

# TCL

# TEACHING CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

An Online Journal of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South

## In This Issue:

Re-imagining Latin Class:  
Using the Reacting to the  
Past Pedagogy in the  
Intermediate Latin Course



Team-Based Learning  
to Promote the  
Study of Greek



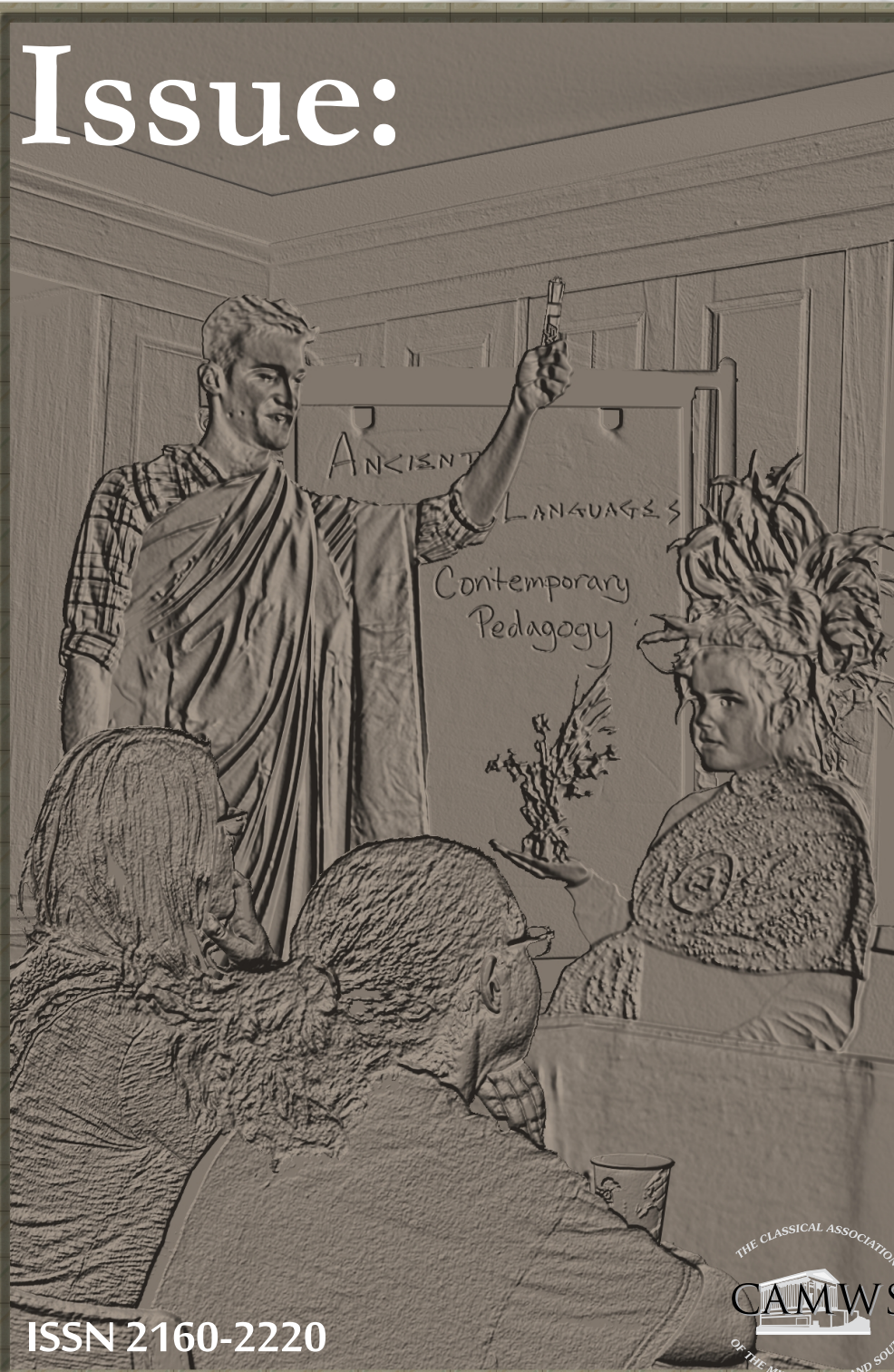
Blended Learning in an  
Advanced Course on  
Greek Tragedy



