PHAOS - 2013
(13) - pp. 119-136

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN ANCIENT GREEK PRIMARY CLASSES

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ABSTRACT
Following this motion towards multilingualism, the National Curriculum in the U.K. - as a national plan to promote multilingualism - requires all Key Stage 2 children of primary education to learn Latin and ancient Greek, among seven-strong shortlisted languages: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Mandarin, Latin and ancient Greek. The Department for Education reasons that both languages provide the foundation for learning Modern Foreign Languages (MFLs) and reading comprehension, and a good grounding in grammar, syntax and vocabulary, which can boost pupils' understanding of other MFLs. In addition, they have enormous cross-curricular potential, drawing in literacy, history, science, geography, art, drama and philosophy. In this context, this paper discusses the teaching of ancient Greek through the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach with the aim of: (i) introducing the method with examples of current practices in a primary class of bilingual children; (ii) reflecting upon current research on ancient Greek and Latin learning; and (iii) suggesting CLT for the improvement of ancient Greek learning within the broader framework of multilingualism.
Keywords: teaching ancient Greek, methodology of Greek, communicative language teaching.

TEACHING ANCIENT GREEK AND LATIN IN EUROPE

In the 20th century, European countries carried out major educational reforms that aimed at increasing compulsory schooling and unifying curricula (Fort, 2006). Within these reforms language instruction became the most important subject. In almost all education systems, "foreign language teaching became compulsory and non-native pupils of foreign mother tongue received special assistance in the form of language support measures within normal school hours and/or in separate groups/classes" (Garrouste, 2010: 38). It was not until the end of 1970s and early 1980s that foreign language reforms took place in the European continent. In these, second language (L2) learning was made

compulsory in primary and/or secondary schools. Furthermore, in the 1990s, almost all European countries implemented curricula that included minority languages (and/or the Less Commonly Taught Languages - LCTLs) and thus, instituting MFL teaching at the primary level (Garrouste, 2010: 39-40).

Following these reforms, on the 11th September 2013 the European Parliament passed a strongly worded motion, which expressed unprecedented support for Europe's endangered linguistic diversity by calling for at least two MFLs to be taught in primary education. The Commission's long-term objective is to increase individual multilingualism until every citizen has practical skills in at least two languages in addition to his or her mother tongue. Thus, the ability to understand and communicate in more than one language is a desirable life-skill for European citizens. This support of linguistic diversity and multilingualism is linked to the competitiveness of the EU economy. Moreover, it is clearly stated that bilingual and/or multilingual speakers attain: (i) greater skills in multitasking areas, creativity and innovation; (ii) greater capacity for being open-minded and perceptive; and (iii) better-equipped for the social and economical challenges. In this context, the percentage of foreign language learning in primary schools is increasing (including LCTLs).

The teaching of ancient Greek and Latin was put forward towards the end of the twentieth century (Gay, 2003: 20), when scholarly research demonstrated the impact of their learning into students' long-term language acquisition and development (involving mainly the skill in writing and reading) (e.g. Skoyles, 1990; Solomons, 2007). For example, in terms of English learning, current research (Rasinski, Padak, Newton, and Newton, 2008: 7, 11) shows that the learning of ancient Greek and Latin reinforces vocabulary learning and meaning decoding, since 75%, well over half of English words is derived from Greek or Latin roots. In particular, a single root helps the understanding of five to twenty words. Furthermore, since most words come to European languages from Latin and Greek roots, knowledge of these word parts is a powerful tool in unlocking the complex vocabulary of other scientific subjects (e.g. maths, literature and social studies). Thus, the learning of ancient Greek and Latin helps students understand that words have a discernible logic since their meanings are historically grounded (Rasinski et. al, 2008: 12).

Table 1[1] displays the European countries that teach both languages, mainly in their secondary educational systems, following traditional teaching methodologies (only with some exceptions i.e. France). Such methodologies involve reading original ancient texts; learning basic vocabulary; translating the texts; and focusing on the grammatical and syntactical aspects of each language.

[1] The information provided in Table 1 is based on CIRCE: http://www.circe.be/content/view/47/279/lang,en/

Following this motion towards multilingualism, the National Curriculum in the U.K. - as a national plan to promote multilingualism - requires all Key Stage 2 children of primary education (7-11 years old) to learn Latin and ancient Greek among seven-strong shortlisted languages: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Mandarin, Latin and ancient Greek.

