

Modern Greek at tertiary level: Applying innovative methods of effective assessment and delivery online

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In a determined effort to preserve the Modern Greek language as an important part of Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity, the Logos Australian Centre for Hellenic Language and Culture¹ established at Flinders University in South Australia in 2011 has been enhancing the delivery of Modern Greek and enabling a wider delivery of this small enrolment language by developing online content and an effective model for delivery via synchronous and asynchronous technologies. Six Modern Greek language topics, two cultural topics and some extension materials have been developed and delivered online via the university's learning management system known as Flinders Learning Online (FLO).

A. Pedagogical considerations

Appropriate pedagogies for language learning in general are those which facilitate communication and provide students with a reason to talk, listen, read and write in cultural context. "Generating language is an important part of the language acquisition process" (Chartrand, 2012:98). This approach closely aligns with the principles of both Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)² and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).³ "It places primary emphasis on communication but does not neglect the importance (whether during-task via corrective feedback or post-task via explicit focus on form) of developing grammatical competence to make communication more successful" (East and Scott, 2011:184).

¹ More information about LOGOS is available from <http://www.flinders.edu.au/ehl/language-studies/departmental-sections/modern-greek/logos/>

² TBLT is explained briefly at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Task-based_language_learning

³ CLT is explained briefly at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communicative_language_teaching

“Contrary to our prior understanding that knowledge can be passed directly from one head to another” (Birjandi and Sarem, 2012:749) it is now understood that learning is a meaning-making process and that “much depends on the learner’s constructions of his or her own experiences” (Birjandi and Sarem, 2012:749). This understanding has many implications for the development of online language learning environments. Most significant is the associated realisation that “learning takes place when the learner actively engages with new elements and adapts his/her perspective in interaction with peers, advanced peers and, possibly, but not necessarily, teachers” (Stickler and Shi, 2013:51). This view is further supported by Meskill (2011) who states that “engaging learners in active, authentic, productive use of the target language is what leads to acquisition and mastery” (Meskill, 2011:250). The associated implication for teaching and assessing languages is that new approaches which support “language learning as knowledge construction and as being the outcome of an interaction between students and teachers” (Birjandi and Sarem, 2012:751) are replacing past practices in which approaches to language assessment and perspectives on learning “focus[ed] on the language ability possessed by test-takers, or the tasks they ...[were] able to perform, or both” (Stoynoff, 2012:524). This new approach “emphasises the interaction of language ability, social context, and the communication that occurs and is jointly constructed by participants” (Stoynoff, 2012:524) and is accompanied by a movement towards “less reliance on an approach to assessment that yields a single test score obtained by means of multiple-choice items that focus on discrete language skills and elements” (Stoynoff, 2012:527). We have been guided by this approach in applying innovative methods of effective assessment and delivery online. We are moving towards integrating teaching, learning and assessment in our Modern Greek online topics, recognising the “benefits of conducting assessment before, during and following teaching and learning” (Stoynoff, 2012:527).

As an instance of the Moodle learner management system, FLO facilitates this approach to online language teaching, learning and assessment based on social constructionist⁴ principles. FLO is supplemented by FLO Live which is the university’s instance of the web-conferencing software Adobe Connect. Together they provide the asynchronous and synchronous technologies to support communication and collaboration in Modern Greek topics online.

⁴ The design and development of Moodle is guided by social constructionist pedagogy. More information is available at <http://docs.moodle.org/25/en/Philosophy> and <http://docs.moodle.org/25/en/Pedagogy>

B. Assessment considerations

1. Effective assessment

“Using effective assessment techniques can improve an instructor’s understanding of student needs and support learner-centered classrooms” (Vonderwell and Bobic, 2013:22). However, effective assessment “takes on a new meaning in online classroom environments where students and instructors do not share physical proximity” (Vonderwell and Bobic, 2013:22). “There should not be a mechanistic transfer [of assessment practices] from one environment to the other without due consideration of their intended purpose and outcome” (Beebe et al., 2010:10).

Traditional forms of assessment are no longer always appropriate for online environments. “Dialogue, collaboration and a common goal” (Beebe et al., 2010:10) are listed as characteristics of online communities of learners which support assessment *for learning* (A_{FL}). Supported by a “theoretical shift away from ‘measuring’ learning and towards assessment that is explicitly designed to promote learning” (Birjandi and Sarem, 2012:749), we are designing and trialling synchronous online assessment procedures integrated with teaching and learning which aim to “find a balance between formative (process) and summative (product) outcomes” (Beebe et al., 2010:9) Central to this process is “increased instructor and student interaction within the online interface” (Beebe et al., 2010:9).

According to Beebe et al., there are “five major themes to be taken into account when designing effective assessment plans for online environments: time management, student responsibility and initiative, structure of the online medium, complexity of content and informal assessment” (Beebe et al., 2012:6). When applied to our Modern Greek language topics these themes are influencing assessment plans in the following ways:

Time management

Taking into account the findings of Beebe et al. that “students expected immediate response and feedback to their questions or to their test results” (Beebe et al., 2010:6) our Modern Greek topics will include regular opportunities for synchronous communication. Informal FLO Live (Adobe Connect) sessions will be scheduled in which students can “drop in” to ask a question or seek assistance from the teacher and/or other students present in the web-based classroom. FLO Live (Adobe Connect) sessions integrating teaching, learning and assessment will also be scheduled. These will provide the feedback required by students to promote further learning.

