

Citizenship School Knowledge and Teaching: Modern and Post-Modern Influences

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to search the impact of the modern and postmodern logic in the formation of the school knowledge regarding the subject of the Citizenship Education and its teaching in contemporary Greek Primary School. The most important findings of this research show that the school knowledge of social and political studies and the instructions given for their teaching management follow the logic of modernism, while postmodern influences are found mainly in the application of the educational package, that contains the educational software, and in the possibility given to the educator to develop teaching strategies through the adoption of various teaching methods.

Keywords: Citizenship; Primary school; school knowledge; modernity; post-modernity.

1. Introduction

The subjects related to modernity and post-modernity have occupied the scientific community mainly since the 1990s and on with the publication of theoretical and research papers (see: Ashton, 2003; Cochran, 1995; Doyle, 2006; Hodge & Derezotes, 2008; Holtzhausen, 2002; Pease, 2002; Ramaekers, 2002; Roberts, 2001). This fact is linked to the social, ideological, political and economical changes which occurred worldwide after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of the Second World. It is about a reality that is called by using the term globalization, though this term mainly regards the economic meaning referring to the unhindered operation of the markets (Giddens, 2000; Hirsch, 1997).

The dominant ideological perceptions, characterizing the contemporary era of globalization, draw their reasoning from the liberal and post-liberal economic theories, the views of which are detected in the official texts of the International Organizations (Organization of the Economic Co-operation and Development, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization) as well as in the discourse and the choices of modern political leaders (see: Barro & Lee, 2005; Carree, van Stel, Thurik, & Wennekers, 2002; Easterly, 2005; Manza, 2000; Ó Riain, 2000; UNESCO, 2002; Western, 1997). In the case of the European Union (E.U.) the formation of the contemporary European policy seems to follow the post-liberal economic model, which faces Europe as a unified economic space, interacting in a competitive way with the rest of the powerful but also the resurgent economies of the planet.

The formation of this policy also has significant impacts on educational philosophy and orientation. A turning point for the formation of the cotemporary European educational policy have been the decisions of the European leaders in Lisbon in 2000 about the creation of a pan-european 'knowledge society' thus unabling the E.U. to antagonize the U.S.A. and Japan in the new economy sector, which is based upon the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (Commission, 2000, 2001).

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The European educational policy promoted following, Lisbon 2000, seeks the students' and the future-to-be European citizens' cultivation of an extrovert conscience, since they should accept the cultural diversity and be able to co-operate with people of a different culture from their own (Fejes, 2008; McCormick, 2010). This target is a basic element of the post-modern approach. However, the traditional educational quests, which constitute an element of modernity and regard the maintenance of the national specificity and are linked to the cultivation of the identity of the citizen of a specific country, do not change. In fact, views of the approaches of modernity and post-modernity co-exist in the official educational discourse of the European Union countries, through which arises the necessity for the formation of the students' conscience based on ethnocentric and eurocentric elements in order to feel that they are not only citizens of a specific European state but of Europe in general as well (Koustourakis & Asimaki, 2010; Koutselini, 1997; Naval, Print, & Veldhuis, 2002; Shore, 2000).

In the case of Greece, concerning the cultivation of the students' social and political conscience and their acquaintance with the basic social and political institutions, there is a particular subject called Social and Political Education (CE), taught during the last two grades of the Primary School addressing students aged 10-11 and 11-12 respectively, as also during the last Junior High School class that students aged 14-15 attend (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999). Given that the educational policy, as defined in Lisbon 2000, contains elements of modern and post-modern reasoning, we wish – through this project – to inquire into the question as to how much and to what degree the formation of the curriculum of the subject CE in Greece, specifically in the primary education, is based on modern and post-modern principles.

