Instead by routinely opting for topic shifts and changes they attempted to bring the teasing to a close and re-negotiate the interactional frame away from play. In doing so, they attempted to remove themselves from the position of the target of teasing.

For example in excerpt 4.14 below, instead of responding to Huseyin's taunt (line 1), Giannis attempts to introduce a frame shift to non-play by diverting my attention to a drawing he has made. Perhaps the very fact that I am signalled out as addressee here (an adult third party who is an outsider to the peer group) further reinforces his unwillingness to take part in the teasing.

Excerpt 4.14

- 1Χουσεΐν *f acc Κόλλια Κόλλια*
 ((πολλες φωνές))
 → 2Γιάννης ((στη Βάλλη)) *κυρία .. acc κοίτα κοίτα . καλό ε-;*
 ((πολλές φωνές))
 3Χουσεΐν *έλα . f Κόλλια . Κόλλια acc Κόλλια Κόλλια .*

4	έλα . f Κόλλια . Κόλλια acc Κόλλια [Κόλλια [acc Κόλλια Κόλλια=
5Νώντας	=fεγώ λιέω=
6Τουτζάι	=(h)αρά- [(h)αρά-
7Γιάννης	f acc [Κόλλια Κόλλια Κόλλια ..
8Χουσεϊν	δύο αρα- (... [])αραιδάκια::(hh)
9Γιάννης	[acc f ((έρχεται)) η κυρία
10Τουτζάι	f acc ((έρχεται)) η κυρία=
11Μαρία	...
→ 1Huseyin	Kollia Kollia ((background noise))
2Giannis	((to Vally)) Miss look look that's a good one right? ((background noise))
3Huseyin	come Kollia Kollia Kollia Kollia
4	come Kollia Kollia Kollia [Kollia
5Nontas	[Kollia Kollia=
6Tuncay	=I say=
7Giannis	=nig- [nig-
8Huseyin	[Kollia Kollia Kollia ..
9Giannis	two nig- (... []) little black skinned people ³⁹
10Tuncay	[the teacher ((is coming))
11Maria	the teacher ((is coming))=
...	...

As excerpt 4.14 above illustrates, if the aim of the targets is to bring the teasing to an end and remove themselves from the interactional limelight via such frame shifts to non-play, this may not be achieved so easily. Their assailants may choose to maintain the play frame and even manage to elicit the support of others (see Nontas and Tuncay's uptakes in lines 5–6 above). However, the assailants' persistence on sustaining the teasing frame contrary to the target's efforts for re-negotiation can put to test the boundaries of play. Failure to re-negotiate the interactional frame can lead to frustration and possible tension among children. Most often than not, however, targets do not react seriously to the maintenance of the activ-

39. I take “αραπιδάκια” [arapidakia] to be a possible transformation of “αραπάκια” [arapakia] which is the diminutive plural form of “αράπης” [arapis] or of “αραπάδες” [arapades]. According to the Tegopoulos-Futrakis Greek dictionary (1989), the plural “αραπάδες” [arapades] refer to the people of Egypt and more broadly to people of the black race (: 109). In every day Greek language use, the word “αραπάδες” [arapades] can be offensive. I have opted to translate the word “αραπιδάκια” as “little black skinned people” in agreement with my translation of “αράπης” [arapis] as “black skinned person”.

ity. Instead, in the next turns, they may make bids for the interactional floor and play along with the teasing (see Giannis' counter-attacks in lines 7 and 9 above). This seems to suggest that unsuccessful attempts to shift or change topic are not seen as personal affronts by targets but perhaps as opportunities to flex their interactional muscles, learn to respond to teasing more effectively and ultimately become more competent players.

Although failure to re-negotiate the interactional frame to non-play does not seem to escalate into hostile talk other ways of responding to teasing seriously can potentially put a strain on the teasing activity. For instance, responding to teasing via playful aggression (e.g. hair pulling, slapping, pushing and shoving) may be interpreted as non-play. Yanking the teaser's hair (slapping or pushing and shoving them) can lead to calls for adult intervention, thereby momentarily questioning the playfulness of the activity.

For instance, in the next excerpt 4.15, Vasia is teasing Tuncay by alluding to the link between his nickname "Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι" <Bronze Moon> and the tune of the popular romantic drama "Ψίθυροι Καρδιάς" <Whispers of the Heart> (lines 28–29) (see also Section 4.3 for a detailed discussion). When Tuncay yanks her pony tail, Vasia brings the offending act to my attention indirectly calling for my intervention on her behalf. However, to my surprise, instead of waiting for my disciplinary remarks she embarks on more playful talk by seconding Huseyin's teasing (lines 34–35).

Excerpt 4.15

- ...
- 28Βάσια ((τραγουδά)) *dec* Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι:: .. Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι:: ..
 29 έτσι κάνει .. *p* Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι:: .. *ff* Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι
 [3sec] ((φωνές))
 30Τουτζάι *f* ποιος είπ' αυτό;
 31Βάσια εγκώ; . ποιό; . τί; .. το Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι;
 32Τουτζάι ναι .
 → ((ο Τουτζάι της τραβάει τα μαλλιά))
 33Βάσια *f* α::: .. *ff* κυρία:: πονάω::=
 34Χουσεϊν ((τραγουδά)) *acc* Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι ..
 → 35Βάσια ((τραγουδά)) *acc* Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι (...) Φεγγάρι Μπρούτζινο ..
 ...
- ...
- 28Vasia ((she sings)) Bronze Moon Bronze Moon
 29 that's how ((he)) sings ((it)) Bronze Moon Bronze Moon
 30Tuncay who said that?
 31Vasia me? what? what ((did I say)) Bronze Moon?

- 32Tuncay yes
 → ((Tuncay yanks Vasia's hair))
 33Vasia ah Miss it hurts=
 34Huseyin Bronze Moon ((she sings))
 → 35Vasia Bronze Moon (...) Bronze Moon ((she sings))
 ...

The fact that Vasia swiftly resumes participation in the teasing (line 35) soon after Tuncay yanks her hair reveals that such instances of playful aggression do not seem to be regarded as hurtful.

While conflict seems to be aborted during those teasing episodes, what starts off as a playful jibe can escalate into something more serious. A case in point is excerpt 4.16 below. It's break-time but some children are still lingering in the classroom. Huseyin is examining the small tape-recorder I have been using to record the children's talk. He is trying to figure out how it works and what the various buttons are for. Giannis approaches him and together they continue examining the tape-recorder. However, when Huseyin embarks on a teasing routine based on the phonetic manipulation of Giannis' name and surname (line 5), Giannis responds seriously: he reveals that his mum has complained to the teacher about Huseyin making fun of his surname (lines 6, 8, 10, 12, 14–16).

Excerpt 4.16

- ...
 3Χουσείν *f* ρεκόρντ .. γράφει; [ρεκ .. τραβάει;
 4Γιάννης [ρεκ
 5Χουσείν ((στο μικρόφωνο)) *f* Γιάτσι . Παννά . Κόλλια ..
 → 6Γιάννης Χουσεί:ν .
 7Χουσείν ((βάζει τα ακουστικά)) α:: .
 → 8Γιάννης Χουσ-=
 9Χουσείν =σ:: .. σ:::
 → 10Γιάννης η μητέρα μου τόχει πει στην κυρία Χουσείν . ότ- [acc ότι βρίζεις
 11Χουσείν [σ:: acc περίμενε σ:
 → 12Γιάννης το επώνυμό μου=
 13Χουσείν =((για τους θορύβους που κάνει το μαγνητόφωνο)) ωραίο .
 → 14Γιάννης acc περίμενε να σου πω .. η κυρί- acc. η μαμά μου τόχει πει
 → 15 στην κυρία ότι μου βρίζεις το επώνυμο .. και η κυρία είχε πει .
 → 16 θα τον συγυρίσω εγώ=
 17Χουσείν =πολύ ωραίο . ((δίνει το ένα ακουστικό στο Γιάννη και κρατάει το
 18 άλλο)) πάρτο . α-
 19 δε γίνεται αυτό; .. αυτό δε γίνεται ((καλώδιο είναι κοντό))
 20Γιάννης *f* άκουσε; .. άκου να δεις . [που τσιρίζεις .

- 21Χουσείν [τίναι αυτό; ωραίο είναι .
 22 *acc* κοίτα να δεις .. έτσι κάνει ((το μαγνητόφωνο)) ..
 ((ο Χουσείν μιμείται το θόρυβο που κάνει το μαγνητόφωνο καθώς
 μαγνητοφωνεί))
 23 *f*αμπλα(hh)μπλαμπλα(hhh)μπλαμπλα(hhhh)μπλαμπλαμπλα(hh)
 .ωραίο
 24Γιάννης άντε (...) ρε Χουσείν
 ...
 3Huseyin record is it recording? [rec is it recording?
 4 [rec
 5Huseyin ((in the microphone)) Giachi Gianna Kollia
 → 6Giannis Huseyin
 7Huseyin ((he puts on the earphones)) ah
 → 8Giannis Hus=
 9Huseyin =shsh shsh
 → 10Giannis my mother talked to the teacher Huseyin tha- [that you make fun of
 11Huseyin [shsh hold on shsh
 → 12Giannis my surname=
 13Huseyin =((commenting on the noises the tape-recorder is making)) cool
 → 14Giannis let me tell you something the tea- my mother talked to the teacher
 → 15 about making fun of my surname and the teacher said
 → 16 I'll take care of him=
 17Huseyin =((this is)) very good ((Huseyin gives one of the earphones to Giannis
 18 and holds on to the other one)) take it oh-
 19 can't do this? can't do this ((the cord is too short))
 20Giannis did you hear ((what I said))? listen to me [and stop screaming
 21Huseyin [what's this? cool
 22 look at the noise it's making ((the tape-recorder))
 ((Huseyin imitates the tape-recorder, while it is recording))
 23 abla(hh)blabla(hh)blabla(hhhh)blablabla(hh) cool
 24Giannis yeah right (...) (re) Huseyin

In this excerpt, Giannis seems to have taken Huseyin's taunts' personally. His reaction to Huseyin's teasing took me by surprise since I had noticed that the children routinely phonetically manipulated his name and surname/nickname transforming them into cues for play. The following vignette is based on some observations regarding the use of Giannis' name and surname/nickname as a cue in teasing episodes.

Giannis is the only child whose surname is also used as nickname. I find this rather interesting and I ask Vasia about it but she can't explain to me how this

came about. When I ask her who came up with it she vaguely replies “η τάξη το έχει βγάλει” <the class has come up with it>. What perhaps surprises me the most is that Giannis is rather cool about this too. He does not react aggressively or defensively when references to his surname/nickname are made in teasing episodes- perhaps this suggests that the use of his name and surname/nickname as cue for play have become normalised. (fieldnotes, 15/3/99)

There are two further points worth raising here. First, such instances of teasing that misfire clearly illustrate the unstable and ever-changing boundary between play and non-play. These boundaries are not fixed, but under constant negotiation. Second, regardless of how frequently specific clusters of contextualization cues have been used in teasing episodes, they may not be consistently and unambiguously understood as playful.

For real conflict to erupt, however, both parties (the teaser and the target) need to be sharing a combative frame, as conflict is a “situated accomplishment” (Hopper, Sims & Alberts 1983 reported in Eisenberg 1986: 188). It is worth noting that when real conflict was about to erupt one of the two parties (usually the initiator of the activity) tried to diffuse tension, by avoiding conflict talk, regardless of the other party’s attempts to escalate the conflict. For instance, in excerpt 3.16 above, in response to Huseyin’s jibe, Giannis attempted to escalate the conflict: he informed Huseyin about an alleged complaint his mother had made to Miss Soula, the class teacher, regarding the latter’s persistence on ridiculing him by making fun of his surname (lines 10, 12, 14–16). To lend moral weight to his claims, Giannis couched his message in reported (lines 10, 14–15) and direct speech (line 16). Indeed, besides highlighting the seriousness of his responses, these references to third, more powerful parties (i.e. his mother and the class teacher), both residing in the adult world, have the effect of enhancing the authoritativeness and authenticity of his statements (cf. Hill & Irvine 1992).

Huseyin, on the other hand, responds to Giannis’ attempts to escalate the seriousness of the exchange, by carefully avoiding conflict talk and trying to diffuse tension: initially, he seems to be ignoring Giannis’ summons and concentrates on the sounds the tape-recorder is making (lines 7, 9, 11, 13, 17). Then, he attempts to share one of the earphones with him (lines 17–19) and lastly, amidst laughter, he starts mimicking the sounds the tape-recorder is making (lines 22–23). The strategies Huseyin adopts eventually lead to a resolution of the conflict. He manages to shift the focus of the interaction away from Giannis’ revelations regarding his mother’s complaints to the class teacher to the noises the tape-recorder is making and re-negotiate a new play frame.

As this teasing episode between Huseyin and Giannis demonstrated, by taking teasing personally, targets managed to successfully put an end to these ac-

tivities. At the same time, instances of teasing that backfired could provide the interactional arena where children had the opportunity to air their grievances regarding each other's conduct as well as express and negotiate feelings of tension. Moreover, research on conflict talk has demonstrated that the goal of such exchanges may not always be to resolve conflict, but rather to display verbal skill and maintain status hierarchies within groups (Eder 1990; Goodwin 1990). Following this line of argument, Giannis' escalation of the seriousness of the teasing in excerpt 3.16 above could have been triggered by underlying grievances about being consistently positioned as the target of Huseyin's taunts. The fact that this particular jibe was delivered directly into the tape-recorder may have further aggravated the situation. At the same time, this particular exchange could be seen as an attempt on Giannis' part to re-negotiate status hierarchies between the two boys, especially since both were active in teasing routines during recreational interactions (for further discussion see Chapter 6).

4.4.4 Adult third party intervention

Research on child socialisation and teasing has repeatedly shown how adult third parties come to the defence of younger children who become the butt of teasing by older siblings and other adults. Since younger children are thought of not being capable yet of defending themselves, adult third parties take it upon themselves to socialize them into existing teasing practices by teaching them that teasing is a form of play and how to respond to it (Eisenberg 1986: 188).

Adult third party intervention (whether by the teacher or the researcher) in children's teasing episodes was minimal. Targets were perceived as capable enough to respond to jibes themselves. In fact, when I brought up the issue of adult interference in children's teasing exchanges with Miss Soula, the class teacher, during a semi-structured interview with her, she had this to say with regard to complaints arising from the use of nicknames:

...γίνεται κόντρα με τα παρατζούκλια «με είπε έτσι» και εγώ λέω «τί έχω πει εγώ; τελείωσε μεταξύ σας (να τα βρείτε)». Στην τελευταία ανάλυση τί έγινε; Και τελείωσε τί έγινε;

<... children get confrontational over the use of nicknames and (come to me to complain about it). They say "s/he called me this or called me that" and I say "what have I said about this? You deal with this among yourselves". At the end of the day, it's not such a big deal. End of story, it's not such a big deal (to be called by one's nickname)>. (interview with Miss Soula, the class teacher, 28/8/99)

Regardless of the fact that children were discouraged to complain to adult third parties to come to their defence they still appealed to them. However, they did not seem to expect third parties to actually intervene and discipline their assailants. Instead, in the following turns, targets took it upon themselves to respond to their teasers and reintroduce the teasing frame in discourse.

For instance, prior to excerpt 4.17, Meltem and Bahrye have been actively involved in music making (e.g. reciting snippets from songs and poems). It is perhaps because of their music making that Meltem became the target of Huseyin's taunts: "η Μελτέμ είναι αγελάδα" <Meltem is a cow>, "αγελάδα Μελτέμ" <Meltem you cow> with Nontas and Costas following suit. Meltem ignored the boys' jibes and concentrated on reciting snippets from poems with Bahrye. In the ensuing turns, when Miss Soula comes into the classroom, however, Meltem quickly runs up to her and complains that Giannis has been calling her "αγελάδα" <cow> (lines 30–31).

Excerpt 4.17

- ...
 24Μπαχριέ =f acc ποιός ξερ- . ποιός ξέρει το ποίημα του;=
 25Μελτέμ =εγώ=
 26Μπαχριέ =πες το Μελ[τέμ
 27Κώστας [f Μετλέμ αγε[λάδα=
 28Μπαχριέ [σστ
 29Μελτέμ =μανούλα μου
 ((μπαίνει μέσα η δασκάλα))
 → 30Μελτέμ ((τρέχει προς τη δασκάλα))) f κυρί::α:: ...ο Γιάννης με φωνάζει
 → 31 .. αγελά:δα=
 32Κυρία Σούλα =τί;
 33Χουσείν άστο έτσι=
 34Μελτέμ f Κόλλια πουλάω .. ελάτε ..
 ((ο Μπάμπης δίνει το φυλλάδιο στη δασκάλα))
 35Μπάμπης κυρία . όλα λάθος θάναι=
 36Κυρία Σούλα =αυτό το φυλλάδιο δεν έχει κανένα τόνο ..
 37 άρα εγώ . δεν έχω να πάρω τίποτα
 ...
 ...
 24Bahrye =who kno- who knows their poem?=
 25Meltem =I ((do))=
 26Bahrye =say it Mel[tem
 27Costas [Meltem is [a cow=
 28Bahrye [sssh

- 29Meltem =oh my gosh
 ((the teacher enters the classroom))
 → 30Meltem ((she runs towards the teacher)) Miss Giannis has been calling
 → 31 me a cow=
 32Miss Soula =pardon?
 33Huseyin just leave it as it is=
 34Meltem =I'm selling Kollia/kolya come ((and have some))
 ((Babis hands his worksheet to the teacher))
 35Babis Miss it's full of mistakes=
 36Miss Soula =this worksheet doesn't have a single stress
 37 so I'm not taking it
 ...

Without waiting for the teacher's intervention, Meltem turns to Giannis and teases him by creatively alluding to the phonetic tie between his surname/nickname "Κόλλια <Kollia> and the word "kolya" <necklace> in the Turkish variety the children spoke: "Κόλλια πουλάω ελάτε" <I'm selling Kollia/kolya come and have some>, line 34).⁴⁰ Interestingly in this particular episode Giannis has refrained from calling Meltem names. The resultant effect is the reintroduction of the teasing activity in discourse, which was temporarily put on hold when Miss Soula entered the classroom.

It would perhaps be expected that such calls for an adult third party to intervene would put an end to the teasing activity. Meltem's uptake (line 34) seems to suggest that this is far from the case: seeking adult intervention tended to pave the way for more rather than less teasing (see also Vasia's complaint about Tunçay yanking her hair and her subsequent tease, in excerpt 4.15, Section 4.4.3). In this respect, complaints to adult third parties seemed to function as ritual rather than as real complaints. This means that their purpose was not for adults to actually intervene and discipline the perpetrators. Instead, given that these appeals tended to be triggered during cross-sex teasing episodes, their purpose seemed to be to negotiate peer group relations and more specifically gender relations in what would appear to be a cross-sex power game of sorts (cf. Eder 1991; see also Chapter 6 for further discussion).

40. In Standard Turkish, the word for "necklace" is "kolye" from the French "collier". It is the same in Modern Greek too.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I focused on teasing episodes among peers in recreational contexts. In particular, I examined the sequential environment for teasing and showed how the emergence and development of teasing were characterised by a high degree of joint construction and participant collusion. I illustrated that children appeared to build their teases by exploiting recurring clusters of contextualization cues (e.g. nicknames, mock orders, threats, challenges, repetition, prosodic and extra-linguistic cues) as well as by experimenting with novel cues (e.g. by making playful allusions to each other's nicknames).

I went on to investigate the different participant positions available to the children, namely two-party and multi-party participation and showed how multi-party participation emerged as the norm. Children, for instance, repeatedly made use of the participant positions of co-initiator and co-teaser or self-selected and responded on behalf of the party being teased, thereby often functioning as conversational duets. I argued that the joint production of teasing routines as locally-structured recurrent social activities pointed to the development of what appeared to be particular teasing relationships among peers (e.g. same-sex peers joined forces and teased children of the opposite sex). At the same time, I argued that teasing episodes seemed to be characterised by a strong agonistic quality. This agonistic quality was reminiscent of verbal duelling routines reported in the literature (e.g. Dundes, Leach & Özkök 1972; Labov 1972) which highlighted the strong performative aspect of teasing. Indeed, the agonistic quality of teasing episodes I presented and discussed in this chapter was not surprising. Similar observations have been reported in research on Greek culture (e.g. Hirschon 1992, 2001) and discourse with special reference to argumentative talk (Georgakopoulou 2001; Georgakopoulou & Patrona 2000; Tannen & Kakava 1992).

The discussion of sequencing rules and participant positions led to the investigation of the different interactional options children had to respond to teasing, notably responding playfully, keeping silent, responding seriously or calling an adult party to intervene on their behalf. I illustrated the preponderance of playful responses to teasing in the data and claimed that this preference for playful retaliations and playing along seemed to reflect the centrality of humour, joking and verbal play in Greek culture and discourse in general (Antonopoulou & Sifianou 2003; Tsakona 2003, 2004; Georgakopoulou 2000 to mention a few). It is worth adding here that similar observations regarding the positive value attributed to one's ability to carry out jocular conversation have also emerged in studies on Turkish language and culture (see Zeyrek 2001).

I discussed how avoiding responding to teasing and keeping silent emerged as the second most preferred interactional option. This particular response to teas-

ing had previously received limited attention. Taking as the point of departure the multi-functional nature of silence, I suggested that rather than signifying embarrassment or lack of verbal skill, silence appeared to be used strategically for the benefit of the target. In particular, children tended to exploit silence to prepare an appropriate comeback later in the exchange, or to elicit the support of others who would come to their defence. More importantly, silence seemed to function as a marker of discontent, especially, it appeared, in cases where particular linguistic elements from the minority (Turkish) language and culture were appropriated and creatively transformed into cues for teasing.

I showed that contrary to previous research serious responses to teasing seemed to be rather limited. This could be explained perhaps by the strong peer group ties children had developed over almost four years of uninterrupted peer socialisation at school which in turn had led to the creation of particular teasing relationships and the emergence of a particular teasing culture (cf. Archakis & Tsakona 2005; Fine & De Soucey 2005). Nevertheless, whenever children responded seriously to teasing they did so by shifting the interactional frame to non-play (albeit not always successfully) or by introducing topic shifts to a previous topic, activity or new topic in discourse. I claimed that this dispreference for overtly serious responses to teasing (such as serious accounts, explanations or denials), however, seemed to be counter-balanced by what appeared to be a preference for silence.

I illustrated how children who became the butt of teasing attempted to solicit the help of an adult third party to come to their defence. It is worth noting here that actual adult intervention in children's teasing episodes was minimal. In fact, children did not seem to expect adults to actually intervene and discipline their assailants. In this respect, I claimed that such complaints to adult third parties seemed to function as ritual rather than as real complaints.

In the next chapter, I shift my focus from peer talk in recreational contexts to classroom talk (both teacher-pupil talk and informal talk among peers) to look into the framing of playful talk during the lesson.

CHAPTER 5

Play frames and the organisation of classroom talk

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I shift my analytical gaze from talk among peers in recreational contexts to classroom talk. By classroom talk I refer to instances of teacher-pupil dialogue as well as when children talk informally among themselves during the lesson. More specifically, in this chapter I look into the framing of playful talk both during whole-class teacher fronted instruction and during small group instruction. I situate the investigation of playful talk in past and more recent research on classroom discourse and discuss how playful talk is framed during instruction.

I draw upon Goffman's (1971) dramaturgical metaphors of "backstage" and "frontstage" to explore informal talk among children that takes place in the periphery of classroom discourse (backstage playful talk) and teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil talk that emerges in its very centre (frontstage playful talk). More specifically, I look into backstage playful talk and examine how children initiate and develop play frames in parallel to instructional frames that tend to dominate the centre of classroom talk. I then explore frontstage playful talk and investigate how children embed play frames in instructional frames, occasionally leading to a "schism" in the classroom floor (i.e. the concurrent development of play and instructional frames over more than a few turns).

I discuss teachers as initiators and respondents to playful talk. I discuss how teachers tend to tolerate children-led shifts to play during teacher-fronted whole class instruction and seldom intervene to stop backstage playful talk. I probe into teacher-led frontstage playful talk or when teachers actively take part in the development of play frames. I shift my focus on a small group of boys doing group work in order to compare the framing of playful talk during whole-class teacher fronted instruction and during small group instruction. Throughout this chapter, I examine how children and teachers exploit playful talk to affirm, transform or contest social relations (including relations of power) and negotiate multiple and potentially conflicting roles and identities during the lesson.

5.1 Locating playful talk in classroom discourse

Traditionally, most sociolinguistic and discourse analytic research on classroom talk focused on how the institutional order of schools and classrooms was (re-) produced in teacher-pupil talk (e.g. through the organisation of turn-taking and repair, the negotiation of teaching and learning practices, classroom management and pupil accountability). Although this line of research tended to have a monocultural bias, it provided useful insights for researchers working in multicultural settings. For instance, researchers were concerned with associating linguistic variability with ways in which schools act as institutions of social selection (Heller & Martin-Jones 2001b: 3). This line of research pointed to a mismatch in cultural conventions between the types of knowledge and linguistic practices children bring to school from their respective communities and those valued by mainstream schools.

These studies, however, have been criticized for failing to address the ways institutionally organised relations of power are played out (*ibid*: 4). By focusing on differences in cultural conventions, it is assumed that pupils from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds participate in the daily life at school on an equal footing. This assumption, however, fails to account for the fact that social relations are negotiated and reproduced in the context of social institutions (such as schools), which control access to and the allocation of valued (linguistic, cultural, material, symbolic and other) resources (*ibid*; see also Duff 2004; Heller 2002; Talmy 2004; Wortham 2006).

Taking this critique as starting point, in this chapter I look at how through local interactional practices (here the use of playful talk) the children and their teachers affirm, negotiate, transform or contest social relations (including relations of power) during instruction. This focus reflects more recent approaches to classroom discourse that have shifted researchers' analytical gaze to the heterogeneity of classroom discourses. They have explored the social practices within which the production, dissemination and consumption of these discourses are situated and have highlighted the processes of recontextualization and dialogicality at play in children and teachers' talk (e.g. Maybin 2006; Haworth 1999; Kambarelis 2001; Rampton 2006). Moreover, these studies have looked at how pupils and teachers exploit different genres, styles, registers and frames within the boundaries of the school day to express different identity positions, social alignments and types of knowledge. For instance, studies have looked into humour and the burlesque (including mimicry and parody of teachers' voices) as interpersonal resources teachers and pupils strategically exploit to negotiate multiple and potentially conflicting identities during instruction (e.g. Baynham 1996; Hirst 2003). In addition, they have examined the ways humour can be used to avoid conflict talk, enhance

friendship ties and cultivate “co-operative learning alliances” in small group discussions among female pupils (Davies 2005: 199).

In the ensuing sections, I seek to explore playful talk both in teacher-pupil dialogue and when children talk informally among themselves. While teacher-pupil talk has been well documented, informal talk among children during instruction has received less attention (but see Diamondstone 1999; Maybin 2006; Rampton 1999, 2006). At the same time, by focusing on playful talk in particular, I investigate linguistic and cultural practices that have overall received limited attention in sociolinguistic and discourse analytically minded classroom research. Indeed, this line of research has tended to focus on children’s official school practices often ignoring that there is more happening than just teaching and learning academic subject matter. As Maybin (2006) aptly argues mainstream accounts of schools and classrooms have tended to adopt an “educational gaze”. They have tended to concentrate on the children and teachers’ curriculum-oriented talk. As a result, they have often treated instances of “off task” talk (including playful talk) among children or between children and their teachers in the classroom as marginal. Nevertheless, sociolinguistic and discourse analytic studies of schools and classrooms from an ethnographic perspective have repeatedly shown that playful talk is an enduring feature of classroom talk and learning (e.g. Davies 2005; Dyson 2003; Lytra 2003a; Rampton 2006; Maybin 2006). Warner (2004) captures the centrality of playful talk for learning and identity work in her study of synchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC) among second language learners of German in the following way:

Play can no longer be regarded as an anomaly or exceptional form of communication, but must be acknowledged as a legitimate and conventional use of language. In particular, greater attention must be paid to playful elements in language use that are not limited to the linguistic form. Students in the German classes were not simply playing with the language, but playing *within* [italics in the original] the language. In such instances, it is not primarily meaning that is being negotiated, but also the relations between speakers, their interlocutors, the medium and the context. What’s more, they are negotiating their relation to a foreign language, which to them feels in some ways inauthentic and, as one student noted, like “just a game”. (: 80)

5.2 Framing talk during instruction

As I discussed in Section 1.3, Goffman’s (1974) concept of frames is a very useful point of entry in exploring the framing of talk during whole-group teacher fronted instruction as well as small-group instruction. I identified three types of frames

in the classroom data: (1) instructional frames (e.g. lesson, class management, task-related frames), (2) socio-relational frames (e.g. greetings/leavings, small-talk, dealing with late-comers) and (3) play frames. I observed that instructional frames tended to dominate classroom discourse while socio-relational frames and play frames tended to be allocated a less prominent position in the classroom floor. Moreover, instructional frames and socio-relational frames tended to be teacher-initiated, while play frames tended to be pupil-initiated and maintained.

Overall, I noticed that instructional frames tended to be highly asymmetrical, both in terms of their structure and the constraints they put on what talk could be produced and who controlled the ongoing activity. As a rule, teachers exerted tight control over turn-taking rights and topic development. By shifting to play, children attempted to negotiate a more symmetrical relationship with their teachers: on these occasions, the roles of teacher and pupil were temporarily placed in the background, while other roles and discourse and social identities were brought to the fore (e.g. being a peer group member, a competent teaser). As I will discuss in this chapter, frame shifts to play, therefore, had interactional consequences in that they could question assumed institutional asymmetries and power relations.⁴¹

As with other forms of institutionally structured talk, children and teachers usually sustained instructional frames with relatively fixed positions, roles and relationships during teacher fronted whole class instruction. As Tannen (1986) aptly argues, participants (here children and teachers) tended to feel constrained to “sail with the framing winds” (:92). In institutional discourse, these constraints become all the more significant, since resisting a frame or reframing talk calls for additional interactional effort. Participants need both conversational skill and power to initiate such shifts (cf. Ribeiro 1996). At the same time, children and teachers manipulated and transformed instructional frames and initiated shifts to play. These frame shifts were often quite rapid transformations which had an emergent and fleeting quality. They would involve, for instance, intertextual references to the children’s out of school recreational and media practices. Children would start quietly singing snippets from a popular song or chanting recyclable and recontextualizable fragments of talk and set phrases inspired by popular comedy shows while engaging in a copying task (see Sections 5.3.1–5.3.2 for further discussion).

I noticed, however, that the dominance of instructional frames waned during task-based small-group instruction. Children seemed more willing and able to “rock the conversational boat” (Ribeiro 1996: 184), perhaps because instructional

41. Cf. Ribeiro (1996) for similar observations regarding framing talk in psychiatric interviews.

frames were proposed by fellow peers rather than their teachers. This meant that teacher control over topic and frame development that characterised interactions during whole-group instruction seized to apply and children had to wrestle control from each other. As we shall see in Section 5.4, in this on-going struggle over topic and frame development, play frames became a resource to negotiate (institutional and non-institutional) roles and undermine bids for authority and status among peers.

5.3 Playful talk during teacher fronted whole-group instruction

Goffman's (1971) dramaturgical metaphors of "frontstage" and "backstage" capture nicely the two types of playful talk I noticed during teacher fronted whole-group instruction. In this context, backstage playful talk refers to informal talk among children that takes place in the periphery of classroom discourse while frontstage playful talk refers to teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil talk that emerges in the centre of classroom discourse. These dramaturgical metaphors echo distinctions in classroom talk identified in other studies. For instance, Cazden (1988) differentiates between talk produced in the centre of classroom talk which she associates with "the official world of the teacher's agenda" and talk generated in the periphery of the classroom floor which she views as coinciding with "the unofficial world of the peer culture" (: 150).⁴² Similar distinctions in talk have been found in informal conversational contexts. Coates (2000) draws on Goffman's dramaturgical metaphor to investigate small talk among females. She argues that frontstage talk is public and requires participants to behave in more carefully controlled ways, by following prevailing norms of politeness and decorum. Backstage talk, on the other hand, is private (as in informal personal conversations) which means that these rules of conduct are relaxed (: 243).