De Lingua Latina Discenda:  
Five Recent Textbooks  
for Introductory Latin

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## Table of Contents

Reimagining Latin Class	1
Using the <i>Reacting to the Past</i> Pedagogy in the Intermediate Latin Course	
Christine L. Albright	
Team-Based Learning to Promote the Study of Greek	15
Henry Bayerle	
Blended Learning in an Advanced Course on Greek Tragedy	30
Nikos Manousakis	
De Lingua Latina Discenda	50
Five Recent Textbooks for Introductory Latin	
Doug Clapp	

Cover by Meghan Yamanishi.

### Editor

John Gruber-Miller, Classical and Modern Languages, Cornell College  
600 First St. SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314  
[jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu)

### Assistant Editor

Meghan Yamanishi  
[myamanishi@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:myamanishi@cornellcollege.edu)

### Editorial Board

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## Letter from the Editor

**John Gruber-Miller**  
**Cornell College**

As *Teaching Classical Languages* enters its fifth year of publication and as the standards for online publication metamorphose before our eyes, it seems a good time to take stock of how our readers access the journal. How are your reading habits changing? In what formats do you read academic articles? On what devices do you read the sort of research and practical advice contained in *TCL*? We want to know so that we can make the journal more accessible than ever while maintaining our standards for articles that create a conversation not only with fellow Latin and Greek classroom instructors but also with applied linguists, modern language educators, and researchers of second language acquisition. Please log in and take our brief five-minute survey and let us know how we can make *TCL* continue to be responsive to your needs.

In this era of state-mandated testing, this issue of *Teaching Classical Languages* recommends new ways to score well and still engage our students deeply. This issue features articles that offer students resources and opportunities for them to imagine the ancient world, take on new roles and characters, develop teamwork, and take ownership of their education. In “Reimagining Latin Instruction: Using *Reacting to the Past* Pedagogy in the Intermediate Latin Classroom,” Christine Albright explains how to transform an intermediate Latin class into a role-play scenario that re-enacts the aftermath of the Ides of March, complete with students impersonating historical characters such as Cicero, Pompey, Antony, and Cleopatra. In “Team-based Learning to Promote the Study of Greek,” Henry Bayerle reports on an experiment using team-based learning in a class of 43 Greek students to get them actively engaged in helping each other learn Greek. In the process, there was so much enthusiasm that he managed to make Greek a regular part of the curriculum at his institution. In “Blended Learning in an Advanced Course on Greek Tragedy,” Nikos Manousakis describes the success that students achieved on their final exam by using Moodle resources to perform web quests, watch performances, and delve more deeply into Sophocles’ *Philoctetes*. Finally, in “*De Lingua Latina Discenda*,” Doug Clapp asks whether five recent introductory Latin textbooks succeed in helping students acquire proficiency in Latin through a pedagogy that follows best practices in language teaching. Enjoy!

## *Teaching Classical Languages* Mission Statement

*Teaching Classical Languages* (ISSN 2160-2220) is the only peer-reviewed electronic journal dedicated to the teaching and learning of Latin and ancient Greek. It addresses the interests of all Latin and Greek teachers, graduate students, coordinators, and administrators. *Teaching Classical Languages* welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek. As an electronic journal, *Teaching Classical Languages* has a unique global outreach. It offers authors and readers a multimedia format that more fully illustrates the topics discussed, and provides hypermedia links to related information and websites. Articles not only contribute to successful Latin and Greek pedagogy, but draw on relevant literature in language education, applied linguistics, and second language acquisition for an ongoing dialogue with modern language educators.

*Teaching Classical Languages* welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek.

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Guidelines for submission may be found at <http://www.tcl.camws.org/guidelines.pdf>.



