



TEACHING C.P. CAVAFY'S POEM *ITHACA* USING THE PROJECT METHODⁱ

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Abstract:

The purpose of education is to contribute to the well-rounded, harmonious, and balanced development of students' intellectual and psychophysical abilities, so that, regardless of gender or background, they have the opportunity to develop into well-rounded individuals and live in harmony. This educational goal is being implemented to a satisfactory degree in the educational setting and can be achieved through appropriate methods that bring a new dimension to the field of education. Many studies have been conducted in this direction with the aim of investigating traditional and modern teaching methods. Inspired by this effort, we decided to focus on studying the Project Method with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding of it and applying it in the classroom in the future. The reason we chose to focus on poetry is our observation that its teaching is not given particular emphasis. Recognizing the immense importance of the Literature course, we will attempt to demonstrate its relevance in the school setting and how a conscientious teacher who uses the Project method can help their students approach poetry in ways different from those used in school and develop aesthetic criteria that make them mature listeners. This paper aims to have students explore the pedagogical role played by the work of the poet K. Cavafy, as well as to highlight the cultural and social context in which the poet operated and to what extent this context can have practical applications and approaches in the contemporary educational process. In other words, to what extent, in today's pluralistic and multicultural society, can literary works of the caliber of C. Cavafy's inspire and shape character and consciousness? This study is centered on C. Cavafy's poem "Ithaca."

Keywords: teaching method, Project, Cavafy, educator

ⁱ Η ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΠΟΙΗΜΑΤΟΣ «ΙΘΑΚΗ» ΤΟΥ Κ.Π. ΚΑΒΑΦΗ ΜΕ ΤΗ ΜΕΘΟΔΟ PROJECT

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Περίληψη:

Σκοπός της Εκπαίδευσης είναι να συμβάλλει στην ολόπλευρη, αρμονική και ισόρροπη ανάπτυξη των διανοητικών και ψυχοσωματικών δυνάμεων των μαθητών, ώστε ανεξάρτητα από φύλο και καταγωγή, να έχουν τη δυνατότητα να εξελιχθούν σε ολοκληρωμένες προσωπικότητες και να ζήσουν αρμονικά. Ο παραπάνω σκοπός της εκπαίδευσης βρίσκει εφαρμογή σε ικανοποιητικό βαθμό στον εκπαιδευτικό χώρο και μπορεί να επιτευχθεί με τις κατάλληλες μεθόδους που προσδίδουν μια νέα διάσταση στο χώρο της αγωγής. Στην κατεύθυνση αυτή έχουν διεξαχθεί πολλές μελέτες με σκοπό τη διερεύνηση παραδοσιακών και σύγχρονων μεθόδων διδασκαλίας. Εμπνεόμενοι από την προσπάθεια αυτή αποφασίσαμε να ασχοληθούμε με τη μελέτη της μεθόδου Project με σκοπό τη βαθύτερη κατανόησή της και τη μελλοντική εφαρμογή της στο διδακτικό πεδίο. Ο λόγος που μάς έκανε να ασχοληθούμε με την ποίηση, είναι η διαπίστωση, ότι δε δίνεται ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στη διδασκαλία της. Γνωρίζοντας την τεράστια σημασία του μαθήματος της Λογοτεχνίας, θα προσπαθήσουμε να αποδείξουμε την ύπαρξή της στο χώρο του σχολείου και πως ο ευαισθητοποιημένος εκπαιδευτικός που χρησιμοποιεί τη μέθοδο Project, μπορεί να βοηθήσει τους μαθητές του να προσεγγίσουν την ποίηση με διαφορετικούς τρόπους από αυτούς που χρησιμοποιούνται στο σχολείο και να αποκτήσουν αισθητικά κριτήρια που να τους καθιστούν ώριμους ακροατές. Η εργασία στοχεύει στη διαπραγμάτευση από τους μαθητές του παιδαγωγικού ρόλου, που ασκεί το έργο του ποιητή Κ. Καβάφη, καθώς και στην ανάδειξη του πολιτιστικού και κοινωνικού υπόβαθρου κατά τη διάρκεια του οποίου έδρασε ο ποιητής και πόσο αυτό το υπόβαθρο μπορεί να έχει πρακτικές εφαρμογές και προσεγγίσεις στη σύγχρονη παιδαγωγική διαδικασία. Με άλλα λόγια, κατά πόσο στη σημερινή πλουραλιστική και πολυπολιτισμική κοινωνία μας, η λογοτεχνική παραγωγή του διαμετρήματος του Κ. Καβάφη μπορεί να αφυπνίζει και να διαπλάθει χαρακτήρες και συνειδήσεις. Η εξέλιξη της εργασίας πραγματοποιείται με κέντρο αναφοράς το ποίημα «Ιθάκη» του Κ. Καβάφη.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά: μέθοδος διδασκαλίας, Project, Καβάφη, εκπαιδευτικός