The target, therefore, of this project is to detect the impacts of the reasoning of modernity and post-modernity in the school knowledge formation of the Social and Political Education subject and of the official instructions that determine the way of its teaching in the modern Greek primary school. The paper begins with some theoretical notes followed by the research questions and methodology unit. In the next unit the findings, concerning the modern and post-modern impacts in the formation of the CE school knowledge in the Greek primary school, are cited. Then, the unit with our findings concerning the impacts of modernity and post-modernity in the formation of the official frame regarding the teaching of the CE follows, and the project is completed with the results section.

2. Theoretical points

The formation of the school knowledge is a result of a recontextualization process, that is, of the choice of elements from the body of the scientific knowledge and of their simplification and adjustment to the age abilities of the students to whom it is about to be taught. According to Bernstein (1996) this process is influenced by the developments in the economy and symbolic control fields. In the contemporary period of globalization the developments occurring in the international environment are decisive for the designation of this process. This means that the official school knowledge results from the activation of the complex 'knowledge-authority' since it is a product, the frame of whose production is governed by regulatory principles, systems of ideas, rankings and dependences, defining what is allowed and not allowed, and resulting in decisions which form systems of truth on the basis of which what is regarded false is reserved by the school reality (Bernstein, 1996; Forquin, 2008; Foucault, 1987). In the case of the reform of the modern Greek primary education curricula enacted in 2003 (OG, 2003), the international factor impacts, that is of the E.U., are dominant (Alahiotis & Karatzia, 2006; Koustourakis, 2007). For this reason, there is observed a European orientation of these curricula. Besides, the specific reform came forward as an attempt of utilization of the decisions of Lisbon 2000 aiming at the convergence of the Greek with the European educational systems so as to contribute to the attempt for building up the knowledge society (Koustourakis, 2007). Especially the cross-thematic curriculum, established in 2002, seems to promote two European pursuits (Alahiotis & Karatzia, 2006): a) the introduction of ICT in the educational process with the creation of educational software for each curriculum subject, and b) the application of the principle of interdisciplinarity, through the interconnection of the contents between the different subjects of the curriculum and the creation of specific cross-thematic teaching activities demanding the active participation of the students in the teaching action.

But, let us see in brief some basic principles of modernity and post-modernity concerning knowledge and their relation to the school knowledge. In the modern conception, as a result of the ideological influences of the Enlightenment movement, occurs the disenchantment of knowledge, which is separated from the religious authority. Here, science possesses a prominent post, expected to lead to progress and to the promotion of the scientific truth.

Thus, the knowledge produced is thought to be neutral, objective and rational as it seems to be closely related to science (Bryson, 2004; Frydaki, 2009). This is why the knowledge offered to the students through education is interwoven with the expert (teacher), constitutes a self-purpose, has self-worth and is fixed to one and only truth.

It is characteristic the fact that the changes and the adjustments concerning the name of the subject of the CE indicate its close correlation to the ideological pursuits and the choices of the dominant political forces in different moments of the Greek History during the post-war period (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999). For example, the pursuit of the cultivation of the students' national conscience indicates the recontextualization of characteristic elements of modernity in the content of the CE. In fact, modernity is linked to the existence of the nation-state and the development of all those ideological characteristics through which the maintenance and the continuation of its existence is ensured. This way, the cultivation of the national identity and the national conscience is sought, through the promotion of national symbols and principles drawn up from the body of the national history to which an everlasting character is given (Reichenbach, 1999). Also, characteristic elements of modernity are the industrialization of production, the scientific revolutions, the demographic changes, the appearance and expansion of the multinational companies and enterprises, the commercial transactions and the borrowing of nation-states (Taylor, 2004).