Taking these two types of playful talk as a point of departure, I show that by transporting playful talk from the periphery (backstage talk) to the very centre of classroom discourse (frontstage talk), children and teachers blur the boundaries between backstage and frontstage talk. In addition, I illustrate that the type of playful talk that emerges in discourse has a bearing on how this talk is framed. In backstage playful talk, play frames are introduced and developed as parallel frames. In frontstage playful talk, however, play frames are initiated and maintained as embedded frames, which may occasionally become forked frames. This suggests that even though both types of playful talk (backstage and frontstage)

42. See also Arthur (2001) for a similar distinction between "center-stage language use" and "backstage language use" in multilingual classrooms.

emerge during whole-group teacher fronted instruction play frames are triggered and sustained differently.

5.3.1 Backstage playful talk

The following vignette is based on some observations of children's backstage playful talk during whole-class teacher fronted instruction:

I am sitting next to Babis, Tuncay, Huseyin and Giannis. All four boys are sitting in a long row on one side of the classroom. Today Miss Soula is discussing a class project the children will be doing this week. The four boys seem to be attending to what the teacher is saying: they ask clarification questions and negotiate among them who will be working with whom. At the same time, I observe that they engage in fleeting shifts to play. For instance, as Miss Soula is elaborating on the project, Babis quietly sings a football chant: “φωτιά το κύπελο” <the (football) cup is on fire>. Moments later Tuncay rhythmically repeats Babis' nickname “Μεϊμπιλίνο Μεϊμπιλίνο” <Babyfino Babyfino> echoing Babis' football chant. Soon after this is followed by Giannis' hellenized rendition of the chant of Istanbul's Galata Saray football team “Τζίμποι Γαλατά Σαράϊ” <Cheers for Galata Saray>. I notice that these fleeting shifts to play are produced in low, almost conspiratorial voices for the ears of those sitting in close proximity only. Miss Soula and the other children seem fully engaged in the official classroom business of discussing the practicalities of the class project, completely oblivious of the boys' playful contributions. The boys' playful talk reminds me of similar playful encounters I have heard time and again in the playground. The only difference is that the classroom ones seem to me like bite size versions of the more sustained and certainly louder playful episodes in the playground.

(fieldnotes, 30/3/99)

This short vignette is illustrative of the kind of recurrent backstage playful talk I witnessed, especially among this small group of boys who were usually sitting next to each other during the lesson. There are two points worth raising here. First, in these peer interactions during whole-class instruction children exploited similar contextualization cues for play they used during break-time. This suggests that cues used in playful encounters during free time were transported into playful occasions during whole-class instruction. The direction of the cues is significant: it reveals that linguistic practices (here engaging in playful talk) first emerged and became established in the playground before they were tried out in the classroom. By being transported into the classroom during the lesson, however, playful talk produced in the margins of classroom discourse became an extension of playful talk during free time.

Second, the emergence of backstage playful talk during whole-group instruction opened up new and exciting participant positions for the children. Following Goffman (1967, 1981), these were: (1) initiators of backstage playful talk, (2) ratified participants which included those children sitting in close proximity and occasionally the researcher (3) unrated participants which included teachers, children who were sitting further a field and the researcher. Although unrated participants were generally held at bay, their participant status could change and they too could become ratified participants or over-hearers of backstage playful talk when it became louder and more declamatory.

Overall, backstage playful talk seemed to thrive particularly at interactional junctions or transition points. As I discussed in Section 4.2, the concept of “liminality” (Turner 1974) can be fruitfully applied in understanding how interactional junctions allow for the emergence of backstage playful talk. Interactional junctions create “liminal” spaces. These are spaces outside normal social structures during which individuals pass from one social status to another (:58). For instance, “liminal” spaces were generated when teachers relaxed or shifted their attention to one side of the classroom, their notes or the blackboard, or when they were pre-occupied with private teacher-pupil talk. They were also triggered by some kind of break in the whole-class lesson frame and subsequent shifts to a class management frame or a socio-relational frame. On these occasions, the whole-class lesson frame could be temporarily suspended, while children copied information the teacher had written on the blackboard (see excerpt 6.1 below). Children tended to be sensitive to breaks in teachers’ attention or in the lesson frame, since such breaks provided them with opportunities to generate private playful talk and construct play frames in the periphery of classroom discourse.

As in the vignette I presented earlier in this section, backstage playful talk tended to emerge in discourse without being anchored onto some prior talk. In the following example, Miss Popi (a teacher who occasionally taught this class) is teaching ancient Greek history. This lesson has been particularly animated and Miss Popi has managed to capture the children’s imagination. I notice that unlike other lessons where formal instruction tends to follow more or less the canonical I-R-A format today discussion flows some what more freely as children take initiative and ask Miss Popi more questions than usual. Here Miss Popi has shifted her attention and gaze to Vasia and is addressing her question regarding the reasons why parents in the ancient Greek world would be forced to sell their children as slaves (lines 1–3). While Vasia back channels to Miss Popi indicating that she is following her train of thought (line 4), Babis, who is sitting at the other side of the classroom, introduces a shift to play on the side. He does so by making a playful

self-reference to Abdullah Öcalan, the Kurdish leader whose capture at the time of the fieldwork had made headlines in the Greek news (line 5).⁴³

Excerpt 5.1⁴⁴ (30/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης	Περιφέρεια της σχολικής τάξης
1Κυρία Πόπη	αν δεν είχε πολλά χωράφια
2	για να τα θρέψει .. μπορούσε
3	τα παιδιά του να τα πουλήσει ..
4Βάσια	κατάλαβα ..
5	(... []) → Μπάμπης [p είμαι Αμπντουλάχ::(hh)]
...	

Centre of classroom talk	Periphery of classroom talk
1Miss Popi	if he didn't have enough food
2	for his children
3	he would sell them
4Vasia	right
5	(... []) → Babis [I'm Abdullah
...	

In excerpt 5.1, Babis marks off his playful contribution from both preceding and current classroom talk (lines 1–4), by making use of prosody: he exploits stress, vowel elongation and giggling and delivers his turn in low voice, while overlapping with Vasia, who is the current speaker in the centre of classroom discourse. Moreover, the prosodic cues he uses signal that the ratified participants in this playful exchange are the children (and the researcher) who are sitting in close proximity to him. Indeed, like most instances of backstage playful talk, his contri-

43. Abdullah Öcalan had been the leader of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) since its establishment in 1978. In 1984, the PKK initiated a campaign of armed conflict in Turkey (as well as in Iraq and Iran) with the purpose of creating an independent Kurdish state which resulted in the death and displacement of thousands of people. In February 1999, Öcalan was captured by the Turkish National Intelligence Agency in Kenya while being transported from the Greek Embassy to Nairobi international airport. His capture led to protest marches by Kurds in major Greek cities and around the world. His capture and the subsequent protest marches were extensively covered by the Greek and Turkish media which explains how the children used chants such as “Öcalan PKK” and “Kurdistan” and created new ones such as “Άμπε Άμπε Κουρδιστάν” <Long live Kurdistan> in their peer talk.

44. In this chapter, I use the parallel column format proposed in Ribeiro (1993) to capture schematically the way backstage playful talk is produced during whole-group instruction.

bution does not appear to be intended as disruptive but rather as a playful interlude alongside the main classroom business (here a class discussion).

Backstage playful talk can also be triggered by prior talk in discourse. Later during the same lesson Miss Popi has turned her back to the children and is summarizing the main discussion points on the blackboard for them to copy in their notebooks. While the children are copying Tuncay turns to Giannis and asks him for the eraser (line 1). Giannis, however, seems to ignore his request. In the next turn, Huseyin leans towards the microphone, which I had placed on the desk in front of the boys to record their talk and teases Giannis (line 4).

Excerpt 5.2 (30/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης		Περιφέρεια της σχολικής τάξης	
1	Τουτζάι ((επαναλαμβάνει ό,τι αντιγράφει))		
2	<i>f</i> α- <u>ο ά::ρχοντας</u> <i>acc</i> γόμα		
3	Γιάννη <i>f</i> γόμα		
4		Χουσεΐν ((στο μικρόφωνο))	
5		→	<i>p</i> <u>Κό:λλια</u> .. <u>Κό:λλια</u> ..
6		→	<u>Κό:λλια</u> (hh) .
7	Τουτζάι ((επαναλαμβάνει)) <i>f</i> ο <u>άρχοντας</u> ..		
8	((στον Χουσεΐν)) <i>acc</i> φύγε ρε=		
9		→ Χουσεΐν	= <i>p</i> <u>Κόλλια</u> :: .
...			

Centre of classroom talk		Periphery of classroom talk	
1	Tuncay ((he repeats what he is copying))		
2	ah the ruler the eraser		
3	Gianni the eraser		
4		Huseyin ((in the microphone))	
5		→	Kollia Kollia
6		→	Kollia
7	Tuncay ((he repeats)) the ruler		
8	((to Huseyin)) go away (re)=		
9		→ Huseyin	=Kollia
...			

Huseyin's teases are reminiscent of teasing episodes between the two boys during break-time in that they are built around the playful repetition of Giannis' surname/nickname "Κόλλια" <Kollia> (see Chapter 4). Here Giannis' lack of response to Tuncay's request for the eraser seems to trigger the subsequent shift to play. Similar to Babis' shift to play in the previous excerpt, Huseyin skilfully uses prosodic cues

to mark off the teasing from the “serious” task of copying the teacher’s main discussion points. Unlike the loudness of the teasing episodes we discussed in Chapter 4, however, Huseyin produces his teases in a low conspiratorial voice. Indeed, the conspiratorial production of these teasing episodes as well as of most backstage playful talk more generally seemed to have the effect of increasing the almost secretive shared enjoyment in taking part in these exchanges on the side.

While backstage playful talk tended to be produced in quiet almost whispering voices for the ears of a select few only, occasionally it would become louder attaining a more public and declamatory character. This happened when teachers put the instructional frame on hold to attend to other matters. The suspension of the instructional frame had immediate interactional consequences in that the children would rise to the occasion and exploit the opportunity to engage in playful talk while waiting for their teachers to resume the lesson. For instance, in the following excerpt, Miss Eleni, the English language teacher, has suspended the lesson for a few seconds and is helping out a small group of children sitting in the corner of the classroom who are doing the English language exam they had missed the previous week. Meltem takes this opportunity to initiate one of her favourite music making routines, chanting snippets from the popular at the time of the fieldwork song “Με λένε Πόπη” <My Name is Popi> (lines 1–2).

Excerpt 5.3 (18/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- 1Μελτέμ ((τραγουδάει)) γει-ά σας . με λέν Πό-πη . σα τη για-γιά μου τη Καλλιόπη
- 2 αχ να με λέ-γανε Κυβέ:λη- ..
- 3 *f* ‘μου πήρε ((ο Νώντας)) (...) .
- 4Νώντας *f* ρε- . έ:λα .. acc να πάρεις το δικό σου=
- 5Μελτέμ =θα σε σκοτώ:σω ..
- 6Βάσια *f*((τραγουδά)) θέλω να ξέρω γιατί : . γιατί:
- ...

Centre of classroom talk

- 1Meltem ((she raps)) hi there my name is Popi just like my granny Calliope
- 2 oh how I wish my name were Kiveli
- 3 he ((Nontas)) took my (...)
- 4Nontas (re) come on take your own ((thing))=
- 5Meltem =I’m gonna kill you
- 6Vasia ((sings)) I wanna know why why
- ...

Meltem's music making is followed by a mock threat to Nontas (line 5), who apparently seems unwilling to share something with her and more music making by Vasia (line 6). Unlike the more subdued and fleeting instances of backstage playful talk discussed earlier in this section (i.e. excerpts 5.1–5.2), the sheer volubility of this particular instance of play and the fact that it is sustained over a number of turns catapults backstage playful talk in the very centre of classroom discourse. There for some brief moments it dominates the interactional floor before Miss Eleni resumes whole-class instruction. On these occasions, through their music making and teasing routines children display their expertise in youth/popular culture and foreground aspects of their peer group identities (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

As I discussed earlier in this section, play frames in backstage playful talk were introduced and developed in parallel with the on-going instructional frame (e.g. lesson or class management frames). Throughout the production of the play frames, instructional frames occupied the centre of classroom discourse and were the main classroom frames. Because the two frames occurred in parallel, children engaging in playful talk could shift in and out of instructional frames. Such shifts were essential in order to ensure that the children's backstage playful talk was not seen as disruptive enough to warrant teacher intervention to restore classroom order.

Children, therefore, moved in and out of the instructional frames, by initiating constant shifts in "footing" (Goffman 1972). Depending on their footing, children could display a consistent orientation towards the play frame under construction or they could opt for successive shifts in footing to signal changes in their position as the play frame developed. Children sharing a consistent orientation towards the play frame did so either by actively contributing to it or by signalling their support via prosodic cues, most frequently giggles. Simultaneously, the children could be orienting (or at least partly) to the instructional frame under way. Indeed, in many cases play and work seemed to be closely interwoven making it difficult to distinguish whether the children were on-task or off-task (cf. Broner & Tarone 2001).⁴⁵ For instance, in excerpt 5.4 below, Babis' playful self-reference to Abdullah Öcalan triggers a play frame in the periphery of classroom discourse, while the lesson frame occupies centre stage (line 5).

45. This was further compounded by the lack of video-recordings which meant that I could only rely on verbal cues from audio-recording and field-notes to ascertain whether children engaging in backstage playful talk were simultaneously orienting to the on-going instructional frame.

Excerpt 5.4 (30/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης		Περιφέρεια της σχολικής τάξης	
1	Κυρία Πόπη	αν δεν είχε πολλά χωράφια	
2		για να τα θρέψει .. μπορούσε	
3		τα παιδιά του να τα πουλήσει ..	
4	Βάσια	κατάλαβα ..	
5		(... [])	→ Μπάμπης [<i>p</i> είμαι Αμπντουλάχ::(hh)
6			Τουτζάι ((στο Γιάννη)) <i>p</i> ηξέ(hh)ρεις
7			→ τί είπε; . Αμπντουλάχ(hh) .
8	Κυρία Πόπη	<i>f dec</i> γράφω .	
9		ό,τι έχουμε πει ..	→ Γιάννης [<i>acc p</i> άμπε άμπε
10		((η δασκάλα γράφει	→ Κουρδιστάν=
11		στον πίνακα))	→ Μπάμπης = <i>acc p</i> άμπε . [4sec]
			((αντιγράφουν από τον πίνακα))
...			

Centre of classroom talk		Periphery of classroom talk	
1	Miss Popi	if he didn't have enough food	
2		for his children	
3		he could sell them	
4	Vasia	right	
5		(... [])	→ Babis [I'm Abdullah
6			Tuncay ((to Giannis)) did you hear
7			→ what he said? Abdullah
8	Miss Popi	I'm writing down	
9		what [we just said	→ Giannis [long live
10		((the teacher is writing	→ Kurdistan=
11		on the blackboard))	→ Babis =long live [4 sec]
			((they are copying from the blackboard))
...			

Following Babis' footsteps, in the subsequent turns, Tuncay and Giannis join in to develop the play frame further. Tuncay turns to Giannis and highlights what Babis has just said and giggles (lines 6–7). Tuncay's playful repetition of "Αμπντουλάχ" <Abdullah> (line 6) prompts Giannis to respond in kind. Drawing on his background knowledge of the various chants in circulation during protest marches following the capture of Abdullah Öcalan in Greek and other European cities at the time of the fieldwork, Giannis improvises and comes up a

new chant: “άμπε άμπε Κουρδιστάν” <long live Kurdistan> (lines 9–10). In the next turn, Giannis’ chant is immediately countered by Babis’ reply “άμπε” <long live>, line 11). In this excerpt, we notice that all three children are demonstrating a common orientation towards the play frame: Tuncay probes Giannis to pay attention to Babis’ self-reference to Öcalan, while Giannis and Babis function as a conversational duet, by complimenting each other’s utterances (cf. Maybin 1994). Shortly after, the play frame is brought to a close, as the boys resume copying what the teacher is writing on the blackboard.

As a rule, however, children did not share a consistent orientation towards play frames that were introduced in the periphery of classroom discourse. Instead, as I mentioned, they opted for constant shifts in footing to signal changes in their position vis-à-vis the development of the play frame. These shifts in footing also marked shifts in and out of the instructional frames at hand. For instance, in excerpt 5.5 below, Huseyin and Tuncay rapidly move in and out of the class management frame (i.e. copying what Miss Popi is writing on the blackboard) to engage in backstage playful talk and develop a play frame in the periphery of classroom activity.

Excerpt 5.5 (30/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης		Περιφέρεια της σχολικής τάξης	
1	Τουτζάι ((επαναλαμβάνει ό,τι αντιγράφει))		
2	<i>f</i> α- ο ά::ρχοντας <i>acc</i> γόμα		
3	Γιάννη <i>f</i> γόμα		
4		Χουσείν	((στο μικρόφωνο))
5		→	<i>p</i> Κό:λλια .. Κό:λλια ..
6		→	Κό:λλια(hh) .
7	Τουτζάι ((επαναλαμβάνει)) <i>f</i> ο άρχοντας ..		
8	((στον Χουσείν)) <i>acc</i> φύγε ρε=		
9		→ Χουσείν	= <i>p</i> Κόλλια:: .
10		→ Τουτζάι	αυτός είπε . Κόλλια .
11		→ Μπάμπης	<i>pp</i> Κόλλια φοράω .
12		→	Κόλλια:
13	Χουσείν <i>acc</i> α:: αυτός είπε .		
14	ο αριθμός .		<i>pp</i> (...)
15	και εγώ έγραψα (...)=	→ Τουτζάι	ατιατό:: .. [Κό::λλια
16		→ Χουσείν	[<i>p acc</i> <i>çiçi</i>
17		→	<i>bana</i> . <i>çiçi bana</i> (hh)
...			

Centre of classroom talk		Periphery of classroom talk	
1	Tuncay ((he repeats what he is copying))		
2	ah the ruler the eraser ...		
3	Gianni the eraser		
4		Huseyin	((in the microphone))
5		→	Kollia Kollia
6		→	Kollia
7	Tuncay ((he repeats)) the ruler		
8	((to Huseyin)) stop it (re)=		
9		→ Huseyin	=Kollia
10		→ Tuncay	he said Kollia
11		→ Babis	Kollia/ <i>kolya</i> I'm wearing
12		→	Kollia/ <i>kolya</i>
13	Huseyin a he said		
14	the number		(...)
15	and I wrote (...)=	→ Tuncay	atiato [Kollia/ <i>kolya</i> =
16		→ Huseyin	[<i>çiçi</i>
17		→	<i>bana çiçi bana</i>
...			

As excerpt 5.5 illustrates, initially Tuncay rejects the play frame. Instead, he seems to be immersed in the copying task at hand. When Huseyin starts teasing Gianni, Tuncay curtly cuts him off: he raises the volume of his voice to repeat what he is copying from the blackboard and in a rather irritated tone of voice orders Huseyin to “stop it” <φύγε ρε> (lines 7–8). In the following turns, however, he aligns himself with the two boys and takes part in the teasing (lines 10, 15). Similar to Tuncay, Huseyin oscillates between play and the “serious” task of copying from the blackboard, as the two boys exchange playful allusions to Gianni’s nickname/surname based on a pun between “Kollia” (Giannis’ surname/nickname) and “kolya” (meaning necklace in the local Turkish variety of Gazi) (lines 11–15). After a momentary shift in footing back to the copying task (lines 13–15), Huseyin re-aligns himself with the on-going playful activity: overlapping with Tuncay, he produces a hybrid quotable set phrase based on the set phrases “çiçi meme” <cute boobs> and “gel bana” <come to me> inspired by the Turkish comedy sequel “Hababam Sınıfı” <The Unruly Class> (lines 16–17).

The parallel development of play frames and instructional frames strongly suggested that the “unofficial world of the peer culture” and “the official world of the teacher’s agenda” could co-exist but never criss-cross one another (Cazden 1988: 150). In this context, instructional frames tended to dominate the centre of classroom talk while play frames were relegated a space in its margins. We

did see, however, that when teachers suspended instructional frames to attend to other business backstage playful talk was temporarily transported to the centre of classroom discourse. Then play frames became the main classroom frame, until the teacher resumed the lesson and reintroduced the instructional frame (e.g. excerpt 5.3). Overall, during these rapid and occasionally more sustained shifts to play children seemed to be putting their institutional roles and identities as “pupils” on hold and foregrounding other social identities and affiliations, most notably those associated with youth/popular culture and their peer group identities. At the same time, children strategically exploited these oscillations between the “serious” business of attending to the lesson and quietly taking part in these more playful encounters on the side to negotiate status and leadership roles, especially among peers of the same sex (see Section 5.4 and Chapter 6 for further discussion).

5.3.2 Frontstage playful talk

This is another vignette from the classroom. It describes some initial observations about frontstage playful talk during teacher-fronted whole class teaching:

I am sitting in one of the literacy lessons. The children and Miss Soula, the class teacher, are reading a chapter from their children’s favourite story book about the lives of two children living in Austria, Sussie and Pawel. Usually, Miss Soula appoints one of the children to read aloud or she reads herself. Today she is doing the reading and the children are listening quietly. As she is reading she comes across the word “εὐθυμος” <high spirited> which the author uses to describe the children’s grandfather. She stops reading and asks the children what it means. Tuncay and Costas self-select and shout out “καλός;” <good?>. Taking her cue from the boys’ utterance, Vasia sings slightly off tune “ο πιο καλός ο παππούς” <the best grandfather>. The other children giggle signalling their familiarity with the tune and their acknowledgement of Vasia’s playful transformation of its lyrics: Vasia has lifted the tune for her music making from a very well-known Greek song which goes like this “ο πιο καλός ο μαθητής” <the best pupil> sang by Georgos Zambetas. Here she has slightly changed the lyrics, building on the intertextual references from the story and the boys’ previous contributions. Miss Soula ignores Vasia’s music making and asks again what the word “εὐθυμος” <high spirited> means.

(fieldnotes, 15/3/99)

This was a typical example of children’s frontstage playful talk during teacher-fronted whole class instruction where playful talk emerged at the very centre of classroom discourse. Unlike canonical instances of backstage playful talk, frontstage playful talk tended to be loud, public and very often diffused. Following

Goffman (1967, 1981), children and teachers alternated in the following participant positions: (1) initiators and (2) ratified participants (which were further divided into primary recipients and secondary recipients).

Like Vasia in the vignette above, children tended to initiate most frontstage playful talk. Frontstage playful talk tended to be directed to a particular child (e.g. the butt of a joke or the target for teasing), although sometimes teachers would be assigned this position as well. On these occasions, the child in question or the teacher were the primary recipients of playful talk, while the rest of the children and the researcher were secondary recipients. When playful talk was diffused (as in the case in the vignette above), then the distinction between primary and secondary recipients did not hold: because of the public nature of frontstage talk in general, all present (children, teachers and the researcher) were ratified participants.

The vignette above highlights two important points. First, in frontstage playful talk, children tended to use contextualization cues that were easily recognisable as cues for play by both their teachers and fellow peers (e.g. prosodic cues). When compared to cues employed in backstage playful talk, children avoided using cues that were specific to the peer group and required shared background knowledge to interpret them (e.g. nicknames or specific recontextualisable fragments of talk that were particular to the children's out-of-school recreational and media practices). For instance, in the vignette above, Vasia chooses a tune from her repertoire that is not specific to the peer group. Instead, she alludes to a song that Miss Soula would also be well acquainted with which meant that she too could understand and appreciate Vasia's intertextual link between the curriculum and music making. This selective use of cues in frontstage playful talk seemed to suggest that children were particularly sensitive to the presence of teachers (and occasionally other adults) as ratified recipients. At the same time, by exerting a high degree of control over the contextualization cues they used, children successfully controlled teacher access to information regarding aspects of their peer group culture.⁴⁶

Second, frontstage playful talk tended to be anchored onto prior talk and second that talk. While the examination of the system of turn-taking during formal teacher-fronted instruction has shown that pupils are constrained in self-selecting and making bids for the classroom floor (McHoul 1978), the classroom data here diverged somewhat from the reported norm. Although teachers tended to allocate next speakership rights, children could still self-select and makes bids for the interactional floor (e.g. Tuncay, Costas and Vasia in the vignette above). Through bids for play in particular, children signalled a reframing of the previous

46. As a result of these gate-keeping practices, I observed that teachers were often unfamiliar with meanings and uses of particular cues for play.

activity (Goffman 1974:44–45). Reframings are viewed as transformations of the existing activity into another one. Although a reframing may change an activity only slightly, it completely alters the participants' perception of the activity at hand (i.e. what they think is going on) (ibid). Therefore, the introduction of playful talk in discourse, via the use of clusters of contextualization cues, reframed the activity (usually an activity associated with the lesson or class management) into play. Through such reframings, children negotiated the construction of play frames and sought to transport playful talk from the periphery to the very centre of classroom discourse. At the same time, such reframings opened up possibilities for a change in relationships, affiliations and identity work between children and teachers (cf. Maybin 2006).

Children initiated shifts to play could be defused (as in the case of Vasia's music making in the vignette above), or they could be directed at particular recipients. A case in point is excerpt 5.6 below. Here Miss Soula has been explaining the aspirations' system in Modern Greek prior to its change in the early 80s (lines 1–2). Her use of the word “πνεύματα” [pneumata] <aspirations> (line 1) to refer to aspirations employed in word-initial vowels triggers an association with a homophonous word, which means “spirits and other supernatural beings”. Drawing on this association, Meltem who is obsessed with spirits and supernatural beings self-selects to voice her fear (line 3). While Miss Soula dismisses Meltem's contribution as irrelevant to their discussion (after all the teacher was not referring to spirits but aspirations), in the subsequent turn, Giannis self-selects and teases Meltem for publicly expressing her fear of such beings (line 4).

Excerpt 5.6 (15/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---|
| 1 | Κυρία Σούλα | και τότε μπαίνανε αυτά <u>εδώ</u> .. ((γράφει στον πίνακα)) |
| 2 | | που τα λέγανε <u>πνεύματα</u> .. |
| 3 | | δε τα λέγανε τόνους= |
| 4 | Μελτέμ | =acc 'μανούλα μου πνεύματα= |
| 5 | Κυρία Σούλα | = acc δεν είναι αυτό που φαντάζεσαι .. |
| → | 6 Πιάννης | f'ε:.....: ντε[<u>ντε</u>: |
| 7 | Κυρία Σούλα | [acc ((στη Μελτέμ)) και <u>σταμάτα</u> τώρα ... |
| | ... | |

Centre of classroom talk

- | | | |
|---|------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Miss Soula | then these things here were used |
| | | ((she writes on the blackboard)) |

- 2 which were called “pnevmeta” ((aspirations))⁴⁷
 3 they weren’t called “tonous” ((another type of stress))=
 4Meltem =oh my gosh “pnevmeta” ((spirits))=
 5Miss Soula =these are not the sort of “pnevmeta”((spirits)) you think
 → 6Giannis e de[de
 7Miss Soula [(to Meltem)) give it a rest
 ...

Drawing on immediately recognisable cues from horror movies, Giannis introduces the teasing activity in discourse, by loudly imitating scary sounds in high pitch (line 6). By manipulating prosody (loudness, high pitch, stress) and vowel elongation, he conjures up shared associations of horror films to introduce the play frame in the centre of classroom discourse. The initiation of the play frame reframes the activity (the teacher’s explanation regarding the aspirations’ system in Modern Greek) into play (a teasing activity). In this sense, the play frame is embedded in the lesson frame. At the same time, through this shift to play, Giannis is pursuing what appear to be peer-sociable goals rather than instructional goals: he is highlighting his knowledge and expertise of horror films over academic knowledge (the aspirations’ system) and foregrounding his identity as a young person immersed in youth popular culture (here viewing horror films) rather than his identity as a pupil engaged in the lesson.

Besides directing their playful jibes at their peers (as in the case of Giannis’ teases above), children would also direct their frontstage playful talk to their teachers, who then became primary recipients of such talk. In particular, frontstage playful talk emerged as a next or a response to teachers’ prior turn, usually a question. These questions were what Mehan refers to as “known-information questions” (1985) and constituted a permanent fixture of classroom talk. They could be directed to the whole class or to a specific pupil. On these occasions, via shifts to frontstage playful talk, children appeared to be responding to the teachers’ questions (by staying on topic), while simultaneously introducing a reframing of the current activity to play.

For instance, in excerpt 5.7 below, Miss Popi (the teacher who occasionally taught this class) asks a known-information question to the whole class. Speakership rights are up for grabs. Giannis makes a bid for the floor, by raising his index finger and calling the teacher (line 2). Besides competing for next speakership rights, Giannis’ playful rendition of his summons has the effect of reframing the current activity into play.

47. Because the ensuing play frame is based on the word play between the homophonous words “πνεύματα” [pnevmeta], I have used the transliteration [pnevmeta] in the English text.

Excerpt 5.7 (30/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- 1Κυρία Πόπη *f* σε μια δημοκρατία . μπορεί κάθε άνθρωπος να μιλήσει
ελεύθερα;=
→ 2Γιάννης = *ff* ((με τραγουδιστή φωνή)) κυ-ρί::α:: .
→ 3Τουτζάι *p* κυ-ρί::α:: .
4Κυρία Πόπη =Κώστα;

Centre of classroom talk

- 1Miss Popi in a democracy can every man speak freely?=
→ 2Giannis =((with sing-song intonation)) Miss
→ 3Tuncay Miss
4Miss Popi =Costa?

Giannis' summons exploits a set of contextualization cues (i.e. loud volume, sing-song intonation, glottal stop, stress and elongated vowels) to playfully reframe the interaction. Although the reframing does not alter the activity greatly (it is still a summons), it does attract a playful uptake by Tuncay (line 3). This means that the summons is perceived differently. It is seen as an attempt for play, especially since it diverges from the canonical summons children employ to compete for teacher attention: calling the teacher by making use of successive "κυρία" <Miss> produced in fast pace, while quickly swaying the index finger. At the same time, by playfully manipulating his summons, Giannis transforms a "doing work" frame into a more "peer socially-orientated" frame. In so doing, he expresses his dual orientation towards engagement in the lesson on the one hand and peer group affiliation on the other hand in that he can spice the lesson up a bit (cf. Maybin 2006).

Although children introduced most of the frontstage playful talk during teacher fronted whole-class instruction, teachers would occasionally take up this position as well. When teachers initiated or participated in the construction of play frames, however, their contributions were limited to single turns. These could take the form of either an initiation or a response to a playful turn (such as a tease, a joke etc.). While such teacher talk could in turn elicit a playful uptake on the part of the children, including sustained laughter and giggling, teachers consistently avoided maintaining the play frame. Rather, they quickly introduced shifts to the instructional frame at hand (e.g. lesson, class management or task-related frame). The following excerpt takes place during English language instruction. Miss Eleni, the English language teacher, is explaining the absence of plural case-marking in adjectives in English. She peppers her explanation with incorrect

examples of English language use (i.e. “talls”, “smalls”, lines 1, 3). She sums up her exemplification by assessing that such mistakes (namely adding plural case-marking in adjectives) “είναι μεγάλη κοτσάνα” <are very silly> ones (line 5).