Student responsibility and initiative

According to Beebe et al. (2010) metacognitive skills, initiative and motivation are all very important to the process of assessment in online environments.

Our Modern Greek topics will include study tips specific to the online environment and students will be supported to develop metacognitive skills by the demonstration of learning strategies within the teaching, learning and assessment process in FLO Live (Adobe Connect) sessions. Meskill (2011) refers to this as “modelling and facilitating processes” (Meskill, 2011:254). It is anticipated that initiative and motivation will be the result of participation in this collaborative learning environment where teaching and learning is student-focused.

Structure of the online medium

Within Modern Greek topics the online medium will include both synchronous FLO Live (Adobe Connect) and asynchronous (FLO) teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers will be supported by the technology within the online medium to generate and guide authentic conversation and respond pedagogically to teachable moments such as have been suggested by Meskill (2011) to be an integral part of the instructor’s role when language instruction is moved online. Students will have many opportunities for interaction with teachers and with other students.

Complexity of content

Student assessment online is sometimes considered difficult when the content requires higher level thinking skills such as analysis and synthesis (Beebe et al., 2010:8). Such skills are not easily assessed using traditional methods such as online quizzes. By adopting an innovative approach which does not seek to transfer traditional methods to the online environment, but rather to develop processes specifically suited to online use, our Modern Greek topics will overcome these difficulties. Meskill’s “recipe for online teaching” described as “orchestrated asynchronous and synchronous moments online whereby learners comprehend and use new target structures and vocabulary productively” (Meskill, 2011:253) will be very useful in this regard. Our Modern Greek topics online will focus on creating opportunities for students to learn Modern Greek by using the language in contexts which are meaningful to them and to the online learning community. Assessment will be integrated with learning and ongoing feedback will be provided via “instructional conversations”.⁵

Informal assessment

According to Beebe et al. (2010) “informal assessment is tied to the issue of how often communication occurs” (Beebe et al., 2010:7) and “the instructor has to devote a lot more time to establishing [...] effective communication

⁵ Instructional conversations is a term used by Meskill (2011) and Davin (2013).

with and among students both during planning and implementing the online course” (Beebe et al., 2010:9). With this in mind assessments within our online Modern Greek topics will incorporate a range of informal techniques derived from interpersonal cues as they are reflected in both synchronous and asynchronous online communication.

2. Authentic assessment

Our assessment plans for online Modern Greek topics have been greatly influenced by the principles of authentic assessment. Many recent explanations and descriptions of authentic assessment have made reference to it as assessment which focuses on the learning *process* rather than on the *product* (Lam, Williams et al., 2007; Blake, 2009; Oskoz, 2005; Liang and Creasy, 2004; Leone, Leo et al., 2010). Authentic assessment is further supported by Gan, Davison et al. (2009) who refer to assessment as being integral to the teaching process and describe an approach to the assessment of English as a second language (ESL) skills in which the aim is “to create a structure for students to interact in English on real material, and to offer a more valid and reliable form of assessment than external assessment by assessing authentic oral language use in low-stress conditions with multiple assessment tasks in real time situations” (Gan, Davison et al., 2009:320). Likewise Ishihara (2009) describes a learning environment in which “the instructor collaboratively developed authentic assessment tools, such as reflective writing, rubrics, role-plays, and self/peer-assessment, and facilitated interaction and assessment in the learning process” (Ishihara, 2009:445).

An authentic assessment approach has been our chosen strategy when considering how to use the synchronous technology of FLO Live (Adobe Connect) to engage students in continual production and use of language in communication and collaboration with teachers and peers. Clear guidelines have been prepared for incorporating actions to support an authentic assessment approach in synchronous online sessions.⁶ These are summarised briefly below:

- sharing information and expectations
- explaining tasks
- sharing authentic content and facilitating oral and written responses
- providing opportunities for guided whole group and small group interaction and collaboration (listening, speaking, reading and writing)
- providing opportunities for individual lecturer-student interaction
- providing live and immediate feedback recording observations of student progress

⁶ This strategy and the guidelines are explained more fully in our previously published paper (C. Wright, A. Litinas, M. Palaktoglou and M. Tsianikas, 2013). Planning for authentic language assessment in higher education synchronous online environments. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies – Special Issue*, 246–258.

3. Dynamic assessment

Dynamic assessment (DA) is an authentic assessment approach closely linked with assessment *for* learning (AFL). AFL and DA have the following in common: (a) a commitment to improving student learning through assessment activities, (b) use of students' current knowledge and ability as the starting point for assessment, and (c) a belief in teacher intervention through interactive feedback (Leung, 2007:267). "DA is interested not only in the product of learning but also in documenting the process of learning while offering individual attention to learners" (Antón, 2009:592). It "extends the interactive nature of leaning to the process of assessment" (Birjandi and Sarem, 2012:749) and, of specific relevance to foreign language learning, allows for "intervention during assessment [which] results in rich information on the linguistic capabilities of learners, which may be used for the development of individualised instructional plans" (Antón, 2009:592).