Country	School	Language	Methodology
Austria	Secondary school (10-12 years of age)	Latin, Greek	Original texts based on topics widespread over the centuries; emphasis on the contents of the texts
Belgium	Secondary school (from age 12 and for six years)	Latin, Greek	Foundation of vocabulary and grammar; attention to classical culture and to reading (adapted) texts; authors read (by theme) in their original form
Czech Republic	Secondary school (15 -17 years of age)	Latin, Greek rarely	Basics of grammar, studying texts on themes; attention to basic differences in vocabulary, morphology and syntax
Denmark	High school (16-18 years of age)	Latin, Greek	Original texts for translation; study of monuments (vases, sculpture, architecture inter alia)
France	Secondary schools (11 -14 years of age)	Latin, Greek	Learning of vocabulary and grammar; reading ancient texts; lexicon, morphology and syntax are studied depending on the kind of texts; written and oral exercises, reciting texts; translation; study of images and archaeological sites; museum visits
Greece	Secondary school (12 – 15 years of age); High School (15-18 years of age)	Greek, Latin (only in High School)	Focus on original texts; vocabulary, grammar and syntax learning
Italy	Secondary school (11 -13 years of age); High School	Latin, Greek	Morphology, syntax learning; original texts for translation; basic set of commonly used vocabulary; etymological comparisons

Portugal	Secondary school (12-15 years of age); High School (15-17 years of age)	Latin, Greek	Reading texts based on civilisation themes (everyday life, social and political organisation); translation; morphology and syntax learning; vocabulary; history and culture learning
Spain	Secondary school (14 -16 years of age)	Latin, Greek	Original text; translation; grammar, syntax etymology, and ancient civilisation
Sweden	Secondary school (aged 16)	Latin, Greek	Not Available
UK	Primary schools Secondary schools	Latin, Greek	Focus on reading continuous passages; story-telling approach; emphasis on grammar-learning in the process

Table 1: Ancient Greek and Latin in European secondary educational systems

The Department for Education reasons that both languages provide the foundation for: (a) MFLs learning; (b) reading comprehension; and (c) a good grounding in grammar, syntax and vocabulary, which can boost pupils' understanding of other MFLs. In addition, it is claimed that both Greek and Latin have enormous cross-curricular potential, drawing in literacy, history, science, geography, art, drama and philosophy (Department for Education, 2013). Thus, it is the first time that these languages stand beside MFLs although they were "frequently viewed as an artifact, a leftover from an elitist and antiquated educational system" (Carlon, 2013: 106).

Following the above reforms, concerns are now raised regarding the methodology to be applied and employed into the teaching of ancient languages in primary school classrooms. So far, critical reviews (e.g. Carlon, 2013; Sipitanou and Mavroskoufis, 2008; Shannon, 2003) of traditional methodologies demonstrate that the teaching focuses, mainly, on systematic analyses of ancient, original texts. Thus, translation dominates (aiming at understanding the meaning of the ancient text) next to analyses of grammatical phenomena. These practices appear to exhaust students and affect their motivation to study the ancient language as a school subject.

In this context, this papers aims at discussing the teaching of ancient Greek through CLT, as an alternative to traditional methodologies of MFLs.

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR ANCIENT GREEK

CLT dominates current language teaching practices and its rise can be seen as a response to the need for change from previous traditional methods in MFL learning. In CLT, language is the medium for communication and language teaching is related to the functions of language. Hence, language is considered as it is used and not as an abstract system (Knight, 2001), emphasising the development of communicative competence. The latter is defined as learners' accurate command of the grammar and vocabulary (of the target language), and his/her use of this linguistic knowledge in a given social-cultural context (Mitchell, 1994). CLT aims at (a) making communicative competence the goal of language teaching, and (b) developing procedures for the teaching of the four linguistics skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Thus, the teaching focus shifts from grammar rules to the communicative functions of language and to how learners perform a variety of functions using different language forms. For the realisation of this aim, a functional syllabus is employed, in which linguistic items are grouped in relation to the grammatical categories and functions of the target language (Mitchell, 1994). The characteristics of CLT classroom practices are: (a) the use of communicative activities through classroom structured interaction (e.g. task-based teacher-learner and/or learner-learner interaction), and actual interaction in native-like, real-life situations (the emphasis is on naturalistic language acquisition) (Howatt, 1984: 279); (b) the use of the target language as the medium of classroom communication; and (c) the use of authentic materials (Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Mitchell, 1994). Furthermore, with regards to technology advancement, language learning occurs outside traditional settings, such as outdoors, where learners are exposed to non-formal, naturalistic learning settings and to real language uses. Thus, authenticity in CLT is linked to natural settings and not only to natural approaches to language learning.