Excerpt 5.8 (26/4/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- 1Κυρία Ελένη *f* δεν μπορώ να βάλω σ' ένα επίθετο “ες” . και να πω .. “talls” .
 2Χουσεΐν ((επαναλαμβάνει ό,τι λέει η δασκάλα)) τολς .
 3Κυρία Ελένη ή- .. ‘smalls’ .
 4Χουσεΐν ((επαναλαμβάνει ό,τι λέει η δασκάλα)) τσοϊτσς .
 → 5Κυρία Ελένη τί είναι; [είναι . μεγάλη . κοτσάνα
 6Κώστας [η Βάσια ..
 7Τουτζάι hhh η:: (hh)Βάσια .. (hh)είπε=-
 8Χουσεΐν =*f*μεγάλη κοτσάνα..
 9() *p* hhhh
 10Κυρία Ελένη *f* λοιπόν .

Centre of classroom talk

- 1Miss Eleni I can't add an “s” to an adjective and say “talls”
 2Huseyin ((repeats)) tols
 3Miss Eleni or “smalls”
 4Huseyin ((repeats)) choichs
 → 5Miss Eleni what would that be? [that would be a very silly mistake
 6Costas [Vasia
 7Tuncay Vasia made=-
 8Huseyin =a very silly mistake
 9() hhhh
 10Miss Eleni right

By making use of the mild term of jocular abuse “κοτσάνα” <silly>, Miss Eleni is trying to precipitate possible mistakes the children (most of whom are beginner learners of English) may make. At the same time, her use of this particular cue which children frequently use to tease one another reframes the activity to play. Although the reframing does not change greatly the activity (it is still an assessment), it does change the children's perception of what is going on. Not surprisingly, as the following turns illustrate, Miss Eleni's assessment triggers playful uptakes on the children's part (cf. Baynham 1996): Tuncay, Costas and Huseyin, collaboratively engage in cross-sex teasing targeting Vasia who had made the very same mistake the teacher had just assessed as “μεγάλη κοτσάνα” <very silly> one (lines 6–8). While still concerned with assessing the children's language errors,

Miss Eleni's appropriation of a taunt commonly used in peer talk provides a ludic interlude to explaining English grammar. This is heightened by the incongruence of her assessment of the mistake as "μεγάλη κοτσάνα" <very silly> with her previous curriculum oriented talk about English grammar. At the same time, such appropriations serve to enhance teachers' inter-personal relations with the children and project a non-institutional social persona with which the children can readily identify (see also Lytra 2004).

One further point worth making here: when compared with contextualization cues children employed in frontstage playful talk, teachers exhibited a more limited range of cues (e.g. mock threats, prosody and mild terms of jocular abuse). The use of this limited range of cues may be attributed to the significantly less playful talk they initiated in discourse as well as their limited participation in play frames during whole-group instruction more generally.

As I stated earlier in this section, play frames in frontstage playful talk tended to be embedded in instructional frames or socio-relational frames. On their part, teachers tended to resist children-led shifts to play by avoiding playing along while simultaneously introducing frame shifts back to the instructional frame at hand (cf. Ribeiro 1996). These teacher-led renegotiations of the main classroom frame usually resulted to the swift re-establishment of the instructional frame. Whenever children attempted to sustain the play frame, in the end they were most likely to abandon playful talk and revert to the teacher-proposed instructional frame at hand. In excerpt 5.9, Miss Soula and the children are checking the maths homework. Miss Soula opens up the bidding for the classroom floor by calling for volunteers to come up to the blackboard and do the maths exercise. Fanis is quick as usual to raise his hand to do the exercise. He further indicates his eagerness by repeatedly calling out Miss Soula. His summons, however, triggers a playful uptake from Babis and Bahrye (lines 3–5).

Excerpt 5.9 (5/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- | | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| 1 | Κυρία Σούλα | ποιός θα σηκωθεί να κάνει το πρώτο πρόβλημα [στον πίνακα; |
| 2 | Φάνης | [acc f γώ- γώ- . |
| 3 | | κυρία κυρία |
| → 4 | Μπάμπης | = f acc ί-α: ί-α: |
| → 5 | Μπαχριέ | ff acc μπί-α: μπί-α: |
| → 6 | Μπάμπης | f acc μπί-α: [μπί-α: . μπίμπα μπίμπα μπίμπα .. |
| 7 | Κώστας | [(...) |
| 8 | Κυρία Σούλα | Κώστα μου θα κάνουμε την άσκηση στον πίνακα |
| 9 | Γιάννης | acc μ' αυτό τον τρόπο . είπε η δασκάλα .. |
| | ... | |

as perhaps a means of providing a brief ludic interlude to instruction and alleviating somewhat feelings of stress or boredom.

Nevertheless, although teachers appeared to tolerate frontstage playful talk, sometimes their reframing of the interaction back to instruction revealed a certain irritation regarding the emergence of frontstage playful talk in discourse and a sense of urgency to get back to the “real” classroom business (i.e. the lesson). Teachers would express this urgency by exploiting discourse markers, such as “λοιπόν” <so, well>, “άρα” <therefore>, followed by prosodic cues (loudness and fast pace), as well as by summoning a “named addressee” (usually one of the key participants in play) (MacBeth 1991:297). The purpose of these cues was to swiftly bring playful talk to an end and re-establish the instructional frame as the main frame in classroom discourse (e.g. excerpt 5.8, line 10).

While teacher-led reframings tended to be performed smoothly, as children were most likely to abandon the play frame and re-orient to the instructional frame sometimes play and instructional frames could co-occur. In other words, one group of children could be pursuing the play frame, where as another group (made up of the teacher and some of the other children) could be maintaining the instructional frame. Unlike canonical instances of frontstage playful talk, on these occasions, children sustained the play frames over more than a few turns. It is worth highlighting here that similar to some instances of backstage playful talk I discussed in Section 5.3.1, children did not exhibit a consistent orientation towards a particular frame. Instead, they oscillated between play and the “serious” business of instruction, as the interaction developed. The co-occurrence of instructional and play frames seemed to be triggered particularly by teacher-initiated sequences of reproach as well as metalinguistic discussions (e.g. talk about aspects of Greek, Turkish and English languages). By seeking to maintain the play frame against teacher-led attempts to firmly re-establish the instructional frame as the main frame, children were seen as resisting and wrestling over teacher control of frame (and topic) development (cf. Candela 1999).

Teacher-initiated sequences of reproach tended to generate play. I observed that children were quick to resort to frontstage playful talk (usually teasing) to lend a hand in the management of classroom discipline (cf. Rampton 1999). Research has shown that forms of discord (among pupils or between teachers and pupils) can trigger sequences of reproach during instruction. Reproaches are regarded as enduring features of classroom life, regardless of teachers’ efforts to contain them and minimise their (potentially) disruptive effect on classroom order (MacBeth 1990:192). Children repeatedly intervened during such sequences of reproach to supplement teacher-led efforts to restore classroom order.

In excerpt 5.10 below, Miss Eleni, the English language teacher has asked the children to do a pre-reading task. The children are working silently although oc-

casional whispering and shifting on chairs can be heard. Huseyin is sitting between Tuncay and Bahrye. It looks like Huseyin is trying to attract her attention, but Bahrye is not happy about this and complains to Miss Eleni. Miss Eleni swiftly orders Huseyin to move seats initiating the subsequent disciplining sequence (line 5 onwards).

Excerpt 5.10 (19/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- 1Μπαχριέ ((στον Χουσεϊν)) στα-μά::τα ..
 2Χουσεϊν [((κοροϊδευτικά)) 'σταμά::τα
 3Μπαχριέ [f κυρί::α .. γιατί μιλάει ο Χουσεϊν; .
 4Χουσεϊν *p acc baksana*=
 τί σε νοιάζει εσένα;
 → 5Κυρία Ελένη = ((αυστηρά)) Χουσεϊν . *acc* πάρτο βιβλίο σου κ' έλα δω=
 → 6Βάσια = Χουσεϊν:v . πάρε το βιβλίο σου κ' έλα εδώ:hh=
 → 7Κώστας =f τυχερέ: Χουσεϊν:v=
 → 8Κυρία Ελένη =((φανερά εκνευρισμένη)) *acc* ΕΛΑ ΔΩ=
 ((Ο Χουσεϊν σηκώνεται αργά και πάει να αλλάξει θέση))
 → 9Χουσεϊν =*acc* (hh) ποιά; (hh)ποιά; ((θέση))
 → 10Μπάμπης *p τυχερέ* [Χουσεϊν
 → 11Τουτζάι [ω- ω- *acc* ποιά ποιά; α:::
 → 12Φάνης Τούτζα . *acc* ποιά ποιά; .
 ((ο Χουσεϊν κάνει πως σηκώνεται από τη θέση του και πως πάει να χτυπήσει το Φάνη))
 13 α- . f με κυνηγάει κυρία ..
 ((Ησυχία καθώς τα παιδιά συνεχίζουν την άσκηση που τους είχεβάλει η κυρία Ελένη))

Centre of classroom talk

- 1Bahrye ((to Huseyin)) stop it
 2Huseyin [((repeats in a whining voice)) stop it
 3Bahrye [Miss why is Huseyin talking?
 4Χουσεϊν *baksana*=
 mind your own business=
 → 5Miss Eleni =((sternly)) Huseyin get your book and come over here=
 → 6Vasia =Huseyin get your book and come over here=
 → 7Costas =lucky you Huseyin=
 → 8Miss Eleni =((irritated) come over here=
 ((Huseyin reluctantly gets up to change seats))
 → 9Huseyin =where? where? ((shall I sit))

- 10Babis lucky [you Huseyin
 → 11Tuncay [((repeats in a teasing manner)) oh where where ((shall
 I sit))
 → 12Fanis ((repeats to Tuncay)) Tuca where where ((shall I sit))?
 ((Huseyin pretends to stand up and hit Fanis))
 13 ah he's coming after me Miss
 (('The children fall silent as they resume the task set by Miss
 Eleni))

Vasia latches onto Miss Eleni's reproach and transforms the serious reprimand into play. The rekeying is subtle: Vasia gives Miss Eleni's utterance a playful twist through vowel elongation and giggling (line 6). Two points worth highlighting here. Miss Eleni continuously sustains her orientation towards the class management frame, throughout the development of the children's play frame. In a rather irritated manner, she repeats her order that Huseyin changes seats immediately ("έλα δω" <come over here>, line 8) and refrains from intervening to address Fanis' call ("με κυνηγάει κυρία" <he's coming after me Miss>, line 13). Meanwhile, Vasia's initial taunt (line 6) triggers more teasing remarks first by Costas (line 7), then Babis (line 10), Tuncay (line 11) and finally Fanis (lines 12–13). At the risk of missing out on the ludic moment, Huseyin also shifts to play (line 9).

This disciplining episode, therefore, gives rise to the following participant structure: Vasia, Costas, Babis, Tuncay and Fanis co-construct the play frame while Miss Eleni is pursuing the sequence of reproach. In other words, both the children and the teacher retain a consistent orientation towards the frame they choose to advance. This means that they do not make any shifts in footing to support the other frame (whether that is the class management or the play frame), as the exchange develops. By maintaining her firm orientation towards the class management frame, however, Miss Eleni ultimately manages to curtail the development of play in discourse.

Second, as Tannen ([1979]1993) argues, "each frame entails ways of behaving that potentially conflict with the demands of other frames" (:67). By engaging in frontstage playful talk (such as the teasing episode above) to lend a hand in the management of classroom discipline, children were in fact generating more disorder. If the aim of sequences of reproach is to discipline the guilty party, whose conduct exhibits a departure from the norm (such as nagging one's neighbour rather than doing the assigned task), and re-establish the institutional frame as the main classroom frame for all, then, play frames hinder its swift re-establishment.

It is, therefore, not surprising that frontstage playful talk may occasionally create a "schism" in the main classroom floor (cf. Cazden 1988). An instructional frame and a play frame may take place simultaneous in the very centre of class-

room talk. As the interaction develops, however, the simultaneous development of the two frames leads to a split of the main classroom floor into two main classroom floors. When such a split occurs, instead of letting the play frame trail off, some children will actively sustain it over a number of turns, while the teacher and some other children will be engaged in maintaining the instructional frame. This split is characterised by overlapping talk among the children and the teacher and by the volubility of their contributions. Occasions of schism, however, seldom escalate into conflict. Similar to other occasions of simultaneously frame development we saw in this section, the play frame is brought to a close and the single classroom floor is restored, via repeated teacher (and occasionally pupil)-led shifts to the instructional frame.

For instance, in excerpt 5.11 below, Giannis teases Meltem for publicly expressing her fear of “πνεύματα” [pnevмата] <spirits and other supernatural beings>. While Miss Soula dismisses Meltem’s notorious pre-occupation with ghosts and spirits as irrelevant, Giannis’ taunt opens up the floor for more play which leads to a “schism” in the main classroom floor (line 6).

Excerpt 5.11 (15/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- ...
- 4Μελτέμ =acc ‘μανούλα μου πνεύματα=
 5Κυρία Σούλα = acc δεν είναι αυτό που φαντάζεσαι ...
 → 6Γιάννης f‘ε:.....: ντε[ντε:.....:
 7Κυρία Σούλα [acc ((στη Μελτέμ)) και σταμάτα τώρα ...
 8Μπαχριέ f κυρί:α: .
 9Κυρία Σούλα (h)να έχουμε την:-=
 10Μπαχριέ =f κυρί:α: .. πνεύμα p [(...)
 → 11Γιάννης [f‘ε:.....:.....: .
 → 12 [ντε- . ντε- . ντε- .
 → 13Βάσια [f‘μουα:.....:.....:
 14Κυρία Σούλα f προσέξτε .. στα Ελληνικά δεν έχουμε πει ότι υπάρχουν
 κάποιες λέξεις
 → 15Κώστας f πνεύματα::=
 16Κυρία Σούλα =που σημαίνουνε: . πολλά πράγματα=
 → 17Γιάννης f δρά::κουλες=
 18Βάσια =f acc και οι αντω[νυμίες
 → 19Γιάννης [f ‘βαμπίρ::=
 20Κυρία Σούλα =αντω[νυμίες συνήθως σημαίνουν στη γραμματική μόνο .
 → 21Κώστας [p (hh)βα(hh)μπίρ
 22Κυρία Σούλα ενώ πνεύμα είναι στη γραμματική και αυτό που λέει η Μπαριέ .

- 22Miss Soula but “pnevma” is used in grammar and also means what Bahrye is saying
- 23Bahrye Miss [I-
- 24Miss Soula [((“pnevma” also means)) what we have inside us
- 25Costas that’s another [kind of “pnevma”
- 26Bahrye [Miss=
- 27Meltem = “pnevma”=
- 28Giannis = “pnev[ma”=
- 29Huseyin [end of discussion=
- 30Giannis =our “pnevma”=
- 31Bahrye = Miss Miss Sophia ((another teacher)) always says [now we’ll do (...)
- 32Vasia [look
- Meltem “pnevmata”
- 33Barhye [(...)=
- 34Vasia [“pnevma”
- 35Miss Soula = in other words this ((points to her head)) that’s what [she means
- 36Costas [(((to Meltem))
- 37 do you know what’s written here? It’s written Satan=
- 38Giannis =Satan you [eat him
- 39Huseyin [end of discussion
- 40Miss Soula I have told you time and again that this sort of discussions
- 41Meltem don’t you believe in them ((spirits and ghosts))?
- ...

Giannis’ taunt attracts a long teasing episode aimed primarily at Meltem.⁴⁸ Giannis, Vasia and Costas build their teases by exploiting the multiple meanings of the word “πνεύμα” [pnevma] (singular) – “πνεύματα” [pnevmata] (plural). Drawing on Meltem’s allusions to “πνεύματα” [pnevmata] meaning spirits and ghosts, Giannis and Vasia proceed to make loud, scary sounds of what appear to be imitations of ghosts and other supernatural beings lifted from horror films (lines 6, 11–13). Here the world of popular culture meets curriculum focused talk:

48. Meltem, more than any of the minority Turkish-speaking children, exhibited a certain pre-occupation with ghosts and other supernatural beings. As I discussed in Section 2.3.2, children told me stories about encounters with the “tekke baba” and other spirits they or family members had had. This sorts of stories were completely absent from their majority peer’s discourse. The latter’s references to ghosts and other supernatural beings came from popular culture, especially horror films, which all children watched. This may explain minority children’s lack of participation in the ensuing play frame, perhaps signalling that this was an inappropriate topic for play.

the children were avid viewers of horror films and they were well versed in their plots and characters. Children lifted shared popular culture references from horror films and transported them in classroom talk to suit their local interactional projects (here engaging in a teasing activity in the main classroom floor) (cf. Dyson 2003). For instance, as the teasing episode unfolds, Giannis and Costas make repeated references to “δράκουλες” <draculas>, “βαμπίρ” <vampires> and “Σατανάς” <Satan> (lines 17, 19 and 21, 36–38). Moreover, the play frame is further sustained by the continuous repetition of the words “πνεύμα” [pnevma] – “πνεύματα” [pnevмата] alluding to its different meanings (lines 15, 25, 27–28, 30, 32, 34) and peppered with knowing glances and giggles.

While Giannis, Costas, Vasia (and occasionally Meltem, see line 27) are actively keeping the play frame going, Miss Soula, Bahrye, Huseyin (and temporarily Vasia) are pursuing the instructional frame. What is particularly interesting in this teasing exchange is that unlike other instances of play neither Huseyin nor Bahrye take part in the play frame. Rather, they join Miss Soula in elaborating on the different meanings of the word “πνεύμα” [pnevma] (see Chapter 6 for further discussion). Their on-going discussion co-occurs with the development of the play frame and seeks to re-establish the instructional frame as the only main frame. However, their contributions are either ignored or overlapped by the group of teasers, as the play frame is in full swing. In other words, unlike generic instances of simultaneous frame development, in instances of “schism”, playful talk does not seem to subside as fast. Nevertheless, similar to other occasions of simultaneous frame development, a “schism” in the main classroom floor has the effect of challenging teacher authority and renegotiating power at a local, micro-interactional level (cf. Candela 1999). In so doing, children are putting forth and negotiating an institutional order of their own, as an alternative to the classroom order proposed by their teachers, where sustained shifts to play are resisted (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

5.3.3 Teachers as initiators and respondents to play⁴⁹

As I discussed in the previous sections, teachers tolerated children-led shifts to play during teacher-fronted whole class instruction, thereby making play frames an enduring feature of classroom talk. In particular, as a rule, teachers seldom intervened to stop playful backstage talk, unless: (1) they were explicitly asked

49. An earlier version of this section appears in Lytra (2004) “Frame shifting and identity construction during whole class instruction: Teachers as initiators and respondents in play frames”. In: Baynham, M., Deignan, A. and G. White. *Applied Linguistics at the Interface*. London: Equinox, 119–131.

to and (2) they deemed that such talk was getting out of hand. Teachers tended to resist such solicitations for intervention, by ignoring the caller and sustaining the instructional frame. When teachers did intervene, they avoided taking sides and engaging in lengthy discussions regarding pupil conduct. Instead, they resorted to quick disciplinary remarks, before resuming the lesson. Regardless of their brevity, such teacher interventions tended to have the desired effect: to bring the preceding playful talk to a stop (at least temporarily), as children shifted their attention back to the lesson.

For instance, in excerpt 5.12 below, Tuncay, Giannis, Babis and Huseyin are sitting one next to the other. The four boys have been actively initiating and participating in fleeting shifts to play in the margins of classroom talk while Miss Popi (the teacher who occasionally taught this class) is introducing new vocabulary items and jotting them down on the blackboard. At the same time, the boys are diligently copying the new vocabulary items in their note books and asking clarification questions (lines 1–6). So far their swift movements in and out of play (i.e. teases and ludic repetitions of recontextualisable fragments of talk) have gone undetected (lines 8–10). In line 11, however, Tuncay goes public and loudly complains to Miss Popi that Babis has repeatedly been calling him “Αμπντουλάχ” <Abdullah>, alluding here to PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan (lines 11–12). Tuncay’s complaint introduces a shift in footing away from the play frame and transforms private children’s talk into public teacher-pupil talk.

Excerpt 5.12 (30/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

Περιφέρεια της σχολικής τάξης

- | | | | | |
|------|------------|---|---------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Γιάννης | ((στην κυρία Πόπη)) αρπαγή::; ..
((διαβάζει από τον πίνακα)) | | |
| 2 | | τίναί αυτό; . | | |
| 3 | Κυρία Πόπη | αρπαγή; .. <u>αρπάζω</u> . | | |
| 4 | | δεν είπαμε . | | |
| 5 | | ότι <u>αρπάζανε</u> ανθρώπους; | | |
| 6 | Χουσεΐν | <i>acc</i> κυρία να το γράψουμε; .. | | |
| 7 | Κυρία Πόπη | και <u>αρπαγή</u> γράψτε .. | | |
| 8 | | | Χουσεΐν | <i>p gei bana</i> |
| 9 | Βάσια | ((αντιγράφει)) α[ρ::παγή | Τουτζάι | [(hh)anja::: ma::: |
| 10 | | | Μπάμπης | <i>p</i> Αμπντουλάχ(hh) |
| → 11 | Τουτζάι | <i>f</i> α::: <i>acc</i> <u>κυρία</u> .. πέστου αυτουνού .. | | |
| → 12 | | όλο- . <u>Αμπντουλάχ</u> λέει .. | | |
| | | | | ((στον Μπάμπη)) |
| 13 | | | | α- <i>p</i> Κουρδιστάν hh |

- 14Γιάννης το παιδί ((ο Μπάμπης)) δεν είναι καλά=
 → 15Κυρία Πόπη =ff τι:: γίνεται Τουτζάι . εκεί ακριβώς;
 16Τουτζάι p hhhh

Centre of classroom talk

Periphery of classroom talk

- | | | | |
|---------------|--|---------|--------------------------------|
| 1Giannis | ((to Miss Popi)) to capture?
((reading from the blackboard)) | | |
| 2 | what does that mean? | | |
| 3Miss Popi | capture? to capture | | |
| 4 | didn't we say | | |
| 5 | that they would capture people? | | |
| 6Huseyin | should we copy it? | | |
| 7Miss Popi | write down capture too | | |
| 8 | | Huseyin | <i>gei bana</i> |
| 9Vasia | ((copies)) ca[pture | Tuncay | [<i>anja ma</i> ⁵⁰ |
| 10 | | Babis | Abdullah |
| → 11Tuncay | ah Miss tell him | | |
| → 12 | he keeps saying Abdullah | | |
| | | | ((to Babis)) |
| 13 | | | ah Kurdistan |
| 14Giannis | the boy ((Babis)) has lost it= | | |
| → 15Miss Popi | =what's going on there Tuncay? | | |
| 16Tuncay | hhhh | | |

Here Miss Popi addresses Tuncay's solicitations. Instead of telling off Babis for calling Tuncay names, however, she focuses her disciplinary remarks on the boys' disruptive conduct (line 15). Her response is consistent with the overall teacher resistance, I noticed, to intervene in (minor) disputes among peers (see also Section 4.4.4). Even when a child would attempt to provide an account or justification for the complaint, teachers still resisted taking sides. Instead, by focusing their disciplinary remarks on the disruptive effect of the children's talk, they were sending the message that such backstage talk was inappropriate and should stop. This message was compounded by the swift re-establishment of the lesson.

One further point worth raising here: It appears that children who complained to teachers did not seem to expect them to actually intervene on their behalf. Similar to Tuncay in the excerpt above, children were more likely to shift back to play immediately after their complaint (line 13). This observation echoes similar findings in teasing among peers, where children who complained to teachers and

50. "Anja" seems to be a playful transformation of "anne" meaning "mother" in Turkish.

other adults did not wait for their intervention but resumed the teasing. As I discussed in Section 4.4.4, such appeals for teacher intervention seemed to function as ritual complaints rather than real complaints. As the children's playful uptakes illustrated (i.e. reintroduction of playful talk in discourse) their purpose did not seem to be to get teachers to discipline the perpetrators. Rather, they seemed to be negotiating peer group power relations and hierarchies (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

Whenever teachers initiated and/or participated in play, their contributions were limited to single turns. These could take the form of either an initiation or a response to a tease, a joke or some recontextualizable fragment of talk. While such teacher talk could in turn elicit a playful uptake on the children's part, including sustained laughter and giggling, teachers consistently avoided maintaining the play frame (by further responding to children's uptakes playfully). Rather, they tended to introduce shifts to the instructional frame at hand.

Occasionally, teachers would introduce playful talk in the centre of classroom discourse, especially during teacher-initiated disciplinary sequences. For instance, in excerpt 5.13 below, Miss Soula has called Nontas to come to the blackboard to do a maths exercise. As Nontas hesitates, Miss Soula summons him once again to the blackboard (line 1). Following her summons, Tuncay and Costas playfully summon Nontas, by chanting his name (lines 2–3). In the next turn, Nontas elaborates on his unwillingness to come to the blackboard by quietly explaining that he does not know how to do the exercise. Miss Soula addresses Nontas' anxieties, before she turns her attention to Costas who had produced the first and most vocal playful summons in this short exchange (line 2).

Excerpt 5.13 (5/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- | | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| 1 | Κυρία Σούλα | <i>f</i> έ::λα |
| 2 | Κώστας | <i>f</i> <u>Νώ::</u> -ντα . |
| 3 | Τουτζάι | <i>p</i> <u>Νώ::</u> -ντα . |
| 4 | Νώντας | <i>pp acc</i> δε ξέρω . |
| 5 | Κυρία Σούλα | <i>acc</i> <u>σήκω</u> ((έλα στον πίνακα)) και θα σου πω εγώ |
| → 6 | | <i>f</i> <u>Κώστα</u> θα σε <u>δεί::ρω</u>
((Ο Νώντας σηκώνεται και κατευθύνεται στον πίνακα)) |
| 7 | () | hhh hh |

Centre of classroom talk

- | | | |
|---|------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Miss Soula | come ((to the blackboard)) |
| 2 | Costas | Nonta |

3Tuncay	Nonta
4Nontas	I don't know how to do it ((the exercise))
5Miss Soula	<i>acc</i> come ((to the blackboard)) and I'll show you
→ 6	Costa you're in for a good spanking ((Nontas gets up and walks up to the blackboard))
7()	hhh hh

Building on the playful delivery of Costas' summons, Miss Soula produces a mock threat ("Κώστα θα σε δειρώ" <Costa you're in for a good spanking>, line 6). Her tease echoes the sing-song intonation in Costas and Tuncay's playful summons directed at Nontas (lines 2–3). The teacher's mock threat triggers laughter, as Nontas reluctantly walks up to the blackboard to do the maths exercise. The children's laughter is triggered by the incongruity between Miss Soula's previous curriculum focused talk and her playful reproach (cf. excerpt 5.8).

It should be added here that such mock threats are a common feature of teacher-led disciplining talk. In her study on Greek verbal play among adults and children, Hirschon (1992) characterises mock threats as: "statements of intention that specify some kind of violent sanction upon a tiny offender but that are seldom carried out" (:39). The frequency with which adults employ such threats towards children, Hirschon argues, points to: "a considerably greater degree of freedom to dissociate words from actions, that there is a lack of accountability for verbal utterances, and that this applies to many more contexts than is admissible in standard English" (:38–39). In this respect, the dissociation between words and actions in Greek discourse means that these mock threats are seen as ritual threats: teachers never physically punish the children to whom they direct their threats and children know that they will never be physically punished. Rather, teacher-initiated ritual threats should be seen as culture-specific aspect to Greek verbal discourse. Indeed, mock threats in this discourse context may function as attempts on the teachers' part to mitigate their disciplinary remarks vis-à-vis children's (minor) conversational transgressions. For instance, in excerpt 5.13 above Costas and Tuncay's teases may have the effect of further inhibiting an already reluctant pupil from coming to the blackboard to do the maths exercise.

Besides disciplining the children, Miss Soula's shift to play can also be seen as an attempt on her part to project a non-institutional social persona. Through the use of ritual threats, she appropriates the "voice" of a mother/care giver with which the children can readily identify. Nevertheless, it is worth reiterating that while foregrounding such non-institutional social personas, teachers are still orientating to their teacher identities and roles (which allow them to initiate, for instance, sequences of reproach and use ritual threats in classroom talk in the first place) (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

Teacher-initiated sequences of reproach could also generate subsequent playful talk. As we saw in excerpt 5.10, through the revoicing of the teachers' disciplinary remarks, children exploited play frames in order to lend a hand in the management of classroom discipline. Although teachers mostly resisted contributing to play, on some ludic moments they would collude with the children, momentarily reverting to playfulness.

For example, in excerpt 5.14 below, Miss Popi and the children have been talking about the issue of the freedom of speech in 5th century Athenian democracy. Vasia who has had the floor prior to this excerpt has been consistently mispronouncing the word “άνθρωποι” [anthropoi] <people> by stressing the second rather than the first syllable. When Giannis and Tuncay draw her attention to this mistake (lines 1, 4) Vasia snaps back at them saying that this is the way she wants to pronounce the word (lines 5). Her snapping back at Giannis and Tuncay elicits a disciplinary remark (line 6): interestingly, Miss Popi does not focus on Vasia's curt reply to the boys but rather on the fact that she is not sitting properly (she is sitting in a cross-legged position).

Excerpt 5.14 (30/3/99)

Κέντρο της σχολικής τάξης

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 Γιάννης | <i>f</i> Βάσια οι άνθρωποι |
| 2 Κυρία Πόπη | λοιπόν . [εεε |
| 3 Βάσια | [κάτσε Γιάννη |
| 4 Γιάννης | <i>ff</i> οι άνθρωποι . |
| 5 Βάσια | ((αλλάζει θέση)) <i>acc</i> ε- ανθρώποι λέω εγώ= |
| 6 Κυρία Πόπη | = <i>acc</i> Βάσια κάτσε καλά σε παρακαλώ= |
| 7 Μαρία | = <i>acc</i> κάτσε καλά Βάσια= |
| 8 Γιάννης | = <i>acc</i> κάτσε [καλά Βάσια |
| 9 Τουτζάι | [<i>acc</i> κάτσε [καλά Βάσια |
| → 10 Κυρία Πόπη | [<i>f</i> και εσύ κύριε Χουσεΐν . [βάλε τον ποπό σου |
| 11 Βάσια | [hhh κύριε Χουσεΐν h |
| → 12 Κυρία Πόπη | [κανονικά στην καρέκλα |
| 13 Βάσια | [hhhh |
| 14 Γιάννης | ((με έμφαση)) τον ποπό σου .. |
| 15 Κυρία Πόπη | δε θέλω νακούσω Γιάννη . [() |
| 16 Χουσεΐν | [τον <u>ποπό</u> σου . |
| 17 Τουτζάι | hhhh |
| 18 Κυρία Πόπη | λοιπόν . στην αρχαία Αθήνα .. |

Centre of classroom talk

- 1Giannis Vasia ((it's)) the people
 2Miss Popi so [mmm
 3Vasia [hold on a minute Gianni
 4Tuncay ((it's)) the people
 5Vasia ((she shifts into a cross-legged position)) well I say people I do=
 6Miss Popi =Vasia sit properly please=
 7Maria = sit properly Vasia=
 8Giannis =sit [properly Vasia
 9Tuncay sit [properly [Vasia
 → 10Miss Popi [you too Mr Huseyin [put your bottom
 11Vasia [hhh Mr Huseyin
 → 12Miss Popi [properly on the chair
 13Vasia [hhhh
 14Giannis your (hh)bottom
 15Miss Popi I don't want to hear ((any more of this)) Gianni
 16Huseyin your (hh) bottom
 17Tuncay hhhhh
 18Miss Popi *f* so in ancient Athens

Latching on Miss Popi's reproach, Maria, Giannis and Tuncay revoice her disciplining remark "κάτσε καλά Βάσια" <sit properly Vasia> (line 6). They exploit syntactic repetition with a minor alteration of the mode of delivery (notably, through accelerated speech) (cf. Tannock 1999). Their contributions trigger a frame shift from the "serious" business of reproaching Vasia to teasing while simultaneously appearing to contribute to policing classroom conduct. In the next turns, instead of calling the three co-teasers to order and shifting gear to disciplining or back to the lesson, Miss Popi momentarily seems to be colluding with the children in maintaining the play frame: although she shifts the target of the reproach to Huseyin, her disciplinary remarks are designed in such a way that they are bound to attract more teasing on the children's part. In particular, she addresses Huseyin as "Κύριε Χουσεΐν" <Mr Huseyin> and tells him "βάλε τον ποπό σου κανονικά στην καρέκλα" <put your bottom properly on the chair> (i.e. to sit properly rather than crossing his legs and leaning on his desk) (lines 10, 12). Not surprisingly, Miss Popi's playful disciplinary remark attracts more uptakes: Vasia, Giannis and Huseyin revoice her remark peppering it with giggling (lines 11, 13–14, 16–17). Similar to excerpt 5.13 earlier in this section, the children's laughter is triggered by the contrast between Miss Popi's previous "serious" and her subsequent more playful talk.