1. Introduction

In the Greek educational system, *“The purpose of education is to contribute to the all-around, harmonious, and balanced development of students’ intellectual and psychophysical abilities, so that they may develop into well-rounded individuals.”* In particular, it helps students: a) become responsible, democratic, and free citizens; b) cultivate and harmoniously develop their intellect, aptitudes, interests, and skills; c) to develop creative and critical thinking, and d) to understand the importance of art, science, and technology, to respect human values, and to promote culture (Papas, 1987).

The above educational goals can be achieved through appropriate methods, which bring a new dimension to the field of education. The need to adapt the educational system to the needs of a multicultural society necessitates the adoption of new teaching methods

and pedagogical principles (Kanga, 2001). In this educational environment, students are encouraged to explore and acquire skills, attitudes, and behaviors aimed at their well-rounded development (Theofilidis, 1997).

What has always preoccupied educators is the definition of the phenomenon of teaching, a term first used by the representatives of the ancient Greek intellectual tradition (Tsambis, 1963). Modern teaching aims not only to impart knowledge but also to educate the young person—that is, to foster their holistic psychophysical development (Georgousis, 1989). The three factors of teaching—curriculum, student, and teacher—form a triangle known as the teaching triangle, and there is a reciprocal interaction among them (Tsimbas, 1975). Learning is a complex process through which an individual acquires experiences, knowledge, or patterns of behavior to develop their personality and cope with changing environmental situations (Danassis-Afentakis, 1985).

Teaching and learning are closely interrelated (Markantonis, 1989) and constitute the two fundamental functions of the entire educational process. The quality of learning depends on the quality of teaching (Zeukilis, 1983), and it must not be forgotten that the success of any teaching is judged by the quality and quantity of learning that resulted from that specific teaching (Paraskevopoulos, 1985). Consequently, it is essential for teachers to undergo continuous professional development in contemporary teaching and pedagogical approaches and to apply them flexibly in their teaching practice.

2. Theoretical Section

2.1 Purpose of the paper

The primary purpose of my thesis was to highlight the application of the Project Method in school life through its study and a deeper understanding of it. Specific objectives include demonstrating how a sensitive teacher can help students approach poetry in ways different from those used in school and develop aesthetic criteria that will make them mature listeners. Furthermore, recognizing the immense importance of the Literature course, this paper aims to have students explore the pedagogical role played by the work of the poet C. Cavafy and to what extent, in today's pluralistic and multicultural society, the literary works of the stature of C. Cavafy can awaken and shape characters and consciences.

2.2 The Teaching of Literature in Schools

"Poetry is like riding a shiny bicycle. Through it, we all grow up" ("The Plokamos of Altamira" by A. Empeirikos). Poetry, as an art form, is not at an advantage. This is evident from the curriculum guidelines, which leave no room for teachers to act independently and analyze a poem from an aesthetic perspective. On the other hand, since students are unaware of the true value of a poem, they consider teaching it to be a simple matter. The introduction of poetry brings joy and spiritual fulfillment, familiarizes students with social reality, and highlights universal human values and ideals. *"In the study of literature, no dubious value will stand in our way, and if it does appear anywhere, it betrays itself, for poetry*

is the expression of life's longings, and wherever these are revealed, the whole person shines with joy" (Apostolakis, 1923).

One of Nietzsche's well-known statements is that *"we have art so that we do not lose ourselves in science."* If science and philosophy enlighten the human mind, art enlightens the human soul, and in order for a person to be whole, they need both knowledge and art. Based on this idea, the choice of the Project method is justified by the conviction that it would strengthen the presence of art in the school environment, where the foundations for a person's future development are laid. Teachers, together with their students, strive to instill respect for the literary canon and to cultivate a love of reading (Maragoudaki, 1994).