# Reimagining Latin Class: Using the *Reacting to the Past* Pedagogy in the Intermediate Latin Course

Christine L. Albright  
University of Georgia

## ABSTRACT

In an attempt to rethink how intermediate Latin classes are taught, during fall semester, 2012, the author incorporated a *Reacting to the Past* game called *Beware the Ides of March: Rome in 44 B.C.E.* by Carl A. Anderson and T. Keith Dix into class and required students to compose formal speeches in Latin as part of the game. To measure the effectiveness of using the pedagogy, the author conducted a qualitative study based on students' anonymous responses to two questionnaires. Results of the study showed that the game was most students' favorite activity of the semester, that students learned a significant amount about Roman history, that students learned more about Roman authors in general and became more engaged with Latin texts, that the composition exercises were effective for improving Latin skills, and that an overwhelming majority of students felt that their Latin skills improved during the semester despite the time spent playing the game.

## KEYWORDS

Reacting to the Past, Latin pedagogy, role-playing, Latin composition, intermediate Latin

Intermediate-level Latin classes can be challenging to teach.<sup>1</sup> First, students in these classes often move from reading passages which have been heavily edited for beginners to reading actual Latin texts such as Cicero's *In Catilinam I* and Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*, and many struggle with this transition. Second, many students take their first intermediate class after a summer of reading no Latin at all. The hiatus necessitates a time-consuming review of basic material and frequently compounds already slow progress through a text. Third, students in intermediate classes often are so focused on dissecting each Latin sentence in order to arrive at a correct translation that they miss the overall meaning of the texts themselves and do not become engaged with the actual content. The format of these classes usually involves instructors asking students to translate aloud passages which have been assigned as homework and then following up with questions about vocabulary and grammar. Students quickly become bored with the daily class routine of translating and parsing, and, after several weeks, class becomes rather stale. At my own institution, where we have a fifteen-week semester, keeping students motivated for the whole term is especially difficult. In an attempt to rethink how intermediate classes are taught, during fall semester, 2012, I incorporated a *Reacting to the Past* game into my Latin class and conducted a qualitative study of students'

<sup>1</sup> This article benefitted greatly from discussions with Sherry Clouser and Denise Domizi of the Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Georgia. I would also like to thank Carl A. Anderson of Michigan State University and T. Keith Dix of the University of Georgia for their unpublished game materials and general advice about the game; Emily Luken at the University of Georgia Libraries; Peter A. Appel, who read and commented on several drafts of this article; and the students who were enrolled in my Latin 2001 course during fall semester, 2012.

experience. While in the future I hope to measure students' progress in Latin more specifically by means of quantitative analysis, for this study I focused on students' self-assessment.

### THE *REACTING TO THE PAST* PEDAGOGY

*Reacting to the Past* is a pedagogy which was developed at Barnard College in the 1990s by Mark Carnes.<sup>2</sup> This pedagogy uses historical simulation and game dynamics to engage students more deeply with primary texts. Students assume the roles of various historical figures and compete by making arguments in front of their fellow classmates. At this point, the *Reacting to the Past* catalogue includes games which focus on many different periods and events in history. There are published games about Athens in the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War, France during the Revolution, the English Reformation, and the trial of Galileo, for example, and there are several new games in development which deal with subjects such as the expulsion of American Indians from the Southeast, the fight for civil rights, and the problem of acid rain in Europe. In the *Reacting to the Past* pedagogy, classes primarily are run by students. The instructor acts as an advisor for students and serves as the general Gamemaster, but he or she does not actively direct the class. Students who participate in a *Reacting to the Past* game not only become familiar with history but also develop skills in critical thinking, improve their writing, and cultivate their ability to articulate oral arguments.<sup>3</sup> Students also interact with each other much more readily than in traditional classes, and, overall, they become more invested in their own education (Carnes *Pedagogy* 1; Higbee 68-71).