Immediately following her playful reproach (lines 10, 12), Miss Popi makes a swift shift back to non-play: in line 15, she appears to be chastising Giannis for teasing Huseyin and then in line 18 she re-introduces the instructional frame that had been put on hold. Once again this excerpt points to the fact that while tolerating frontstage playful talk during whole class instruction, teachers routinely avoid actively participating in and sustaining it over a single turn. Instead, they tend to ignore such contributions, provide minimal responses and most commonly single handedly initiate frame shifts to the instructional frame.

One further point worth making here: The children's further uptakes of Miss Popi's playful talk highlight the possible hazards for teachers to actively take part in the development of play frames. Whenever teachers employ contextualization cues invoking informal talk among peers, such as "βάλε τον ποπό σου κανονικά στην καρέκλα" <put your bottom properly on the chair> (see excerpt 5.14 above) or "είναι μεγάλη κοτσάνα" <[they] are very silly [mistakes]> (see excerpt 5.8 earlier in this section), they risk inadvertently sustaining the play frame over a number of turns and impeding its tailing off. As I discussed, this is due to the fact that these cues are incongruent with teacher talk and inevitably elicit playful uptakes, giggling and laughter (cf. Baynham 1996). It is perhaps this possibility of triggering more playful talk rather than containing it that may influence teachers' decision to abstain from playful contributions during whole class instruction. As a result, as I have repeatedly mentioned in this chapter, teachers may initiate repeated shifts to the instructional frame to bring the play frame to a close, by using discourse markers such as "λοιπόν" <so> or "άρα" <therefore>, summoning a "named addressee" and/or resorting to more disciplinary remarks. All this time, the children may temporarily resist such teacher-led reframings to instruction, by opting to sustain the play frame. Such instances of pupil resistance to teacher-led reframings back to the "serious" business of the lesson serve to enhance the children's institutional roles as active agents in the shaping of classroom talk (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

5.4 Playful talk during small-group instruction

While teacher-fronted whole class instruction tended to be the norm, there were occasions for small-group instruction too. Teachers assigned group projects which were related to particular events in the school calendar (e.g. "Διεθνής Ημέρα Βιβλίου" <International Book Day>) or curriculum demands (e.g. writing a group letter to a local newspaper). Here is a vignette from small-group instruction. It describes the setting up of a small group activity and it will serve to contextualise the playful exchange I will be presenting and discussing in this section:

Miss Soula is explaining to the children that on Friday they will celebrate “Διεθνής Ημέρα Βιβλίου” <International Book Day> and that they will be doing a group project for the occasion. The children are animated. Giannis asks what they are supposed to be celebrating on that day while Tuncay ruefully inquires whether there is a similar “Διεθνής Ημέρα του Μολυβιού” <International Pencil Day>. Miss Soula pumps up the volume, as the noise levels among the children is steadily increasing and quickly responds to Tuncay that they can celebrate “International Pencil Day” along with “International Book Day”. She is busy getting two groups formed and explaining what they are supposed to do. She also writes instructions on the blackboard. The children are supposed to write down how they benefit from reading books and suggest ways to make children interested in reading. Giannis, Huseyin, Tuncay and Babis, who are sitting next to each other, are already negotiating among themselves who will be acting as group secretary and will be responsible for keeping a record of the children’s contributions. For a few brief moments Giannis and Tuncay dispute over who will be group secretary. Finally, Tuncay gives in and Giannis has a go first. Giannis, whose relationship with Tuncay and Huseyin is ambivalent and often competitive, seems to be taking his role very seriously. He tells Huseyin to keep quiet, stop fooling around and concentrate on the writing task (Huseyin has been chanting on and off various recontextualizable fragments of talk). Then, he censors Babis’ contributions to the assigned task as inappropriate. Huseyin is certainly not happy about Giannis’ telling him off. He snaps back “τί είσαι εσύ; ό,τι θες εσύ;” <who do you think you are? why should we do what you want?> and starts chanting Giannis’ surname/nickname “Κόλλια” <Kolliia> rather provocatively in sing-song intonation. While Giannis seems to be taking the lead in pursuing the assigned task, Huseyin is clearly not in the mood for “serious” work. Tuncay and Babis seem to be caught between two warring sides, as they oscillate between doing the assigned task and playing along with Huseyin. (fieldnotes, 30/3/99)

As the vignette above seems to suggest, play frames during small-group instruction tended to be embedded in task-related frames (here discussing the benefits of reading and suggesting ways to improve children’s reading habits). Children initiated departures to play via frame shifts (e.g. Huseyin’s chants and teases) which transported playful talk to the centre of small-group talk. These departures to playful talk were frequent. Children seemed more willing and perhaps able to initiate and sustain play frames during small-group instruction than in teacher fronted whole-class instruction, partly because the task-related frames were proposed by fellow peers (rather than their teachers). During small-group instruction teachers were no longer the orchestrators of classroom activity. Rather, teachers (and occasionally the researcher as in excerpt 5.15 below) merely monitored pupil conduct and ensured that noise levels were kept under control. They checked on the progression of the task, addressed clarification questions, settled disagreements and

issued reproaches, when children's talk became loud and disruptive (after all tasks had to be completed as quietly as possible within a given time frame).

Children were, therefore, left to their own devices to wrestle control over topic and frame development, next speakership rights and negotiate the content and organisation of the task at hand (cf. Davies 2005). At the same time, children needed to negotiate different and sometimes new roles (e.g. the role of the secretary) as well as share available resources (e.g. dictionaries, encyclopaedias and writing materials). For instance, as we saw in the vignette above negotiating the role of the secretary was fraught with contention. In this context, children could strategically use shifts to play as a means to (re-)negotiate roles, undermine bids for authority and status made by their peers and demonstrate their wit and assertiveness.

In the following excerpt, Miss Soula has stepped out of the classroom for a few minutes and has asked me to supervise the children, which explains my active participation in this particular exchange. Prior to excerpt 5.15 below Giannis, Tuncay and Babis have been advancing the task-related frame (albeit at a very slow pace) brainstorming how they can improve children's reading practices. Their task-focused talk is characterized by a high degree of joint construction as the three boys complete each others' contributions and overlap and latch onto each other's utterances. Giannis is acting as group secretary. Huseyin, however, appears to be minimally engaged with the task at hand. At the same time, the boys' brainstorming is peppered with shifts to play. Some of these shifts are fleeting while others are more sustained and manage to put the assigned task on hold.

Excerpt 5.15

- 1Τουτζάι ε::μείς . ζητάμε από την πολιτεία ..
 2Μπάμπης *acc* λεφτά .
 3Γιάννης ((γράφει συλλαβίζοντας)) ε- μείς [ζη- τά::- με
 → 4Τουτζάι [*acc* γιατί είμαστε
 → 5 ζητάνοι . γιατί είμαστε ζητιάνοι . γράψε .. ζητάμε λεφτά .
 → 6 γιατί είμαστε ζητιάνοι και γύφτοι . hhhh
 → 7Μπάμπης hhhh
 → 8Γιάννης ((στον Τουτζάι)) hhhh Κουρδι(hhh)σάν hhhh hhh
 9Τουτζάι *acc f* ((στη Βάλλη)) κυρία . άκουσες τί είπε;
 ((κάθομαι με την άλλη ομάδα στην άκρη της αίθουσας))
 10Βάλλη *p* δεν άκουσα . και ούτε θέλω νακούσω
 11Γιάννης *f* κυρία:: . (hh)μου (hh)λέει ο Του(hh)τζάι να γρά(hhh)ψω=
 12Τουτζάι *f* ε::: κυρία . *acc* πλάκα έκανα=
 ((έρχομαι προς το μέρος των παιδιών))
 13Γιάννης =μου λέει μου λέει να γράψω-

- 14Τουτζάι ε:::- *acc* εμένα λέει Κουρδιστάν . έτσι λέει=
 15Γιάννης μου λέει [μου λέει να γράψουμε ότι *acc* (hh)είμαστε ζητιάνοι και γύφτοι
 16Τουτζάι [*f* αυτός λέει . ο Μπάμπης .. *acc* κυρία ο Μπάμπης λέει=
 17Βάλλη =*f* παιδιά=
 18Τουτζάι =*acc* *f* ότι από την πολιτεία ζητάμε λεφτά .. έτσι λέει .
 19Βάλλη *acc f* και επειδή το λέει ο Μπάμπης είναι σωστός;=
 ((απομακρύνομαι από τα παιδιά))
 20Τουτζάι =*p* όχι=
 21Γιάννης =*f* εμείς ζητάμε από την πολιτεία .
 → 22Τουτζάι *p* γιατί είμαστε γύφτοι hhh
 23Μπάμπης =*f* κάνει [καμιά παράγραφο . [Γιάννη
 → 24Τουτζάι [*p* γύφτοι . γύφτοι hhh
 → 25Χουσείν [*f* Μπεμπιλίνο::: [hhhh
 → 26Μπάμπης [*acc* είσαι=
 → 27Χουσείν =*acc f* Μπεμπιλίνο είσαι συ hhhh=
 → 28Τουτζάι =*f* hhhhhh hh
 ...
 1Tuncay we are asking the state for
 2Babis money
 3Giannis ((he reads aloud as he writes)) we are [asking
 → 4Tuncay [because we are
 → 5 beggars because we are beggars write ((this down)) we are asking
 → 6 for money because we are beggars and gypsies hhh
 → 7Babis hhhh
 → 8Giannis ((to Tuncay)) hhhh Kurdi(hhh)stan hhhh hhh
 9Tuncay Miss did you hear what he just said?
 ((I'm sitting with the other group at the other side of the classroom))
 10Vally I didn't hear this and I don't want to hear this
 11Giannis Miss Tuncay says to write down=
 12Tuncay Miss I was only joking=
 ((I go over to the children))
 13Giannis =he says to write down
 14Tuncay he keeps calling me Kurdistan that's what he says=
 15Giannis he says [he says to write down that we are beggars and gypsies
 16Tuncay [he says Babis ((says)) Miss Babis says=
 17Vally =come on children=
 18Tuncay =that we should ask for money from the government he says
 19Vally just because Babis says it does it mean it's right?=
 ((I move away from the children))

- 20Tuncay =no=
 21Giannis =we are asking the state
 → 22Tuncay because we are gypsies hhh=
 23Babis start [a new paragraph [Gianni
 → 24Tuncay [gypsies gypsies
 → 25Huseyin [Bebilino [hhhh
 → 26Babis [you are=
 → 27Huseyin =you are Bebilino hhh=
 → 28 Tuncay =hhhhh hh
 ...

The three boys are thinking aloud trying to come up with suggestions to include in their text, when Tuncay initiates a shift to play (lines 4–6). Tuncay overlaps with Giannis who appears to be writing down what Tuncay and Babis have just suggested (line 3). Tuncay completes Babis' utterance by suggesting that they should ask the government for money because they are “ζητιάνοι” <beggars> and “γύφτοι” <gypsies>. Although appearing to be on topic, Tuncay's contribution is incongruous with the preceding talk and not surprisingly it elicits laughter (by Babis) and a playful uptake (by Giannis). His peers' playful uptakes seem to suggest that the reference to “γύφτοι” <gypsies> is seen as incongruous, as it conjures up associations with the pejorative use of this ethnic/cultural label (see the discussion of this ethnic/cultural label in Section 2.2). As Archakis and Tsakona (2006) aptly argue “the framing of an event or action as incongruous presupposes and results from its comparison with specific attitudes and beliefs about ‘how things should be’ i.e. with specific norms and values” (:122). Here the references to “ζητιάνοι” <beggars> and “γύφτοι” <gypsies> allude to intertextual connections that are clearly inappropriate in the context of the assigned writing task. At the same time, these references reveal the socially accepted representations of and children's shared values about these two groups of people: both groups hover about in the margins of Greek society while membership in these groups is stigmatized.

In the ensuing turns, Giannis' jibe “Κουρδιστάν” <Kurdistan> (line 8) which alluded to the chants heard during protest marches against the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, triggers Tuncay's complaint. Giannis defends his taunting Tuncay by arguing that Tuncay asked him to write down the offending contribution, namely that they are asking the government for money because they are “ζητιάνοι” <beggars> and “γύφτοι” <gypsies>. Tuncay counter-argues that “I was only joking” (line 12). However, shortly after the complaint Tuncay resumes the play frame by reintroducing the reference to “γύφτοι” <gypsies> (lines 22, 24) in response to Giannis and Babis' attempts to stir the exchange back to the task at hand (lines 21, 23). Indeed, Giannis and Babis' attempts to shift to the “serious”

business of doing the writing task triggers more teasing, as Huseyin joins in calling Babis by his nickname “Μπεμπιλίνο” <Bebilino> (line 25).

From the onset of excerpt 5.15 above it became evident that Giannis and Babis were sustaining more or less the task-related frames (with the exception of minor shifts to play, see lines 7–8 and line 26) while Tuncay and later on Huseyin were pursuing the play frames. Giannis and Babis’ efforts to sustain the task-related frames, however, were undermined by Tuncay and Huseyin’s shifts to play. For instance, Babis’ suggestion that Giannis started a new paragraph was overlapped by Huseyin’s taunts (lines 24–25).

As a result, the four boys appeared to be functioning as conversational duets with each pair supporting competing frames (cf. Maybin 1994). Through repeated shifts to play, one conversational duet (Tuncay and Huseyin) appeared to be challenging the other’s (Giannis and Babis) control over task-related topic and frame development. By avoiding participation in playful talk and (almost) consistently supporting the development of the task-related frames, the other conversational duet (Giannis and Babis) was registering their disagreement with such shifts to play. In fact, Giannis and Babis’ stance was reminiscent of prototypical teacher responses to child-initiated frontstage playful talk: as we saw earlier in this chapter teachers tended to avoid taking part in play advancing the instructional frames instead (see Section 5.3.3). Here the fact that Giannis and to a lesser extent Babis attempt to orchestrate the development of the writing task (just as teachers do during whole-group teacher-fronted instruction) appeared to be hotly contested by Tuncay and Huseyin through their repeated frame shifts to play. This sustained orientation towards competing frames and roles seemed to lead to a conflict of frames that had tangible interactional consequences for the successful completion of the assigned task. It was, therefore, not surprising that such small group activities tended to be full of minor disputes and calls for teacher and/or researcher intervention (e.g. lines 9, 11–18 in excerpt 5.15 above). Moreover, they seemed to advance at a very slow pace and their completion went well beyond the initial deadline (set by the teacher).

Two further points are worth making here: The first has to do with the framing of playful talk during small-group instruction. The clusters of cues the children used shared similarities with cues employed in peer exchanges during free time and in instances of backstage playful talk (e.g. nicknames, music making, recontextualisable fragments of talk drawing on immediately recognizable references from the children’s out-of-school recreational and media practices and lived experiences). These similarities could perhaps be explained by the fact that these exchanges were orchestrated by the children, almost exclusively for their ears only. Teachers (and the researcher as we saw in excerpt 5.15 above) had a

monitoring role and only occasionally were called upon to play a more central role in the development of these exchanges (e.g. to settle disputes).

The second point has to do with the different possibilities for identity work that playful talk during small-group instruction opened up. These possibilities were different from those available during whole-class teacher-fronted instruction. As I mentioned earlier in this section, small-group instruction gave children the opportunity to negotiate and experiment with new institutional roles, such as that of the “group secretary” and “orchestrator” of curriculum-focused talk and represent themselves as “good” pupils who sought to advance the assigned classroom task (cf. Davies 2005). Needless to say, that these new roles and identity ascriptions did not go uncontested or unquestioned by members of the group. In excerpt 5.15 for instance, Giannis’ attempts to control topic and frame development were high jacked by Tuncay and Huseyin’s ludic contributions. At the same time, small-group instruction allowed children to flex their interactional muscles so to speak and compete for status and power and (re-)negotiate academic and peer group hierarchies (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I investigated the emergence and development of play frames during whole-class teacher-fronted instruction and small-group instruction. I showed how children engaged in backstage playful talk in the margins of classroom discourse by transporting contextualization cues from recreational contexts to instructional ones (e.g. nicknames, recontextualisable fragments of talk). In this context, I discussed how children initiated and maintained play frames that were generated in parallel with instructional frames. I argued that play frames and instructional frames rarely criss-crossed one another, as children tended to revert back to “doing work”, if they saw their teachers heading towards their direction or glaring at them.

I illustrated that while not explicitly encouraging frontstage playful talk, in general, teachers tolerated its emergence in classroom discourse. I demonstrated how through shifts to play, children initiated and developed play frames which were embedded in instructional frames. I argued that the resultant effect was to transport playful talk from the margins to the very centre of classroom talk. I also claimed that children made selective use of cues such as prosody and repetition which both they and their teachers could readily understand and interpret as play. Sharing a common (albeit limited) set of cues for play was significant, as teachers did not have access to aspects of peer group knowledge and expertise.

Even though teachers occasionally initiated and maintained play frames, overall they were most likely to support instructional frames. By supporting instructional frames, they usually brought playful talk swiftly to a close, as the children tended to revert to the “serious” business of curriculum-focused talk. Sometimes, however, I showed how children persisted in maintaining play frames, regardless of teacher-led shifts to play. This led to the development of two concurrent floors resulting in a “schism” of the classroom floor. Via repeated teacher- (and occasionally pupil-) led shifts back to instruction, the “schism” was eventually bridged and the single classroom floor was restored.

I argued that, as a rule, teachers avoided participating in playful talk. Whenever they did resort to play (e.g. in sequences of reproach or metalinguistic discussions) their contributions were limited to one turn only: an initiation or a brief response to pupil-led playful talk. On these occasions I observed that teachers often made use of contextualisation cues invoking informal talk among peers by exploiting prosody and mind terms of jocular abuse.

I compared instances of playful talk during whole-class teacher-fronted instruction with small-group instruction by focusing on a group of boys. I argued that similar to frontstage playful talk, play frames during small-group instruction were embedded in instructional frames (here task-related frames). I showed that children were more willing and perhaps more able to engage in departures to play than in whole-group teacher-fronted instruction, perhaps because children were left to their own devices to orchestrate and micro manage these tasks. Moreover, I illustrated how children drew upon readily available resources as cues for play (e.g. nicknames, recontextualisable fragments of talk drawing on their recreational and media practices) that were similar to those used in playful talk in recreational contexts and backstage playful talk.

Throughout this chapter, I discussed how besides transforming work into pleasurable sociability, shifts to play allowed children and teachers to highlight different aspects of their social identities and roles as well as experiment and negotiate new ones. In so doing, I argued that they became active agents in the forging of their identities and roles during instruction at school (cf. Maybin 2006; Rampton 2006; Wortham 2006).

In the next chapter I probe further into how, through playful talk and play frames, children and teachers construct social identities, roles and social relations across school contexts.

CHAPTER 6

Playful talk, play frames and social identities across contexts

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter I probe further into the relationship between playful talk, play frames and social identities in recreational and instructional contexts. As I discussed in Section 1.4, the investigation of processes of social identity construction between the children and their teachers has been based on the premise that, through language (here playful talk), participants perform different aspects of the “self”, which are attuned to local interactional contexts. More specifically, I focus on peer talk and explore playful talk as a form of collective pleasurable sociability among the children. I look at how through cross-sex teasing boys and girls signal contrasting aspects of their gendered identities. In this context, I probe further into the children’s teasing routines as a means to impress one’s peers, gain prestige, acceptance and popularity and negotiate leadership roles. At the same time, I show how children exercise social control, regulate peer conduct and talk and position themselves and their peers in particular (favourable or unfavourable) ways.

I investigate how the children’s engagement with popular culture and media consumption serves to construct boundaries of belonging. In particular, through the joint production of playful talk (e.g. music making, chanting, teasing episodes) the children exhibit their expertise in the media saturated (Greek) youth popular culture and negotiate peer group membership. I look into how playful talk opens up an interactional space for the construction of a linguistically and culturally rich “small” peer culture (Holliday 1999) and the negotiation of a mixed peer group identity. I illustrate how children draw upon aspects of the minority language and culture in their playful talk and discuss how its uptakes (or lack of) points to certain ambivalence suggesting that processes of conversion to and diversion from this mixed peer culture and identity are at play. I discuss this ambivalence in relation to broader national discourses about the “self” and the “other” in circulation in mainstream Greek society and how these could have filtered through children’s everyday talk at school.

I focus on classroom talk and explore the different ways children and teachers draw upon playful talk as a resource to negotiate alternative models of identity,

social relationships and authoritative knowledge in the official classroom floor. In so doing, I discuss how they seek to redefine what counts as classroom talk and re-conceptualise the classroom order.

6.1 Playful talk as shared sociability among peers

As I discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, engaging in fleeting or more sustained music making, chanting, teasing, joking or verbal play seemed to imply a kind of collective pleasurable sociability. Indeed, the entertainment value of playful talk has been well documented in the literature on young people's verbal routines and activities (e.g. Archakis & Tsakona 2005; Ardington 2006; Dyson 2003; Merchant 2005; Pichler 2006). These studies have shown that such playful activities and routines can generate fun and amusement, serve as time fillers and enhance bonding among peers. For instance, in Chapter 4, I illustrated how children often derived a sense of shared enjoyment, a kind of emotional sociability, whenever they joined in teasing routines or the singing of popular tunes in circulation. This shared enjoyment was manifested in the contextualisation cues they made use of to construct these verbal activities and routines (e.g. exchanging nicknames at a fast pace coupled with sustained giggling and laughter). At the same time displaying familiarity with their peers' nicknames or with the words of songs seemed to function as a strong in-group marker effectively excluding those who did not share similar experiences and expertise. As a result, on these occasions, the content of playful talk tended to be less important than simply having the pleasure of engaging in such verbal activities and routines among peers with whom children shared a long interactional history at school.

It is perhaps worth noting here that the entertainment value of playful talk was not restricted to recreational contexts only. As I showed in Chapter 5 singing and humming snatches of songs or chanting recontextualisable fragments of talk in *sotto voce* in instances of backstage playful talk allowed children to create an interactional space where they could momentarily have fun and alleviate feelings of boredom while appearing, for instance, to be engaged in a copying or other school work related tasks. The creation of these interactional spaces became particularly appealing and the effect of pleasurable sociability was further heightened by the fact that backstage playful talk was produced solely by and for the children.

Besides the shared enjoyment, engaging in playful talk provided children with different possibilities for identity work. In other words, playful talk seemed to involve something more than "just play" (cf. Kotthoff 2006; Maybin 2006; Ramp-ton 2006). As I will discuss in the following sections, through playful talk chil-

dren also negotiated status and expertise, made claims for leadership and experimented with and even fantasized new roles and alternative identity positionings, exerted social control and regulated peer conduct and talk. For example, through cross sex teasing routines boys and girls signalled aspects of their gendered identities. Or by appropriating and transforming snippets of talk from media sources children displayed their orientation towards youth/popular culture and put forth alternative authoritative knowledge and models of identity than those associated with school knowledge and expertise.

6.2 Cross-sex teasing and gendered identities

Early observations of the ten year old cohort revealed that children did not talk explicitly about male-female relationships and sexuality among themselves. These observations contrasted with the talk of slightly older children (11–12 year olds) which was saturated with talk about “liking” or “loving” someone of the other sex and having many different boyfriends and girlfriends. The following vignette is illustrative of this kind of talk:

I am chatting with Alisman and Ergut (two 11 year old minority boys) about their out-of-school recreational practices, as we are cueing up at the school canteen during the break. Alisman and Ergut are part of the same extended peer group of minority boys that hang out together after school (along with Huseyin and Fanis from the ten year old cohort). Panagiotis and Mary (two of their majority Greek classmates) are cueing up behind us closely attending to our talk. As Alisman and Ergut are trying to explain to me where the games parlour they frequent is located and how they get there, Panagiotis butts in saying: “ο Αλισμάν μιλάει όλο για κορίτσια” <Alisman talks about girls all the time>. Ergut quickly replies on Alisman’s behalf “ο Αλισμάν έχει δέκα κορίτσια” <Alisman has ten girlfriends>. Maria then confirms: “όλο για γυναίκες μιλάει” <he talks about women all the time>. I notice that Alisman keeps quiet but has a smug smile on his face. Our chat drifts away from Alisman’s prowess back to the games parlour, as I’m trying to figure out where it is located. (fieldnotes, 5/3/99)

Unlike their slightly older peers, neither girls nor boys openly admitted to sharing romantic or affectionate feelings towards peers of the other sex. These differences pointed perhaps to age-specific preferences.⁵¹ Nevertheless, regardless of the absence of such direct references girls in particular were keen to engage in romantic

51. Indeed, as I observed in my ensuing visits to the school after the initial fieldwork children started talking more about their feelings towards peers of the other sex as they grew older.

talk and fantasize about their favourite actors and singers. For instance, in excerpt 6.1 below, Maria and Vasia are chatting during the break. Maria inquires whether Vasia likes Sakis Rouvas (young male pop singer and teen idol). This question leads to an elaborate exchange between the two girls where the looks of Sakis Rouvas are debated and evaluated and then compared (rather unfavourably it seems) to those of Leonardo di Caprio (star of the motion picture “Titanic” and another favourite teen idol, especially among the ten year old girls).

Excerpt 6.1 (18/3/99)

- 1Μαρία Βάσια σου αρέσει ο Σάκης ο Ρουβάς;
 2Βάσια το σιχαίνομαι
 3Μαρία δεν έχεις δικιο
 4Βάσια εμένα μ’ αρέσει πιο πολύ ο Λεονάρντο
 5Μαρία είναι πολύ πιο ωραίος ο Λεονάρντο απ’ το Ρουβά
 6Βάσια μα δεν είναι πιο ωραίος γιατί ο άλλος δεν είναι ωραίος
 7 είναι . ωραία χχχ
 8Μαρία ποιός;
 9Βάσια ο Σάκη ο Σάκης [Ρουβάς
 10Μαρία [και οι δύο μ’ αρέσουνε [πάρα πολύ
 11Βάσια [acc και και ο Σάκης Ρουβάς
 12 είναι ωραία όχι ωραίος
 ((Ο Γιάννης και ο Τουτζάι πλησιάζουν την Μαρία και τη Βάσια))
 13Γιάννης τί έγινε;
 14Τουτζάι όλοι είμαστε κάτω
 ...
 1Maria Vasia do you like Sakis Rouvas?
 2Vasia I loath him
 3Maria I disagree
 4Vasia I like Leonardo ((di Caprio)) more
 5Maria he’s more handsome than Rouvas
 6Vasia actually he’s not more handsome because the other one ((Sakis Rouvas))
 7 is not a he he’s a she hhh
 8Maria who’s that?
 9Vasia Sakis Sakis [Rouvas
 10Maria I really like [both of them [very much
 11Vasia [yes yes but Sakis Rouvas is a she
 12 not a he
 ((Giannis and Tuncay come up to the two girls))
 13Giannis what’s up?
 14Tuncay we’re all downstairs

While avoiding overtly expressing “liking” or “loving” peers of the opposite sex, exchanges like excerpt 6.1 above seemed to suggest an acute awareness of gendered identities, heterosexual relations and sexuality. In this excerpt, Maria expresses her intense feelings for Leonardo di Caprio and Sakis Rouvas although she concedes to Vasia that the former is more handsome than the latter. Vasia, however, challenges Maria by arguing that she can’t really compare the two as Sakis Rouvas is (allegedly) gay.

Besides talking about favorite actors and singers of the opposite sex and their sexual orientation, boys and girls expressed their awareness of gendered relations in social interaction with their peers through cross-sex teasing routines. For instance, as I discussed in Section 4.3, boys collaborated with other boys to tease girls and vice versa. In particular, I described how cross-sex teasing episodes frequently attracted the participation of co-teasers of the same sex, who would self-select and join in the teasing of the common target or respond on behalf of the party being teased. Moreover, I described how other times same-sex collaboration was explicitly sought after when the initiator of the teasing activity invited co-teasers to take part in the teasing. As a result, children aligned themselves with members of the same sex against members of the opposite sex, thereby projecting a shared female or male footing.

This was not to say that cross-sex alliances in teasing did not exist. As we saw in Section 4.3, Tuncay was relentlessly teased by both his male and female peers who skilfully drew upon the intertextual reference between the refrain of a popular love song “καράβι το φεγγάρι” [karavi to fegari] <the moon like a boat> and his nickname “Μπρούτζινο Φεγγάρι” [Broutzino Fegari] <Bronze Moon>. Such cross-sex alliances, however, tended to be rather fickle: children would temporarily align themselves with members of the opposite sex, only to swiftly disassociate themselves with the teasing activity and turn against their former co-teasers, as the interaction unfolded. For instance, I discussed how Giannis who had earlier colluded with Meltem and Maria in creatively substituting part of the refrain with Tuncay’s nickname, latter on in the same exchange encouraged Tuncay to retaliate against the girls and laughed at their predicament (the hair-pulling that ensued). Although the hair-pulling was intended to be playful, by applauding this form of aggression, Giannis appeared to be re-aligning himself with his male peer.

By projecting a common male or female alignment and casting members of the opposite sex as targets, children articulated and strengthened their male and female bonds and friendships (cf. Davies 2005; Holmes 2006). In other words, through cross-sex teasing children shared the enjoyment of teasing, while increasing same-sex solidarity. Moreover, cross-sex teasing provided an international space for children to express their emotions towards one another and perhaps communicate (shared) liking (cf. Eder 1993). I noticed, for instance, that Vasia

and Tuncay repeatedly targeted each other for teasing which pointed to the development of what appeared to be particular teasing routines.

For girls in particular, cross-sex teasing encounters provided them with the opportunity to negotiate new and exciting female identities that exhibited a disengagement from traditional female roles of passivity and questioned assumed expectations regarding femininity (cf. Ardington 2006; Eder 1993). More specifically, by initiating and actively participating in cross-sex teasing girls presented themselves as equally assertive and competent teasers as their male peers. Their assertive behaviour was verbally expressed through the use of contextualization cues such as mock challenges, orders, commands and imitating and parodying the voices of their male peers. Their assertiveness in teasing was further compounded by their liberal use of playful aggression (e.g. nape-slapping, bodily pokes, the grabbing of possessions) and participation in cross-sex chasing routines. Moreover, cross-sex teasing allowed girls to undermine traditional female conduct. For instance, by appealing to teachers or the researcher to intervene on their behalf and then resuming the teasing without waiting for adult intervention (see Section 4.4.4), girls undermined traditional views that see women in need of protection and help by a powerful (here an adult) third party. In other words, by initiating shifts to play and re-introducing the teasing activity in discourse, they subverted the image of the “weak female” (cf. Makri-Tsilipakou 1994b; Paxton 2004; Petronoti & Papagaroufali 2006; see also Kotthoff 2006 for further discussion).

For boys, however, cross-sex teasing seemed to aid them in reinforcing and consolidating more traditional male roles. Boys responded to cross-sex teasing by resorting to hair-pulling and playground invasions that disrupted the girls’ activities and provoked more cross-sex teasing and chasing. This was perhaps not surprising. As Eder aptly (1995) argues, “society places considerable importance on men being aggressive and tough” (:61) and boys tended to reproduce this image (cf. studies in Loizos & Papataxiarchis 1991; also Connell 1995; Fine 1987).