C. The Modern Greek language context

Introductory Modern Greek Part 1 is a beginner's topic. It has been taught online for 3 years using materials specifically developed for the online context. The topic includes many opportunities for asynchronous interaction in discussion forums and collaborative learning by writing in shared online spaces. However, our use of synchronous technologies has been limited. We have also identified a need to move away from traditional assessments such as multiple choice and true/false quizzes. We believe the functionality of the synchronous online environment of FLO Live (Adobe Connect) supports innovation. Having trialed the technology within the Modern Greek team during 2013 we are now planning to use FLO Live (Adobe Connect) to implement a more authentic and dynamic assessment approach. The focus will be on the assessment of speaking.

Several aspects of dynamic assessment are of particular interest to the context of our Modern Greek topics. These aspects will be explained below followed by an explanation of how they will be trialed to assess speaking within *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1*.

Improving learning through and during assessment activities

Dynamic assessment "seamlessly embeds assessment within an instructional activity. It draws on Vygotsky's (1934/1986) notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), namely that learning develops from and is embedded in social interactions with others, e.g. people, texts, objects, events etc" (Fox, 2008:100). Learning takes place as the emergent abilities of students are identified and their development supported. "Dynamic assessment puts more emphasis on the process rather than on the product"

(Antón, 2009:579). Learning takes place concurrently with assessment as students are provided with feedback during their participation in meaningful, real-world tasks involving higher order thinking. “Learners’ competencies are typically described or summarised in a descriptive narrative, written in terms of what learners are able to do, as well as what they need to work on” (Ishihara, 2009:448). In this way learning is improved both through and during assessment activities as students are provided with ongoing feedback to take them to the next level of language understanding and use.

Leung also supports the view that the central aim of dynamic assessment is to “improve learning through and during assessment activities” (Leung, 2007:267) and explains that the classroom practices and principles associated with assessment *for* learning (AfL) are consistent with this central aim of dynamic assessment (DA) and that “AfL and DA have the following in common:

- a. a commitment to improving student learning through assessment activities,
- b. use of students’ current knowledge and ability as the starting point for assessment, and
- c. a belief in teacher intervention through interactive feedback”. (Leung, 2007:267)

In the context of *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1* we plan to trial this assessment *for* learning, dynamic assessment approach by providing opportunities for group conversations and discussions in small peer groups supported by student-student and student-teacher interaction and feedback. We will be aiming to create oral assessment situations including students, teachers, native speakers and non-native speakers described by Gan, Davison et al. (2009) as one in which group conversations take place in which interactions are modified and restructured by participants restating, clarifying and confirming information in order to make meaning. Gan, Davison et al. claim that “opportunities for substantive conversation are greater in small peer groups than in teacher-controlled class discussions” (Gan, Davison et al., 2009:317). Web conferencing environments such as FLO Live (Adobe Connect) are very suitable for such conversations. Small peer groups can meet in break out rooms to complete oral interaction tasks and the teacher can visit each break out room as an observer and/or participant, providing support and collecting information about students’ abilities as required. In this way assessment will be integrated with learning.⁷

The possibility of individualised learning plans

According to Antón (2009) “dynamic assessment allows for a deeper and richer description of learners’ actual and emergent abilities, which enables programs to devise individualised instructional plans attuned to learners’ needs” (Antón, 2009:576). He describes a process whereby the information required for the development of an individual learning plan was documented using a rubric during a speaking assessment.

⁷ An activity example is included as Appendix A.

The resultant speaking assessment report focused on “what the student could do and any intervention required (based on the rubric) and recommendations as to how the student could improve his/her oral performance and further teaching required” (Antón, 2009:587).

In the context on *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1* online we plan to individualise learning by using rubrics to assess speaking. Regularly documenting information about pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, content and comprehensibility (Antón, 2009:587) while students engage in speaking activities during FLO Live (Adobe Connect) sessions will guide teachers to appropriate intervention. This will assist students to develop their emergent abilities.⁸

Instructional conversations

Davin (2013) describes instructional conversations as a useful assessment process and expresses the opinion that they “can work symbiotically [with interventionist dynamic assessment] to meet the students’ and the teachers’ needs” (Davin, 2013:318). Instructional frameworks can be used to construct a zone of proximal development for a group of students when the teacher knows that all the students will benefit from the pre-scripted responses during the conversation. These pre-scripted responses are characteristic of interventionist dynamic assessment. “Instructional conversations engage learners not in recitation of known answers (or punishment/remediation for unknown ones), but in thoughtful, engaging, communicative interaction” (Meskill, 2009:53). According to Ciancio and Diaz-Rico (2010) “the instructional conversation works best when the topic, as evoked by the prompt, is relevant to students’ lives, so the conversation can be student-centered” (Ciancio and Diaz-Rico, 2010:312). Instructional conversations must be carefully planned. Three aspects in particular are important for their success:

- the discussion starters or prompts are carefully tailored to the developmental level and interests of the group
- the facilitator or teacher is able to interact both as a discussant and as an instructor
- the facilitator or teacher is able to adapt the instructional conversation to the needs of the learners and uses a structured way to educate the participants on ways to obtain a self-nominated turn. (Ciancio and Diaz-Rico, 2010:313)

In the context of *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1* online we plan to use instructional conversations in the assessment of speaking by engaging students in conversation in the synchronous web based FLO Live (Adobe Connect) environment. The multi-modal nature of this online environment means that pictures and photos can

⁸ An activity example is included as Appendix B.

be shared simultaneously with text, audio and visual prompts supported by interaction with the teacher and between students. By its very nature the FLO Live (Adobe Connect) environment slows down the conversation process and provides a useful structure for supported spoken interaction. Students have time to think and engage with the prompts while listening to other students speak and can indicate that they would like to add to the conversation by using the “hands up” indicator within the online classroom. Instructional conversations will integrate teaching, learning and assessment allowing students to develop emerging conversational skills in a supported environment.⁹

Mediation for learners

Mediation is an integral part of dynamic assessment. “A fundamental difference with non-dynamic types of assessment is the active role taken by the examiner during the testing situation” (Antón, 2009:576) when a dynamic assessment approach is used. Davin describes two kinds of dynamic assessment and refers to them as interventionist [quantitative] and interactionist [qualitative]. Mediation is part of both forms. Interventionist dynamic assessment uses pre-scripted prompts, sometimes arranged in a hierarchical manner from implicit to explicit. Interactionist dynamic assessment is more flexible and occurs in the form of unscripted dialogue (Davin, 2013:306–307).

Mediation in the form of pre-scripted assisting prompts can be used by the teacher to respond to predictable errors thus permitting the teacher to assess students while also promoting development (Davin, 2013:303). Davin (2013) describes a five stage prompt process as below. The stages are graded implicit (1) to explicit (5):

Prompt 1: Pause with questioning look

Prompt 2: Repetition of entire phrase by teacher with emphasis on source of error

Prompt 3: Repetition of specific site of error

Prompt 4: Forced choice option

Prompt 5: Correct response and explanation provided

Likewise Lantolf and Poehner (2011) suggest an inventory of teacher prompts as below. They too are graded implicit (1) to explicit (8):

1. “Pause
2. Repeat the whole phrase questioningly
3. Repeat just the part of the sentence with the error
4. Teacher points out that there is something wrong with the sentence. Alternatively, she can pose this as a question, ‘What is wrong with that sentence?’

⁹ An activity example is included as Appendix C.

5. Teacher points out the incorrect word
6. Teacher asks either/or question
7. Teacher identifies the correct answer
8. Teacher explains why” (Lantolf and Poehner, 2011:20)

Pre-scripted prompts are not always necessary. A commonly used approach is mediation that is not scripted but “take(s) the form of prompts, questions, hints, suggestions, or explanations” (Davin, 2013:306). This is what Davin (2013) refers to as interactionist dynamic assessment. It is a process which “places no restrictions on mediation but instead demands that the mediator do everything possible to help the learner stretch beyond his/her current independent performance, short of giving the answer” (Lantolf and Poehner, 2011:15).

Antón claims that: “Dynamic assessment studies show that verbalisation and elaborated feedback are two of the most powerful elements of mediated learning experiences” (Antón, 2009:579). Both scripted and non-scripted prompts allow instruction and assessment to occur simultaneously and provide an appropriate level of support to guide the student towards meaningful communication whilst also providing valuable information for the teacher as to how much support the student requires.

The concept of group dynamic assessment as described by Poehner (2009) expands on dynamic assessment by suggesting that mediation can involve and benefit other students. He describes a face to face Spanish class in which a student engaging in a one on one interaction with the teacher as part of a dynamic assessment process “draws the class into the interaction by looking to them immediately after first uttering the word [...] perhaps to gauge their response or for reassurance” (Poehner, 2009:485) Poehner refers to this process as “engaging the class as secondary interactants” (Poehner, 2009, 485) and draws the conclusion that students benefit from being present as secondary interactants in this dynamic assessment situation.

In the context of *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1* online we plan to trial both pre-scripted prompts and mediation via unscripted dialogue within group dynamic assessment situations. The synchronous online environment of FLO Live (Adobe Connect) provides the functionality to support this dynamic assessment approach in a number of ways. Oral interaction is obviously crucial to this process and is enabled when participants use headset microphones. With web cams enabled participants can view such prompts as a “pause with questioning look”. Additional functionality available in this synchronous online environment to support dynamic assessment includes the following:

- text chat and notes area where the teacher (and other students) could provide short written prompts or guiding questions
- shared whiteboard space and whiteboard tools where support materials can be displayed and “marked up” to provide hints, suggestions or explanations

- screen and document sharing which allows the teacher to provide support and stimulus materials (e.g. websites, images, movies, PowerPoint slides, PDF documents, audio files)
- breakout pods to enable small group or individual teacher- student interaction.