In my Latin class, I used a game written by Carl A. Anderson of Michigan State University and T. Keith Dix of the University of Georgia called *Beware the Ides of March: Rome in 44 B.C.E.*<sup>4</sup> This game is still under development but has been tested at conferences and in classes. Students play Roman senators in the days immediately following the assassination of Julius Caesar, and each class constitutes a meeting of the senate. For each meeting, a student formally convenes the senate by submitting a *relatio* as well as an appropriate meeting place in Rome, and, if the submission is accepted by the Gamemaster, the student disseminates the information to the other students in time for them to prepare their positions. Voting is accomplished by actual *discessio*, where everyone gets up and moves to one side of the room or the other. There are both Republicans and Caesarians, but these are only loose categories. Each character has an individualized agenda for the game. For example, Publius Cornelius Dolabella must act to ratify his position as consul and also to deal with his enormous debt. Tiberius Claudius Nero must attempt to restore the earlier reputation of his family. Lucius Scribonius Libo must promote the interests of Sextus Pompeius, and Marcus Terentius Varro must endeavor to establish a public library in Rome. All characters strive for power in the vacuum left by Julius Caesar. In keeping with the nature of the *Reacting to the Past* pedagogy, success in the game generally depends on both written and oral work (Anderson and Dix "Curriculum" 452). This game is particularly exciting for its cast of famous figures: Octavian, Marcus Antonius, Lepidus, and Cleopatra all appear in the game.

Previously, I had used *Reacting to the Past* games and other role-playing activities in classical culture classes with great success. I found that role-playing helped the students develop a

2 For a complete list of games, visit <http://reacting.barnard.edu/>.

3 For general impressions and formal studies of the *Reacting to the Past* pedagogy, see, for example, Carnes, "Minds on Fire;" Higbee; Lightcap; and Stoessner, Beckerman, and Whittaker.

4 I used the unpublished Student Manual and Instructor's Manual which are dated August, 2011. Access to game materials is available <http://reacting.barnard.edu/>.

deeper understanding of Greek and Roman civilization. Amy Richlin has recently written about using role-playing exercises in her courses on Roman civilization and Roman comedy to help students appreciate the diverse nature of Roman society (Richlin). In my own culture classes, I had used the *Reacting to the Past* games at the end of the semester, and it had always been my experience that the games brought some real energy into the last period of the term. Students frequently wrote on course evaluations that playing the game was the best part of a class. It had also been my experience that, in preparing for their daily arguments and writing assignments, students became much more engaged with the literature than they did in classes taught only in the traditional lecture format. In using the *Reacting to the Past* pedagogy in my Latin class, I had two primary goals. First, I wanted to break up the monotony of the traditional routine and give students the opportunity to learn Latin in a more multifaceted approach. Second, I wanted to help students understand the larger significance of the Latin texts they were translating. I hoped that the earlier success I had experienced with *Reacting to the Past* games would extend to the language classroom as well.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, I wanted to measure the success of the endeavor through more formal means than my own impressions.

### INTRODUCING *REACTING TO THE PAST* INTO LATIN CLASS

At my institution, we typically read Caesar and Ovid in the first class of our intermediate Latin series. Most instructors divide the semester into two parts, with the first half devoted to prose and the second half devoted to poetry. To accommodate the game, I divided the semester into thirds. For the first five weeks of the term, we read Caesar, using *A Caesar Reader: Selections from Bellum Gallicum and Bellum Civile, and from Caesar's Letters, Speeches, and Poetry* by W. Jeffrey Tatum. I decided to use this reader because it features passages from both *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile* as well as relevant selections from Cicero and Suetonius. For the next five weeks, we played the game. The Student Manual for the game was posted on our class website. I did not require that the students purchase specific books for this portion of the class, but I recommended several texts for use during the game, including, most notably, Jo-Ann Shelton's *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History*, Ronald Syme's *The Roman Revolution*, and *Handbook to Life in Rome* by Lesley Adkins and Roy A. Adkins. I also directed the students to our departmental library to find primary texts and additional secondary resources. For the last five weeks of the semester, we read parts of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. I used Richard LaFleur's *Love and Transformation: An Ovid Reader* for this portion of the class. Thus, I focused on the same authors we usually read in intermediate Latin but structured the entire course around the game.

Even though we did not actually play the game until the sixth week of the semester, I introduced the game in the first few days of the term and assigned individual roles. I had taught about half of the students in elementary Latin courses, so I was fortunate to know several students quite well, which made the process of assigning roles much easier. I chose highly motivated students for important roles such as Marcus Antonius, Dolabella, Lepidus, and Cleopatra. I chose a student who already had a law degree to play Cicero, and I chose a student who was majoring in English and who had exhibited a trenchant sense of humor in earlier classes to play Catullus. I assigned leading Republican roles to students who were regularly outspoken and opinionated about contemporary politics in class. For the students I did not know well, I distributed roles randomly.