Nevertheless, despite the playfully antagonistic nature of cross-sex teasing and the sustained use of playful aggression against members of the opposite sex, cross-sex teasing rarely (if ever) seemed to lead to overt conflict. Even in cases of hair-pulling or chasing that triggered appeals to an adult third party teasing activities would be temporarily suspended and then shortly resumed by the very children who had sought out adult intervention. The absence of overt conflict seemed to suggest that children treated instances of cross-sex teasing as occasions for playful banter, resembling what Schiffrin (1984) has referred to as “sociable argument”. As in the case of sociable arguments, cross-sex teasing episodes seemed to share the form of an argument (e.g. children fired orders, demands and challenges at one another) but lacked the serious substance of arguments (e.g. fall-outs or physical confrontations) (:331; see also Ardington 2006; Lytra 2003b). Because

of its apparent close connection with argumentative talk, however, cross-sex teasing could be prone to misinterpretation, especially as Miller (1986) argues, “by persons who are not familiar with the local norms of communication” (:210). As I have repeatedly shown in Chapters 4 and 5, the children seemed to share local norms of communication which had been negotiated and co-constructed over a four-year period of sustained daily interactions at school, thereby reducing by far the possibility of miscommunication.

6.3 Teasing, peer group hierarchies and the regulation of children’s talk⁵²

As I discussed in Chapter 4, teasing emerged as one of the central verbal activities children made use of to impress one another, gain prestige, acceptance and popularity and negotiate leadership roles. At the same time, through teasing children exercised social control, regulated peer conduct and reproduced particular models of identity.

Because of their playfully antagonistic overtones teasing activities resembled engaging in a game of sorts. The purpose of this verbal tag of war was to outperform their opponents and present themselves as competent and experienced teasers. For instance, children could exploit more conventional (contextualised) cues (e.g. the rhythmic repetition of nicknames) but also experiment with new (contextualising) cues (e.g. making creative allusions to each other’s nicknames), thereby setting novel trends. In the on-going process to outperform their peers, children developed their verbal and social skills and were gradually transformed from “novice” to more “experienced” teasers (cf. Miller 1986). In other words, they were being socialised into the norms of their “community of practice”, which attached high value to playful (same-sex and cross-sex) banter (cf. Davies 2005; Fine & De Soucey 2005; Fine 1987).

More importantly, engaging in teasing routines offered children the opportunity to enhance peer group status and negotiate leadership roles (cf. Holmes 2006; Kotthoff 2006). Skilful initiators would successfully manage to marshal the participation of other children in teasing a common target. Moreover, they would manage to divert the target of the activity from themselves to someone else, either by introducing a new target or by re-introducing a previous one. In other words, they seemed to play an active role in orchestrating these activities by leading the way.

52. An extended discussion about constructing Babis as an academically “poor” pupil also appears in Lytra, V. (forthcoming 2008) “Constructing academic hierarchies: Teasing and identity work among peers at school”. In *Pragmatics Language, Discourse and Identities. Snapshots from the Greek Context* (Special Issue). Alexandra Georgakopoulou and Vally Lytra (guest eds.).

For instance, time and again I observed how Huseyin was particularly successful in orchestrating teasing episodes by eliciting the support of his peers to tease Giannis as well as divert attention from himself to Babis, Meltem or Tuncay whenever he was in the sticky position of the target of teasing. On the other hand, I noticed that Giannis and Babis were less successful in eliciting similar support. It must be said that this lack of support could also be attributed to the children's particular character traits and positions within the peer group hierarchy. Huseyin was well regarded by his peers and his successful taunts had earned him the attribute “πειραχτίρι” <class tease>. Giannis and Babis, however, were less popular and somewhat marginalised within the peer group. Nevertheless, even in the case of Huseyin who was a particularly successful teaser, there were times when he fell short of eliciting his peers' support. This suggests that leadership roles and status hierarchies were not to be taken for granted. They were up for grabs and required constant negotiation – one way they could be successfully accomplished was through playful talk.

Besides serving as a means to gain peer group status and negotiate leadership roles, children used teasing to reinforce and reconfirm social concerns and monitor peer conduct and talk without seriously and explicitly addressing these issues (cf. Antonopoulou & Sifianou 2003; Archakis & Tsakona 2005, 2006; Fine & De Soucey 2005). By drawing attention to these violations children scrutinized, criticized and even policed the talk and conduct of their peers and communicated their views concerning what was regarded as the norm. For instance, children made use of teasing to address what they regarded as their peers' unwarranted complaints, threats to tell on the teacher, brags or attempts to trick or deceive and “poor” academic performance. Through these teases, children exposed a breach of conduct. In doing so, they attempted to manage inter-personal relationships within the peer group and demonstrate their autonomy vis-à-vis the adult world of the teachers at school.

Moreover, by exposing these violations, they attributed to themselves and their targets particular social roles and identities and raised boundaries of inclusion and exclusion within the peer group. Needless to say that these ascribed roles and identities could be contested; children who were teased and positioned in unfavourable ways could propose alternative models of identity and authoritative knowledge. For instance, one social identity that had high purchase among the children (and teachers) was associated with school achievement and “good” academic performance. Children were quick to tease fellow peers who fell short of the expected norm.

Indeed, I noticed that the children's teases about their peers' “poor” academic performance seemed to (re-)produce particular teacher sanctioned definitions of “good” academic performance, conduct and talk. From the onset of the fieldwork, I observed that Miss Soula, the class teacher, regularly highlighted what she and

other teachers seemed to regard as “poor” academic performance, practices and modes of talk and conduct for the class as a whole. I also noticed that she focused particularly on one pupil’s failings, Babis. Babis was frequently reprimanded for falling short of the expected norm: he consistently failed to hand in his homework on time, had a backlog of unfinished homework which he promised to deliver but seldom did and often relied on his female classmates to give him a much needed helping hand with his overdue homework or occasionally do it for him. He regularly brought the wrong school books (and sometimes no school books at all) to class. He exhibited low concentration levels and generally seemed to be disengaged from the learning process. The following vignette is indicative of the kind of criticism Babis’ conduct attracted:

It’s the beginning of literacy hour and it has come to Miss Soula’s attention that Babis has once again failed to bring the right textbooks to class. She abruptly stops the lesson, goes over to his desk and asks him why he hasn’t brought the right textbooks. As she hovers over his desk, she notices his English textbook and a pile of Greek textbooks (including an old textbook) among some half finished overdue worksheets. The lesson is temporarily put on hold, as Miss Soula points out how Babis’ conduct falls short of the expected norm by contrasting it with what counts as “good/competent” pupil conduct. She remarks in a rather exasperated voice: “Αυτό το λένε μαθητής; Είσαι εσύ μαθητής; Αυτό το βιβλίο το οποίο τελείωσε και δε το χρειαζόμαστε είπαμε ή το αφήνουμε στο σπίτι μας ή το αφήνουμε στο σχολείο” <Is this correct pupil conduct? Does your conduct befit a pupil? What do we do with textbooks we’re not using anymore we’ve said time and again we either leave them at home or we leave them at school [we don’t carry them around in our school bags]>. It looks like Babis is now in trouble. Miss Soula goes on to identify some other homework that was due that day and Babis hadn’t done. Then, she moves on to explain what Babis (and everyone else) should do in order to ensure that all homework is handed in on time: “εδώ λέει το πρόχειρο Δευτέρα γλώσσα τα βγάζω όλα μου τα βιβλία έξω και βάζω αυτά που πρέπει πάντα να έχω για τη γλώσσα μετά τα φυλλάδια μου τα ψάχνω τα ψάχνω τα φυλλάδιά μου για τα κάνω” <you check your class schedule and you see that on Mondays we have the literacy hour so I take out all my textbooks and I put in my school bag those textbooks for the literacy hour then I check my worksheets and do those due [for the literacy hour]>.

(fieldnotes, 15/3/99)

By focusing on Babis’ (and to a lesser extent on other children’s) “poor” pupil conduct, Miss Soula singled out “poor” academic performance, practices and modes of talk and behaviour, thereby defining relationally what counted as “good” ones. I observed that these teacher sanctioned definitions of “good” academic performance, conduct and talk had inevitably filtered through to the children’s talk. In this respect, teasing became a powerful discursive resource to monitor “poor”

academic performance and further consolidate academic hierarchies among the children.

In the following excerpt, Vasia and Bahrye exploit teasing to position Babis as a “poor” pupil and themselves by extension as “good” ones. Prior to this excerpt, Bahrye and Babis have been silently copying the verbs Vasia has declined for them on the blackboard when Bahrye breaks the silence. She turns to Babis and teases him in a provocative manner that she is well ahead of him in finishing the homework before the end of the break.

Excerpt 6.2 (15/3/99)

- 1Μπαχριέ *acc* ωχ Μπάμπη εγώ σε περν.
- 2Μπάμπης α; ...
- 3Μπαχριέ *acc* εγώ σε περνάω παιδά=
- 4Μπάμπης =*acc* δεν πειράζει .. δεν κάνουμε αγώνες . f άμα κάναμε αγώνες θα
- 5 σ' είχα περάσει με δύο χιλιάδες λάθη

- 1Bahrye oh Babis I'm so well ahead-
- 2Babis huh?
- 3Bahrye I'm so well ahead of you du-=
- 4Babis = that's ok we're not competing if we were competing ((to
- 5 finish the homework)) I would have won by two thousand mistakes

By foregrounding the fact that she is well ahead of him in completing the worksheets on time, Bahrye is implicitly highlighting one aspect of Babis' “poor” performance (i.e. being too slow). Simultaneously, she is positioning herself relationally as a “good” pupil and certainly as the more “competent” of the two in being able to finish the homework on time. This presentation of self seems to be in agreement with the more complex image politics she has been attending to as the two children are trying to complete bits of their homework before the end of the break. Although she too is doing parts of the same overdue homework she is quick to distance herself from Babis and his “poor” academic performance.

Bahrye's shift to play while being simultaneously fully engaged in the serious business of “doing homework” elicits a response by Babis. Unlike other occasions I observed where Babis tended to remain silent as his teasers weaved in and out of play, in this occasion Babis breaks his silence and plays along with Bahrye's teasing by resorting to self-denigrating humour. In instances of self-denigrating humour the target not only accepts being cast in the participant position of the recipient of the teasing but also reinforces this through self-directed remarks (cf. Boxer & Cortés-Conde 1997; Drew 1987; Kotthoff 2000). Babis not only acknowledges the teasing but also further elaborates on it by claiming that “άμα κάναμε

αγώνες θα σ' είχα περάσει με δύο χιλιάδες λάθη" <if we were competing I would have won by two thousand mistakes> (line 4). By playing along with the teasing and publicly acknowledging his weaknesses as a pupil, Babis seeks to conjure up a positive personal image: he is cool with Bahrye's teasing and has a good sense of humour because he can openly laugh at his ineptitudes and shortcomings. In so doing, Babis implicitly attempts to resist his pigeonholing as just a "poor" pupil and attempts to foreground and reaffirm other aspects of his identity kit that are considered equally if not more important for himself as well as among his peers. Indeed, given that engaging in teasing routines and other playful performances (e.g. singing and chanting routines) emerged as a key organizational factor of peer talk among children, self-denigrating remarks can serve to exhibit a child's active engagement with the peer group culture and enhance further his or her status in the peer group.

The next excerpt takes place shortly after excerpt 6.2. Here Vasia invites Bahrye to join her in teasing Babis about his "poor" academic performance once more. Seconds prior to the frame shift to play Vasia walks up to Babis and asks him how he's getting along with the homework. When he says he's about to finish, Vasia volunteers to check it over and in a loud authoritative voice starting reading through. In line 6, she stumbles at a spelling mistake. Babis has misspelled the first person plural of the personal pronoun "εμείς" [emeis] <we>. This misspelling triggers a series of subsequent taunts.

Excerpt 6.3 (15/3/99)

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1Βάσια | ((τραγουδά χαμηλόφωνα)) α:::χ .. τελειώσεις ρε; |
| 2Μπάμπης | τελειώνω ... το πήρα .. ((διαβάζει αυτά που έχει γράψει)) |
| 3 | "εγώ- θα- κουνιέ:μαι" . "εσύ- θα- κουνιέ:σαι" = |
| 4Βάσια | =ff να δω τι έχεις γράψει βρε .. ((διαβάζει)) " <u>εγώ</u> : θα- κρα <u>τιέ</u> :μαι" |
| 5 | "εσύ θα- κρα <u>τιέ</u> :σαι" "αυτός θα κρα <u>τιέ</u> :ται" .. acc με κανένα τόνο .. |
| → 6 | f "εμείς . <u>ΕΜΕΙ</u> :::Σ;" .. acc αχ- θα το <u>σκοτώσω</u> αχ- = |
| 7Μπάμπης | =p acc ((διαβάζει ό,τι έχει γράψει)) "εγώ εσύ εμείς" .. |
| → 8Βάσια | αχ- αχ- f Μπαριέ θα το <u>σκοτώσω</u> .. αχ- αχ- .. |
| 9 | acc έλα να δεις πως έχει γραψει το "εμείς" .. |
| → 10Μπαχριέ | ff "Ε::ΜΕΙ::Σ"; |
| 11Βάσια | "εσεις"; . p έλα . |
| 12Μπαχριέ | f το "εσεις"; . |
| 13Βάσια | πάλι ((το ίδιο λάθος)) |
| 14Μπαχριέ | ff ε:::; .. δεν είναι με::: . <u>έτσι</u> ((γράφει στον πίνακα)) |
| 15Μπάμπης | <u>έ::ψιλον γιώ:τα::</u> ... |
| → 16Βάσια | 'α- α- α- .. [τι::: |
| 17Μπαχριέ | ((γράφει στον πίνακα)) [" <u>ε::μείς</u> .. <u>ε::σεις</u> .. <u>αυ:τοι</u> " .. |

- 18 [αχ- ρε- .. [τίποτα δε ξέρεις ρε Μπαμπινίνο ..
 19Βάσια [acc και κανένα [τόνο βέβαια
 20Μπάμπης Μπαμπινίνο; . acc δε με λένε Μπαμπινίνο ..
 21Μπαχριέ δε με νοιάζει .. Μπαμπιλίνο σε λένε . Μπειμπιλίνο hhhh =
 22Βάσια =((προς Μπάμπη)) ff γράφε ((τις ασκήσεις))=
 23Μπάμπης =((προς Βάσια που έχει το χέρι της στο γύψο)) μπορείς να το
 24 κουνήσεις αυτό το δάχτυλο που το έχεις έξω; ..
 25Βάσια ναι . αυτό ..
 26Μπαχριέ εσένα τί σε νοιάζει παιδί μου;
 27Μπάμπης ό:χι ρε τίποτα ..
 28Βάσια Μπάμπη άσε τη Μπαριέ και τα δάκτυλα
 29Μπαχριέ ((προς Μπάμπη)) για φέρε εδώ ((το χαρτί)) .. να βάλλω αυτό
 → 30 ((στο ντοσιέ)).. f τι ντοσιέ είναι αυτό ρε . για πέταμα ..
 31Βάσια ((προς Μπάμπη)) εγώ θα σου γράψω το συντελλεσμένο στον
 32 πίνακα ... το πρώτο ... ποιά είναι ποιοί είναι; .
 33 Μπαχριέ το: “κρατιέμαι” . και το “κουνιέμαι” ..
 ((η Βάσια αρχίζει να κλείνει τα ρήματα στον πίνακα))
- 1Vasia ((sings quietly)) ah have you finished (re)?
 2Babis I’m almost done I got it ((reads aloud what he has written))
 3 “I will be swinging” “you will be swinging”=
 4Vasia = let me see (vre) what you’ve written ((she reads)) “I will be
 5 holding” “you will be holding” “he will be holding” with no
 → 6 stress “we” “we”? uh I’m gonna kill him uh=
 7Babis =((reads aloud what he has written)) “I you we”
 → 8Vasia uh uh Barhye I’m gonna kill him uh uh
 9 have a look how he’s spelled “we”
 → 10Bahrye “we”?
 11Vasia “you”? have a look
 12Bahrye ((how has he spelled)) “you”?
 13Vasia again ((the same mistake))
 14Bahrye uh? isn’t it spelled like this ((writes the correct spelling
 on the blackboard))
 15Babis ((it’s spelled with)) epsilon giota
 → 16Vasia a a a [what ((is this))?
 17Bahrye ((writes on the blackboard)) [“we you they”
 → 18 [u [you don’t know a thing (re) Babinino
 19Vasia [and no [stresses of course
 20Babis Babinino? I’m not called Babinino
 21Bahrye I don’t care you’re called Babilino Babyfino hhhh=
 22Vasia =((to Babis)) finish up ((your homework))=
 23Babis =((to Vasia who has her hand in a plaster)) can you move the

- 24 finger that's not in the plaster
 25Vasia yes this ((one I can move))
 26Bahrye what's it to you?
 27Babis no nothing
 28Vasia Babis forget about Bahrye and ((my)) fingers
 29Bahrye ((to Babis)) why don't you give me this ((worksheet)) let me put
 → 30 it here ((in the folder)) your folder is a real mess (re)
 31Vasia ((to Babis)) I'll write the tense on the blackboard what's
 32 the first verb?
 33Bahrye ((it's the verb)) to hold and to swing
 ((Vasia starts declining the verbs on the blackboard))

In line with the previous teasing exchange, Vasia and Bahrye tease Babis about aspects of his “poor” academic performance and practices: gross spelling mistakes in his worksheets coupled with a very messy folder. In an exasperated voice, Vasia and Bahrye rapidly exchange mock threats (“θα τον σκοτώσω” <I’m gonna kill him>) emulating teacher/adult talk (lines 6, 8) and challenges (“τίποτα δε ξέρεις ρε Μπαμπινίνο” <you don’t know a thing (re) Babinino>, line 18 and “τί ντοσιέ είναι αυτό ρε για πέταμα” <your folder is a real mess (re)>, line 30). These threats and challenges are complemented by emphatic repetition (lines 6, 8, 10), requests for clarification (line 16) and corrections delivered in dramatic high-pitch chuckling voices. In so doing, Vasia and Bahrye co-construct Babis as the “poor” pupil and relationally position themselves as “good” ones.

However, similar to excerpt 6.2, Babis attempts to resist this identity positioning, this time by addressing the girls’ taunts seriously. He produces the correct spelling of the word as Bahrye is writing it on the blackboard (line 15) and responds to her taunt (“τίποτα δε ξέρεις ρε Μπαμπινίνο” <you don’t know a thing (re) Babinino>, line 18) by turning the tables and challenging her background knowledge regarding peer group nicknames (“Μπαμπινίνο; δε με λένε Μπαμπινίνο” <Babinino? I’m not called Babinino>, line 20). While the first frame shift to non-play backfires (Babis is still the butt of teasing), his second attempt proves more successful, as it brings the teasing (temporarily) to a hold. The resultant effect is that Babis attempts to indirectly contest the teasing and its underlying message, by seeking to foreground another type of knowledge and expertise, one associated with peer group membership and affiliation rather than academic achievement. In Section 3.5, I discussed the children’s nicknaming practices and their significance in developing and maintaining peer group bonds (see also Lytra 2003b). Suffice it to say that in this exchange the importance of this shared non-academic knowledge becomes apparent by Bahrye’s subsequent self-correction

and her quick procurement of two of Babis' nicknames: "Μπαμπιλίνο" <Babilino> and "Μπειμπιλίνο" <Babylino> (line 21).

One final point worth making here about the regulation of peer conduct and talk is that the children's taunts did not seem to escalate into real disputes or physical confrontations. Indeed, as I argued in Chapter 4, these taunts could have potentially triggered a fight had it not been for the strong friendship ties between the children. As Archakis and Tsakona (2005) persuasively argue:

.... the absence of a quarrel does not mean that the humor loses its evaluative force. On the contrary it shows that the bonds between the group members are so strong that they cannot be threatened by such an evaluation or criticism. (56)

6.4 Popular culture and peer group affiliation in playful talk⁵³

As I discussed in Chapter 3, popular culture featured largely in the children's peer culture and talk. Children were avid consumers and producers of TV, film and music: they exchanged bits of gossip about their favourite actors and singers, shared comedy routines and used songs, chants, stock expressions, punch lines and quoted set phrases as contextualization cues for play. This is not surprising given that like elsewhere peer cultures in Greece have become increasingly mediated by mass media and techno-popular culture (e.g. Iordanidou & Androutsopoulos 1995; Georgakopoulou 2005; Lytra 2003a; Spilioti 2007).⁵⁴ Via playful talk, children demonstrated their knowledge of mass media and popular culture that of the majority (Greek) which they all shared access to as well as that of the minority (Turkish) and globalised American-English popular cultures where access was more restricted. Such forms of competence afforded indispensable social capital to their users and played an important part in (re-)producing a common peer group identity through the construction of social boundaries of membership and inclusion (Minks 1999; Georgakopoulou 2005).

The process of constructing boundaries of belonging and becoming a peer group member was articulated in the joint production of much of the children's playful talk. Children were quick to latch onto or overlap with their peers' talk and

53. An earlier version of this section with reference to more planned episodes of music making also appears in Lytra (2006a) "Mass media, music making and identities in an Athens primary schools" In: Trends and Developments in Youth Language Research. Christa Dürscheid and Jürgen Spitzmüller (eds.) Frankfurt/M.u.a.: Lang, 239–257.

54. Note that the centrality of media and techno-popular culture in everyday Greece has led to calls for the examination of its role as an object of intellectual inquiry in its own right (Hess 2003; Georgakopoulou 2004).

co-construct their singing, teasing or chanting routines. A case in point was the joined production of more planned episodes of music making mainly by Meltem, Maria, Vasia and Bahrye. Planned episodes of music making were based on the imaginative production of a mid-day variety show. Variety shows which fall under this TV genre exhibit a fixed participant structure with well-determined roles: they feature a hostess, who is responsible for orchestrating the show, along with an aggregate of glamorous and more obscure media personalities. The latter always include some popular singer who is invariably asked to perform live for the audience during the show. The hostess tends to favour a conversational style characterised by fast mode of delivery, elongated vowels, laughter and exaggerated gesturing. Moreover, she sprinkles her talk with catchy one-liners, personal anecdotes, snappy witticisms and marked openings and closings in order to highlight different conversational moves (Marki-Tsilipakou 2001).

In these music making episodes, performers and audience drew on a variety of mass-mediated resources (e.g. snippets of songs, nicknames, style-shifts) and manipulated the researcher's microphone in order to perform a succession of songs. In doing so, they negotiated and acted out different imaginary personas, that of the "tempestuous singer", the "bossy hostess" and the "appreciative audience". In excerpt 6.4 below, Bahrye, Meltem, Vasia, Nontas and I are hanging out in the classroom during break-time. The three girls are doodling on the blackboard, Nontas is finishing some overdue homework and I am writing up some field-notes from the previous recording session. Bahrye comes up to me and asks for permission to sing into the microphone I had been using to tape-record classroom talk to which I agree. Once in possession of the microphone Bahrye joins Vasia and Meltem at the blackboard where she starts allocating participant roles and staging the imaginary variety show (line 1 onwards). By virtue of orchestrating the show, Bahrye takes up the role of the show's hostess. She then delegates the role of the singer to Meltem, while Vasia, Babis and I act as the excited audience.

Excerpt 6.4

- 1 Μπαχριέ *f* πρώτα η Μελτέμ τραγουδάει . έλα=
 ((δίνει το μικρόφωνο στη Μελτέμ))
 2 Βάλλη =εντάξει; . με προσοχή μεγάλη θέλω
 3 Μπάμπης ((τραγουδιστά)) *f* ταλαριραρι[ρουμ
 4 () [σ::
 5 Μπαχριέ *f* έν- α:: δύ:ο τρία:: . *acc* εμείς [τη βλέπουμε
 6 Μελτέμ [*f* 'α:::ι:: ((στη Βάλλη)) εσύ θα φύ:γεις;
 7 Βάλλη θα φύγω να μην ακούω .. θέλεις να μείνω; ..
 8 Μπαχριέ έν::-α:: δύ:::ο τρία:: πάμε=

- 9Μελτέμ =acc ((στη Μπαχριέ))'ά:- άσε μας ..
 10Μπαχριέ p έλα
 11Μελτέμ ((τραγουδά)) ff στο ασανσέρ που συναντιώ::μαστε
 12 φανταζό::μαστε να συμ[βαίνουν
 13Μπαχριέ [p cikaram [p cikaram
 [να σε παρουσιάσω [να σε παρουσιάσω
 ((παίρνει το μικρόφωνο από τη Μελτέμ))
 14Μελτέμ f'ά:: θα με βγάλει . (... [)
 15Μπαχριέ [p acc χτύπα χέρια . χτυπήστε χέρια
 ((χειροκροτήματα))
 16Μπαχριέ ff γειά σας .. τί κά::νετε; . καλώς ορί::σατε ..
 17 f σήμερα έχουμε μια τραγουδίστρια που είναι πολύ:: ωραί::α μ::=
 18Μπαμπής = p η Μελτέμ Τζουμπούλ .
 19Μπαχριέ ε:: ff acc τη λένε *Meltem Cumbul* και θα μας τραγουδήσει-
 20 ((τραγουδά)) στο ασανσέρ που συναντιώ::μαστε hhh
 ((χειροκροτήματα))
 21Μελτέμ αι:: hhh [f'σταμάτα
 ((παίρνει το μικρόφωνο από την Μπαχριέ))
 22() [hhhh
 23Μελτέμ ((τραγουδά)) f στο ασανσέρ που συναντιώ::μαστε
 24 [φανταζό::μαστε να συμ[βαί- hhh
 25() [hhh hh [hhh
 26Μελτέμ f'χτυπάτε δάχτυλα
 ((χειροκροτήματα))
 27Μελτέμ ((κάνει τη φωνή της πιο βαθυά)) f στο ασανσέρ που
 28 [συναντιώ::μαστε φανταζό::μαστε
 29() [hhh hhh
 30Μελτέμ ((κάνει τη φωνή της πιο λεπτή)) f να συμβαί::νουν [τα πιο
 31Μπαχριέ [ff ευχαριστούμε τη
 32Μπαχριέ *Meltem Cumbul*=
 ((παίρνει το μικρόφωνο από τη Μελτέμ))
 32Μελτέμ f'άσε μας καλή-
 ((δυνατά χειροκροτήματα καθώς η Μελτέμ απομακρύνεται από
 τη "σκηνή"))
 1Bahrye first Meltem sings come on=
 ((Bahrye hands the microphone over to Meltem))
 2Vally =ok? I want you to be very careful ((with the microphone
 3Babis ((sings in falsetto)) talarirari[roum
 4() [sh
 5Bahrye one two three we [are looking at her
 6Meltem [ai ((to Vally)) will you leave?

- 7Vally I'll leave so that I don't hear ((you singing)) do you want me to stay?
8Bahrye one two three go=
9Meltem =(to Bahrye) a leave us alone
10Bahrye come on
11Meltem ((sings emphatically)) in the elevator where we meet
12 we ima[gine all sorts of wild [things happening between us
13Bahrye [çıkaram [çıkaram
let me present you let me present you
((she takes the microphone from Meltem))
14Meltem a she's going to present me ([)
15Bahrye [clap ((your)) hands clap hands
((clapping))
16Bahrye hello everybody how are you today? welcome ((to our show))
17 today we have with us a singer who is very beautiful mm=
18Babis =Meltem Cumbul
19Bahrye er her name is *Meltem Cumbul* and she will sing for us
20 ((sings slightly off-tune)) in the elevator where we meet hhh
((clapping))
21Meltem ai hhh [stop it
((she takes the microphone from Bahrye))
22() [hhhh
23Meltem ((sings emphatically)) in the elevator where we meet
24 [we imagine all sorts of [wild hhh
25() [hhh hh [hhh
26Meltem clap your hands
((clapping))
27Meltem ((shifts to a deeper, throatier voice)) in the elevator where we
28 meet [we imagine all sorts of wild
29() [hhh hhh
30Meltem ((shifts to a high pitch Mickey-Mouse-like voice)) things [happening
31Bahrye [thank you
32Bahrye *Meltem Cumbul*=
((she takes the microphone from Meltem))
33Meltem ((snaps back)) leave me alone
((Meltem exits amid loud clapping))

Here the children co-construct a more planned music making episode drawing on shared stereotypes regarding the talk and conduct of the protagonists of these mid-day variety shows. Meltem enacts the persona of the singer by manipulating rhythm and sound rather than faithfully reproducing the entire popular love song “Στο Ασανσέπ” <In the Elevator> sang by male teen idol Valandis. She creatively

reproduces a snippet of the song's refrain over a number of turns by exploiting different combinations of stress, vowel elongation and shifts in pitch and tone. She kick-starts her performance with emphatic singing (lines 11–12, 23–24), then shifts to a deeper, throatier voice (lines 27–28) and wraps up her performance with a high pitch Mickey-Mouse-like rendition of the song (line 30). While appearing to mirror the performances in variety shows, through successive experimentations of the same snippet of song Meltem actually seems to be contesting and transforming established singing practices. It is not, therefore, surprising that the last part of her performance is enthusiastically received by her audience who applaud wholeheartedly, as she makes an exit.

While Meltem skilfully performs the role of the singer, Bahrye meticulously orchestrates the former's performance. She greets the imaginary audience (line 16), introduces Meltem as the Turkish singer Meltem Cumbul (line 17, 19) and sings a few bars (albeit slightly off-tune) from the song Meltem is about to perform (line 20). In addition, Bahrye manipulates the microphone as a prop to allocate next speakership rights between herself (the presenter) and Meltem (the singer). On their part, the audience demonstrate their appreciation of Meltem's singing by laughter and sustained applause, either coached by Bahrye (line 15) and Meltem (line 26) or on their own initiative.

Besides constructing a shared peer identity and boundaries of belonging, more planned episodes of music making revealed the extent to which minority Turkish-speaking children were immersed into mainstream (Greek) popular culture. It was not only Meltem's choice of song which had topped Greek pop charts at the time of the fieldwork, but also Meltem and Bahrye's creative evocations of the singer and the show's hostess that reflected their high degree of engagement with popular culture and the media. Such forms of participation allowed them to negotiate and gain access to important linguistic and cultural resources from the majority (Greek) language and culture.

Moreover, this music making episode was not based on the passive reproduction of mass-mediated resources (e.g. snippets of songs, style-shifts, nicknames). Rather, drawing on out-of-school practices (in the form of watching comedy and variety shows on TV and keeping abreast of the latest music hits) the two girls actively appropriated and transformed mass-mediated resources to suit their local interactional projects (in this case the imaginative production of a mid-day variety show) (cf. Dyson 2003; Duff 2004; Rampton 2006). Their ability to balance divergent musical tastes (ranging from Greek male teen idols Vlandis and Sakis Rouvas to Turkish arabesk singers İbrahim Tatlıses and Küçük İbo) could be seen as a form of "biculturalism", a "dual frame of reference" that enables immigrant and minority children "to manage two cultural realities with comfort and efficacy" (Carcia Coll & Magnuson 1997 reported in Minks 1999: 84).

turn and dismisses her contribution as superfluous (“εντάξει εντάξει εσένα σ’ αρέσουν τα πάντα έλα” <yeah right you like everything come on>, lines 12–13). Vasia’s interruption suggests that Barhye’s bid is regarded as a competitive move: an attempt to usurp current speakership rights and take part in the discussion Vasia has been exclusively conducting with Babis. On her part, Bahrye does not question Vasia’s move, regardless of the fact that the latter’s abrupt intervention is a threat to her public face. Instead, by producing a token of agreement coupled with giggling (line 12), Bahrye avoids escalating the confrontation and diffuses possible tensions. When seen against a backdrop of past interactions between the two girls, Vasia’s challenge brings to the fore the existing competition between the two girls over leadership and peer group status. By barring Barhye’s access to and participation in media talk Vasia is claiming authoritative knowledge for herself while undermining Bahrye’s claims. Indeed, such forms of contestation have the effect of questioning children’s access to valuable resources (here media knowledge and expertise) and raising boundaries of exclusion (cf. Minks 1999). In the case of minority children in particular, by playing down their claims to popular culture knowledge and expertise, their majority Greek peers may also be seen to be questioning their participation in majority Greek media talk and popular culture, which dominate their playful talk. In the process, they seem to be undermining minority children’s claims to a bicultural identity.