Having trialed these functions within our team we now plan to involve the students of *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1* in a dynamic assessment process which maximises the use of this synchronous online environment.¹⁰

D. The future

Research conducted by Meskill and Anthony (2014) concluded that “limitations of synchronous online environments can apparently be transformed into advantages” (Meskill and Anthony, 2014:186). They describe environments in which activities are planned and orchestrated “so that the target language is productively used while student attention gets creatively managed” (Meskill and Anthony, 2014:186). Likewise some advantages of multimodal online teaching mentioned by Stickler and Shi (2013) are “the options to cater for reticent students and for different learner types, give feedback in different modes, and manage the classroom more efficiently” (Stickler and Shi, 2013:65). It must be acknowledged however, that planning and managing multimodal online teaching is time consuming as it requires the development of learning materials and strategies specific to the synchronous online environment. “Attempts at mimicking face to face instruction online are far from productive for both teachers and students” (Meskill and Anthony, 2014:177) and expertise in the development of learning materials is required to ensure that stimulus overload is avoided.

The dynamic assessment approach we are advocating is sometimes considered “labor-intensive, time consuming, and, perhaps, difficult to carry out in large programs” (Antón, 2009:592). It is to our advantage that we are currently teaching *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1* to relatively small groups of students. When planning for anticipated enrolment increases consideration will need to be given to maintaining small groups (no more than 8 students) for the synchronous online sessions. This will enable the teacher “to detect learner difficulties and formulate appropriate responses in the moment-to-moment dynamics of interaction” (Lantolf and Poehner, 2011:15). Maintaining small groups will also ensure that online sessions can be interactive and involve students in “materialised attention” (Meskill and Anthony, 2014:181) which means that they are asked to respond by circling, underlining or signalling understanding in other ways possible in the synchronous online environment.

“There is broad consensus in the online teaching literature that synchronous online teaching is demanding. Multimodal environments that contemporary online

¹⁰ An activity example is included as Appendix D.

instructors use to conduct live sessions are challenging to manage in instructionally positive ways” (Meskill and Anthony, 2014:179). Teachers venturing into these synchronous online environments must be prepared for a transformation of their roles because “managing learners at a distance using digital tools requires that instructors develop alternative teaching strategies from those used in traditional classrooms” (Meskill and Anthony, 2014:179). Multi-modal online environments can incorporate verbal, visual, musical, cinematal and procedural elements, allowing the user to choose and combine modes most suited to their learning preferences. “Procedural elements, such as yes and no indicators (tick and cross), emoticons (smiley face, confused face, clapping hands, thumbs down) and a hand raising symbol [...] can be used as substitutes for gesture, facial expression, and body language” (Stickler and Shi, 2013:51) and oral communication can be supported by the use of text chat and procedural elements such as emoticons. Ongoing training specific to teaching in this environment is necessary to ensure that an engaging environment for online language learning is developed and maintained.

Conclusion

Dynamic assessment is “not intended as a replacement for other types of testing but as a complement to them” (Antón, 2009:576). In the context of *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1*, we will adopt a dynamic assessment strategy which integrates teaching, learning and assessment by providing opportunities for guided spoken interaction in synchronous online sessions. We will aim to improve learning through and during assessment activities by providing opportunities for group conversations and discussions in small peer groups supported by student-student and student-teacher interaction and feedback. By using rubrics to assess some speaking tasks we will move towards individualising learning in which students are assisted to develop their emergent abilities. Instructional conversations together with multi-modal resources will further integrate teaching, learning and assessment allowing students to develop emerging conversational skills in a supported environment. By incorporating both pre-scripted prompts and mediation via unscripted dialogue in synchronous speaking activities students will be guided towards meaningful communication. With careful planning, taking into account the challenges associated with teaching and learning languages in the synchronous online environment, it is anticipated that the strategies and procedures explained in this paper will result in effective Modern Greek language assessment and delivery online.

Appendix A

This activity will make use of the breakout rooms available in FLO Live (Adobe Connect). Students will be allocated a breakout room in which they can interact with 2 or 3 other students to complete the task. The teacher will visit each breakout room providing support as required. Assessment will be integrated with learning in this way as the teacher supports the students and collects information about their speaking proficiency.

Speaking activity

Participants will each take on the role of one person in the pictured scenario below. They will use known vocabulary and structures to participate in a discussion appropriate to the pictured scenario to demonstrate that they have achieved or are moving towards achievement of the *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1* objectives below:

- Ask and answer questions about where you have been using a familiar pattern
- Construct sentences about food and eating using a variety of verbs and sentence structures
- Respond to basic questions about what you eat at different times of the day.

Students will be assisted by visual, oral and written prompts from the teacher or other students as required to complete the task. The web cam, headset microphone and text chat will be used to provide these prompts if necessary. Information about the level of support required by each student to complete the task will be collected by the teacher with a view to identifying what learners are able to do, as well as what they need to work on.