Post-modernity is linked to the explosive development of the new technologies and the contemporary conditions of globalization, that operate to deconstruct the independence of the national states and promote an international type of conscience, eroding thus the cultural and linguistic identities (Harvey, 2007). So, we can see the prevalence of English as an international language of communication, which also is the language of ICT and Internet. Moreover, in the modern era, there are sought and promoted unhindered operation of the markets, flexibility in the work section and ensurance of the commercial-industrial entrepreneurship on the side of the multinational and supranational companies, which are activated in many countries and which can be spread simultaneously in all five continents of the earth (Bauman 2004, Giddens, 2000, 2002; Offe, 1996; Wright, 1997). Baudrillard (1994) commenting on post-modernity and the reforms that it has brought about through new technologies in modern societies argues that over-consumption of information has resulted in the production of a transcendent condition (hyperreality). That is, a new world emerges, demanding the citizens to possess practical knowledge and skills of a general character to be able to handle successfully the ICT covering the demands of the modern work market (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2010).

The time of post-modernity, therefore, is closely connected with the 'knowledge and information society', forming a new 'social type' that corresponds to the pursuits of the new order of things (Tsaousis, 2009). Here, the 'knowledge society' implies the promotion of an 'economy of knowledge' where the human brain, which thinks and acts based on education and training that it possesses, is considered to be the most important factor for its support and operation (Dehaene, 1995). For this reason, very great significance is given to the social and political formation of the citizens of the future, whose shaping constitutes one of the most important aims of the educational process and specifically of the subject of the CE (Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999). These aims are clearly formulated in the modern CE curriculum of the Greek primary school and lead us to the following question: Which reforms and changes is the school knowledge undergoing that is transferred within the post-modern frame, and how does this newly-established frame change the educational practices and influence the educational work?

In the case of post-modernity, the conception concerning knowledge is changing, as knowledge and truth are 'adopted' in the 'plural' within an ephemeral, discontinuous, fragmented and pluralistic frame (Harvey, 2007). Also, the utilization of the ICT in the modern era has changed the nature, the organization and the management of knowledge, leading to its digitization, its storing and its distribution, in the form of educational packages. Thus, knowledge is transformed into a consumption product with the ability of being sold (Foray, 2010). Therefore, in the time of post-modernity the main request is not self-worth and the global character of knowledge, as it happens in modernity, but its usefulness, usability and effectiveness. Also, what seems to excel at this period is "*who decides what knowledge is and who knows what needed to be decided*" concerning knowledge (Lyotard, 2007, p. 20). Furthermore, knowledge operates as a productive power and according to Boutang (2007) constitutes an element of "capitalism of knowledge". In fact, if the "capitalism of knowledge" is based on the accumulation of non-material capital, then the human-spiritual capital (education – training) acquires prevalent importance and is connected with a "knowledge-centered economy", which may bring forward a distinction between those who know and those who do not know (Kladis, 1999).

And in this case knowledge is not related to the accumulation of scientific titles, as it used to happen in older times, but to the development of skills of utilitarian character, which ought to be renewed frequently with the utilization of the institutions of lifelong learning (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2010). For this reason, too, the desirable image of the modern citizen – working person is that of the re-trainable person.

The change in the choices of school knowledge formation according to the principles of post-modernity also brings about the change in pedagogic practices through which knowledge is transferred. According to the standards of modernity the only bearer and transferor of knowledge is the teacher. However, after the digitization of school knowledge the way of its teaching is changing and it seems that a new role emerges for the educator. The latter is called to promote the self-activated learning of the students and work as an instructor, facilitator, advisor and assistant in their attempt to approach and manage the “educational packages” of school knowledge (Syriopoulou-Delli, 2003). Post-modernity promotes the creation of flexible students, who will be the future flexible citizens, well as flexible educators. In fact, this ‘flexible’ citizen will have to possess utilitarian skills, be well-adjustable and be able to move in comfort beyond the narrow national borders of his/her country for education and work. Also, “knowledge production” will be based on the “co-operation of brains that congregate in a net through computers” (Tsaousis, 2009, p. 92). This way, the creation of the “knowledgeable worker” is sought, who ought to be flexible and whose personalized knowledge will be continually evaluated and will be valued on the basis of a specific market price. This “knowledgeable worker” therefore should be able to put targets, invent, program, compete and perform an uncertain social role, which he/she is obliged to attempt to secure and conquer constantly in the ever-changing social-economic environment (Tsoukalas, 2010). Respectively, the “flexible educator” should also be in the position to locate and solve problems, realize teaching targets and shape an attractive teaching environment for his/her students for them to be able to self-act in order to approach knowledge and develop their practical skills (Kossivaki, 2003). The above raise a series of questions concerning so much the citizens of the emerging knowledge societies, as well as their social and political education.