6.5 Playful talk in the negotiation of a mixed peer group identity

As I discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, minority children imported aspects of their media-saturated minority culture into the school and shared them with their majority peers. Majority Greek boys in particular seemed to be particularly interested in inquiring about aspects of the minority culture- more so than the girls. The following vignette is illustrative of this kind of knowledge exchange that took place between the boys:

It’s early in the morning, right after assembly. Tuncay, Fanis, Huseyin and Babis are slowly taking their seats waiting for the lesson to begin. The four boys are sitting one next to the other along a long row of seats. I notice that Huseyin is wearing a bright red tracksuit today. Boys often wore track suits or T-shirts of their favourite (Greek) football teams to school but this is the first time I notice that a child is wearing the tracksuit of a Turkish football team. Babis turns to Huseyin and asks him which team’s tracksuit it is. Huseyin doesn’t seem to know. He turns to Tuncay and Fanis for help. The two boys answer back in unison “Beşiktaş”. Babis then asks where this team is. Huseyin says “Τουρκία” <Turkey> and Fanis

adds (in Turkish) “İstanbul’da” <in Istanbul>. Babis doesn’t ask anything else nor do the boys comment on his questions. (fieldnotes, 1/02/99)

Besides information about dress, minority children also shared linguistic resources (e.g. football chants, quotable set phrases but also media talk) with their majority peers, thereby actively contributing to the construction of a linguistically and culturally rich peer group “small” culture (Holliday 1999). Some of the shared information from the minority language was then transformed into contextualization cues for play. Once exposed to them, majority children came to recognise these resources from the minority language as cues for play and sometimes used them too. As I discussed in Section 3.5, some cues, such as nicknames and football chants, were widely understood and extensively used by both minority and majority children. Other cues (e.g. quotable set phrases) were novel cues that had been introduced more recently in children’s playful and as I shall show later in this section their meaning was perhaps less transparent. When encountering the use of unfamiliar cues from Turkish, majority children tended to try to clarify their meaning (the same way Babis tried to find out about the tracksuit Huseyin was wearing in the vignette above).

For instance, in excerpt 6.6 below, Babis inquires about the meaning of the chant “ατιατό” <atiato> that Tuncay and Huseyin have been repeating through out the small group writing activity. As I discussed in Section 5.4, the four boys were brainstorming ways to improve children’s reading practices as part of a series of class activities to celebrate “International Book Day”. During their brainstorming they shifted in and out of play, thereby transporting playful talk in the very centre of small-group talk. In the excerpt below, Giannis is acting as group secretary noting down the children’s contributions, when Tuncay asks him if he knows what the Turkish word “gelmeme” means (line 3). Tuncay’s question prompts Babis to inquire about the meaning of another word Tuncay and Huseyin have been using a lot in their playful talk, “ατιατό” <atiato> (line 6), which Babis seems to be assuming is also Turkish.

Excerpt 6.6

- | | | |
|-----|---------|--|
| 1 | Γιάννης | <i>acc</i> οι άλλοι δε θα κάνουν παραγράφους ((στο κείμενο που |
| 2 | | γράφουν)) εμείς θα κάνουμε <u>κόλλα το</u> εμείς θα κάνουμε .. |
| 3 | Τουτζάι | ((στο Γιάννη)) ναι <i>gelmeme</i> hh <i>gelmeme</i> ξέρεις τί είναι; . |
| | | να μην έρθει να μην έρθει |
| 4 | | τί άλλο σημαίνει; |
| 5 | Γιάννης | () |
| 6 | Τουτζάι | σταλήθεια= |
| → 7 | Μπάμπης | ατιατό τί σημαίνει; |

- 8Τουτζάι =((με ύφος πονηρό)) έλα σε μένα
 9Γιάννης *p* ατιατό θέατρο . ατιατό είναι θέατρο
 10Μπάμπης γιατί το λες σε μένα; .
 11Τουτζάι ((προς Χουσεΐν)) *acc* έλα ρε τιάτρο=
 12Χουσεΐν *atiato hh*
 13Τουτζάι *hhhh acc atato gee bana=*
 έλα σε μένα
 14Χουσεΐν *=p acc atato gee bana=*
 έλα σε μένα
 15Τουτζάι =όταν το βιβλίο
 16Γιάννης ό::ταν . περιμένε όταν ..
- 1Giannis the other group won't divide their text into paragraphs
 2 but we will way to go we will
 3Tuncay ((to Giannis)) yeah *gelmeme*⁵⁵ hh do you know what *gelmeme* means?
 not to come
 4 do you know what else it means?
 5Giannis ()
 6Tuncay I mean it
 → 7Babis what does *atiato* mean?
 8Tuncay ((in an aspirated voice)) come to me
 9Giannis *atiato* theatre *atiato* means theatre
 10Babis then why do you say it to me?
 11Tuncay ((to Huseyin)) come off it *re tiatro*
 12Huseyin *atiato hh*
 13Tuncay *hhhh atato gee bana*
 come to me
 14Huseyin *atato gee bana*
 come to me
 15Tuncay =when the book
 16Giannis ((he is writing down what Tuncay is saying)) when hold on when

In response to Babis' question about the meaning of the word "ατιατό" <*atiato*> Tuncay says it means "έλα σε μένα" <come to me> (line 8). Tuncay produces his response in an aspirated voice alluding to the potentially sexual connotations of the word. Following Tuncay's explanation Giannis takes the floor claiming that the Turkish word in question actually means "θέατρο" [*theatro*] <theatre> (line 9).

55. The recording is not very clear here but it seems that Tuncay may be referring to the sexual connotations of the word "gelmeme" (meaning not being able to come during sexual intercourse).

Drawing on what appears to be a certain phonetic closeness between “atiato” and “θέατρο” [theatro] <theatre> in Greek, Giannis’ claim does not sound outlandish. Interestingly, neither Babis but most importantly neither Tuncay nor Huseyin contest Giannis’ claim. Instead, Babis quickly notes the sexual overtones of the word and inquires why Tuncay has been saying it to him (line 10). Tuncay avoids responding to Babis’ clarification request. He turns to Huseyin and tells him off calling him “τίατρο” [“tiatro”] – perhaps a hybrid word based on Gianni’s “θέατρο” [theatro] <theatre> and the original word “ατιατό” <atiato> (line 11). In the ensuing turns, Tuncay and Huseyin playfully reproduce the word “atato” along with a transformation of the Turkish set phrase “gel bana” <come to me> (lines 13–14), before Tuncay redirects talk back to the small-group task at hand (line 15).

The excerpt above illustrates some of the ambiguities regarding the sharing of the meaning of Turkish words in general and contextualization cues for play from the minority (Turkish) language and culture in particular. While seeming to share the meaning of the word “atiato” with Babis, Tuncay is in fact concealing its meaning. I observed that the word “atiato” (and its variant “atato”) were often used along with the Turkish phrase “gel bana” <come to me> (and its various playful transformations “gee bana”, “geni mana”). My inquiries about the meaning of the phrase “gel bana” had revealed that it was a stock expression used by the Turkish TV character of Şaban and that it functioned as an invitation to sexually approach somebody. The word “atiato” on its own, on the other hand, did not seem to have any particular meaning in Turkish. However, when used in the phrase “atiato gel bana” it was suggested that it could refer to a person in the sense of “x come to me”. I was therefore surprised to see that Tuncay explained to Babis that “atiato” meant “come to me” (because it clearly did not). In fact, Tuncay’s response here seemed to cause some kind of confusion, as Babis queried why Tuncay had been saying “atiato” to him.

This exchange regarding the meaning of a particular Turkish word or phrase is reminiscent of other exchanges I observed between minority and majority children. Overall, I noticed that minority children avoided sharing the meaning of Turkish words and phrases with their majority peers. Instead of addressing their peers’ clarification requests, they would revert to play (e.g. Tuncay’s shift to play in response to Babis’ second clarification request, line 11 in excerpt 6.6 above) or simply keep silent. In other words, minority children tended to resort to what appeared to be strategies of avoidance in order to divert attention away from the clarification questions at hand.

These responses regarding requests for clarification seemed to suggest a certain ambivalence on the minority children’s part vis-à-vis the sharing of the meaning of cues for play from their home language and culture with their majority peers. On the one hand, by making use of Turkish words and phrases as cues for play,

minority children were ensuring the visibility of their home language and culture in peer talk. Moreover, they were positioning these cues on an equal footing with cues from Greek media saturated popular culture. In so doing, they were actively negotiating a space for their home language and culture in their shared peer group “small” culture (Holliday 1999) that would otherwise be completely dominated by cues from the majority (Greek) language and culture. The resultant effect was the negotiation of a linguistically and culturally mixed peer group identity.

At the same time, by resisting through not so transparent answers or via shifts to play and silence to provide an explanation of the meaning of these cues to their majority peers, they were barring the latter’s access to this knowledge. The fact that their peers could only access this sort of knowledge at school, as cross-cultural friendships rarely occurred in the neighbourhood, heightened minority children’s control over the meaning of these cues. By controlling access, they seemed to be claiming sole ownership of the meaning of these cues and erecting boundaries of exclusion vis-à-vis their majority peers. Such intra-group boundaries, however, seemed to ultimately undermine the process of negotiating a linguistically and culturally diverse peer group identity.

One further point worth making here: I was surprised by Giannis’ claim in the excerpt above that “atiato” meant “theatre”. My surprise was compounded by the fact that Giannis (like his other majority Greek peers) had flatly denied knowing any Turkish during informal discussions (see Section 3.3.2). On this occasion, however, he seems to be staking a claim to linguistic authority and expertise in Turkish which is incongruous with his reported language use. As in other episodes about the meaning of Turkish words and phrases I observed, Giannis’ claims were not refuted by his minority peers.

It might be useful to interpret these claims for knowledge and expertise as part of what appeared to be a broader attempt on the majority children’s part to experiment with aspects of their peer’s home language and culture. In this context, I now turn to some instances of playful talk where majority children appropriate Turkish stock expressions as cues for play. The concept of “crossing” is particularly productive in examining these instances of playful talk. Following Rampton (1995), “crossing” is defined as “the use of language varieties associated with social and ethnic groups that the speaker does not normally ‘belong’ to” (: 14). This means that crossing involves “a distinct sense of movement across social or ethnic boundaries” (: 280). Here such movement spans across linguistic, cultural and ethnic boundaries and may elicit a variety of responses on the minority children’s part, notably from playful uptakes, to serious responses to silence.

For instance, in excerpt 6.7 below Giannis reproduces a Hellenized version of the playful transformation of the stock phrase “gel bana” <come to me> that Huseyin and Tuncay have been chanting through out the small-group task. Giannis has

passed on the role of the group secretary to Huseyin who is now recording the boys' contributions. Huseyin is having trouble spelling the word encyclopaedia (lines 1–2), when Giannis latches onto his turn and loudly cries out “γκένι μανά” <geni mana> (line 3).

Excerpt 6.7 (30/3/99)

- 1 Χουσεΐν ((καθώς προσπαθεί να γράψει τη λέξη “εγκυκλοπαίδεια”)) *f* ‘α:.....: ..
 2 *acc* μπερδέφτηκα και εγώ τώρα:: =
 → 3 Γιάννης *ff* γκένι μανά::.
 4 Τουτζάι *ff* geni mana:: ..
 5 Χουσεΐν *acc* ((στη Βάλλη)) κυρία μπερδεύομαι::=
 6 Τουτζάι = *p* κυρία:: . μπερδεύομαι::
- 1 Huseyin ((he is trying to spell the word “encyclopaedia”)) *a*
 2 I got confused now too=
 → 3 Giannis *geni mana*
 4 Tuncay *geni mana*
 5 Huseyin ((to Vally)) Miss I’m confused=
 6 Tuncay = Miss I’m confused

Subsequent to Giannis’ shift play, Tuncay makes a bid for the next turn and echoes Giannis’ contribution. He produces the same stock phrase capitalising on volume, stress and vowel elongation just as Giannis had done. Tuncay’s playful uptake suggests that he is exhibiting a shared footing with Giannis, thereby ratifying his “crossing” to Turkish.

While Tuncay’s playful response illustrates that he takes Giannis’ shift to play as a bid for solidarity, in the next excerpt he responds to Babis’ rendition of the same cue quite differently. Babis asks what Giannis (who is acting as group secretary) has noted down when Tuncay teases him about this: “έλα ρε τί κοιτάς εκεί” <come on (re) what are you staring at> (line 1). Babis responds to Tuncay’s taunt via another transformation of the stock phrase “gel bana” delivered in near-native pronunciation (line 3).

Excerpt 6.7 (30/3/99)

- 1 Μπάμπης ((στο Γιάννη)) τί έγραψες εδώ; ...
 2 Τουτζάι ((στον Μπάμπη)) *acc* έλα ρε ... τί κοιτάς (hh)εκεί(hh); ...
 → 3 Μπάμπης ((στο Τουτζάι)) *p* gee bana .
 4 Τουτζάι α- *f* ((στη Βάλλη)) κυρία . αυτός όλο λέει- gee bana . αυτός .
 5 ((προς Μπάμπη)) *p* φύγε(hhh)
 6 Βάλλη Μπάμπη σε παρακαλώ . κάτσε ήσυχος .

- 1Babis ((to Giannis)) what have you written here?
2Tuncay ((to Babis)) come on (re) what at you staring (hh)at(hh) there?.
→ 3Babis ((to Tuncay)) *gee bana*
4Tuncay a- ((to Vally)) Miss he's been saying *gee bana* all the time
5 ((to Babis)) beat it (hhh)
6Vally Babis quiet please

This time Tuncay seems to be taking Babis' transformation of the stock phrase "gel bana" less playfully. Rather than playing along as he had done in the previous excerpt with Giannis, he summons an adult third party (here the researcher) and complains about his peer's teasing (line 4). Similar to other appeals for adult intervention I discussed (see Section 4.4.4), however, Tuncay makes an abrupt shift in footing back to teasing, immediately after issuing his complaint without waiting for my response.

By first addressing Babis' "crossing" seriously, Tuncay appears to be challenging Babis' right to use the stock phrase in question. This can be further gleaned at by the content of his complaint, namely that Babis has been repeatedly employing this cue. Through this complaint, Tuncay is indirectly raising questions regarding Babis' right to use the stock phrase, while putting forth claims of sole ownership of the cue (cf. Shuman 1993). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that his shift back to play in mid-turn (line 5) appears to be undermining the seriousness of his initial serious response.

When seen against a trajectory of responses to play that emerged in children's talk, such abrupt shifts in footing in playful talk were rather common. In Chapter 4, I claimed that such shifts in footing highlighted the complexities and ambiguities of playful talk as well as the necessity to frame talk in such a manner that it was understood as playful. Moreover, as in other cases of complaints to adult third parties, the swift shift in footing back to play suggested that these complaints were not to be taken seriously. Rather they needed to be seen as ritual complaints. Their purpose was not so much to elicit disciplinary comments (although this could also occur as in excerpt 6.7 above) but more so to negotiate inter-personal relations and one-upmanship among peers.

One further point that might shed light to the interpretation of Tuncay's divergent responses to "crossing" is the following: Tuncay's initial serious response to Babis' "crossing" in excerpt 6.7 may have been triggered by what appeared to be Babis' near-native pronunciation of the stock phrase in question. Perhaps this rather unexpected near-native pronunciation generated associations with the sexual overtones of the stock expression and its allusion to intimate cross-sex encounters. By directing this stock phrase to Tuncay, Babis could have conjured up these associations, thereby triggering Tuncay's serious response.

The extent to which such responses to instances of “crossing” bring forth issues of “entitlement” (Shuman 1992), namely who has the right to use a particular cue, is an important question and certainly one worth exploring further. According to Shuman (1992), entitlement concerns “the distribution of knowledge” and in particular “differential knowledge” among participants (: 135). In this context, the appropriation of Turkish stock phrases could “raise questions about the ownership of talk as well as, by implication, the ownership of experience” (ibid). Although there was clearly an element of contestation in Tuncay’s and other minority children’s responses, the fact that their responses converged with the range of responses elicited when other cues were used for play strongly suggested that there was no clear-cut connection between the use of these particular cues and issues of entitlement (see also relevant discussion in Chapters 4 and 5).

While this seems to be the case with the use of Turkish stock phrases, the issue of entitlement could come into play whenever majority Greek children imitated Turkish words and phrases and transformed them into cues for play. Such imitations appeared infrequently in children’s playful talk and usually elicited silences on the minority children’s part. As I claimed in 4.4.2, the absence of an uptake seemed to indicate an unwillingness to take part in play rather than a lack of verbal skill. Via silence children could be signalling their discontent with the way a given playful activity was developing and perhaps indirectly registering their disapproval of the use of specific cues. In this respect, it was not surprising that Vasia’s echoing of Tuncay’s prior Turkish utterance in excerpt 6.8 below does not trigger any uptakes (line 12). Even though both Tuncay and Meltem had actively participated in the development of the cross-sex teasing routine earlier in the exchange, they refrained from responding and sustaining the teasing (lines 9–10).

Excerpt 6.8 (18/3/99)

- ...
 9Τουτζάι *p á:ντε ρε Cumbul=*
 10Μελτέμ *=f áσε μας ρε Τούτζα Μούτζα:: Μούτζα Μούτζα:=*
 11Τουτζάι *=be:n mi suledim? .*
 εγώ το είπα αυτό;
 → 12Βάσια *μπέ::μ σουλέ .. μπεμί σουλέ; [4sec]*
 ((φωνές))
 13Τουτζάι *κοίτα .. πολύ ωραίο σημαία έκανα ..*
 ...
 9Τuncay *come off with it (re) Cumbul=*
 10Meltem *=get lost (re) Tunzda Mundza Mundza Munzda=*
 11Τουτζάι *=ben mi suledim?*
 did I say that?

- 12Vasia bem sule bemi sule? [4sec]
 ((background noise))
 13Tuncay look I painted a very nice flag

The minority children's four second silence subsequent to Vasia's Hellenized version of Tuncay's Turkish utterance is followed by Tuncay's evaluation of the flag he had painted (line 13). Both the silence and Tuncay's evaluation of his artwork have the effect of consolidating the frame shift away from play and back to the painting task the children had been engaged in.

As I argued in Section 4.4.2, silence in response to imitations of Turkish words and phrases by majority children seemed to foreground ambiguities regarding their appropriateness as cues for play. This was compounded by the fact that minority children did not use such Turkish imitations as cues for play, unlike their ubiquitous use of other media inspired Turkish cues such as stock phrases and nicknames. This suggested that minority children did not seem to readily identify these cues as playful. Indeed, the fact that such imitations could come out as "caricature" (Norrick 1993: 16) of their home language perhaps reinforced their ambiguity further. Therefore, by keeping silent minority children seemed to be signalling the unsuitability of such cues for play and implicitly raising issues of entitlement. They did so, however, without engaging in overt conflict with their majority peers.

Overall, the sharing and subsequent use of Turkish as cues for play pointed to processes of constructing a linguistically and culturally mixed peer group "small" culture (Holliday 1999) and negotiating a mixed peer group identity. These processes, however, appeared to be fraught with contradiction and were in no way straight forward and unambiguous. This contradiction was also reflected in the children's competing perceptions about their majority peers' competence in Turkish. There was consensus among minority children that their majority peers: "ξέρουν Τούρκικα, εμείς τους μάθαμε" <they know Turkish, we taught them> (fieldnotes, 30/3/99). One interesting point here was that minority children seemed to treat their majority peers as a homogeneous group. This implied that all majority children shared the same level of competence in Turkish.

On the majority children's part, however, only Vasia, Babis and Costas openly acknowledged having some knowledge of Turkish. When prompted during informal discussions, Vasia explained that: "ξέρω λίγο λίγες λέξεις" <I know a little bit a few words>. When I asked her where she learnt her Turkish she answered "στο σχολείο" <at school> (fieldnotes, 30/3/99). It is perhaps worth adding here that none of the majority children put down Turkish as one of the languages they could understand or speak even a little bit in the questionnaire I administered towards the end of the initial fieldwork where I was seeking to explore the children's

linguistic and cultural practices and repertoires (see the five-part questionnaire in Appendix II).

These competing perceptions of minority and majority children regarding the latter's Turkish competence pointed to a form of resistance at play. I suggest that these perceptions need to be seen as operating in the context of two broader processes which impacted upon the negotiation of a mixed peer group identity at school. These were processes of conversion to and diversion from a diverse peer group "small" culture (Holliday 1999).

In particular, on the basis of the children's language practices I discussed earlier in this section, processes of conversion and diversion could be seen in operation in both majority and the minority children's talk. I showed how majority children used clarification requests to seek out the meaning of Turkish words and phrases, some of which were also used as cues for play. Moreover, I illustrated how they appropriated and reproduced Turkish words and phrases as cues (e.g. stock expressions, nicknames, football chants) in their playful talk. At the same time, however, I highlighted how the very same children underplayed and in some occasions (e.g. in the questionnaires) flatly denied their knowledge of Turkish.

Notwithstanding, I identified similar processes of conversion and diversion at play in the minority children's talk. On the one hand, they seemed keen to make their home language and culture visible in the context of their school-based peer group through the sharing of Turkish contextualization cues in playful talk. On the other hand, they seemed to engage in strategies of avoidance, whenever they were explicitly asked about the meaning of particular cues by their majority peers. Via these strategies, I argued, they sought to claim sole ownership of the meaning of these cues and erect boundaries of exclusion within the peer group.

To understand these parallel processes of conversion and diversion, it is necessary to situate them in dominant national discourses regarding how modern Greeks perceive the national "self" and "other". In Sections 2.2–2.3 I discussed how these broader societal discourses resulted in positioning minority Gaziotes as the linguistic, cultural and ethnic "other". As Avramopoulou and Karakatsanis (2002) argued these discourses were influential in the negotiation of social relations at a local inter-community level in Gazi. In their study of processes of identity construction in Gazi, they claimed that inter-community relations were characterized by a high degree of polarisation and stereotyping within and across the two communities. They argued that majority Gaziotes in particular positioned themselves and their minority neighbours on the two ends of a superiority-inferiority axis: they saw themselves as "culturally superior" and their minority neighbours as "culturally inferior" (cf. Avdela 1997; Petronoti & Papagaroufali 2006).

These social categories reflected and reproduced the aforementioned dominant national discourses which were premised on an understanding of communi-

ties and cultures as homogeneous and static entities. Deviations from this norm whether in terms of religious beliefs or linguistic and cultural practices and repertoires were often singled out, stigmatised and viewed as unwillingness to integrate in mainstream Greek society (cf. Androussou 2005; collection of articles in Fragoudaki & Dragona 1997; Pavlou & Christopoulos 2006). Such rigid social categories, however, failed to capture the heterogeneity, diversity and propensity for change of minority communities and cultures (cf. Blackledge 2005; Heller 2002; Blommaert & Verschueren 1998).

These dominant national discourses seemed to filter through and influence children's talk at school including their playful talk regardless of the school and local NGOs' efforts to counter their effect. In this context, the frequent positioning of minority Gaziotas as "culturally inferior" and the subsequent stigmatisation of their home language and culture by their majority neighbours could perhaps account for discrepancies between majority children's reported language use and actual language use in Turkish. At the same time, the same children were comfortable to include English and other European languages (e.g. French, German) that are commonly associated with high prestige in their linguistic repertoires they reported in the questionnaires I administered (see also Makri-Tsilipakou 1997). By excluding Turkish as well as other minority languages (e.g. Albanian, Bulgarian, Romany) spoken at school and in the neighbourhood, however, they seemed to be treating them as not sharing similar positive associations as English, French and German, thereby tacitly marginalising them further.

By the same token, the awareness of negative perceptions and attitudes towards Turkish may have prompted minority children to sometimes withhold information regarding the meaning of Turkish words and phrases. As I argued earlier in this section, by controlling access to this sort of knowledge and expertise, they seemed to be claiming sole ownership of Turkish and tacitly (re-)negotiating power relations with their majority peers at a local interactional level.

Overall, these processes of conversion and diversion strongly suggest that negotiating a linguistically and culturally mixed peer group identity, at the time of the initial fieldwork, was in early stages. For instance, most Turkish language use in contact encounters was confined to instances of playful talk. This meant that the visibility of Turkish in children's peer talk was still low. This contrasted with the high visibility of Turkish, for instance, in German urban youth talk (Auer & Dirim 2003). It is unlikely in the foreseeable future that Turkish in the Greek context will assume similar levels of visibility as it has in other European urban spaces. Regardless of the effects of the recent "earthquake diplomacy" and the exchange of cultural products between Greece and Turkey in Greek mainstream society (see discussion in Section 2.3), to date at the local level of the neighbourhood contact between majority and minority children is still mainly confined to the school set-

ting. This has hindered the dissemination of Turkish language and culture in other settings (e.g. in the neighbourhood playground) although small steps towards that direction have taken place (see the postscript for further discussion).⁵⁶

6.6 Alternative identities, authoritative knowledge and playful talk during lessons⁵⁷

In the final section of this chapter, I discuss how children and teachers exploit playful talk as a discursive resource to negotiate alternative identities and authoritative knowledge in the very centre of classroom discourse. In so doing, I show how they renegotiate what counts as classroom talk and re-conceptualise the institutional order.

As I discussed in Chapter 5, playful talk figured large both in private backstage children's talk and teacher-fronted frontstage talk during lessons. Although Miss Soula and the other teachers tended to resist children-led frame shifts to play all in all playful talk seemed to be tolerated. In other words, teachers and children co-constructed an interactional space in this classroom where playful talk was allowed rather than be explicitly sanctioned (unless it was judged as disruptive to classroom order). In this respect, playful talk became something of a "hidden norm" in that neither the children nor the teachers openly acknowledged it, yet its presence permeated (both official and unofficial) classroom discourse.

Perhaps one of the most important functions of playful talk was that it often functioned as a brief interlude to the lesson, serving to alleviate feelings of stress or boredom (see also 6.1). These playful interludes resembled what Goffman (1961) has referred to as "secondary adjustments" which he regards as: "the ways the individual stands apart from the role and the self taken for granted for him by the institutions and by which he 'makes out', 'gets by', 'plays the system' and so on" (reported in Woods 1976: 181). At the same time, these "secondary adjustments" allowed the children and their teachers to temporarily put on hold their

56. It is worth noting that due to extensive language contact between Greek and Turkish in the past, Greek has borrowed lexical items and word-forming suffixes from Turkish (Joseph 1992; Kazazis 1973). In addition, Greek dialects of Asia Minor (in Turkey) were heavily influenced by Turkish and had incorporated grammatical and derivational elements (Dawkins 1916).

57. An earlier version of the section on the visibility of Turkish appears in Lytra (2006b) "Exploring the 'other': The visibility of Turkish in a linguistically and culturally mixed classroom". In: *New directions in Applied Linguistics. Proceedings of the 13th International Conference of the Greek Applied Linguistics Association*, 600–614.

institutional identities and put forth alternative ones (e.g. by invoking adult-child interactions or informal talk among friends).

Moreover, through frontstage playful talk in particular children negotiated the main classroom frame. These frame negotiations could provide children with a window to contest teacher authority and power at a local interactional level. It is important here to distinguish between two levels of teacher authority and power: a local interactional level and a broader institutional one. Classroom research has traditionally viewed power asymmetries between teachers and children as an integral part of their institutional identities and roles. Indeed, in most classrooms power usually resides with the teacher. However, teacher power and authority at a local interactional level is not to be taken for granted.

Candela's (1999) distinction between "institutional rank" and "local rank" is very useful here in conceptualising different levels of teacher authority and power (:142). Drawing on Diamond (1996), Candela (1999) differentiates between "institutional rank" and "local rank". She views "institutional rank" as forms of "social stratification" based on, for instance, sex, age, nationality and other variables which tend to be rather fixed. She sees "local rank", on the other hand, based on "social variables whose meaning is internal to a particular community" (here this particular classroom) (ibid). Rank position implies power and since children and teachers can not question institutional rank the argument goes they compete for power at a local rank (i.e. at an interactional level): "when people bid for the floor, compete, negotiate rules, interrupt each other, overlap, they are vying for local rank" (ibid).

Following this line of argument, when children negotiated frame shifts to play or resisted teacher-led reframings, they could also be questioning power asymmetries and traditional teacher-pupil roles and identities at the local interactional level. By "local power" Candela takes to mean "the differentiated use of discursive resources or actions that influence the discourse of other participants (such as control of next turns, topic and frame development)" (:143). By challenging teacher authority and power at a local level, children were seen as putting forth alternative identity positionings and forms of authoritative knowledge: they were seen as attempting to gain control of their lives in the classroom and negotiate a social order of their own as an alternative to the classroom order put forth by their teachers (cf. Maybin 2006). This social order seemed to share features with the children's social orders outside the classroom (cf. Dyson 2003; Kenner 2000, 2004; Marsh & Millard 2005). As I discussed in Chapter 5, children, for instance, imported contextualization cues (e.g. nicknames, mock challenges, threats and orders, recontextualised and recycleable fragments of talk) and verbal activities (e.g. teasing as a form of social control) from the playground into the main classroom floor. On these occasions the children's peer group affiliations and partici-

pation in media saturated youth popular cultures seemed to gain precedence over their institutional roles and identities as pupils.

On their part, teachers sought to re-negotiate and re-affirm their authority and power at a local level by attempting to regain control over the development of turn-taking, topic and frame. For instance, teachers kept silent, avoiding responding to children-led playful talk or opted to re-negotiate the main classroom frame away from play and back to instruction.⁵⁸ By maintaining a firm orientation towards instructional frames, teachers managed to successfully curtail the development of play frames in the centre of classroom talk: in the end, play frames tended to trial off, as children re-oriented to instructional frames. This suggests that, even though, children would attempt to resist and undermine teacher authority and power at a local level, ultimately teachers had the last word in the struggle over topic, frame and turn-taking development (cf. Baynham 1996). This observation reinforces what Macbeth (1991) has referred to as “the teacher’s prerogative to shape and direct next turns” in classroom discourse (:285). As a result, children and teachers appeared to be engaged in opposing goals in their local struggle over frame development during whole-class instruction: children sought to (temporarily) bring playful talk to the centre of classroom discourse while teachers sought to downplay its presence and allocate it a place in its margins. At the same time, they were foregrounding contrasting aspects of their identity kit: teachers were foregrounding aspects of their institutional identities while children of their non-institutional ones.

Nevertheless, as I also discussed in Chapter 5, when teachers initiated or made use of playful talk (e.g. in pupil assessments or in disciplining episodes) they too temporarily foregrounded a legitimate (albeit limited) role for playful talk in the official classroom space. On these occasions, they seemed to be aligning their interactional goals with those of the children. At the same time, it became evident that by exhibiting an ability and willingness for play, teachers negotiated a non-institutional social persona and enhanced their personal relations with the children (see Baynham 1996; Lytra 2004).

Furthermore, shifts to play especially during foreign language (here English) instruction seemed to have an additional role to play: to facilitate language learning and teaching by allowing children to experiment with aspects of the foreign language (cf. Broner & Tarone 2002; Cook 2000; Gregory 2005; Warner 2004).

58. Such teacher-led reframings were reminiscent of doctor-led reframings during medical interviews. Ribeiro (1996) discusses how doctors responded to patients’ attempts to shift the on-going interview in the direction of “the social encounter” frame by shifting back to “the medical encounter” frame with the purpose of regaining control of the interview and reframing the interaction (:188).