Appendix B

This dynamic assessment of speaking includes 4 speaking activities. The completion of a speaking assessment report (rubric) for each activity would enable teachers to provide the appropriate intervention to assist students to develop their emergent abilities. This could initiate a movement towards individualised learning plans.

Speaking activities

These speaking activities relate to the objectives below for the topic *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1*:

- Understand and use complex greetings
- Respond to basic questions about yourself
- Interact with others by sharing key points of information about yourself
- Use familiar language to share information about people
- Construct sentences about everyday life using a variety of verbs and sentence structures

The activities would take place in FLO Live (Adobe Connect) sessions.

1. Responding to personalised questions from the teacher and interacting with others by sharing key points of information about yourself.

Teacher: Hello (name)

Student responds with a greeting appropriate to the situation and time of day.

Teacher: How are you?

Student responds appropriately to reflect how they are feeling at the time.

Teacher: Please introduce yourself to the group using the prompts on the screen to guide you

NB Screen prompts could include sample speech bubble text in the target language in which one or more pictured person introduces themselves.

Student:

e.g.

My name is (name) or I am (name)

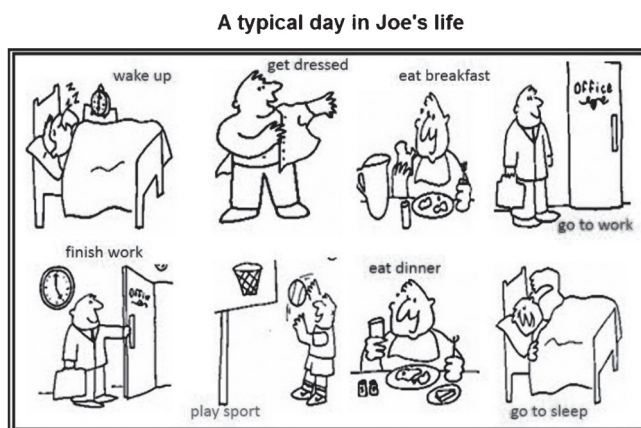
I am from (country) or I am (nationality)

I speak (language)

I am (employment type)

I live (location)

2. Narrating a story based on a given picture story — a task done in 3 phases: firstly with no help from the teacher, secondly with “some guidance in the form of hints, direct instructions, or appropriate vocabulary that might improve the student’s performance” (Antón, 2009:584) (scaffolding) and thirdly using a process in which the teacher narrates the story and then asks the student to narrate it again (based on a belief that students will be able to imitate what they hear from the teacher if it is within their ZPD) (Antón, 2009:584).



For example, the picture story below depicts a typical day in Joe’s life. Using the pictures as prompts students can construct sentences about everyday life using a variety of verbs and sentences structures.

Within the FLO Live (Adobe Connect) web based classroom appropriate levels of support can be provided as follows:

Phase 1: No support

In this phase the student uses known vocabulary and sentence structures to tell the story of a typical day in Joe’s life with no intervention by the teacher.

Phase 2: Hints, direct instructions or vocabulary prompts

Support of this kind can be provided via text or voice. Headset microphones enable spoken support. Text can be written in the text chat or notes area. Depending on the level of support required, vocabulary and sentence structure support could be provided by sharing a document so that each student can open it on his/her own computer and proceed with their narration.

Phase 3: Teacher narration

To provide this level of support the teacher would use a headset microphone to narrate the story asking the student to repeat what they have heard. Depending on the level of support required, the story could be narrated by

the teacher as a whole or in parts with the student repeating as appropriate to their ability.

3. Taking on the role of one of the characters in the narrated story and saying something appropriate to the situation, for example, taking on the role of Joe (who is the only character in the picture story example above) the student could prepare one or more speech bubbles (spoken rather than written) for the daily activities assuming that Joe is interacting with someone else at the time. Possibilities include:

- Good morning
- Today I will wear ...
- It is cold/wet today so I will wear ...
- I am hungry
- Let's eat breakfast
- I like (food)
- Let's play basketball
- It is time for dinner
- This is delicious
- I'm leaving now
- Goodbye
- See you later
- I'm finished work for the day
- See you tomorrow
- We won!
- I am tired
- Good night

4. Developing and delivering a 3 minute monologue on a topic (one of 2 choices) with some guiding questions provided according to student need. Examples below:

- **My day**

Guiding questions could include the following:

- Do you go to work?
- What exercise do you do?
- Do you travel very far?

- **Me and my family**

Guiding questions could include the following:

- Do you enjoy spending time with your brothers and sisters?
- What do you enjoy doing with your family?
- Do some of your family live far away?