Literature, as both a personal creation and an expression of society in every era, constitutes a social reality from the very beginning. The author's social standing, ideological orientation, and education can often play a significant role in the social content of their works. It is well known that the relationship between society and literature is reciprocal. Society influences literature, and literature, in turn, shapes new models of social relationships and behaviors. Through the study of literature, students develop aesthetic skills and critical thinking, discover their creative inclinations, and engage in an experiential approach to the knowledge provided by the educational system (Mezirow, 1991).

Throughout the history of human thought, from Plato and Aristotle (Christodoulidis, 1994), the philosopher and educator Dewey (1934), and the psychologist Gardner (1990), engagement with literary expression has been viewed as a dynamic process that broadens reflection, critical thinking (Ennis, 1996), and students' imagination, since literature employs symbolic systems (Gardner, 1983) and thus enhances children's cognitive development.

From a pedagogical perspective, until the late 19th century, the child as a reader of literature was viewed both as an object of education and as the protagonist of children's literature. In the 21st century, children's book authors take the reader into account and adapt their material accordingly. At the same time, the role of the child in the school textbook is very important, as it serves as a model for the child reader. Scholars from various academic disciplines believe that literary texts serve as a unifying link among many fields of study, as they allow for the comparative analysis of different aspects of reality (Kokkos, 2011).

2.3 The Concept of the Project Method

The term "method" is a compound of the words "meta" and "odos" and refers to the approach we follow to achieve a certain goal. Therefore, a teaching method is the path that a teacher follows to achieve the goals of instruction (Georgousis, 1989). By "project method," we mean a form of instructional process that originates from the concerns of individual students or the entire learning group. The lesson is designed under the team's responsibility and aims primarily at completing a project that usually leads to the solution of the problem. This problem may be posed as a suggestion by the instructor to

motivate the team or may arise spontaneously from individual members (Chrysafidis, 2000).

The term "project" derives from the Latin verb *projicere*, which means "to plan, to intend, to set something in one's mind, and to describe a set of activities." Semantically, it encompasses related terms in terms of content: plan, work, program, intention, and purpose; and it is a form of group instruction in which all individuals play a decisive role. The "*project method*," as the English term "*the project method*" is rendered in Greek, refers to a series of systematic procedures that a group of students follows in order to investigate a specific topic (Matsangouras, 1987).

When teaching, serious consideration must be given to the nature of the subject matter and the ways in which scientific knowledge is classified (Exarchopoulos, 1946). The project method utilizes the interdisciplinary approach in everyday school practice, yielding positive results, especially in multicultural classrooms (Nikolaou, 2000). The term "*interdisciplinary approach*" is used to describe the teaching approach that examines each thematic unit from all angles (Paraskeva & Papagianni, 2008). Frey (1986) emphasizes that this method is not appropriate when the goal of instruction is the learning of strictly structured content. In general, we could say that it is a collaborative project aimed at exploring a topic proposed by the students in collaboration with their teacher and carried out in a specific manner and according to a defined procedure.

The following are the characteristics of the project method: a) It allows students to take the initiative; b) The teacher is a member of the group, and the teacher-student collaboration takes place on an equal footing; c) It offers equal opportunities for participation to both high-achieving and struggling students, and the topic each student will work on is determined by the students themselves; d) Discussion and critique take place throughout the project; e) This method starts from practical interests and leads to useful results; f) It seeks to intervene in people's lives with the intention of changing and improving them; g) The teaching process is determined by the group's intentions. Once students are given the opportunity to express their views and participate in planning the activity, the entire framework of traditional teaching is overturned, and new horizons of learning and education are opened up. This constitutes a qualitative intervention within the context of teaching (Frey, 1986).

A project is an in-depth study of a specific topic undertaken by a small group of students within a classroom (Nikolaou, 2000). Therefore, it is a complex creative endeavor that can engage the class for anywhere from a few hours to an entire school year (Soulioti & Pange, 2005). By the term "project method," we refer to a complex form of teaching process that originates from specific concerns of the teaching team, aims to achieve a specific project, and is based on the needs and experiences of the children, whose active participation in the planning and organization process is crucial. Bastian and Gudjons list ten characteristics of the method that help clarify its definition: 1. Connection to real-life situations, 2. Focus on the interests of the participants, 3. Self-organization, responsibility, 4. Social significance, 5. Systematic organization, 6. Creation and production of a product, 7. Engagement of multiple senses, 8. Social learning, 9. Interdisciplinary course, 10. Connection to other courses (Chrysafidis, 2000).