<sup>5</sup> For suggestions of less elaborate role-playing exercises which can be used in language instruction, see Livingstone. For information about the general importance of students' engagement and environment, see Ambrose, Bridges, DiPetro, Lovett, and Norman.

I directed students to start reading the game materials right at the beginning of the term. In addition to instructions for playing the game, Anderson and Dix have provided in the Student Manual essential information about the life of Julius Caesar, Roman names and families, Roman political offices, procedures of the Senate, and the Roman legal system, for example, and there are useful supplemental readings from authors such as Sallust, Cicero, Suetonius, and Plutarch. To make sure that students read the game materials thoroughly, I used the fourth weekly quiz to test students on the historical and cultural information in the Student Manual. To prepare for the game, I also spent part of one class during the first week of the semester lecturing briefly on general Roman history and the events leading up to the assassination of Caesar. Setting up the game at the beginning of the semester helped students focus on the late Republic and on Caesar as a political figure as we started reading his works.

As usual, most students had not looked at Latin since the previous spring semester, so I offered a review of basic grammar at the beginning of the course. After a few days, we started working our way through selections from *Bellum Gallicum*. I taught the class in the traditional format, asking students to translate and parse passages they had prepared at home. The material was difficult for the students, and our progress through the passages was sometimes painfully slow. Eventually, we turned to *Bellum Civile*, which the students found even more difficult, and to other material in the reader. To keep them interested, I frequently started short general discussions of Caesar's works. For example, I asked the students to consider Caesar's agenda in writing about his own accomplishments, and I asked the students to think about how Caesar characterizes his enemies. Because I had assigned individual roles for the game early in the semester, I also asked students to consider certain passages in the texts from the perspective of their characters. Thus, students practiced their Latin skills while at the same time developing a basic understanding of Caesar's military and political endeavors in preparation for the game. In general, I found that students asked more general questions about the texts themselves rather than just questions about grammar and vocabulary and seemed to appreciate that the Latin we were reading was part of a text with actual historical significance.

For the next five weeks of the semester, we played the game. There were twenty-six students in the class, which is a large number for a *Reacting to the Past* game. In the Instructor's Manual for the game, Anderson and Dix recommend a maximum of twenty-four students (6). In keeping with the authors' recommendations, there were roughly twice as many Caesarians as Republicans (6). Most students fully embraced their roles in the game. The student who played Cicero, who had several years of experience working as an attorney and had a naturally booming voice, delivered consistently impressive speeches. The student who played Cleopatra, a character who is not allowed to speak in the senate unless sponsored by a senator, wore a gold crown and sat at her desk every day with an appropriate regal expression. The student who played Dolabella actually grew a beard to demonstrate his grief for Caesar and came to every class dressed in a toga. The student who played Catullus composed and recited witty and highly entertaining poems about various happenings in the senate which frequently made everyone laugh. Some roles in the game are more developed than others, and many students who had been assigned less developed roles took advantage of the opportunity to shape their own characters. At times, in talking to these students, I was surprised at the amount of detailed research they were doing to justify decisions they had made about their characters.

It has always been my experience in using a *Reacting to the Past* game that, after the first somewhat awkward class meeting, students start to engage with the historical situation. That had



been the case when I used the games in classical culture classes, and the same held true in my Latin class. At first, students were a bit confused about how to act and reluctant to speak in front of the class. By the second session, however, students were lining up to be recognized by the presiding senator, and they were spending many hours outside of class preparing for the next meeting. Each class was full of energy, and the excitement grew as the game developed. As I approached the classroom each day, there would always be several students talking in the hall about what was going to happen that day and urgently making deals with each other. The student who played Quintus Pedius later told me that he and the student who played Lepidus worked together at the main library on campus and that, for those five weeks, the two spent most of their time on the job strategizing about the game. The issues students debated in our game included whether to give Caesar a state funeral or to throw his body into the Tiber River, whether or not to attack the Parthians, basic qualifications for becoming a senator, and the possible deification of Caesar. Although *Reacting to the Past* games strive for historical accuracy, the outcomes of the games are often not in keeping with history, and this was certainly the case in my class. On the last day of our game, Lepidus and Quintus Pedius unexpectedly marched on Rome and set Marc Antony up as Dictator. One student who had been recruited by them to announce their arrival contributed to this dramatic end by showing up dressed head-to-toe in a Roman centurion's uniform.