Speaking assessment report

Date:	
Topic:	
Speaking activity:	
Student name:	
Background information:	
Assessment criteria:	
Comprehensibility and content	
Exceeds the expected level	An appropriate amount (or more) was spoken enthusiastically. It was interesting, easily heard, relevant and easy to understand. The speaker was able to compensate when the listener appeared not to understand.
Meets the level expected	An appropriate amount was spoken with moderate enthusiasm. It was mostly interesting, comprehensible, easily heard and relevant.
Close to the expected level	The amount spoken was adequate. There were some problems with comprehensibility, relevance and interest level.
Moving towards the expected level	There were quite a few problems with comprehensibility, relevance and interest level. A limited amount was spoken.
Little/No attempt	Not enough language was spoken to assess comprehension and comprehensibility.
Fluency	
Exceed the expected level	Speech was smooth throughout. Ideas were conveyed with little hesitation; went beyond the minimum requirement. Communicated with ease overall.
Meets the expected level	Communicated confidently using simple structures; some hesitation with more complex material. Evidence of fluency outweighed moments of uncertainty or stumbling.
Close to the expected level	Speech contained unnecessary hesitation but there were some signs of fluency. Consistently used simple structures, vocabulary etc. and avoided more complex material. Excessively simple language predominated.
Moving towards the expected level	Use of simple structures was uncertain and hesitant. Speech was broken with little evidence of fluency despite moments of ease.
Little/No attempt	Not enough language was spoken to assess fluency.

(continued)

(continued)

Language control/grammar	
Exceed the expected level	Demonstrated the ability to takes risks with the language on top of correctly using learned linguistic structures.
Meets the expected level	Any errors in usage were minor, inconsistent, and did not interfere with comprehension.
Close to the expected level	Minor errors with simple structures; less accurate use of more complex structures. Errors in usage sometimes interfered with comprehension.
Moving towards the expected level	Inaccuracies in grammar throughout. Errors sometimes interfered with comprehensibility and forced interpretation by the listener.
Little/No attempt	Not enough language was spoken to assess language control/ grammar.
Pronunciation	
Exceed the expected level	Pronunciation was accurate throughout, with good rhythm and intonation for this level.
Meets the expected level	Pronunciation was acceptable and errors were rare and did not interfere with communication
Close to the expected level	Pronunciation was generally comprehensible. There were some errors which interfered with communication.
Moving towards the expected level	Pronunciation was comprehensible at times but rhythm and intonation deviated from that of fluent Greek and interfered with communication at times.
Little/No attempt	Not enough language was spoken to assess pronunciation.
Vocabulary	
Exceed the expected level	Demonstrated a rich, developed vocabulary. Used precise words for the situation.
Meets the expected level	Vocabulary appropriate to the topic was used with no major inaccuracies in word choice.
Close to the expected level	Vocabulary was under developed. Only simple vocabulary was used and some expressions were not precise for the context.
Moving towards the expected level	Vocabulary was under developed and often used out of context.
Little/No attempt	Not enough language was spoken to assess vocabulary.
Recommendations for improvement:	
Further teaching required:	

Appendix C

This activity involves an instructional conversation based on a fashion blog or website where a range of different clothes is pictured.

Students will be all together in the main FLO Live (Adobe Connect) classroom and will be taken on a synchronous “tour” of the blog or website led by the teacher using the screen sharing functionality of FLO Live (Adobe Connect). With headset microphones enabled all participants will be able to speak and listen. The teacher’s role will be to encourage and guide conversation by modelling the use of known vocabulary and sentence structures as they pose questions and prompt the students to participate in the conversation. Students will have time to think and engage with the prompts while listening to other students speak and can indicate that they would like to add to the conversation by using the “hands up” indicator within the online classroom. The teacher will be both a discussant (adding relevant information and/or opinion to the conversation) and an instructor (guiding and prompting students by modelling the use of known vocabulary and sentence structures). Assessment will be integrated with teaching and learning with students developing emerging conversational skills in a supported environment.

This activity will relate to the following objective of *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1*:

- Construct sentences to talk about clothes and describe what people are wearing

Possible discussion starters/prompts are:

- What items of clothing can you see?
- Describe a pictured clothing item that you like/dislike?
- Where would you like to wear (*item of clothing pictured*)?
- Do you think the (*item of clothing pictured*) would be expensive?
- Do you like the (*item of clothing*)?

Depending on the competency level of the students, additional support could be provided using the file sharing functionality of FLO Live (Adobe Connect). A word document list of vocabulary and sentence starters could be shared in this way so that each student can have it open on his/her computer to refer to during this speaking activity.