3. Inquiring Questions – Methodology

In this paper we will deal with the answer to the following questions:

- 1) What impacts of modernity and post-modernity are detected in the formation of the school knowledge of the CE in the modern Greek primary school?
- 2) What are the impacts of modernity and post-modernity in the formation of the institutional texts that define the way of teaching of the CE?

The sources of this study are: a) the curriculum of the CE subject for the Greek primary school (OG, 2003), and b) the educational material of the specific subject (Florou, Stefanopoulos, & Christopoulou, 2008; Nikolaou, Vatsitsi, Daneelidou, & Paxaliori, 2008; MoE-P.I., 2006).

The approach to our research material was made with the application of the qualitative content analysis, taking as a unit of analysis the sentence, which is perceived by the semantic and not by its grammatical concept (Morais, 2002; Weber, 1990). The classification of the research material in perceptive categories is based on the inquiring questions we have stated. This way, the detection of modern and post-modern impacts results from: a) the formation of the official school knowledge of the CE subject of the primary school, and b) the suggested way of the specific subject taught in the primary school.

4. School knowledge of the “Social and Political Education” of the Greek Primary School

Modern impacts

The subject of the CE in the Greek compulsory education is an organic part of a curriculum, which has been formed on the basis of the logic of modernity (Koustourakis & Asimaki, 2009). This is so, because school knowledge is classified in particular fields of knowledge, one of which is CE, which is taught as an independent subject in the two last grades of primary school. Also, the school knowledge of the particular subject possesses a low status, as according to the evaluating criteria of the importance of the various subjects (Bernstein, 1975; Makrinioti & Solomon, 1999; Noutsos, 1988; Young, 1998) it lies in the lowest positions in the list of the subjects of the primary school curriculum, it is taught once a week, and its teaching is usually assigned either to the school principal, who has a shorter teaching programme, or to some other teacher so as to supplement his/her own teaching timetable.

Thus, the teaching time of the subject which may sometimes be missed during the school year for various reasons, such as school holidays or teaching visits, is not replenished (Koustourakis & Asimaki, 2010).

The teaching material of the CE is clearly and in detail defined by the cross-thematic curriculum (OG, 2003), which also constituted the guide in forming the teaching package content, that is, the textbooks and the educational software. Therefore, the choice of the material that is taught in the case of the CE in the 5th and 6th grades of the primary school and the order of its presentation have been pre-defined by the curriculum and the textbooks which utilize it and the teachers are bound as to 'what' exactly they will teach and in 'which order' they will teach it to their students.

By teaching the CE subject the socialization of the students is sought on the basis of one, in some way, Durkheimian logic (Blackledge & Hunt, 2000), because the target is their moralization since they have to *"internalize values and develop attitudes which are related with the ethics and behavior of the responsible and active citizen"* (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 10). That is, here is promoted the creation of the responsible and active citizen Europe needs in the contemporary era of globalization (Naval et al. 2002; Shore, 2000). For this reason the cultivation of the students' conscience is attempted through ethnocentered and eurocentered elements in order one to feel that they are at the same time citizens of Greece and of Europe, as it derives from the following extracts:

"(in the most specific targets of the CE are) the development of the greek identity and conscience through the acquaintance and understanding of our national and cultural inheritance" (Florou et al., 2008, p. 9).