The main challenge I faced in using the game in a Latin class was that I had to somehow incorporate Latin, and my experience with *Reacting to the Past* games to that point only had been in classes taught in English. Others have used *Reacting to the Past* games successfully in language classes. Jim McKinley at Sophia University in Japan has used *The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C.* to help his students develop skills in English (McKinley), and Peggy Schaller at Georgia College and State University required her students to read and speak French when playing the game about the French Revolution (Schaller). However, unlike students learning English or French, students at my institution do not learn to speak Latin. We require that students learn to pronounce Latin correctly, and some of our instructors use a bit of conversational Latin in the elementary classes. Still, while the idea of using only Latin for the game is compelling, I did not feel that it was a real option.

Thus, to incorporate the language into the game, I had the students compose two formal speeches in Latin—350-400 words each. I knew that this assignment would be quite challenging for students in an intermediate-level class. Other than a few basic exercises in our elementary-level classes, students do not generally practice composition as undergraduates in our program. (In fact, I myself did not attempt serious Latin composition until I was in a doctoral program.) I recommended that students consult the English-to-Latin section of *Cassell's Latin Dictionary* and also *Allen and Greenough's New Latin Grammar*, both of which were available to students in our departmental library. Because these assignments were so demanding, I arranged for eleven first-year graduate students who were enrolled with me at the same time in a course on Latin teaching methods to serve as tutors to help the intermediate-level students polish their speeches. The arrangement thus gave the graduate students some valuable teaching experience. In general, however, the undergraduates themselves were responsible for rendering their English speeches into correct, idiomatic Latin. The first speech was due at the beginning of the game, and most students spent several weeks working on it, with most of them meeting several times with their graduate tutors to work on their compositions. Students could turn in their second speech at any point later in the game. All of the compositions had mistakes, but it was also clear from the speeches that many of the students were learning to deal properly with new vocabulary and grammatical constructions.

During the game, students delivered the first part of these formal speeches to their fellow senators in Latin. I did not have them deliver their speeches in their entirety in Latin because it was a large class and this would have taken too much time. At first, most students simply went to the podium and read their speeches with little emotion or emphasis, often stumbling over and mispronouncing words. Many of these initial deliveries were, frankly, a bit agonizing to hear. A few students delivered their speeches with surprising power and feeling, however, and the rest of the class reacted to these deliveries by snapping their fingers, which in general we used instead of applause to keep from disturbing nearby classes. After the rest of the class heard these few powerful deliveries, students started practicing their deliveries and reading their Latin speeches as real orations. Thus, even though we were not speaking only Latin for the game, students did get to experience Latin as a living language rather than only as ancient text.

In listening to the students' deliveries, I noticed that many students who had trouble translating in class were nevertheless skilled at giving their Latin speeches. I had taught one of these students in an intensive elementary Latin course the summer before, and he had struggled in that class. When I told the students at the beginning of the semester that we would be playing a historical game as part of our intermediate Latin course, this student had told me that he really enjoyed learning about history. It turned out that he was a particularly dedicated and skilled player during the game. Whenever he went to the podium to read his Latin, his orations were consistently filled with emotion and fiery gesticulation. He sometimes mispronounced words, and his Latin was far from perfect. Still, I believe that the experience of successfully composing and delivering his own speeches as part of the game helped this student feel more positive about learning the language itself. In general, delivering their own Latin compositions in the context of the game seemed to make the language come alive for many of the students.

In addition to the two speeches, I also encouraged students to compose political graffiti as well as any documents which figured in the game in Latin by offering a small amount of extra credit. About a fourth of the students did post graffiti on our class website and on posters they hung on the walls of our classroom. After the student who played Marcus Antonius announced that he possessed the *acta* of Caesar, for example, the following graffiti (rendered verbatim) appeared on the class website:

*M. Antonius mendax est.*  
*Non confidunt Marcium Antonium.*  
*Marcus Antonius est foedus medax qui solum beneficium sibi petit.*  
*Non habet commodum Romae prope cor.*  
*Acta Caesaris non sunt.*

Although only some of the students posted graffiti, the graffiti which were posted were of interest to the other students. Graffiti were often the subject of students' conversations before class meetings, and, on a few occasions, I overheard students talking about how a posted statement had been composed incorrectly in Latin.