There are various types of projects: Depending on the number of participants, they can be individual or group-based. They are also classified based on the time required to complete them: short (up to 6 class hours), medium (from one week to one month), or long (an entire school year). Finally, they also vary depending on the topic chosen by the class, which may be simple, complex, timely, interesting, etc. (Fotiou & Soulioti, 2006). It is very rewarding for teachers to collaborate and design lessons together with teachers of other subjects as part of an interdisciplinary approach, as well as with teachers from other countries through the eTwinning program (Fotiou, 2011).

This is a process based on a fundamental principle of the “*new school*”: the principle of encouraging children’s initiative and participation in activities—what Kerschen Steiner and Dewey refer to as the “*principle of work*.” Furthermore, it places greater emphasis on the development of skills than on the acquisition of knowledge. Rogers notes in this regard: “*To be present and at the same time to cope with everything new is far more important than knowing and repeating what is ancient*” (Rogers, 1994). Through the Project, we strive to help children develop skills such as initiative, the ability to listen and communicate, self-awareness, confidence in their abilities, etc., which can be developed through poetry, creative expression, and interaction among members.

2.3 The stages of the Project Method

The organization and planning phase of the Project Method requires the active participation of all team members within the framework of communicative teaching. The following procedure is followed to implement the Project Method (Frey, 1986):

Stage 1: “Initiative and Proposal.”

In this stage, the teacher or student puts forward a proposal, which serves as the stimulus for carrying out the project and may stem from a personal experience, an event, or a problem. Those who make the proposal must identify the educational value upon which the project is based. The initiative has two defining characteristics: a) An open-ended outcome. The proposal itself does not automatically mean the project will be carried out. Participating members must clarify the proposal and explain its value. b) No educational value required. The person making the proposal is not required to suggest something that necessarily has educational value—that is, it does not have to involve social, ecological, or other issues. What is of great importance is that the suggestion be made not by the teacher but by a student.

Stage 2: “Critical exchange of views on the initiative.”

At this stage, participants express their views on the proposal, refine the initial initiative, and determine what they will do together. This is followed by the process of exchanging views—that is, communicating through words and expressive gestures—carefully examining the proposal, trying to understand its content, taking a stance on it by expressing their desires for action, and expanding upon it with their own ideas.

Stage 3: "Jointly shaping the framework."

At this stage, the initiative begins to take shape, and members define the areas of action, plan the project's development phases, discuss, and proceed with the assignment of tasks. Finally, a detailed activity plan is established, which describes the nature of the actions in three ways: 1st. We have a description of the process leading to the specific outcome, which can take two forms: it either specifies the various activities of all members individually or outlines the principles according to which the various actions should be carried out, so that the action can be adapted to the prevailing circumstances. 2nd: We have a description of roles, that is, the roles that each person must assume are assigned; 3rd: The resources provided by the environment—such as tools, funds, available time, and spaces—are documented.

Stage 4: "Program Implementation—Project Execution."

In this stage, members strive to achieve the goals they have set, work on the tasks they have developed, and, at the same time, learn through practice. The distribution of tasks should not be the result of orders or rules.

Stage 5: "Project Closure."

The project can be closed in one of the following ways: a) When the desired outcome has been achieved, the project is terminated. b) The project is terminated early if the course of action has led to a result different from the one initially set as the common goal. c) The project is not closed through formal procedures; rather, the lessons learned from the entire effort are gradually implemented in daily practice.

Stage 6: "Feedback and Update Sessions"

Throughout the project, there are periodic feedback and update sessions during which members exchange information and discuss situations or problems that arise as the project progresses.

2.4 Teaching C. P. Cavafy's poem "Ithaca" Using the Project Method—A Teaching Proposal

Idea: Teaching the poem "Ithaca"

Grade Level: 10th Grade

Subjects: Modern Greek Literature

Estimated time: 8–9 class periods

Relation to the Curriculum: Reinforcing and enriching the teaching of the poem as presented in the textbook.