From the onset of the initial fieldwork, I noticed that children's propensity for play seemed to increase exponentially during English class. English language classes seemed to open up an interactional space where playful talk was overall far more tolerated than in other learning contexts. Perhaps this tolerance for play reflected Miss Eleni's teaching style and/or the specific teacher identities, roles and discourses particular to the English foreign language class (see Papaefthymiou-Lytra 1990 for further discussion). The following vignette is based on some observations regarding both children-led and teacher-led playful talk during English class. It also serves to contextualise the excerpt I will be discussing afterwards (excerpt 6.11):

I am sitting in one of the English classes. The children are practicing existentials in the affirmative and negative forms ("there is/are", "there isn't/aren't"). It's a very animated learning environment. I notice that the children are shouting out their answers as they try to construct sentences with existentials using the visual prompts provided in their English language textbook. At the same time they are playfully experimenting with the phonetics of English in an attempt to model and reproduce Miss Eleni's utterances (with a twist) while teasing each other's about their efforts. On her part, Miss Eleni seems to be quite relaxed about the children's overall exuberance. She uses a lot of Greek in her teaching which is not surprising given that most of the children are novice language learners. I observe that she too teases the children quite a bit about their mistakes. When Meltem gets the sentence wrong (she says "there isn't" instead of "there is") Miss Eleni playfully remarks: "πόσες φορές την έχω ρωτήσει παιδιά;" <how many times have I asked her this question children?> Vasia quickly answers back "ένα εκατομύριο" <a million times> and Costas adds "ένα δις το χρόνο" <a billion times a year>. Tuncay then takes the floor and procures the correct form "there is" and Meltem mirrors his answer. (fieldnotes, 26/4/99)

Indeed, playful talk in this English language class seemed to have developed into a discursive resource for foreign language teaching and learning. Children strategically exploited playful talk as means to experiment with aspects of the foreign language without losing face (e.g. aspects of the phonetics of English as I mentioned in the vignette above). Moreover, they appeared to resort to playful talk in order to mask ignorance of or uncertainty about aspects of the foreign language they were learning, especially since most of them were novice learners of English (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra 1986, 1990). In so doing, they sought to highlight aspects of their non-institutional social personas which were linked with alternative forms of competence and authoritative knowledge. This was more so the case with minority children. Unlike their majority peers, they did not attend English language classes in after-school fee-paying foreign languages centres which meant that their competence in English was far more restricted than that of their peers.

The following excerpt is illustrative of the role of playful talk as opening up new possibilities for identity work while at the same time facilitating English language teaching and learning.

In excerpt 6.11 below, it is Huseyin's turn to construct a sentence with the existential "there is" using the visual aids from his textbook (here a basket of bananas). As Huseyin struggles to construct the sentence "there are bananas" he stumbles on the pronunciation of the [r] in "are" and the plural case marking in "bananas" (line 2).

Excerpt 6.11 (26/4/99)

- 1Κυρία Ελένη *f dec* there a::re=
→ 2Χουσείν *=f acc* there ares .. banana-s:: . z:: =
→ 3Τουτζάι *=s:: . [s::*
4Κυρία Ελένη [*f dec* there are . χωρίς [σ]...
→ 5Τουτζάι *σ::=*
→ 6Χουσείν *=dec* there are[r::
7Κυρία Ελένη [μπρά::βο .. έτσι- . [r::]
8Τουτζάι hhh
→ 9() *p ρ[:*
→ 10Χουσείν [*r:: . ff*banana::s
→ 11Γιάννης *f s:::.....*
12Τουτζάι hhhh=
13Κυρία Ελένη =πάμε στο τέταρτο καλάθι . το τέταρτο καλάθι
- 1Miss Eleni **there are=**
→ 2Huseyin **=there ares .. banana-s . z =**
→ 3Tuncay **=s . [s**
4Miss Eleni [**there are** without the final [s]
→ 5Tuncay **s =**
6Huseyin **=there are[r**
7Miss Eleni [**well done that's the way ((to pronounce it)) [r]**
8Tuncay hhh
→ 9() **r[**
→ 10Huseyin [**r bananas**
→ 11Giannis **s**
12Τουτζάι hhhh=
13Miss Eleni =let's move on now to the fourth basket the fourth basket

Huseyin manipulates prosody by emphatically trilling the [r] in "are" and playfully alternating between the sibilants [s] and [z] (line 2) perhaps in an attempt to

mask his uncertainty about the correct pronunciation of the word. His prosodic manipulations attract playful uptakes by other children, who echo his pronunciation of the trilled [r] and the sibilants [s] and [z] (lines 3, 5, 9, 11) as well as some giggles (lines 8, 12). In playfully manipulating his English utterances Huseyin is downplaying his beginner's competence in English and highlighting another (perhaps more important) form of competence among the children, that of being able to elicit a good laugh in the official classroom floor.

On her part, Miss Eleni corrects Huseyin's pronunciation and makes use of his playful rendition of the emphatically trilled [r] to complement him on his efforts in English. Consistent with other teacher responses to play I observed in other classes (see Chapter 5), she neither directly responds to nor explicitly sanctions these playful manipulations and their subsequent playful uptakes. Nevertheless, the ways Miss Eleni strategically exploits Huseyin's playful talk suggests certain awareness on her part of the discursive possibilities of playful talk to facilitate foreign language teaching and learning and foreground non-institutional social identities.

Lastly, similar to recreational contexts (see Section 6.5) playful talk played a role in negotiating the overall visibility of Turkish in the official classroom space by allowing majority children to experiment with the minority language and culture. These experimentations with the minority language in the main classroom floor need to be situated in the context of the school's overarching discourse of inclusion and pluralism and how this filtered through daily educational practice. As I discussed in 2.4, the local state school in Gazi was transformed into one of the first "διαπολιτισμικά σχολεία" <intercultural schools> in Athens. Its aim was to promote a more learner-centred teaching environment and encourage respect and understanding of linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious diversity both inside and outside school. The following vignette provides an indicative example of how Miss Soula, the class teacher, sought to integrate aspects of the school's intercultural regime with curriculum demands (here integrating the children's out-of-school media and other social practices with practicing oral/presentation skills):

I am sitting in one of the Monday morning literacy hour classes. I have observed that every Monday morning Miss Soula and the children engage in a particular literacy practice. Miss Soula asks the children to talk for a few minutes about some newsworthy event drawing on their out-of-school media and other social practices (e.g. watching the news on Greek and/or Turkish satellite TV, reading Greek newspapers, participating in family and community social events). Melt-em starts off by talking about something she watched on the news on Turkish TV. She is talking about a little boy who appeared to have committed suicide (he threw himself down the stairs) allegedly in response to the death of some celebrity. It appears that Bahrye, Tuncay and Fanis are also familiar with this news

item. Bahrye joins in providing the name of the dead celebrity “ο Βαρίσμαν” <it’s Βαρίσμαν> while Tuncay and Fanis explain that he was “πολύ μεγάλος τραγουδιστής” <a great singer>. I observe that there is quite a bit of overlapping talk as the four children co-construct their shared viewing experience mediated through common media practices (here watching the news on Turkish satellite TV). The next newsworthy items seem much more mundane: most children seem to have chosen to talk about the weather forecast which they either watched on TV or read about in the Sunday newspaper (the choice of topic was perhaps influenced by the fact that they had been learning about the weather the previous week). I notice that Costas has also brought along a newspaper clipping from the Sunday paper with the weather forecast for the whole week and is showing it to Miss Soula and the other children. The children’s talk becomes less animated and the children appear somewhat subdued- it looks like Meltem’s news item was the highlight of the literacy hour. (fieldnotes, 24/2/99)

The Monday morning literacy class I describe above is an example of a teacher-led initiative to provide minority and majority children with an interactional space to share aspects of their recreational and other social practices with their teachers and peers in the main classroom floor. The sharing of such practices provided children with a window to their peers’ lived experiences, especially since cross-cultural friendships between majority and minority children outside school were rare.⁵⁹ Equally importantly, it increased the visibility of the minority language and culture inside the classroom.

Besides teacher-led initiatives, minority children were keen to share aspects of their home language and culture in the centre of classroom discourse. Unlike informal private peer talk which was saturated by intertextual references to Turkish media sources (e.g. nicknames, football and other chants and stock expressions), teacher-pupil public talk was dominated by linguistic and cultural references. These references often included metalinguistic talk about Turkish which was usually triggered by some prior teacher-led metalinguistic discussions about Greek. By initiating metalinguistic talk about Turkish minority children sought to make connections between the two languages and negotiate an “expert” identity vis-à-vis their teachers and peers (cf. Kenner 2000, 2004).

For instance, in excerpt 6.12 below, Miss Soula and the children have been talking about a short story they had read in class on rural schools in 19th century Greece and they have been comparing them to present day urban schools. The class discussion has shifted to how teaching and learning practices have changed

59. Karagiorgi (1996) and Magos (1996) document a series of other teacher-led initiatives in this school which sought to make links between the taught curriculum and the children’s lived experiences.

dramatically over the past hundred years when the teacher remarks how difficult learning spelling rules used to be (as opposed to nowadays). She illustrates her point by giving an example of the various aspirations and stresses that were used in Greek and have now become obsolete. The class discussion elicits subsequent contributions and bids for the interactional floor by Vasia, Costas, Meltem and Giannis. In line 17, Bahrye takes the floor and introduces a comparison between “περισπωμένη” [“perispomeni”] (which looks like the tilde), the stress Miss Soula and her peers have been referring to, and the Turkish letter “yumuşak ge” (or “soft g” [ğ]).

Excerpt 6.12 (15/3/99)

- 1Κυρία Σούλα και σας έχω ξαναπεί ότι η γραμματική τότε ήταν πολύ πιο
2 δύσκολη γιατί είχε εκτός από τον [τόνο πολλούς τόνους
3Βάσια [α ναι κυρί .. κ' ένα άλλο
4Κυρία Σούλα που είχαμε πει=
5Βάσια =αυτό δω [πέρα
6Κώστας [p περισπωμένη=
7Κυρία Σούλα την περισπωμένη . αυτά . που μπάινανε πάνω σε λέξεις=
8Μελτέμ =τόνοι ήτανε;=
9Γιάννης =κυρία αυτό [ήτανε . εκείνο πάει
10Μελτέμ [f μανούλα μου
11Γιάννης ή αυτό κει πέρα που λέτε;=
12Βάσια = acc ναι κυρία μας είχατε φέρει τέτοιους τόνους
13Κυρία Σούλα ((στο Γιάννη)) α- εκεί που λέει αυτό ((στο βιβλίο)) εννοεί
14 αυτόν εδώ
15Γιάννης το::: ()
16Κυρία Σούλα ναι=
→ 17Μπαχριέ =f acc κυρία στα Τούρκικα υπάρχει [ένα γράμμα έτσι .
((η Μπαχριέ σηκώνεται από τη θέση της και πηγαίνει στον
πίνακα))
18Κυρία Σούλα [αυτό εννοεί αυτό
19 [εδώ ((ο συγγραφέας))
→ 20Μπαχριέ [και βάζεις ένα έτσι κυρία ..
21Κυρία Σούλα ((στην Μπαχριέ)) ναι έ::τσι [ναι
→ 22Μπαχριέ [yumuşak ge το λένε=
23Κυρία Σούλα =μόνο που στα Τούρκικα πάντα σ'αυτό το γράμμα μπαίνει
24 αυτό . [έτσι δεν είναι;
25Μελτέμ [p μπαίνει τέτοια γράμμα;=
26Κυρία Σούλα =αυτό που σας λέω εγώ είναι πιο δύσκολο γιατί .

- 27 παράδειγμα στο ωμέγα ή στο ήττα έμπαινε ή αυτός ο τόνος
 28 ((γράφει στον πίνακα)) ή αυτός ...
- 1Miss Soula I have already told you that grammar at the time was a lot more
 2 difficult because apart from one stress [we said that there were
 3Vasia [a yes Mi- another stress
 4Miss Soula many stresses=
 5Vasia =this one [here ((she writes the stress in the air))
 6Costas ["perispomeni" ((the stress Vasia is referring to))
 7Miss Soula "perispomeni" and those ((other stresses)) that were used=
 8Meltem =where these stresses?=
 9Giannis =Miss on that [letter do you put this stress or the one you're
 10Meltem [oh my gosh
 11Giannis referring to?=
 12Vasia yes Miss you had showed us this kind of stresses
 13Miss Soula ((to Giannis)) where it talks about stresses ((in the book)) it
 14 means this one
 15Giannis the (...)
 16Miss Soula yes=
 → 17Bahrye =Miss in Turkish there [is a letter like this
 ((Bahrye gets up and walks to the blackboard))
 18Miss Soula (((to Giannis)) that's what
 19 ((the writer of the story)) means [here
 → 20Bahrye and you put this Miss
 21Miss Soula ((to Bahrye)) yes like that [yes
 → 22Bahrye [it's called *yumuşak ge*=
 23Miss Soula only in Turkish this letter always takes this ((diacritic))
 24 [isn't that so?
 25Meltem [is there such a letter ((in Turkish))?=
 26Miss Soula =what I'm telling you is a lot harder ((to learn)) because for
 27 example in ((the vowels)) "omega" and "itta" you could have
 28 this stress ((she writes on the blackboard)) or that stress

In this excerpt, Bahrye self-selects to introduce her metalinguistic talk on Turkish in the centre of classroom talk. In addition, she gets up from her seat and goes to the blackboard to illustrate her point of comparison: she writes the letter "yumuşak ge" in big clear letters for everyone to see and provides its name (lines 17, 20 and 22). Bahrye's metalinguistic comment shows an awareness of the written codes of the two languages and the ability to talk about them (cf. Kenner 2000, 2004). This in itself is very interesting given that Bahrye did not have any formal instruction in written Standard Turkish. At the same time, Bahrye exhibits an

awareness of her audience which is partly comprised of majority and minority children who lack literacy skills in Turkish (as Meltem's comment in line 25 seems to suggest). In so doing, she is showing her knowledge and expertise of the minority language and negotiating an "expert" identity in the main classroom floor. In fact, this episode chimes with observations of Bahrye's heightened metalinguistic knowledge of literacies and languages and ability to use and talk about this knowledge both inside and outside the classroom setting. The following vignette recounts an episode where Bahrye is trying out some Turkish with her teachers.

Bahrye is in the teachers' lounge. She is chatting with Miss Sophia, one of the teachers from the extended school programme. There are other teachers around too. Suddenly Bahrye sees a mobile phone on the table and points to it saying in Turkish: "cep telefonu cep telefonu kimin? kimin?" <a mobile phone a mobile phone whose is it? whose is it?> and turning to one of the teachers she says "senim? senim?" <is it yours? is it yours?>. I notice that none of the teachers acknowledge Bahrye's utterances in Turkish. (fieldnotes, 1/1/99)

Indeed, Bahrye's metalinguistic awareness and talk suggests that minority children were not only keen to negotiate a legitimate place for Turkish in peer talk but also in the very centre of classroom discourse as well as in informal talk with their teachers. These practices sought to increase the visibility of Turkish beyond the peer group and seemed to complement teacher-led efforts in the classroom (see the vignette at the beginning of this section). Moreover, these practices were encouraged by the school's intercultural regime, which sought to counter prevailing national discourses regarding the "self" and the "other" as they emerged, for instance, in the writing of history, geography and language textbooks (see relevant papers in Fragoudaki & Dragona 1997; Koulouri 2002; also see Section 2.3).

Unlike the teachers' lack of response in the short vignette above, in excerpt 6.12, Miss Soula acknowledges Bahrye's contribution (line 21). Moreover, she uses it as a spring board to make a contrast between the two written codes: in Turkish the letter in question always takes the diacritic while in Greek stresses differ depending on the position of the stressed vowel in a given word (lines 23, 26–28). Although she does not dwell on Bahrye's metalinguistic comment and shifts the discussion back to the aspirations and stress system in Greek, the teacher incorporates the former's comment in current classroom talk and elaborates on it. As a result, building on Bahrye's contribution Miss Soula provides an opportunity for exposure to aspects of the two written codes (Greek and Turkish) for the benefit of both majority and minority children very much in the spirit of the school's intercultural regime.

On the majority children's part, metalinguistic talk about Turkish tended to elicit playful uptakes. These responses resembled the majority children's playful

uptakes of their peers' Turkish utterances in peer talk (see Section 6.5). For instance, in excerpt 6.13, the children and Miss Soula are discussing new vocabulary from a short story they just read about a camping holiday. Miss Soula is explaining differences in language use between the words "σκηνή" [skini] and "τσαντίρι" [tsadiri] (here I have translated both words as "tent" in English but in every day Greek language use "τσαντίρι" [tsadiri] can also refer to a make-shift tent used by Roma people). Talking her cue from Miss Soula, Meltem self-selects and introduces the Turkish word "çandır" (line 3) in discourse, bringing to the fore the phonetic similarity between the two words in the two languages.

Excerpt 6.13 (18/3/99)

- | | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| 1 | Κυρία Σούλα | η σκηνή <u>αυτό</u> . τσαντίρι <u>τέτοιο</u> . |
| 2 | Τουτζάι | τσαν::τίρι . |
| → 3 | Μελτέμ | <i>f çandır . çandır .</i> |
| → 4 | Βάσια | <i>f ça::dır . ça::dır .</i> |
| 5 | Κυρία Σούλα | <u>πώς</u> κοιμούνται μέσα σ' αυτό; .. δεν έχει κρεβάτια; .. |
| 1 | Miss Soula | this [skini] is this kind of tent that [tsadiri] is that kind of tent |
| 2 | Tuncay | tent [tsandiri] |
| → 3 | Meltem | <i>çandır çandır</i>
tent tent |
| → 4 | Vasia | <i>çadır çadır</i>
tent tent |
| 5 | Teacher | how do they sleep in this kind of tent? are there any beds? |

Meltem's utterance in Turkish triggers a playful uptake by one of her peers: Vasia closely imitates Meltem's utterance through the manipulation of vowel elongation and stress (line 4). As I have argued in 6.5, imitations of Turkish words and phrases provided majority children with the opportunity to experiment with Turkish which they did not have access outside school. These forms of experimentation became all the more important since Turkish was marginalized at the local inter-community level in Gazi and within broader mainstream Greek society.⁶⁰

60. Note that such forms of experimentation with minority languages are not new: they have been identified in contact encounters among peers in other European urban contexts with longer histories of linguistic and cultural contact between majority and minority groups both inside and outside multilingual/multicultural schools (e.g. Rampton 1995, 2006). As I mentioned in the introduction, in the case of Greece, such contact encounters are a recent phenomenon punctuated by the influx of linguistic minorities from the periphery to urban centres as well as immigration from abroad, especially from the early 90s onwards.

Unlike more established (contextualised) cues (e.g. nicknames and football chants), impromptu imitations of Turkish utterances seemed to be much more ambiguous, especially when an initial imitation could function as a spring board generating subsequent imitations and sustained giggling and laughter (by majority children). In Section 4.4.2, I discussed how lack of uptake on the minority children's part of such imitations in peer talk perhaps signalled their unsuitability as cues for play. Here again, the silence that ensues Vasia's playful uptake may suggest that appropriating and transforming Meltem's utterance in Turkish into a cue for play could perhaps be seen as parody.

One further point worth raising in this excerpt is the following: we discussed how in excerpt 6.12 Miss Soula acknowledged Bahrye's contribution as relevant to current classroom talk and elaborated on the links between the two languages. In excerpt 6.13, however, she avoids acknowledging the relevance of Meltem's Turkish utterance in current classroom talk. Instead, she re-orient's classroom talk back to her explanation of the differences in language use between the two words in Greek (cf. the teachers' silence to Bahrye's attempt to speak to them in Turkish I described in the vignette in the beginning of this section).

Her divergent responses have implications for the visibility of Turkish in the main classroom floor and her institutional identity and roles. Regardless of the school's dominant intercultural regime and Miss Soula's strong commitment, it seems that not all forms of knowledge regarding Turkish were treated as potential curriculum content. For instance, while failing to take on board Meltem's metalinguistic observations regarding the phonetic similarities between the Greek word "τραντίρ" and the Turkish word "çandır" Miss Soula reported initiating a class project on similarities in the phonology of the two languages the year before. This seems to imply that class projects initiated and led by the teacher regarding, for instance, similarities in the phonology of the two languages (Greek and Turkish) were seen as more acceptable forms of transmittable knowledge than similar information spontaneously procured by the children.

This discrepancy may be explained by probing into the traditional role of the teacher as "transmitter" and "explainer" of curriculum content and how this was potentially undermined by minority children's metalinguistic talk on Turkish. More specifically, according to Miss Soula's self-reports she had never studied Turkish formally; but had had limited exposure to written Standard Turkish in the context of an in-service teacher training seminar. This meant that when faced with children-initiated metalinguistic talk on Turkish she often lacked the necessary knowledge to assess both its accuracy and relevance to current classroom talk. As a result, this type of metalinguistic talk could be seen as jeopardizing her traditional role as "transmitter" and "explainer" of curriculum content and putting to test her institutional identity and roles. Indeed, by claiming an "expert"

identity for themselves, minority children seemed to be relationally positioning their teachers as “novice” language learners. These positionings could cause all sorts of challenges to teachers: teachers could find it face threatening to have the roles of “transmitter” and “explainer” reversed, as this could be seen as undermining their institutional authority and power. Moreover, it meant that they had to temporarily put on hold their traditional institutional identity and roles and join the pupil cohort.

The different ways children and teachers drew upon playful talk as a discursive resource to negotiate alternative social identities, forms of authoritative knowledge and power asymmetries at a local interactional level as well as facilitate foreign language learning and teaching and increase the visibility of the minority language during lessons resonates with the growing literature on redefining what counts as classroom talk and re-conceptualising the classroom order (e.g. Candela 1999; Kambarelis 2001; Maybin 2006; Rampton 1995, 2006). This line of research has revealed that children strategically exploit their available resources (here playful talk) to question their assumed passive role in the (re-)production of the classroom order. Indeed, majority and minority children were seen as taking an agentive stance in navigating identity positions that foregrounded alternative social identities and roles and in collaboratively negotiating the classroom order. At the same time, teachers were seen as also exploiting playful talk (e.g. in ritual threats, assessments, as a resource to teach the foreign language) and highlight (albeit temporarily) non-institutional social personas and enhance their relations with their pupils. These observations challenged what Kambarelis (2001) has referred to as “the long-presumed homogeneity of classroom discourse implicit in the ubiquitous initiation-response-evaluation/follow-up (IRE/IRF) genre” (:85). Indeed, they revealed the heterogeneity of classroom talk. Classroom talk was, thus, seen as comprised of many different activities, genres, tasks, types of talk and frames which co-existed and interacted with one another producing diverse and dynamic exchanges (cf. Gutiérrez et al. 1999; Wortham 2006).

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined in more detail the intersection of playful talk, play frames and social identities in recreational and instructional contexts. I looked at playful talk as a form of collective sociability among the children. I discussed how the sharing of playful activities and routines punctuated by the use of clusters of contextualisation cues functioned as a strong-in group marker distinguishing this particular peer group from others at school.

I then examined how through cross-sex teasing routines boys and girls expressed their awareness of gendered relations. By conjuring up same sex alliances I showed how girls sought to negotiate new and exciting female identities drawing on their out of school recreational and media practices which put to test traditional female roles of passivity and femininity. Boys, on the other hand, sought to reinforce traditional male roles valuing aggressiveness and toughness.

I explored how eliciting the support of their peers and orchestrating teasing routines offered children the opportunity to compete for peer group leadership and status and consolidate (but also contest) peer group hierarchies. Furthermore, I discussed how children used teasing to reinforce and reconfirm social concerns and monitor peer conduct and talk. By exposing these violations children brought to the fore breaches of conduct, communicated their views concerning what was regarded as the norm and ultimately managed their inter-personal relationships within the peer group without resorting to adult intervention or help. At the same time, I showed how by exposing these violations, children attributed to themselves and their targets particular (favourable or unfavourable) social roles and identities. A case in point was the way teasing emerged as a discursive resource to monitor “poor” academic performance and consolidate academic hierarchies among the children while (re-)producing particular teacher sanctioned definitions of “good” academic performance, conduct and talk. Needless to say, children who were positioned in a less favorable light tended to resist their peers’ identity ascriptions and seek to foreground alternative models of self identification (e.g. having a good sense of humor) and authoritative knowledge (e.g. knowledge associated with peer group membership and affiliation rather than academic achievement).

I probed into the interplay between media consumption, popular culture and playful talk in negotiating peer group membership. I showed how through the joint production of playful talk, in particular music making routines, children showed off their knowledge of and expertise in media talk and popular culture and presented themselves as media savvy and tuned into the world of mainstream (Greek) popular culture. These forms of engagement afforded children indispensable social capital and raised boundaries of inclusion. For minority children in particular they also provided them with an interactional space to lay claims to a bicultural identity. As I showed, however, majority Greek children could downplay these identity positionings, by questioning their minority peers’ access, knowledge and expertise. In so doing, they appeared to be contesting the latter’s claims to a bicultural identity.

I looked into how playful talk opened up an interactional space for the construction of a linguistically and culturally rich “small” peer culture and the negotiation of a mixed peer group identity. By transforming aspects of Turkish language

and culture into cues for play minority children sought to increase its visibility in peer talk. By the same token, by appropriating these cues for play (e.g. in cases of “crossing”) or asking clarification requests about their meaning majority children were seen as willing to experiment with Turkish and contribute further to the construction of a mixed peer culture. At the same time, I discussed how children’s playful talk and its uptakes (or lack of) pointed to certain ambivalence: sometimes minority children kept silent or responded seriously to the use of Turkish cues by their majority peers or resisted explaining their meaning to them. On their part majority children underplayed and in other occasions flatly denied any competence in Turkish. This ambivalence seemed to suggest that processes of conversion to and diversion from this mixed peer culture and peer group identity were at play. I situated this ambivalence in the context of dominant national discourses that continue to marginalise Turkish language and culture in mainstream Greek society.

In the final section of this chapter, I investigated the different ways children and teachers drew upon playful talk as a discursive resource to negotiate alternative models of identity, social relationships and authoritative knowledge in the very centre of classroom talk. More specifically, I illustrated how children made use of playful talk to question traditional teacher-pupil roles and identities and assumed power asymmetries at a local interactional level. On these occasions, the children’s peer group affiliations and expertise in media saturated youth popular culture seemed to override institutional roles and identities and preferred forms of curriculum focused knowledge. I also demonstrated how teachers negotiated a non-institutional social persona and enhanced their relationships with the children by frame shifts to play. I discussed how shifts to play especially during English classes facilitated language learning and teaching by allowing children (particularly those with low competence in English) to experiment with aspects of the foreign language and project aspects of their non-institutional social personas which were linked with alternative forms of competence and authoritative knowledge. I investigated the role of playful talk in negotiating the visibility of the minority language and culture in the main classroom floor. I showed how by initiating metalinguistic talk about Turkish minority children sought to negotiate an “expert” identity which seemed to undermine the traditional role of the teacher as “transmitter” and “explainer” of curriculum content. I argued that through playful talk children (and teachers) redefined what counted as classroom talk and re-conceptualised the classroom order.

In the concluding chapter, I bring together some of the main findings of this book.

Conclusion

This book has been about children's talk and interaction with one another and their teachers in a multilingual, multicultural, multiethnic school in Athens, Greece. Its focus has been triggered by the ever increasing cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity in present day Greek society in general and state schools in particular reflecting recent changes in immigration and the mobilization of indigenous linguistic minorities from the periphery to urban centres. It has sought to contribute to the nascent sociolinguistics literature on indigenous and more newly established linguistic minorities and multilingual, multicultural and multi-ethnic schools and classrooms in Greece.

In particular, in this book, I focused on the talk of a linguistically, culturally and ethnically diverse group of ten year olds of majority Greek and minority Turkish-speaking backgrounds. Drawing on ethnographically informed approaches to discourse, I looked into the children's interactional histories, linguistic and other semiotic resources and choices, practices and ways of talk and conduct to construct play frames. For this purpose, I drew upon the concept of playful talk as performance and developed the idea of play frames further by charting the ways they interacted with other types of frames (i.e. instructional, socio-relational). Both playful talk as performance and play frames were viewed as a points of entry into the exploration of meaning making and identity work in children's talk. This analytic framework allowed us to look at new ways in which well researched verbal phenomena such as teasing, joking, verbal play as well as relatively under researched ones such as music making and chanting provided a productive locus for the study of identity construction. In particular, I probed into the ways children exploited playful talk to negotiate, reframe but also resist and transgress available social roles and identities as well as experiment with or fantasize novel and exciting possibilities.

Taking a social constructionist perspective to identity as a point of departure, I showed how through playful talk with their peers and teachers children made salient particular aspects of their rich identity kit. This approach to identity was based on the premise that, through linguistic and other semiotic resources and practices, children performed different aspects of the "self". The latter was seen as an active agent in the interactively achieved social construction of meaning. As a result, in this book, I took identity construction as on-going process that was

constituted through daily interactions across school contexts and participation. This conceptualisation of identity implied that children (and teachers) ascribed to themselves and others multiple and at times contradictory identifications (e.g. identities associated with gender, youth/popular culture, the peer group, ethno-linguistic affiliation, prescribed but also alternative institutional identities and roles).

Moreover, adopting an ethnographically informed sociolinguistics perspective captured the ways in which the children's locally motivated linguistic and other semiotic choices and practices indexed or were shaped by larger extra-situational categories, meanings and understandings. These were not only confined to various social identities and roles but also included the school as an institution of social reproduction (e.g. its intercultural regime which fostered particular teaching and learning practices and discourses of inclusion distinguishing it from other mainstream state schools in Athens). Other salient categories I identified were majority-minority relations situated in the macro-historical context of Modern Greek nation building and identity formation as well as aspects of the daily realities of the local neighbourhood of Gazi and its recent transformation.

Based on tape-recordings of spontaneous talk and ethnographic observations as well as semi-structured interviews and other written and visual sources, the central part of the book (Chapters 3–5) explored teasing, joking, verbal play, music making and chanting in children's talk in recreational and instructional contexts. In response to an already robust sociolinguistics literature on children's curriculum oriented talk, I sought to explore children's talk across school contexts. Therefore, in addition to curriculum oriented talk during teacher fronted whole class and small group instruction, I looked into informal, undirected talk in the classroom, during the break, at lunchtime and as the children socialised in school corridors and the playground.

I grounded the investigation of the above mentioned verbal activities and routines in the children's gender specific out-of-school recreational practices and forms of media engagement and media preferences as well as in their linguistic repertoires and expertise in different languages. The latter included various degrees of competence in and competing language attitudes towards Greek, Turkish (both Standard Turkish and the Turkish variety spoken in Gazi), taught foreign languages (e.g. English, French, German) and immigrant and other minority languages (e.g. Albanian, Romany).

Taking the children's rich kit of linguistic and other resources as a point of departure, I investigated the emergence and development of playful talk across contexts and participation. This led to identifying a repertoire of contextualization cues children used to set up play frames. Cues were partly habitual and established through continuous use (contextualized cues) and partly creative (con-

textualizing cues), thereby requiring further interactional work to compensate for their emergent quality. The children's repertoire of cues was renewed and updated by appropriating, transforming or experimenting with new and at times highly ambiguous and potentially volatile cues (e.g. Vasia's echoings of utterances in Turkish or Giannis and Babis' "crossings" to Turkish). Moreover, children negotiated a set of assumptions and associations based on their shared interactional histories and diverse life, home and community experiences which helped them understand the meaning of these cues and, as a rule, interpret the verbal activities playfully.

In this context, teasing emerged as the most frequently occurring locally-structured social activity in children's talk in recreational contexts. Focusing on one verbal activity allowed me to take a more nuanced approach and look in greater detail into its sequential environment, sequencing rules, participation frameworks and response work. I showed that children navigated more or less successfully a range of (a) participant positions and discourse identities (e.g. teaser, co-teaser, butt of teasing, appreciative audience); (b) interactional options (e.g. self-selecting, soliciting third party participation, making collective bids for the interactional floor) and (c) responses to teasing (i.e. responding playfully, keeping silent, responding seriously and calling an adult third party to intervene).