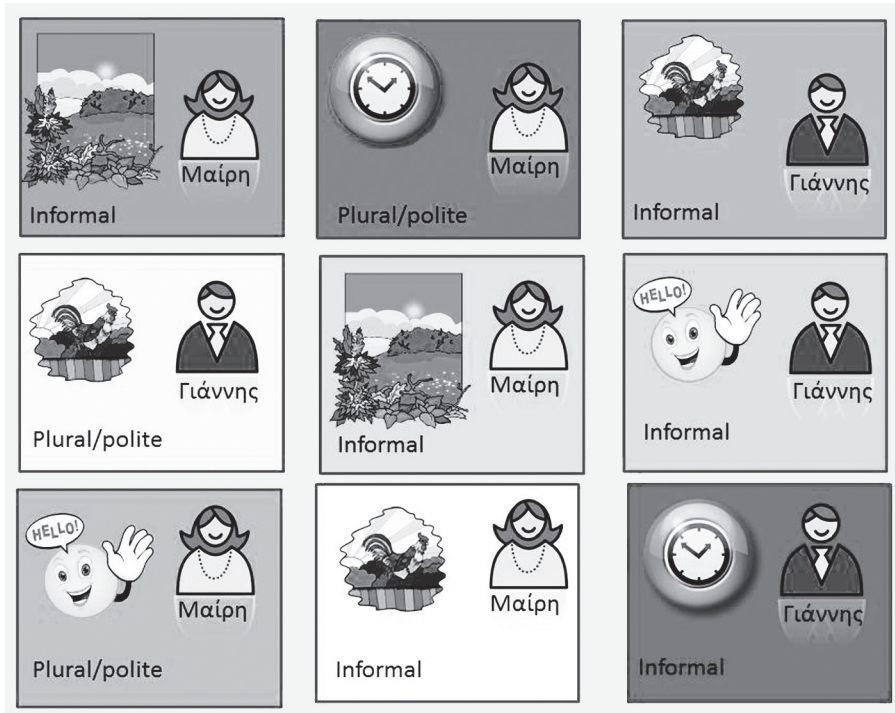
Appendix D

This activity will involve the whole group together in the main FLO Live (Adobe Connect) classroom. It is appropriate for 8 students or less divided into 2 teams. Breakout rooms will only be required if small group or individual teacher- student interaction is

necessary to follow up the activity with one or more students who require additional support. Students will demonstrate their achievement of the following objective of *Introductory Modern Greek Part 1*:

- Understand and use greetings appropriately

To do this they will participate in a game of noughts and crosses. The game board will be displayed on screen as below:



To play the game students divide into two teams (noughts and crosses). The teams (and students within the teams) then take it in turns to use the visual clues provided to construct a sentence (speaking) to match one space on the grid. They can use either

Greeting, my name is or *Greeting, I am*

The assessment focus is on the student being able to use the correct greeting for the pictured time of day and plural/polite or informal as stated. If the correct greeting is spoken the student uses the whiteboard pencil to draw a nought or cross on the square. If the incorrect greeting is spoken the student can be guided to the correct response using either pre-scripted prompts or unscripted dialogue.

The most appropriate pre-scripted responses for this activity would be those described by Davin (2013:310) in a five stage prompt process where stage 1 is the

least explicit prompt and stage 5 is the most explicit. In the FLO Live (Adobe Connect) web based classroom setting these would be implemented as follows:

<p>Prompt 1: Pause with questioning look</p>	<p>Students will be able to see this visual prompt via the teacher's web cam. E.g. raised eyebrows/questioning expression</p>
<p>Prompt 2: Repetition of entire phrase by teacher with emphasis on source of error</p>	<p>Students will be able to hear this audio prompt via the headset. E.g. if <i>good morning (informal)</i> is spoken instead of <i>good morning (plural/polite)</i> the teacher would repeat what the student has said with emphasis on the incorrect greeting i.e. <i>Good morning (informal). My name is</i></p>
<p>Prompt 3: Repetition of specific site of error</p>	<p>Students will be able to hear this audio prompt via the headset. E.g. if <i>good morning (informal)</i> is spoken instead of <i>good morning (plural/polite)</i> the teacher would repeat the incorrect greeting i.e. <i>Good morning (informal)</i></p>
<p>Prompt 4: Forced choice option</p>	<p>Students will be able to hear this audio prompt via the headset. E.g. if <i>good morning (informal)</i> is spoken instead of <i>good morning (plural/polite)</i> the teacher would repeat what the student has said and also give the correct answer, prompting the student to choose the correct option i.e. <i>Good morning (informal)</i> or <i>Good morning (plural/polite)</i></p>
<p>Prompt 5: Correct response and explanation provided</p>	<p>Students will be able to hear this audio prompt via the headset. E.g. if <i>good morning (informal)</i> is spoken instead of <i>good morning (plural/polite)</i> the teacher would provide the response <i>Good morning (plural/polite). My name is</i> The teacher would also explain the context around the use of <i>good morning (plural/polite)</i> i.e. the speaker might be greeting a group of people (plural) or someone he does not know very well (polite).</p>

The use of pre-scripted prompts would enable the teacher to allocate a score or grade to each student based on the level of support required over a number of speaking assessment activities of this kind.

Mediation via unscripted dialogue would also be appropriate to this assessment situation. For the activity example above unscripted dialogue could include

prompts, hints, suggestions and explanations via text chat and written notes or support materials shared on the online whiteboard or via screen or document sharing. Whiteboard tools could also be used by the teacher to focus the student's attention on key information needed to complete the task successfully. For example, if the student is saying *good morning* instead of *good evening*, the teacher could use the whiteboard tools to highlight or circle the picture which indicates that it is evening. Unscripted dialogue supports the teacher to provide anecdotal feedback as part of the assessment process.

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