During the last week of the game, I assigned an exercise which would expose students to the general corpus of classical literature. I wanted the students to understand that they were learning Latin to be able to read original texts, not just to regurgitate memorized forms. So, I asked them to write a short paper in English about the three classical texts which their character would most likely own. About half of the students chose the easy path and wrote about at least one of Caesar's works, which to some degree defeated my goal of exposing the students to authors they would not

typically encounter in early Latin classes. These students delved into Caesar's works more deeply than we had in class, however, and they had to think about how Caesar's works relate to other texts of the period. Many students wrote about authors such as Lucretius, Cornelius Nepos, and Cato the Elder, and a few students even wrote about Greek texts such as the Homeric epics and Hesiod's *Theogony*. Thus, I feel that the writing assignment motivated students to learn more about classical literature in general, and I think it helped underscore that the passages we had read in Latin during the first part of the semester were elements of larger, meaningful texts.

Immediately after we finished playing the game, I conducted a post-mortem. We spent one class talking about what actually happened right after Julius Caesar's assassination. Anderson and Dix have included a short summary of important events and dates in their Instructor's Manual, and I used this as my general guide (89-91). The students were still quite energized by the exciting last day of the game, so I followed Mark Carnes' recommendation in his *Pedagogy Manual* and made the post-mortem relaxed and fun in order to foster the spirit of community which had developed during the game (23-24). Many students brought food to share, and everyone was eager to learn about the fates of the characters they had played. In looking ahead to the poetry we were going to read next, I spent the last part of our post-mortem talking about the events leading up to Augustus' reign. Because we were going to read the story of Daphne and Apollo in Book One of the *Metamorphoses*, I also briefly lectured on the importance of Apollo in the Augustan Age. Thus, the students were better prepared to consider the political context of the poetry they were about to read than most students in intermediate Latin classes.

When we started reading Ovid for the last part of the class, I again ran the class in the traditional format, asking students to translate and to parse. The transition back to the traditional format was a bit bumpy. Most students had lost some speed in reading during the five-week game, and, for many students, this was a first attempt at reading poetry. At first, we made extremely slow progress through the text, but, after a few days, everyone seemed to be moving more quickly through the Latin. During the game, many students had formed bonds with each other, and the class indeed had become a real learning community. Students often made plans to meet for lunch or coffee outside of class to prepare for the next class meeting. This sense of community continued after the game. When students stumbled with a section of Latin text, for example, other students offered helpful hints, and when students successfully translated a difficult portion of the text or correctly answered difficult parsing questions, the other students cheered for them by snapping their fingers just like they had for good speeches in the game. Because the students were more familiar with the history leading up to the Augustan Age and because we had talked about the importance of Apollo to Augustus, the students were able to think about the story they were translating in a larger context. They often made interesting observations about the potential political elements of the story and asked thoughtful questions about the *Metamorphoses* as a whole during class. We did not have time to read the passage in Latin, but we did briefly discuss the apotheosis of Julius Caesar at the end of the *Metamorphoses*. Again, their experience in the game helped generate meaningful class discussions about the poem. Although the time away from the traditional routine slowed down the students' speed a bit, the experience of playing the game helped maintain energy in the classroom and generate enthusiasm for the language late in the term when students' interest usually wanes.

### ASSESSMENT

In assessing students' performance in the course, I used the same measures I had always used in intermediate classes and then added a few elements to account for the game. In previous in-

intermediate classes, I had measured performance by means of weekly quizzes, a midterm exam, and a final exam. Overall, students' grades in this course were determined by weekly quizzes (15%), a midterm exam given at the end of the first five weeks (20%), a final exam (25%), the two formal Latin compositions (10% each), the writing assignment (15%), and class participation (5%). For the weekly quizzes, which were given while we read Caesar and Ovid but not during the game itself, students were asked to translate and parse words from passages they had worked through in class. (As discussed above, one quiz covered the historical and cultural information in the Student Manual rather than the Latin we had read that week.) The midterm exam covered the Latin we read during the first five weeks of the semester. Students were expected to translate and parse words from two passages they had seen before and also to translate at sight a passage from Caesar's *Bel-lum Gallicum*. The final exam was cumulative and included material from the game. Students were asked to translate passages and to parse words from the passages we had read in Caesar and Ovid. They were expected to translate one Latin passage at sight, and they could choose between Caesar and Ovid for this exercise. Students also were asked to write a long essay about the late Republic; for the essay, students could focus on the history or the literature of the period.