Through teasing, children competed for peer group leadership and status and reinforced (but also undermined) established peer hierarchies. They indexed aspects of their gendered identities and positioned themselves and their peers in particular (favourable or unfavourable) ways. As I illustrated, children who were positioned in a less favourable light opted to counter their peers' identity ascriptions and foreground alternative models of self identification and authoritative knowledge. For instance, Babis responded to Vasia and Bahrye's teases by foregrounding his good sense of humour and his ability to laugh at his academic failings while playing up his peer group knowledge and affiliation.

Shifting my analytical gaze away from talk among peers in recreational contexts to classroom talk allowed me to probe into the interplay of instructional frames and play frames. By examining shifts in and out of play during backstage peer talk, teacher-led frontstage talk and small group talk I compared playful talk across different instructional contexts and modes of participation. I discussed how children readily transported contextualization cues for play (e.g. nicknames, recontextualisable fragments of talk drawing on their recreational and media practices) from recreational contexts to instructional ones. At the same time, they confined themselves to a more limited and perhaps more transparent set of cues (e.g. prosody and repetition) when interacting with their teachers in the centre of classroom talk. On their part, while tolerating shifts to play during instruction, teachers were less likely to actively take part in their development. Instead, they

tended to support instructional frames and redirect classroom activity back to the “serious” business of curriculum focused talk.

Nevertheless, the emergence of playful talk during the lesson had important implications for “doing” identity work, negotiating social relationships (including relationships of power) and proposing alternative models of authoritative knowledge in the classroom. Besides providing a much needed interlude to the humdrum of classroom life, shifts to play allowed children to question traditional teacher-pupil roles and identities and institutionally sanctioned power asymmetries at a local interactional level. Moreover, they provided them with the interactional space to highlight their peer group affiliations and expertise over their institutional personas and curriculum focused knowledge. Additionally, shifts to play allowed children to facilitate foreign (here English) language learning and teaching and negotiate the visibility of the minority (Turkish) language and culture in the official classroom floor (see, for instance, Bahrye and Meltem’s metalinguistic comments on Turkish and Greek). As regards to teachers, playful talk proved to be a discursive resource for the negotiation of non-institutional social personas identities and roles (see, for instance, how Miss Soula peppered her reproaches with ritual insults by appropriating the “voice” of the mother/care giver).

Drawing on Chapters 3–5, in Chapter 6 I discussed further the relationship between playful talk, play frames and social identities in recreational and instructional contexts. I found that playful talk opened up an interactional space for the construction of a linguistically and culturally diverse “small” peer culture and the negotiation of a mixed peer group identity. I showed how minority children sought to share and transform aspects of Turkish language and culture into cues for play (e.g. nicknames, recontextualizable fragments of talk from Turkish media sources), thereby raising its visibility in peer talk. In a similar vein to their minority peers, majority children were seen as willing to experiment with Turkish by appropriating and reproducing these cues (faithfully or with a twist) or asking clarification requests about their meaning (as we saw Babis did).

At the same time, children’s playful talk and its uptakes (or lack of) strongly suggested certain ambivalence: sometimes minority children chose to keep silent or respond seriously to their majority peers’ forays into Turkish or avoided explaining the meaning of these cues to them. On their part, majority children downplayed and when explicitly asked flatly denied any competence in Turkish. This ambivalence seemed to suggest that processes of conversion to and diversion from this mixed peer culture were at play. I demonstrated how this ambivalence reflected but also reproduced powerful discourses in circulation in mainstream Greek society on national identity and linguistic minorities. The discourses in question marginalise Turkish language and culture and often position its bearers as culturally “inferior”. Taking the social reproduction of these dominant dis-

courses as a point of departure, I discussed how they filtered through and influenced everyday interaction at a local level in this Athens' neighbourhood and ultimately children's playful talk at school.

I highlighted the significance of media consumption and popular culture in peer group membership. Children drew upon their knowledge of and expertise in media talk and mainstream (Greek) popular culture as main sources for contextualisation cues for play and in so doing (re-)drafted the boundaries of their peer group (see, for instance, Vasia and Babis chat about the comedy routine from "Κατὰ Μάρκον Ευαγγέλιο" <The Gospel according to St Mark>). For minority children in particular, such forms of media engagement also provided them with an interactional space to lay claims not only to a shared peer group identity but also to a bicultural identity (e.g. Meltem and Bahrye's music making based on snippets from popular Greek love songs). On their part, majority children sometimes questioned their peers' access, knowledge and expertise in media talk and mainstream Greek popular culture, thereby renegotiating peer group boundaries and undermining their claims to a bicultural identity.

I showed how widening the scope of study of classroom talk to include both private pupil-pupil talk and public teacher-pupil talk and focusing on activities other than the initiation-response-evaluation/follow-up revealed the heterogeneity of classroom talk. Classroom talk was, thus, seen as comprised of many different activities, genres, tasks types of talk and frames which co-existed with one another producing rich and dynamic interactions. In this context, I explore how children (and teachers) redefined what counted as classroom talk. By strategically exploiting playful talk, children were seen as taking an agentive stance in negotiating alternative models of identity and knowledge that potentially undermined their teachers more traditional ones.

A case in point was the role of playful talk in negotiating the overall visibility of Turkish in the official classroom space and the kinds of possibilities for identity work it opened. Minority children were keen to share aspects of their home language and culture with their peers and teachers during lessons, especially through metalinguistic talk on Turkish. In so doing, I discussed how minority children claimed an "expert" identity for themselves. Such identity claims, however, could be seen as undermining their teachers' traditional roles as "transmitter" and "explainer" of curriculum content and relationally positioning them as "novice" language learners. Moreover, these identity negotiations could be seen as potentially subverting teachers' institutional authority and power at a local level, thereby foregrounding new ways of conceptualising the institutional order.

It is worth noting here that pupil- (and teacher-) led efforts to negotiate the visibility of Turkish in the main classroom floor were situated in the context of the school's intercultural regime which promoted a discourse of inclusion and plu-

ralism. They also reflected the new educational realities of urban Greek schools and classrooms that are becoming increasingly more linguistically, culturally and ethnically diverse. These new educational realities call for closely paying attention to raising teacher and pupil awareness regarding the children's rich linguistic and cultural repertoires. In this context, teachers need to become aware of playful talk as a potential teaching and learning resource for understanding and celebrating different languages and cultures. Raising awareness can then help combat stereotyping and the marginalisation of minority and immigrant languages and cultures in schools and communities.

Methodologically, this book demonstrated that ethnographically informed approaches to discourse can help to make links between the children's local linguistic choices and practices and larger extra-situational categories, meanings and understandings (e.g. social roles and identities but also powerful discourses about Greek national identity, linguistic minorities and immigration in circulation). Moreover, it highlighted the inter-relatedness of various linguistic features such as contextualisation cues, verbal activities and routines, the framing of talk across school contexts and participation in processes of social identity construction. It foregrounded the importance of providing a detailed contextualization of children's talk by focusing on the situated use of their resources in the context of their shared interactional histories, out-of-school recreational and other social practices and linguistic repertoires.

For the ethnographer in particular, this book showed that the process of ethnographic inquiry had important implications for developing relationships with the children (as well as with the teachers, parents and other adults) both inside and outside the school. As a researcher in the field, it increased my awareness of the on-going negotiation of social relationships and affiliations, identities and roles, degrees of knowledge and expertise between myself and the "researched". For instance, the children's collusive teasing when withholding information about aspects of their peer culture reminded me all too well of how we depend upon the "researched" to forward our research agenda. It also enriched my understanding of the process of boundary raising and peer group identity construction: the children affirmed their autonomy vis-à-vis the adult world (which inevitably included the researcher) by barring my access to shared peer group knowledge.

POST SCRIPT

Six years later

- Βάλλη εάν μπορείς να μου πεις έναν άνθρωπο που σ' έχει επιρρεάσει στη ζωή σου
- Φάνης ο εαυτός μου
- Τουτζάι κι εγώ αυτό θα έλεγα
- Φάνης άμα δεν ήθελα εγώ να διαβάσω αν μου έλεγε η μητέρα μου να μην διαβάζω εγώ θα διάβαζα αν μου έλεγε μην πας σχολείο δεν με νοιάζει εγώ θα πήγαινα ο ευατός σου αποφασίζει σίγουρα παίρνεις κάτι μικρό από τους άλλους που βλέπεις από τους συμμαθητές από τη μητέρα τον πατέρα
- Vally who is your role model in life?
- Fanis my self
- Tuncay I would have said the same thing
- Fanis if I didn't want to study if my mum said don't study I would study if she said don't go to school I would still go to school no matter what you decide for yourself of course other people influence you in small ways too your classmates your mother father
(interview with Tuncay and Fanis, 1/11/05)
- Κώστας δεν αλλάζεις τον κόσμο αφήνεις ένα σπόρο και τι μπορεί να γίνει σε δέκα χρόνια δεν το ξέρεις δεν περιμέναμε άμεσα αποτελέσματα όλοι ((τα παιδιά)) με τους δικούς του χρόνους και πορεία με σεβασμό στην ιδιαιτερότητά τους σαν φίλος
- Costas you don't change the world you plant a seed you don't know what may happen ten years down the line we were not after a quick fix we let them ((the children)) take their time follow their trajectories respecting their difference all along like a friend would
(interview with Costas Varlas, co-director of "Paths of Life", 3/11/05)

In the post script, I make a leap across time to provide a snap shot of the children's personal, social and educational change six years later as they made the transition from childhood to adolescence, renewed and transformed old peer group networks and explored new and exciting possibilities for social affiliation. Since my last visit to the primary school in Gazi in 2001, I had maintained contact

with minority children through the local NGO “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life>. Fanis, Tuncay, Huseyin and Bahrye were among the very first minority children to attend the homework clubs organised by the NGO at its rented premises on the corner of Constantinoupolis and Damokleous Streets every afternoon after school. Since 2000, they got regular help for their school work in Greek (including ancient Greek in secondary school), maths, science as well as English, French and German (the last two foreign languages are currently being taught along side English in state secondary schools in Greece). More importantly, besides homework clubs, the local NGO provided them and their families with a safe space to build relationships and enduring friendships with majority Greeks and gain access to valuable material and symbolic resources.

In November 2005, I contacted Fanis, Tuncay, Huseyin and Bahrye through Mata and Costas Varlas, co-directors of the NGO. Of the four teenagers (at the time sixteen years old), only Fanis and Tuncay came to our meeting. Huseyin and Bahrye excused themselves: the former was tied up at his father’s video store while the latter had house chores to do for the impending celebration of the “Kurban Bayrami” marking the end of Ramadan.

During the course of our initial meeting and the subsequent one a few days later, it became clear to me that finishing primary school had been an important transition point for the ten year old cohort: Soon after the end of the school year, Costas, Maria and Nontas moved out of Gazi, ostensibly to leafier parts of Athens. Neither Tuncay nor Fanis were able to say much about their former classmates as they had lost touch. Shortly after Meltem and her family moved first to the town of Katerini (in central Greece) and then to the town of Ksanthi (in Western Thrace) where her father worked as a musician playing along side majority Greek musicians (see Map A of Greece, in Appendix I). The boys reported seeing Meltem regularly whenever she visited her grandparents who were still living in Gazi. According to Tuncay and Fanis she has been doing rather poorly at school. Irregular school attendance and subsequent low grades had forced her to repeat classes and till their last meeting she had failed to successfully complete secondary school. On the other hand, living in Katerini and then in Ksanthi had given Meltem the opportunity to venture outside the confines of the minority community and establish friendship ties with immigrant girls of Russian-Pontic and Albanian origins. The two boys expressed ambivalent feelings about Meltem’s unconventional peer group affiliations and life style: they admired her individualism and freedom of choice but also compared her unfavourably with her more “traditional” minority female contemporaries in Gazi.

Although Vasia still lived in Gazi, she and her three brothers were sent to secondary schools outside the neighbourhood, in the near by neighbourhood of Petralona. There she had established new peer networks and hadn’t kept in touch

with her old classmates. Tuncay and Fanis reported that nowadays she seldom acknowledged them in the streets of Gazi or in neighbourhood shops which perhaps signalled her disaffiliation with her former peers. Giannis moved out of Gazi three years ago. Till then, he had been going to the same local secondary school along with Tuncay, Fanis, Huseyin, Babis and Bahrye. He kept close contact with the boys socialising with them extensively inside school and occasionally outside school too. Giannis' uninterrupted socialisation with Tuncay, Fanis and Huseyin during the two years they were together in secondary school appeared to me in sharp contrast with his rather ambivalent attitude towards his minority peers in primary school. Indeed, both Tuncay and Fanis reported that Giannis had somewhat mellowed down and spoke of him warmly. They had lost touch though since he moved out of Gazi and did not know how he was doing at school.

The second transition point for the remaining children of the ten year old cohort had been moving on from secondary school to high school. Compulsory education in Greece stops at secondary school level with the official school leaving age set at fifteen. At the age of fifteen, young people have the choice to either stop school or continue school by enrolling in "γενικό λύκειο" <high school> or "τεχνικό λύκειο" <vocational high school>. Bahrye had chosen to stop school and stay home. I was taken aback by her decision not to continue school. By all accounts, Bahrye had been a successful learner with aspirations to go on to vocational high school and train as a hair dresser. She was perhaps one of the very first minority girls to successfully complete secondary school without having to repeat classes. In this respect, her educational trajectory and future aspirations were unconventional. However, her decision to stop school seemed to reproduce more traditional practices among minority young people: these practices discouraged girls from continuing their education and seeking employment outside the home. Instead, girls were encouraged to hone their home making and child rearing skills in preparation for their future roles as housewives and mothers.

Of the remaining four boys, Huseyin and Babis enrolled in the local vocational high school while Tuncay and Fanis enrolled in the local high school. Through out secondary school, Babis socialised extensively with the three minority boys both inside and outside school. Indeed, the transition from primary school to secondary school had paved the way for minority boys to extend their peer networks beyond the once close knit all-male minority peer group. While in primary school peer networks outside school tended to be linguistically, culturally and ethnically homogeneous, this appeared to have changed radically in secondary school and continued to be the case in high school. Fanis, Tuncay, Huseyin, Babis and other young adolescents (of majority Greek and immigrant backgrounds) shared recreational out-of-school practices: they watched together the new film releases in the same state-of-the-art multiplex cinema in Nicea (a neighbourhood

near the port of Pireas), hang out together in the same upmarket cafés and bars in Thisio (an adjoining neighbourhood north east of Gazi and perhaps the most popular entertainment strong hold in the area), hummed tunes from the latest hits of Ploutarchos, Remos and Kalomoira (all Greek singers very popular among young audiences) and constantly exchanged text messages with jokes and poems in Greek.

Even though the four boys were now attending different high schools (located in different premises), they still maintained close ties. The fact that Babis had started working as an apprentice cook that year in the afternoons after school in one of the neighbourhood's most hip restaurants meant that he had a lot less time to socialise with his peers. Neither Tuncay nor Fanis knew how he was getting along at school but added that vocational high school was academically less rigorous and there was less discipline than high school. On the other hand, Tuncay and Fanis stressed that vocational high school guaranteed jobs after school and gave me the example of Ergut and Huseyin, two other minority boys who were a year and two years older than Tuncay and Fanis respectively and were training as electricians. Huseyin who was also going to vocational high school was training as an accountant. He was under a lot of parental pressure to finish vocational high school so that he could get a clerical job in the public sector (like his father) and take over the family business. Huseyin, however, was not particularly keen on finishing school which was perhaps reflected in the fact that he had progressively stopped going to the daily homework clubs run by the local NGO “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life>.

Last but not least, Fanis and Tuncay were part of a small group of four minority boys all in the same class who were about to successfully complete high school and had long standing aspirations to go on to University. All four young people were considered as successful learners: they worked very hard at school and attended the homework clubs at “Δρόμοι Ζωής” <Paths of Life> every afternoon. They were viewed by their minority peers and volunteer tutors there as “πρότυπα” <role models> and were hailed as positive examples for younger children to follow. Both Tuncay and Fanis expressed their wish to study accounting and computers at University.

By all accounts Fanis and Tuncay's educational trajectories represented a significant shift among the younger generation of minority Gaziotes. Some years earlier, Tuncay's brother, Ahmet, who had also been a very successful learner had stopped school just before graduating. Like most minority young men of his age cohort first he got married and then went on to do his military service. By November 2005, Ahmet already had a year and a half old son and was looking for a job. Not having his high school qualification, however, was making job hunting very frustrating and creating a lot of tensions at home. Ahmet's educational tra-

jectory and life choices were not unusual but reflected prevailing practices among minority youth at the time.

Tuncay and Fanis were quick to distance themselves from Ahmet's life choices proposing alternative personal and educational models. Their discourse focused on individual agency and each person's capacity to bring about change. It needs to be situated in the raising awareness among adult minority Gazities in general about the importance of education for their children, including the girls' education. In this context, Costas Varlas reported that there were seven minority girls from Gazi enrolled in secondary school who were also attending the NGO's homework clubs for the school year 2005–2006. He added that regular school attendance represented a growing trend among minority young people who saw their numbers steadily increase in local secondary and high schools. Notwithstanding, Tuncay and Fanis personal and educational trajectories along those of other successful learners provided powerful role models from within the minority community setting an enduring example for other young people to follow.

All in all, this post script attests to the richness and complexity of the ten year old cohort's personal, social and educational trajectories and life choices six years after the initial fieldwork. I thank the children once more for having given me this wonderful opportunity to share their worlds inside and outside the classroom with me.

APPENDIX I

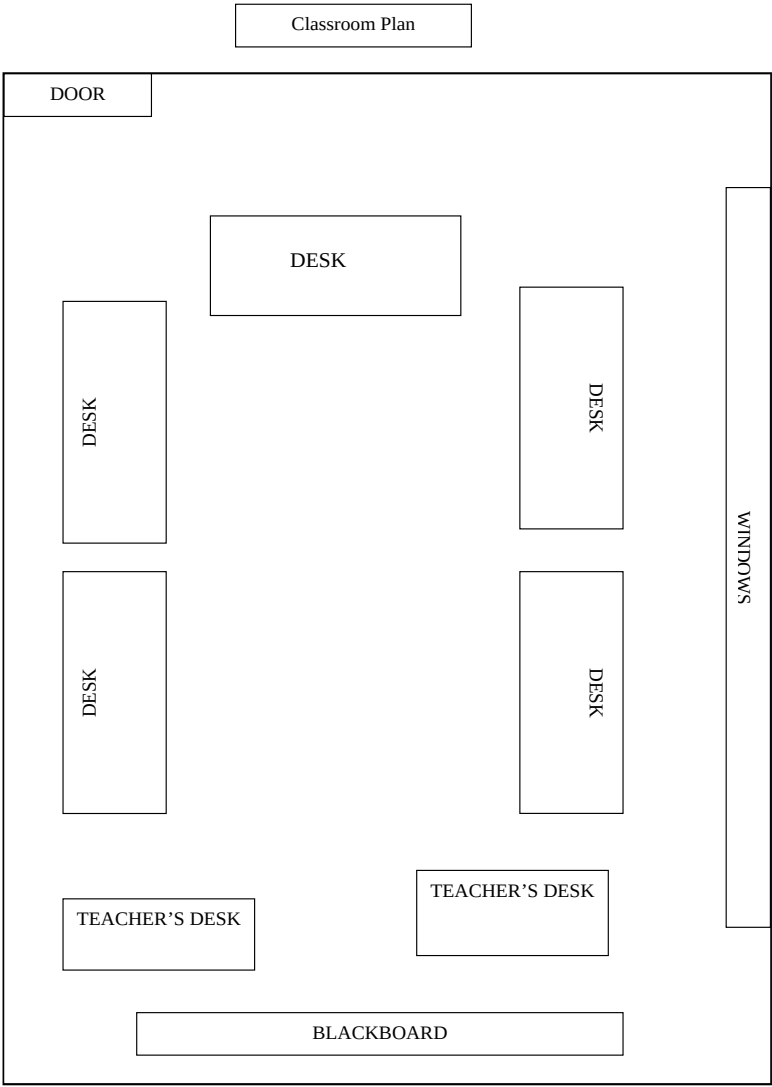
Maps and classroom plan



Map A. Map of Greece



Map B. Map of Athens



APPENDIX II

Data sources

Table A. Data set: An overview

Field notes	34 sets, including classroom observations, observations during the break and lunchtime; discussions with teachers, parents and children at school, in the neighbourhood and at children's homes; observations during carnival and national day celebrations at school and school-sponsored visits to museums and archaeological sites
Audio-recordings	a total of 29 hours and 25 minutes during instruction, free time, lunch time and school-sponsored events and visits
Interviews	8 semi-structured interviews with children and teachers (a total of 13 h 30 min)
Written and visual sources	12 written questionnaires; 13 pupil reports; 5 bi-annual newsletters "Η Φωνή των Δρόμων" <The Voice of the Streets>; 1 children's newsletter "Ονειρόδρομος του Γκαζιού" <Streetdreams of Gazi> all published by the NGO "Δρόμοι Ζωής" <Paths of Life>; 1 film "Το Σχολείο" <The School>

Table B. Tape-recorded data (total number of hours and minutes recorded per grade and setting)

School grade: Hours	In the class-room, during instruction	In the class-room & in the schoolyard during free time	In the school dinning hall, during lunch-time	In settings outside the school, during different extracurricular activities
4th grade (10 year old cohort) 29 h 25 min	20 h 15 mim	4 h 25 min	1 h	3 h 45 min
5th grade (11 year old cohort) 5 h 35 min	4 h	15 min	35 min	45 min
6th grade (12 year old cohort) 14 h 40 min	10 h 10 min	15 min	1 h 15 min	3 h
4th & 5th grades (10–11 year old cohort) 1 h			1 h	
Greek language support classes for eleven-twelve year olds	30 min			
After-school Greek language support class with Fanis (from the 10 year old cohort)	3 h 30 min			

Table C. Interviews with children

Types of interviews: Interviewees	Hours: Tape-recorded or written notes
Follow-up interview (23/4/99) with four minority Turkish speaking children of the ten year old cohort	1 h 30 min: tape-recorded
Survey interview 1 (26/2/99) with one minority Turkish speaking child of the ten year old cohort	3 h: tape-recorded
Survey interview 2 (28/4/99) with five minority Turkish speaking children of the nine-ten year old cohorts	2 h: tape-recorded
In-depth interview (15/9/99) with four minority and five majority children of the ten year old cohort	30 min: written notes

Table D. Interviews with teachers

Types of interviews: Interviewees	Hours: Tape-recorded or written notes
Survey interview 1 (28/8/99) with Miss Soula, the teacher teaching the ten year old cohort	2 h 30 min: tape-recorded
Survey interview 2 (21/9/99) with Miss Vicky, one of the teachers teaching the twelve year old cohort	1 h 30 min: tape-recorded
Survey interview 3 (15/10/2000) with a former teacher of the school who was also doing a PhD in social anthropology at the time of the interview	1 h: tape-recorded
Survey interview 4 (7/9/99): with minority Turkish teacher who was trained to teach in the dual medium minority schools in Western Thrace and who at the time of the interview was acting as a liaison between the school and minority children's homes	1 h 30 min: tape-recorded

The five-part questionnaire

In Greek:

ΕΡΩΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ

- A.1. Όνομα

2. Τάξη

3. Ηλικία

4. Έχεις αδελφούς;

5. Πόσο χρονών είναι;

6. Έχεις αδελφές;

7. Πόσο χρονών είναι;

8. Τί δουλιά κάνει ο μπαμπάς σου;

9. Τί δουλιά κάνει η μαμά σου;

10. Ζεις μαζί με τη γιαγιά σου;

11. Ζεις μαζί με το παπού σου;
- B.1. Κάνεις κάποιο άθλημα;

2. Ποιό;

3. Ποιοί είναι οι αγαπημένοι σου ηθοποιοί;

.....

4. Ποιοί είναι οι αγαπημένοι σου τραγουδιστές;

.....

5. Ποιές είναι οι αγαπημένες σου σειρές στην τηλεόραση;

.....

6. Ποιές είναι οι αγαπημένες σου ποδοσφαιρικές ομάδες;

.....

7. Ποιοί είναι οι αγαπημένοι σου ποδοσφαιριστές;

.....

8. Ποιοί είναι οι αγαπημένοι σου μπασκετμπολίστες;

Γ.1. Γράψε με ποιούς παίζεις στο σχολείο.

2. Γράψε με ποιούς παίζεις στη γειτονιά ή στο σπίτι.

3. Πού παίζεις στη γειτονιά;

4. Γράψε τρία πράγματα που σου αρέσει να κάνεις όταν δεν έχεις διάβασμα.

5. Τί πράγματα σου αρέσει να κάνεις μαζί με τη μαμά ή το μπαμπά σου;

6. Πώς βοηθάς τη μαμά ή το μπαμπά σου;

7. Πού πας διακοπές το καλοκαίρι;

8. Με ποιούς πας διακοπές;

9. Σε ποιά πόλη σου αρέσει να ζεις; 10. Γιατί;

Δ.1 Ποιές γλώσσες μιλάς;

2. Σε ποιές γλώσσες ξέρεις να γράφεις και να διαβάζεις;

3. Ποιές γλώσσες σου αρέσουν;

4. Γιατί;

5. Ποιές γλώσσες ξέρεις καλά;

6. Ποιές γλώσσες ξέρεις λίγο;

Ε.1. Θέλεις να πας στο γυμνάσιο; 2. Γιατί;

3. Τί θέλεις να γίνεις όταν μεγαλώσεις;

4. Γιατί;

5. Εδώ γράψε ό,τι άλλο θέλεις για τον εαυτό σου.

*Ευχαριστώ πολύ
Βάλλη*

Translated into English:

QUESTIONNAIRE

- A.1. Name 2. Grade 3. Age
4. Do you have any brothers? 5. How old are they?
6. Do you have any sisters? 7. How old are they?
8. What does you father do?
9. What does your mother do?
10. Do you live with your grandmother? 11. Do you live with your
grandfather?

- B.1. Do you play any sports? 2. Which one?
3. Who are your favourite actors?
.....
4. Who are your favourite singers?
.....
5. Which are your favourite shows on TV?
.....
6. Which are your favourite football teams?
.....
7. Who are your favourite football players?
.....
8. Who are your favourite basketball players?
.....

- C.1. Who do you play with at school?
.....
2. Who do you play with in the neighbourhood or at home?
.....
3. Where do you play in the neighbourhood?
4. Write three things you like doing in your spare time.
.....
.....
5. What things do you like doing with your mum or dad?
.....
.....
6. How do you help your mum or dad?
.....
.....
7. Where do you go on vacation in the summer?

8. Who do you go on vacation with?
9. Where do you like living? 10. Why?
.....

- D.1. Which languages do you speak?
2. In which languages do you know how to read and write?
3. Which languages do you like?
4. Why?
5. Which languages do you know well?
6. Which languages do you know a little?

- E.1. Do you want to continue your studies in junior high school?
2. Why?
.....
3. What would you like to do when you grow up?
.....
4. Why?
.....
5. In the space below you can write anything you want about yourself.
.....
.....

*Thanks
Vally*

The four-part pupil profile forms

In Greek:

A. ΒΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΑ ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Όνομα | 2. Επώνυμο | 3. Φύλο |
| 4. Ημ. Γέννησης | | 5. Ηλικία |
| 6. Οικογενειακή κατάσταση | | |
| 7. Θρήσκευμα | | |
| 8. Γλώσσες που μιλιούνται στο σπίτι | | |
| 9. Ιδιαίτερα ενδιαφέροντα μαθητή | | |
| 10. Εξωσχολικές δραστηριότητες μαθητή | | |
| 11. Ιδιαίτερες δεξιότητες | | |
| 12. Τακτικότητα φοίτησης | | |

13. Εργάζεται
14. Άλλα στοιχεία- παρατηρήσεις

Β. ΔΕΞΙΟΤΗΤΕΣ ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ

1. με συμμαθητές
2. με το δάσκαλο
3. με τους άλλους εκπ/κους- με το σχολείο
4. εκτός τάξης

Γ. ΕΠΙΔΟΣΗ ΑΝΑ ΜΑΘΗΜΑ

1. μαθηματικά
2. άλλα μαθήματα
3. ορθογραφία
4. τρόπος γραφής

Δ. ΓΛΩΣΣΑ

1. Επικοινωνιακή δεξιότητα
2. Λεξιλόγιο
3. Δημιουργικότητα στη γλώσσα
4. Γραμματική- συνακτικό
5. Κατανόηση- παραγωγή κειμένου
6. Συναισθηματική έκφραση μέσω γλώσσας
7. Μη λεκτική επικοινωνία
8. Αναγνωστική ικανότητα

Translated into English:

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

- | | | |
|---|------------|--------|
| 1. Name | 2. Surname | 3. Sex |
| 4. Date of Birth | | 5. Age |
| 6. Family situation | | |
| 7. Religion | | |
| 8. Languages spoken at home | | |
| 9. Special interests the pupil has | | |
| 10. Extra-curricular activities in which the pupil participates | | |
| 11. Particular abilities the pupil has | | |
| 12. School attendance | | |

13. Work outside school⁶¹

14. Other relevant information- comments

B. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. with fellow classmates

2. with form teacher

3. with other teachers- with the school administration

4. outside the classroom setting

C. PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO SUBJECT

1. in maths

2. in all other subjects

3. in spelling

4. in handwriting

D. LANGUAGE

1. Communicative competence

2. Vocabulary

3. Creativity with language

4. Grammar- Syntax

5. Writing skills

6. Expressing one's feeling through language

7. Non-verbal communication

8. Reading skills

⁶¹. A few years prior to my initial fieldwork, there were reports that some primary school Turkish-speaking children from the most impoverished families worked on and off as peddlers. This had resulted in high levels of absenteeism and underachievement at school. At the time of the fieldwork, however, none of the children worked.

APPENDIX III

Transcription conventions

A. Key to transcription conventions

The following transcription conventions have been adapted from Tannen, D. (1984) *Conversational Style: Analyzing Talk among Friends*. Nowood, NJ: Albex.

.	sentence-final falling intonation
..	noticeable pause or break in rhythm (less than 0.5 second)
...	half second pause
	an extra dot is added for each half second of pause
....	full second pause
.....	second and a half pause
[2.5 sec]	numbers in brackets represent pauses, in seconds
‘	marks high pitch on word
?	marks yes/no question rising intonation
<u>underline</u>	marks emphatic stress
CAPS	mark very emphatic stress
-	marks a glottal stop, or abrupt cutting off of sound, as in ‘uh-oh’
:	indicates lengthened vowel sound (extra colons indicate greater lengthening)

Musical notation is used for amplitude:

<i>f</i>	spoken loudly
<i>ff</i>	spoken very loudly
<i>p</i>	spoken softly
<i>pp</i>	spoken very softly
<i>acc</i>	spoken quickly
<i>dec</i>	spoken slowly

Amendments:

(())	indicates transcriber's comments
()	indicates transcription impossible
brackets ([])	indicate overlapping speech and are employed where speakers A and B's utterances start simultaneously
=	indicates latching of speaker A's utterance onto speaker B's without perceptible pause
<i>italics</i>	indicates Turkish in the transcript
bold	indicates English in the transcript
< >	indicates English translation in the text

B. Additional transcription conventions

The following transcription conventions regarding the transcription of laughter have been taken from Norrick, N. (1993) *Conversational Joking. Humor in Everyday Talk*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

(h)word	indicates laughter that occurs word-initially
wo(hh)rd	indicates laughter that occurs word-internally
word(hh)	indicates laughter that occurs word-finally

To capture the quality of laughter (e.g. booming ha ha ha) normal orthographic conventions of Greek and English are used.

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