Technological and Visual Aids: Computer, whiteboard, photocopies of the poem, Cavafy's complete works, information on the poet's life and work, materials related to the analysis of the poem, blank sheets of paper.

Course Objectives: a) For students to identify, through their engagement with a traditional poem, its distinctive characteristics (form and content). b) To develop a spirit of teamwork in order to create a collaborative outcome. c) To experience joy, personal

fulfillment, and also reflection through their engagement with this literary form. d) To learn about and become familiar with the life and work of a great Greek poet.

The proposed working method is the Project Method. W. H. Kilpatrick, the "father" of the method, described it in 1918 as "*planned action carried out wholeheartedly in a social setting*" (Rogers, 1994). Today, the Project Method is reemerging in theoretical, social, and philosophical contexts different from those in which the "new education" movement took shape.

Specific elements of the method, such as the interdisciplinary approach, action planning, group work, voluntary participation, and the expression of interest, contribute to the formation of a qualitatively superior relationship between students and their teacher; the one-sided use of a single textbook is avoided; and critical thinking, as well as students' initiative and responsibility. The teaching approach is interdisciplinary and cross-curricular, and students are engaged in the methods and techniques of literary research. For this method to function within the above framework, it is essential that the literary works of C. Cavafy be examined free from prejudice, metaphysical assumptions, and moral or intellectual constraints.

Reference to the topic: "*The structured language of Cavafy's poetry offers many opportunities for a constructive 'dialogue' with the literature of the Alexandrian school. Cavafy's poetry may not be the full light, the light that streams in through an open window, but precisely because it enters through a crack, it is much stronger; it illuminates things in a way that does not make them disappear but allows them, in turn, to illuminate other things as well,*" Karolos Koun.

The teacher's task is to develop students' literary thinking and, above all, to help them acquire skills in the emotional realm. C. Cavafy's "*Ithaca*" is one of the poems in which his expressive mastery is fully evident, offering the reader all those intellectual and moral foundations that will help them draw useful intellectual, moral, and ideological conclusions. The instructional objectives set forth in the Curriculum are met and expanded upon. The duration of the project may vary depending on the dynamics of the groups, but it is estimated to be around 3–5 class hours and is drawn from the courses in Literature, History, Language (texts, essays), and Social and Political Education.

2.5 The Project and Its Development

2.5.1 Initiative—Exchange of views on the initiative

The initial stage of the process is the most difficult but also the most creative (Chrysafidis, 2000). The teacher should be aware that he or she is not conducting a "typical lesson" but is aiming for the active and conscious participation of his or her students. Capturing students' interest and highlighting their experiences play an important role. To mark the declaration of the academic year dedicated to C. Cavafy, a discussion will begin about the poet, his life, his work, his intellectual and ideological concerns, and his impact on younger generations.

From this point, the teacher can guide the class in formulating key questions, which the students will discuss based on their own experiences: -Is the poet timeless? -Does the poet have a rich body of literary work? Which of his works do you know? In

what context, time, and place did he live and create? -Who is the target audience for his work? What is his aim, and which social, literary, and ideological groups does he represent? The discussion will last one class period, and at the end, students will complete a questionnaire about the poet's work. It will be emphasized that this is not a performance test, but rather an opportunity to see what we know about the poet. This questionnaire will be administered again at the end of the lesson and will serve as an assessment of the entire process.

2.5.2 Developing frameworks for action. Planning instructional activities

This is the most crucial phase of the planning process, and the students' active participation is key to organizing the activity (Frey, 1986). At this point, we explain to the children that we will carefully study what we have written about the poet and this particular poem. Four working groups are proposed: the first will focus on the mythological elements of the text, the second will address the historical elements, the third will address the literary and factual interpretations and references published about the poem, and the fourth will focus on publications referring to the poet's literary persona.

Each group will be supported by collected material and suggested reading lists. Students are given general guidelines and asked to form groups, which are chosen freely and finalized so that the groups are balanced and equivalent in size. Each group proposes its own working method, discusses sources of material, the visits that need to be made, and what each member will undertake and be responsible for. The teacher's discreet yet steady presence at this stage is crucial.