[2] The earliest method known to be applied during the 20th century is the Direct Method by W. H. D. Rouse at the Perse School in Cambridge – U.K. from 1902 to 1928. "The success of his method led to a series of textbooks, lecture tours, summer seminars for teachers" (Coffee, 2012: 257), providing a model for the method advocated by contemporary scholars in the teaching of ancient Greek and Latin.

CLT APPROACHES IN ANCIENT GREEK CLASSES

To present (2015), there is a growing body of research that shows how CLT approaches have been adapted[2] in the learning of Classics. The milestone for such research was the year 1997, when the American Classical League (ACL) and the American Philological Association (APA), along with regional classical associations, created and published the *Standards for Classical Language Learning*. In these, communication is introduced as Goal 1 in the classroom (Coffee, 2012; Dugdale, 2011; Gephardt, 2011). Furthermore, the *Standards for Latin Teaching Preparation* (ACL and APA, 2010: 13) specifies that the learning is fundamentally an active process, involving active learning strategies whenever possible so as to promote the active use of the target language. Hence, towards the end of 1990s, a shift to CLT took place that involved academic discussion about its applications in ancient Greek and Latin classes.

In the study of Bayerle (2013), 43 students in Oxford University were taught ancient Greek through the Team-Based Learning (TBL) approach. In contrast to casual group work, teams in TBL were permanent groups, which had to demonstrate that they have mastered the course content through a five-step testing process; that is, through (i) Pre-Readings, (ii) Individual Tests (iii) Students Team Test, (iv) Appeals, and (v) Oral Instructor Feedback. Also, students were not allowed to translate and practise the language in every class meeting. The findings were very positive, such as that students retained information at a high level; they were enthusiastic and interested in studying Greek, and more active in their learning. These findings corroborated with previous results from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research on collaborative language learning.

For the development of writing skills, Dugdale (2013) argues the value of an alternative model of composition that focuses on creative writing assignments (e.g. cartoons, letters, haiku, mottoes, grammatical stories, inscriptions, translations) in which students maintain full authorial independence. Hence, learners are not called to translate predetermined sentences but to create their own compositions directly in the target language. The following positive results were reported. Firstly, students invested more in creative compositions rather than in passive exercises (e.g. fill-in-the-blanks). The method fostered camaraderie since students learned about each other's interests through their writings. Secondly, they became linguistically aware with morphological and syntactical decisions, and revised their writings rather than set textbook grammar exercises. Thirdly, they assimilated socio-cultural aspects of Greek and Roman civilisations (e.g. conventions of literary genres such as letters and inscriptions) (Dugdale, 2013: 18).

Gruber-Miller (2013) introduced multiliteracy approaches through the use of student multimedia re-workings. Through group/pair collaboration, students compared passages from Virgil's Aeneid with passages from Homer's Odyssey and were asked to re-create a scene so as to regenerate Vergil in their generation and modern times. In doing so, students were required to remix Vergil's narrative by combining visual and aural media, spoken and written text. Students' productions included video documentary, illustrated children's books, dubbed videos similar to Italian films from the 50s-70s, and puppet show. Participatory and collaborative authorship was found to impact positively students' engagement in multiple literacies. With regards to language, students used textual borrowings in their own writing; integrated vocabulary and syntax of sophisticated literary texts in their compositions; and became more sensitive to ancient author's language, style, and word order. They understood better the ancient culture by critically thinking of and voicing new roles and identities, rethinking their own attitudes, and taking "a meta-critical view of how language, character, and genre can reframe situations and create new meanings through remixing" (Gruber-Miller, 2013: 157).

Manousakis (2013) presented blended approaches in the teaching of ancient Greek tragedy in the University of Athens, Greece. The study demonstrated students' overall satisfaction while they were communicating with each other in a forun within Moodle. The study also showed that students, who participated in the blended learning, compared with those who did not, exhibited significantly successful results in their final exams. Thus, the blended method proved quite beneficial for the participants. Furthermore, both the course professor and the learners commented positively about the method used. Similar results were demonstrated in the study by Moss (2013), in which students believed that a blended approach to learning Latin, using technology, helped them improve their understanding of the ancient texts.