"The basic philosophy of the new curricula concerning Social Sciences is the formation of flexible and multi-skilled citizens... and the development of a national and European conscience" (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 7).

Through the teaching elaboration of the CE material the rise of humanistic values is pursued, since themes *"which regard freedom, equality, justice, human rights"* (Florou et al., 2008, p. 9) are taught. Besides, among the basic aims of the contemporary curriculum for the CE are also *"the development of universal, pan-human and time-lasting values and the understanding by the students that they are both citizens of Greece and Europe"* (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 7). Indeed, the utilization of the element of 'time-lasting', which is expected to contribute to the cultivation of the national and European conscience of the students, is accomplished with the historical approach of the following areas of the CE school knowledge (OG, 2003, pp. 3968-3970, 3972):

- Development of the family institution.
- Organization and operation of the Greek school.
- Activity and offer of the Orthodox Church.
- Development of the political system in Greece and establishment of the democratic regime.
- The need for the enrolling of the individual and of the country in the international community through the participation in international organizations as the U.N.
- Creation of the European Union and the process of accession of Greece in it.

Then, the main and basic pursuit of the teaching of the CE is the development of the students' individuality because the target is the creation of a 'responsible' person in two levels: a) the micro-level of the school class through the *"fulfillment of the real obligations of the individual towards the group"* of fellow students (OG, 2003, p. 3974). This is so, because teaching strategies are adopted which presuppose the work and co-operation of the students in groups. And b) the macro-level, as the creation of the 'active citizen' is sought, who will be a responsible member of the Greek, the European but also the international community:

"The concept of the citizen is approached to a wider frame. It exceeds the limits of the national state and reaches the concept of the European and international community, through a net of interconnections which involve the local, national, peripheral and international frame, which the persons live in" (Florou et al., 2008, p. 10).

Therefore, CE in Greek primary school seeks, according to a modern reasoning, the creation of a responsible person, who should possess a conscience of the national and the European heritage and be able as a cosmopolitan person to move comfortably in the international environment.

Post-modern impacts

The formation of the CE school knowledge in the Greek primary school concerning the recontextualization of post-modern elements is influenced by the developments in the international environment (Bernstein, 1990) and specifically by the promotion of collective policies in the sections of economy, society and education, which seek the utilization of ICT in the productive process, aiming at the creation of a pan-european knowledge society (Commission, 2001; Dion, 2005; Ertl, 2006). For this reason, since the beginnings of the 21st century specific policies have been promoted, which have been funded by the E.U. so as to incorporate the ICT into the educational process. This is so, because in a pan-european knowledge society the European citizens ought to possess technological literacy to be able to work productively and cover the work market needs, as it is expected that this way there will be created in Europe the conditions for economic development and prosperity (Felt, 2007; Lawn & Lingard, 2002; Mundschenk, Stierle, Stierle-von Schutz, & Traistaru, 2006; Verdier & Breen, 2001). Therefore, the international factor is dominant for shaping the contemporary greek educational policy and is connected with the funding of activities through the European Community Fund for the materialization of the centrally planned European policy. This fact has led to the institutional incorporation of new technologies in the corpus of the official school knowledge (Koustourakis & Panagiotakopoulos, 2008). Thus, the change of school knowledge in the compulsory education has arisen through the edition of new textbooks and the enactment for the first time in Greece of the educational package.

In the case of CE, the educational package, besides the textbooks and teacher-books, includes a CD-ROM, which has been created by the Laboratory of Applications of Virtual Reality in Education of the Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina. That is, we observe the co-operation of significant scientific agents, which belong to the Pedagogic Recontextualizing Field (Bernstein, 1990), with the official state agents (Ministry of Education, Pedagogical Institute), which are responsible for the creation of the new school knowledge that involves the teaching use of ICT. Through the specific educational software is sought (MoE-P.I., 2006): a) the students' self-activation so as to summarize, understand better and consolidate the teaching material through particular applications of Exercises and Activities; b) the provision of the teachers with more visual sources (texts and audio-visual material such as: pictures classified according to teaching units and themes, videos with extracts of greek movies and documentaries) so as to make their lesson more interesting, attractive and understandable to the students; and c) the creation of presuppositions for the utilization of the Internet in teaching as in every teaching unit specific sites are suggested which help in the easy finding of further information which is directly available through active links.