Specifically, the group focusing on the mythological element is responsible for gathering information on the history, time period, origin, and symbolism of the people and objects mentioned in this context. The significance of these elements and their connection to the present day lend them another dimension and scope. The team focusing on historical elements will gather material on the historical context to which the poet refers and link these elements to events that may have influenced him. The team responsible for literary and pragmatic interpretations will analyze material related to the ideological, literary, and pragmatic interpretation of the text. The information gathered will pertain to the ideas mentioned in the text (nostos, experiences, goals, intellectual and physical pleasures, exhortations), along with the literary elements present (austere style, didactic tone, exhortative tone, chiasmic structure, use of the second-person singular) and any cultural products of the era (songs, customs). Finally, the fourth group will focus on publications that refer to the poet's literary persona.

The results of this research may include special issues, collective works, books, articles, lectures, and interpretations of Cavafy, as well as publications of texts related to the work of the Alexandrian poet. Each group's members will appoint a coordinator who will oversee the group's activities, represent the group in its interactions with other groups, and present the group's findings. If necessary, each group may be divided into subgroups, and the coordinator may change for each subsequent stage. The groups may be given a folder of materials, informing them that they will have one week to study it

and gather sources and additional materials. This phase (forming groups, briefing, and providing guidelines) will last two class periods.

2.5.3 Implementation of the program

This phase is the most dynamic—the phase of “action itself.” *“In the context of fostering creative thinking, the phase of carrying out activities corresponds to what we call the confirmation or refutation of hypotheses, verification, and critique”* (Chrysafidis, 2000). The groups will be asked to describe their working methods, present their sources, and articulate the questions and difficulties they encounter. The teacher intervenes by clarifying, organizing, and generally assisting the groups in the progress of their work. In this way, serious mistakes and misunderstandings are avoided—both regarding the purpose and progress of the project and the relationships among team members. At the same time, each team is kept informed of the other teams’ progress.

This meeting lasts one hour. After the presentation of the assignment, the teacher gives a lecture in which, summarizing what has been said, he or she provides new material and guidance. At the same time, the teacher presents information to the groups about the poetry and the poet’s cultural background. At the end, the schedule of visits is set, and each group will be responsible for leading a tour and collecting materials (photographs, visual aids, publications). The remaining groups observe the group giving the tour (assistance from an outside expert is permitted). During this phase, the groups collect materials (e.g., an interview with the curator of the museum dedicated to the poet). They also conduct research in their assigned areas and record their observations (photos, videos, worksheets, recitations of the poet’s works).

2.5.3 Feedback and Update Sessions

Throughout the project, feedback and update sessions are held, during which members exchange information and discuss situations or problems that arise during the project’s implementation. The need to share results, to keep each other informed, to take notes, to change the pace, and to reaffirm or redefine the purpose underscores the necessity of these breaks.

2.5.4 Information Evaluation and Program Completion Phase

The teacher’s role (Chrysafidis, 2000) at this stage is even more crucial. Because the sheer volume of material makes it difficult for students to manage and evaluate it, categorizing and organizing it is helpful. Three (3) class periods are allocated. During the first period, the teacher gives a lecture, addressing any questions or concerns that arise. The groups spend the next two hours on the final organization of the data, grouping and classifying it. They illustrate and set the poem’s verses to music, attempt to depict mythological and historical figures and bring them to life, create slides, and use any other visual aids they have from their field trips.

Specifically, the team focusing on mythological elements seeks to depict them through descriptions, interpret them, and connect them to the present day. The team focusing on historical elements (Ithaca, Egyptian cities) classifies and categorizes the

material in the same way. The team focusing on the literary and factual context processes a wealth of material containing cultural elements (sentefia, ebony, amber), literary elements (style, form, language), as well as other pragmatic and ideological elements (nostos, knowledge, experience, goals). Finally, the team responsible for analyses, literary studies, and publications related to the poems of C. Cavafy—as well as this specific poem—classifies and archives the data according to the place, time, and significance of the works.