Anderson and Beckwith (2010) presented form-focused teaching methods that aimed to direct students' attention to specific grammar points in certain communicative contexts. It was shown that visual highlighting, enhanced input, and indirect corrective feedback with recasting, intrigued students' learning of intermediate Latin. These methods have the advantage to make grammatical and thematic points more visually salient to students, and to offer them the opportunity to recast their work (e.g. to formulate a grammatically correct version of a prior attempt at communication). Hence, students' attention is directed meaningfully through worksheets and exercises at particular pieces of knowledge and, by reading different texts with different constructions, can result in faster and more competent reading skills. Furthermore, it was indicated that students must encounter grammar and meaning together in order to generate accurate text interpretations. Their

understanding of grammar must be part of the interpretation process of the text rather than of a set of paradigms and rules that need to be learned (Anderson and Beckwith, 2010: 39).

The above studies are by no means conclusive but prove the introduction of CLT in ancient Greek and Latin classes (Coffee, 2012). For example, they provide more data on teaching reading and writing skills, where students' and teachers' first language (L1) (e.g. English) dominates classroom talk. Also, they refer to university rather than to school classroom practices, where students are adult learners with advanced cognitive skills. Furthermore, they are not purely ancient Greek classes (they may involve other subjects such as Greek tragedy, history, mythology etc.), where the target language is taught in a parallel fashion to MFLs learning (e.g. by following levels and functional syllabuses). More importantly, the majority of research concerns the teaching and learning of Latin rather than Greek, and hence, indicative of the existing difficulty in collecting data about the specific field.

However, they constitute research-based applications of CLT in the ancient language classroom, indicating that ancient Greek and Latin can be taught actively, although they are considered 'dead languages' and no longer in use. They also demonstrate a gradual integration of CLT in school and university learning settings, and a substantial growth of extracurricular practices for speaking (and not only reading/writing) ancient languages (Coffee, 2012: 260). The following section discusses CLT active practices, since this approach prioritises the use of the target language in its socio-cultural context.

LEARNING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ANCIENT GREEK

THE LEARNING CONTEXT

The present study is based on a descriptive account of a 4-month learning programme (October 2013 – January 2014) that was developed in a private institution for one primary class in ancient Greek. The class consisted of 15 bilingual students (English and Greek), aged 6-10 years old, attending a 2-hour session per week. The programme followed CLT methodologies through co-teaching practices, during which the students were usually divided – according to their age – in two groups. The lesson plans for each session were prepared by both teachers so as to manage synchronisation in the course of classroom activity. This paper aims at reporting common practices in order to present the teaching of each type of communicative competence in ancient Greek (see section below). Abundant supplementary materials were employed throughout

the programme such as audio examples for ancient Greek pronunciation; online videos and or in-classroom video recordings of students' performances; selected authentic ancient Greek texts; and teacher-generated handouts. As there is no textbook for this type of programme, all necessary information was communicated to parents and students on paper via a corpus of handouts distributed every week, and/or online through Edmodo. The syllabus of the programme was based on a cross-thematic framework.

PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

The definition of communicative competence is broadly presented in the international bibliography and it is not the scope of this paper to discuss it here. However, a brief definition is provided in Table 2.

Linguistic competence	**Socio-cultural competence**	**Strategic competence**	**Discourse competence**
Understanding and using: - Vocabulary - Syntax - Morphology - Phonology	Having awareness of: - Social rules of language - Non-verbal language - Cultural references (idioms, background knowledge)	Using techniques to: - overcome language gaps - plan and assess the effectiveness of communication - achieve conversational fluency - modify text for audience and purpose	Understanding how ideas are connected through: - Patterns of organisation - Cohesive and transitional devices

Table 2: Forms of communicative competence in CLT

Communicative competence involves not only the learning of its linguistic aspects (e.g. syntax, morphology, phonology) but also, the learning of its socio-cultural functions (e.g. social rules, idioms), its discourse (e.g. cohesive and transitional devices), and its communication strategies (e.g. modifying text for audience and purpose). Thus, a person who is competent in one language ideally possesses listening, speaking, reading and writing across all four communicative competencies. Concerning communicative competence in ancient Greek classes, two parameters were taken into consideration:

(a) There is a continuity of linguistic development from ancient to modern Greek, and "speakers of the modern language can, with a little help and guidance, still recognize here some extremely ancient correspondents of a number of contemporary words" (Horrocks, 2010: 2). Greek did not end

with the classical period, or with the Hellenistic Koine but it continued on through the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman periods down to the present day. Thus, overall, the educated modern speaker can see some instinctive familiarities with much of the ancient Greek lexicon (Horrocks, 2010: 2). For example, many words from the Attic dialect (5th-4th centuries B.C.) are spelled in very much the same way as their equivalents in modern Greek. Furthermore, for reasons such as: (i) the continuing academic debate on the correct reconstructed ancient pronunciation (e.g. Allen, 1968; Antonopoulou, 2007; Caragounis, 1995; Petrounias, 2007), and (ii) the lack of appropriate training (when the ancient pronunciation is adopted), the present work employs[3] the pronunciation of modern Greek (its living version) for learning reading and speaking of ancient Greek.

(b) Discourse, communication strategies and socio-cultural aspects of ancient Greek are taught in cross-reference with the study of history, mythology, philosophy and related subjects, supported by archaeological research (e.g. sites, various artefacts). For example, passages from Homer's epic poetry are studied in cross-reference to Minoan and Mycenaean history and civilisation (e.g. including Linear B scripts, archaeological representations of palaces and access to online manuscripts). This practice also justifies the choice of a cross-thematic framework for the curriculum of this programme.

Based on (a) and (b), each type of communicative competence is presented as following:

The learning of *linguistic competence* involved the learning of grammar, syntax, semantics and phonology of ancient Greek in strong connection to communicative functions (e.g. greetings, introducing oneself, talking about food, interests) that can be found in ancient texts. The following example is illustrative of the function 'introducing oneself' from Homer's Odyssey (Book 9, 250-264; 364-370), when Odysseus meets Cyclops in the cave.

Example 1:

A. *Introducing oneself - asking a question*:
OD.9.252: ὦ ξεῖνοι, τίνες ἐστέ; πόθεν πλεῖθ᾽ ὑγρὰ κέλευθα;
(Foreigners, who are you? From where did you sail the watery paths?)

B. *Introducing oneself - replying to a question*:
OD.9.259: ἡμεῖς τοι Τροίηθεν ἀποπλαγχθέντες Ἀχαιοὶ
(We are Achaeans led away from Troy.)
OD.9.263: λαοὶ δ᾽ Ἀτρεΐδεω Ἀγαμέμνονος εὐχόμεθ᾽ εἶναι
(We boast we are people of Agamemnon, son of Atreus.)
OD.9.366: Οὖτις ἐμοί γ᾽ ὄνομα· Οὖτιν δέ με κικλήσκουσι μήτηρ ἠδὲ πατὴρ ἠδ᾽ ἄλλοι πάντες ἑταῖροι.

[3] To the best of the author's knowledge, the work by podium arts: http://www.podium-arts.com is the first attempt made by Greek, native speakers.

(My name is Nobody. And they call me Nobody, my mother, my father, and all my comrades as well.)

Apart from vocabulary, linguistic structures were taught as certain conversational patterns/formulae, which students performed in short dialogues/role-plays. For instance, they were taught how to form questions when asking one's name (1A) by using the vocative case of nouns, the interrogative pronoun τίς (= who?), and the verb εἰμί (= to be) in the 3rd person of singular/plural. Also, they were taught to reply when asked about one's name (1B) by using one's name followed by the dative of the personal pronoun ἐγώ of the first person and the noun ὄνομα.

Figure 2: Eurykleia washing Odysseus' feet. **Source:** Attic red figure cup *skyphos* (side A), c. 440 BCE. Museo Nazionale, Chiusi, Italy. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

The *socio-cultural competence* was taught not only through the study of short texts, but also through the use of authentic archaeological materials. For instance, concerning example 1, introductions and greetings were taught in relation to the hospitality custom, a dominant social rule in ancient Greece. In this case, for students' better understanding of the context, photos of archaeological material were used, like Greek pottery with scenes of the custom, as in Figure 2, where Odysseus is having his feet washed. Such materials offer strong socio-cultural references, which teachers and students can recreate in the classroom through interactive activities.