The creation and provision of CE CD-ROM in the greek educational community for teaching use materializes the perspectives of the cross-thematic curriculum concerning the *"use of various sources and means and particularly of ICT for the quest, collection, selection and presentation of information"* (OG, 2003, p. 3974). However, the utilization of this possibility lies in the disposition of each teacher who should possess technological literacy and know very well the content which is included in the specific educational software. In fact, in the CE teacher's book it is characteristically mentioned:

*"For the chapters for which **it is considered intentional, specific bibliographic instructions are provided** as well as internet sites, sources which the teacher will be able to look into, so as to enrich his work in the class"* (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 8; the emphasis is ours).

Therefore, the pursuit for the educational software utilization for teaching CE constitutes the application of a post-modern approach. However, as it results from the above extract, this approach is made through a modern reasoning as it seems, somehow, that the teacher's freedom in the shaping of the CE school knowledge is limited by the use of Internet. This is so, because the width of the abilities of the ICT use by the teacher is pre-determined, since the creators of school knowledge have pre-selected the type and form of ICT sources that can be used in the CE teaching. Here, we ought to mark out that in Greece freedom is not given to the teachers so as to formulate by their own initiative the material of the subjects that they are about to teach. On the contrary, on the basis of given official instructions to them, they are called to teach the pre-selected school knowledge, which is defined clearly and in detail by the curriculum and the printed educational material which is provided to the students.

The formation of the content of CE has been influenced by the contemporary social reality. More concretely, first, Greece is a multi-cultural society since it is a country of entrance of immigrants from the Balkan countries, Asia and North Africa. Thus, along with the prevalent national group there also exist other national groups which possess different cultural characteristics (Giddens, 2002).

Second, in order to achieve the European integration, it is presupposed the cultivation of compromising, the acceptance of cultural differentiation and the promotion of the co-operation among the people who possess different national origin and culture (McCormick, 2010; Shore, 2000). For this reason, in the most specific pursuits of the CE are also put in the following post-modern targets: a) the acceptance of the polyphony and the cultural pluralism (Florou et al., 2008, pp. 7, 9), b) respect cultivation *“towards differentiation”* and the development of practices *“for the acceptance of differentiation”* (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 10), and c) the recognition of different cultural characteristics, that many of the people who live next to us have, a fact that leads to the *“strengthening of the different cultural and linguistic identities in the frame of a multi-cultural society”* (Florou et al., 2008, p. 10) such as modern Greece.

The acquisition by the students of the qualities which will allow them to live with social sensitivity in a multi-cultural environment is sought to be achieved through the teaching of the following thematic units:

- “Individual and state” (5th Primary School grade). In this unit two post-modern targets are put forward (OG, 2003, p. 3965): a) the students to acquire *“positive thinking about the different people and the different groups that live”* in Greece, and b) to encourage the undertaking of initiatives through which the understanding and co-operation among the various organized social groups that exist in Greece will be promoted.
- “Individual and European Union” (5th grade), where the cultivation of the respect to the beliefs and cultural traditions of the citizens who come from other European countries is sought (OG, 2003, p. 3965).
- “Individual and society” (6th grade) where the acceptance of the differentiation is promoted (OG, 2003, p. 3966).
- “Individual and state” (6th grade) where the teacher is required to help the students understand that *“multi-culture influences our society and that the recognition and respect of the human rights constitute a presupposition for harmonic coexistence”* (OG, 2003, p. 3966).
- “Individual and E.U.” (6th grade) where the cultivation of the acceptance of differentiation on the macro-level is attempted through the *“maintenance of the cultural peculiarities of the people, in the frame of a multi-cultural Europe, as a presupposition for a peaceful, democratic, and equal coexistence of the countries-members”* (OG, 2003, p. 3966).
- “Church” (6th grade), where the acceptance and respect towards the religions that exist in Greece, is attempted, so as to secure the right of freedom in religion (OG, 2003, p. 3971).
- “Organized groups and clubs” and “Human rights” (6th grade), where it is attempted for the students to realize the duty of supporting sensitive social groups, such as persons who suffer of Mediterranean Anemia (OG, 2003, p. 3971), persons with special educational needs, refugees, immigrants and women (OG, 2003, p. 3973).