In addition, one hour can be set aside for the teacher to help the groups finalize their work, and two hours can be dedicated to the final presentation of the project, the formulation of conclusions, and the evaluation of their work. The children's imagination and spontaneity can also give rise to other forms of expression of the experiences they gained during the project. For example, the children might write letters to historical and mythological figures (Cyclopes, Laestrygonians), describe a typical day in the life of a poet, or recount a visit to historical cities mentioned in the text (Egypt, Phoenicia). Finally, each presentation can be accompanied by a dramatization of a historical narrative or a text written by the children themselves, which can be recited. In conclusion, we could say that the group activities do not conflict with our goals and pedagogical principles. Recognizing that all instruction is adapted to the needs and abilities of the children—one of the principles of Project—we believe that this particular teaching approach will work to the students' benefit.

3. Conclusions

The Project Method, which is part of the general “philosophy” of self-directed and collaborative learning, is the method par excellence for fostering interpersonal communication between teacher and student, because it differs from the traditional form of teaching, where the teacher is the sole source of knowledge and an all-knowing figure. The teacher's role in the group is very subtle, advisory, and equal. This method encourages students to find sources on the topic they are discussing and enables them to determine their own approach to the work. A key feature of the method is that it presents challenges to the group and ensures that everyone is kept informed of any problems that arise.

This is precisely where the difference from traditional teaching becomes apparent, because they have the freedom to shape their beautiful discoveries with their own hands and transform them into beautiful creations, without being under the watchful eye of the teacher (Taratori-Tsalakatidou, 1996). The result of this encouragement is that it aids the student's maturation, because a pedagogical relationship that does not encourage the child to express themselves has a negative impact on their linguistic and cognitive development (Fragoudaki, 1979). The structure and atmosphere of the classroom influence students' participation in activities and their communication both with one another and with the teacher (Trillianos, 1997). Relationships based on trust, recognition, self-confidence, and encouragement from the educator toward the child are fundamental elements of the pedagogical atmosphere. This emotional climate instills optimism in their

consciousness, which leads to progress, creativity, and constructive learning (Tsourekis, 1987).

Consequently, we could say that the pedagogical and didactic significance of teaching using the Project Method is very great, because students learn to collaborate, develop a sense of shared responsibility, and cultivate social awareness. The joint effort between teacher and students creates strong emotional bonds among the students and fosters solidarity, mutual understanding, interdependence, and camaraderie. In this way, students become active participants, take the initiative, conduct research, and are driven by a collective ambition to produce work of the highest quality. Furthermore, they learn to argue their case, objectively evaluate opinions and positions, and cultivate their higher cognitive functions. This method also supports the pedagogical principles of individuality and self-education, as it allows group members to work according to their abilities, aptitudes, and interests (Trillianos, 1998).

It is undeniable that the Project Method offers significant advantages, and if it is not frequently used in the classroom, it is due either to the teacher's inability to implement it or to the lack of suitable conditions for its implementation. Therefore, to achieve positive results, one must use the method correctly, because there is a risk that not all of its benefits will be realized.

Under the new teaching approach, teachers cease to be the central figures in the teaching process who dictate what must be done and act primarily as transmitters of knowledge. Instead, they discreetly guide their students and create the conditions that allow them to play an active role in their education.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Appendix

Ithaca

When you set out on your journey to Ithaca,
may you wish for the road to be long,
full of adventures, full of knowledge.
Do not fear the Laestrygonians or the Cyclopes,
nor the wrathful Poseidon;
you will never encounter such things on your path,
if your thoughts are lofty, if a noble
inspiration stirs your spirit and your body.
You will not encounter the Laestrygonians or the Cyclopes,
nor the savage Poseidon,
unless you carry them within your soul,
unless your soul sets them before you.

May the road be long.
May there be many summer mornings
when, with what delight, with what joy,
you'll sail into ports you've never seen before,
stop at the markets of Phoenicia,
and acquire fine goods:
cinnabar and coral, amber and ebony,
and all manner of delightful fragrances,
as many delightful fragrances as you can,
to visit many Egyptian cities,
to learn and learn from the learned.

Always keep Ithaca in mind.
Reaching it is your destination.
But do not rush the journey at all.
May it last for many years to come,
And may you, now an old man, settle on the island,
rich with all you've earned along the way,
without expecting Ithaca to give you riches.

Ithaca gave you the beautiful journey.
Without it, you would never have set out on your journey.
But it has nothing more to give you now.
And even if you find Ithaca poor, it has not deceived you.
Now that you have become so wise, with so much experience,
you must already understand what Ithaca truly means.