Moreover, students were asked to study the texts in order to explore additional sociolinguistic aspects such as dialects of ancient Greek, registers, various idiomatic expressions and figures of speech, which may survive in modern Greek. In doing so, the teaching was based on comparisons between ancient and modern Greek festivals, and on cultural references to traditional

customs, in which children are the protagonists. For example, the swallow custom was integrated in the curriculum, while studying a text by Athenaeus of Naucratis (200 AD) (Example 2). This custom survived, and today in Greece at the beginning of March of each year, children in groups sing out in the streets the welcoming of spring. The in-class performance of this custom, with parents' participation in decorating children's' flowery baskets, affected positively students' motivation and learning. The following excerpt is indicative of this comparison. In this, children compared its lexical items and identified words that were used in the same way in the past and present, and words that are now replaced.
Example 2:

Anc. Greek: ἦλθ', ἦλθε χελιδὼν
Mod. Greek: ήρθε, ήρθε χελιδόνα,
(The swallow came, came)

Anc. Greek: καλὰς ὥρας ἄγουσα,
Mod. Greek: φέρνοντας καλοκαιριά
(bringing the good weather)

Anc. Greek: καλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς,
Mod. Greek: και καλή χρονιά,
(and a good year)

Anc. Greek: ἐπὶ γαστέρα λευκά,
Mod. Greek: στην κοιλιά της άσπρη
(on its white belly)

Anc. Greek: ἐπὶ νῶτα μέλαινα.
Mod. Greek: και στη ράχη μαύρη.
(and black back)

Likewise, many other texts were selected to be taught (e.g. from Hesiod, Aesop) referring to agricultural/rural life and customs of ancient Greece, which still survive in modern, seasonal, traditional festivals and celebrations, such as the summer harvesting, the harvesting of grapes, and the picking of olives in autumn. Additionally, Greek folklore songs (and dancing), called *demotika*, comprised an indistinguishable element of the specific sociolinguistic learning process. Through such activities, students were eagerly engaged in using the language appropriately (e.g. its style, register), based on the given situations (e.g. in the fields, in temples, in agora). Moreover, there were sessions in which students enjoyed dressing up as ancient Greeks to perform such scenes.

In the teaching of the *discourse competence* students were asked to combine language structures so as to produce text/speech in different modes

such as in a fairy tale (e.g. in Aesop's fables) and in a political speech of various rhetoricians. Hence, students were asked to explore certain cohesion devices and coherence rules within texts so as to carry out their communicative intent (e.g. μέν ... δέ, τοσοῦτον δέ .... ὥστε) in writing or in role plays. With regards to speaking, students were called to narrate Aesop's fables using puppetry, and in other cases, to pretend being in agora, giving rhetorical speeches in front of an ancient Greek assembly. As aforementioned, certain patterns/formulae were used throughout classroom practice.

The learning of the *strategic competence* involved students' engagement with understanding the meaning of the original text, and using communication strategies (e.g. paraphrase or circumlocution, approximation, explanations, definitions, non-linguistic means such as mime, gesture, or imitation; and fillers) when problems are encountered in the process of transmitting the information of the text. In this case, the most frequent teaching practice was to engage students in identifying and noting down all variations of what they were considering to be communication strategies in a text. Once these were identified, students were encouraged to use them in their activities for conversational practice. For this purpose, teachers chose extracts from tragedies and/or comedies, since, due to their dialogic form, involved many types of communication strategies and thus, served better students' learning.

DISCUSSION

The above practical ideas for CLT teaching in the ancient Greek classroom have worked with primary school students. Considering each form of communicative competence, specific practices were presented for teachers to overcome constraints imposed by the 'antiquity' of the language under study. Such practices have been broadly applied in MFLs and, gradually, some of them appear to take place in ancient Greek (and Latin) classes. However, due to limited research, the teachability of CLT in ancient Greek classroom is still a controversial issue, particularly with regards to speaking the language during interaction.

This paper discusses that teaching speaking is useful and feasible, following modern Greek pronunciation, especially at the beginning stages of the language in such young ages. In this study, it was observed that children who had some knowledge of modern Greek (as a second language from their families), could easily read the texts, compare their lexical items, and identify similarities and/or differences between ancient and modern Greek; and participate, using the language interactively in group activities. This work appeared harder for the younger group, whose level in modern Greek was at the beginning age, and lacked basic spelling skills (in both

languages). In this latter case, teachers facilitated students' speaking, by selectively ascribing short sentences in cards, which students carried out and read throughout role-plays.