5. The teaching management of the subject of the “Social and Political Education”

Modern influences

In the content of the teacher’s book it is defined and presented exactly the *“way of utilization of each one of the teaching approaches”* (Florou et al., 2008, p. 7), which the teacher can use in order to teach the CE. For example, in the 6th grade teacher’s book, the stages, that the teacher should follow in order to apply the strategy of group-orientated teaching, are indicated at first as follows, then they are explained in detail:

“First stage: Pre-teaching Organizing Activities:

- (1) *Organizing students’ groups.*
- (2) *Space organizing.*

Second stage: Psychological and cognitive preparation:

- (3) *Announcing teaching targets.*
- (4) *Defining expected forms of social behavior.*
- (5) *Announcing cooperation processes.*

Third stage: Presentation and Elaboration of the teaching theme:

- (6) *Presentation or collection of data for the teaching theme.*
- (7) *Group work distribution into sub-groups.*
- (8) *Composition of the sub-groups.*

Fourth stage: Guiding the group work:

- (9) *Organizing-teaching activities of the teacher.*
- (10) *Learning and co-operational activities of the students.*
Fifth stage: Work evaluation:
- (11) *Learning evaluation.*
- (12) *Operational evaluation of the group.*
- (13) *Meta-cognitive consideration of the choices"* (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 14).

The course of teaching of the CE is suggested to always start from what is familiar to the students, which is related to their experiences, and to end up to the particular, which is defined by the specific themes which constitute the school knowledge of the specific subject (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 7). In fact, the cross-thematic curriculum and the teacher's books inform the teacher clearly about the teaching aims and skills, which should be cultivated to the students through the teaching of each CE unit. For example, in the unit entitled "We are citizens of Greece, of Europe and of the world", taught in the 5th primary school grade the curriculum puts forward as targets: *"(the students) to be introduced to the concepts of the rights and the obligations of the citizen in the frame of E.U. To recognize the importance of the European dimension of their rights as citizens"* (OG, 2003, p. 3970). Moreover, the specific aims are specified and analyzed further on, in the teacher's book as follows:

"The students are expected:

- *To understand the widthness of the concept of the citizen and its broadening from the local to the European and international level.*
- *To be in the position to distinct the rights and obligations of the European citizens.*
- *To become sensitive to the existence of common universal problems and conscious that their impacts concern everyone.*
- *To be in the position to think, suggest solutions and participate in the solution of the problems"* (Florou et al., 2008, p. 27-28).

The influence of modern reasoning is detected also in the clear definition of the cross-thematic work plans which are included: a) in the content of the CE teacher's book and are pointed out to the teachers in order to utilize them in their classroom (Florou et al., 2008; Nikolaou et al., 2008), and b) in the "special space for the teacher", shaped in the educational software of the CE (MoE-P.I., 2006, p. 4). Also, the content of the specific software, which constitutes a post-modern painting-stroke on the canvas of the corpus of the CE school knowledge, for each teaching unit, specific Exercises and Activities have been placed, which aim to help the student comprehend the teaching material (MoE-P.I., 2006, pp. 11-15).

Post-modern influences

Though the teaching material and targets in each unit of the CE have been defined clearly (modern impact) it is attempted to give great teaching liberty to the teacher to formulate his teaching practices in order to make the students get involved in the educational process (post-modern impact). Specifically, it is defined that the CE should be taught *"with the help of participative experiential teaching strategies"* (Florou et al., 2008, p. 11) and in a way that will *"support the cross-thematic and holistic approach of knowledge"* (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 10). Therefore, an attempt of differentiation from the traditional teacher-centered methods, which were until recently applied in the greek primary school, is observed. This is so, because with the curricula reform in 2003, cooperative relations among the students have been established, which are placed in the epicenter of teaching and are faced *"as an assembled micro-group"* (Nikolaou et al., 2008, p. 13).

Then, although through the CE teaching the cultivation of individual responsibility is attempted, an effort is simultaneously made for the promotion of collectiveness, as the students should work in groups and self-act in order to approach and discover school knowledge. Thus, it is suggested to the teacher to select either independently or in combination among a variety of teaching methods and strategies. Such are the utilization of projects, which should be based on the students' experiences and needs, the organized out of school activities (i.e. visits to work places, services, museums etc.), the students' self-activation for the realization of short-extended researches (i.e. interviews from older people, relatives, professionals, priests etc.). Even yet, there could be applied quest, selection, elaboration and presentation by the students of data and information connected with the specialized teaching themes of the CE. Finally, the possibility of inviting expert visitors in the classto inform the students about their professions, is presupposed (Florou et al., 2008; OG, 2003, pp. 3968-3973; Nikolaou et al., 2008).

6. Conclusions

According to what we have examined above, we end up to the following results:

- For the formation of the CE school knowledge the reasoning of modernity is dominant. This is so, because the specific subject constitutes part of a curriculum formulated on the basis of the principles of a collection code (Bernstein, 1990). That is, it is combined of self-sufficient and separate subjects among which also falls the CE. Moreover, in the CE curriculum and its educational material which specifies and makes it concrete for the teacher and the students, the teaching content and its order of presentation, the teaching aims, the actions which the teacher can utilize, and the pursuits of its successful teaching for the student are clearly defined. Also, the school knowledge utilizes ethnocentric and eurocentric elements, while in some points of the teaching material the historic dimension is pointed out, humanistic values are projected, too, and the development of individuality is sought through the cultivation of the conscience of the responsible and active citizen, who ought to be a citizen of Greece, as also of Europe.
- The post-modern detections in the formation of CE school knowledge are located in the adoption of the educational package, which includes the educational software and promotes the internet teaching exploitation. Also, through the material of the particular subject, the promotion of the value for the respect of the "other - different" is attempted in the frame of the contemporary multi-cultural society and the peaceful co-existence with all those fellow-people, who possess different cultural characteristics from the student, is promoted. The post-modern impacts in the teaching of CE are detected in the liberty, which is provided to the teacher to involve his students in the learning process and formulate all those strategies, which he considers to be suitable for the promotion of the teaching aims which are clearly stated in the curriculum and the teacher's book. Therefore, the teacher is managing a frame of school knowledge, which has been formulated on the basis of the logic of modernity, but he possesses the ability to formulate the methods by which he will teach the specific knowledge. And this is so, because he should work student-centered, since, according to the cross-thematic curriculum, the student is becoming the protagonist and is called to discover, elaborate and acquire the knowledge of the CE.

Therefore, the reform of the school knowledge concerning the subject of CE, which we have approached, involves elements of modernity and post-modernity, although, the prevalent one for its definition and formulation is the logic of the former. Moreover, the teaching management of the CE school knowledge follows a parallel course and for the formation of its choices elements are drawn mainly from the post-modern frame. Therefore, the knowledge and teaching regarding the subject of Social and Political Education in the contemporary Greek primary school seem to be moving among modern and post-modern selections of a specific character.

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