The practice of active ancient Greek – in contrast to Latin - has not reached a sufficient scale so as to consider it in future approaches. For instance, in Greece, national curricula do not promote this practice, and still the methodology follows traditional approaches. However, ancient Greek conversation, written or video recorded seems to appear on Facebook, blogs and online learning platforms, from various countries (UK, Spain etc.). Still, though, its teaching is kept separately from modern Greek and emphasis is put on mythological, historical, and archaeological references only. This paper aims at addressing the necessity of bridging Greek, thus teaching its ancient version in close proximity to its modern, due to plethora of linguistic and cultural cross-references. The question then is raised: how many teachers, who teach ancient Greek, are sufficiently trained for bringing into teaching ancient and modern Greek?

The study of ancient Greek needs to stay closed to its socio-cultural context. Pennycook (1994) and Holliday (1994) warned the danger of naively accepting practices, which have been invented abroad, without looking carefully at the local culture of the target language. Also, Gruber-Miller (2013) pointed that in order for learners to read and understand the discourses, contexts, cultural memories, values and social practices of those who develop the texts, they need to engage directly with native-speaker voices. However, "in order to function successfully as interculturally competent", learners need to "take on different subject positions, perform new identities, and learn to reframe situations in order to mitigate potential conflict" (Gruber-Miller, 2013: 145). Such statements call teachers, academics and educational practitioners, from Greece and abroad, to move toward schemes from within the speech community, relying on resources with minimal input from outside, like schemes existing for MFLs (e.g. council-based language materials; inter-cultural teacher exchanges).

Successful application of CLT in ancient Greek classes means that learners pronounce and write the language correctly. Thus, textbooks (and all materials) need to reflect and respect Greek and the attitudes of its people. There is still much material with spelling and grammar errors and/or wrong cultural references (this matter comprises a chapter on its own and it can be stated here briefly only), and more empirical data are in need to present supporting evidence and examples of such phenomena. Additionally, exposure to native-like language and culture is needed. There are still many classes claiming that they teach Greek but both teachers and students have not heard how the sounds of Greek actually blend together in casual, modern speech. This is the reason why some primary schools in the U.K. place Greek-native speaking teachers to teach the language, and/or invite Greek native speakers (even if they are not certified teachers) to set up informative language workshops.

In the present learning programme, syllabus was based on a cross-thematic approach that organised the lessons according to topics, showing clearly how many facets of contemporary Greek culture were relevant to young children in the U.K. For example, in the lessons about the contest between goddess Athena and Poseidon for the name of Athens, students discussed the importance of olive trees and olives and their experiences visiting olive orchards in Greece. In relation to this framework, the teaching did not focus on traditional explanations of grammar points but rather on repetitions of important patterns/formulae, emphasising observation so as to reflect ancient Greek learning approaches. Thus, learning assumed a 'peripatetic'[4] character, was mobile, and observation was linked to the visuality of the learning settings and procedures (Mertzani, 2014). The act of observing the teacher and/or the classmates (e.g. while performing) allowed students to experience learning as a collective creation. Students were simultaneously the characters and the audience – listeners (there is a duality in the process) and through their roles, they could collectively ask questions, give advice, opinions, and feedback on their work. Thus, they were involved in a collective spectatorship similar to the one met in a theatre.

CONCLUSION

What is presented in the previous sections is a proposal for the teaching of ancient Greek in parallel to modern Greek (where is needed), following CLT approaches from the field of MFLs. The discussion concerned the teaching of communicative competence and its strategies, as the latter is controversial in the ancient classroom. It is argued that applying CLT in a primary class of ancient Greek is feasible, and communication strategies moderated by modern Greek and used by native-speakers are useful for students' learning. More empirical data though are in need to highlight the long-term impact of such practices. CLT is the dominant approach in MFL teaching, and as current research shows, its use emerges in the teaching of classical languages.

[4] The term peripatetic derived from the Greek word *peripatos*, which means walk, and referred to the teaching method employed by firstly, Aristotle and secondly, by his followers (from the 4th century B.C. and until the fall of the Romans). According to this approach, learning was based on walking while lecturing, moving from place to place, and engaging learners in discussions.

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