I graded the Latin compositions according to both content and presentation. One-third of the grade for each composition was determined by the actual argument and evidence presented in the speech. I took into consideration whether or not each speech supported the goals of a student's character, the quality of the evidence which was presented, the rhetorical organization, and the polish of the speech. Two-thirds of the grade for each speech was determined by the quality of the Latin. Because these exercises were challenging, I allowed students to make three errors in Latin without penalty, but, after the third error, I deducted points for each mistake. Because graduate students had been available as tutors for the undergraduates while they worked on their Latin speeches, I did not allow students to revise the compositions after I graded them. For the writing assignment in English, half of the grade was derived from content, and half was determined by how well the paper was written. Students not only had to demonstrate that they had examined the corpus of classical literature, but they had to construct reasonable arguments for why the texts which they chose would be meaningful to their own Roman characters. As with any writing assignment, I expected effective organization and argumentation, and I deducted points for sloppy writing, incorrect grammar, and misspelled words. The Latin speeches and the writing assignment served as the primary graded work for the game.

I included a grade for class participation to motivate students to work diligently during the game. Because I had never used the game in a Latin class and because some characters are more developed and easier to play than others, I did not feel comfortable assigning letter grades for students' individual daily arguments or skills in oration. Thus, for the grade in class participation, I took into consideration the number of times students spoke in class, whether or not their speeches were appropriate for their characters' goals, and regular attendance during the game. To earn a high grade in this area, students were expected to speak in front of the class at least five times and to have prepared their arguments thoroughly before coming to each senate meeting. Students who missed more than one senate meeting during the game lost points. As an extra incentive to participate fully in the game, I offered to the winning student or students a bonus of three points towards the final grade for the course. In selecting winners, I considered whether or not students accomplished their individual objectives, how diligently students seemed to be conducting research for their arguments, and how accurately students portrayed their Roman characters. I chose three winners from this class. Another student had played almost as well, so I awarded him two

extra bonus points. The bonus points turned out to be an effective incentive: I often heard students talking among themselves during the game about how much they wanted to win the extra points.

### RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The qualitative study I conducted involved two questionnaires and relied on students' anonymous self-reporting. Students were asked to complete the first questionnaire immediately after the game, and they were asked to complete the second questionnaire at the end of the semester. Students could choose whether or not to participate in the study, and there were no special incentives for participation. On the days when I handed out the questionnaires, I also distributed an informational letter which described the study and which explained that, although there were no incentives for participation, students' participation might improve education in Latin classes. I hoped that all students would complete both questionnaires, but several students chose not to participate. Eighteen out of twenty-six students participated in the first part of the study, and fourteen out of twenty-six students participated in the second part of the study. I asked students to complete the second questionnaire during the last few days of class; thus, the fact that there were fewer respondents to the second questionnaire than to the first was due to end-of-semester absenteeism rather than an increase in the number of students opting not to participate in the study. The study produced the following results.

When asked which activities they enjoyed most during the semester, 85.7% of students who responded reported that they most enjoyed playing the game. One student wrote: "I enjoyed coming to class in general because of the overall class enthusiasm. Class and all activities were super difficult[;] thus, it was hard for me. But the game was quite enjoyable." At the end of the semester, several students asked me about other opportunities in the Classics Department to take classes which use the *Reacting to the Past* pedagogy. Another student sent me an email after the class, and this is what he had to say:

*I just wanted to let you know that this game has been one of the coolest things I've ever done in all of my school. And I'm not saying that to try and suck up or anything [;] this has seriously been such a fascinating informative experience and I'm really sad that it's over!! But I will never forget our time spent in the senate. Please keep doing this with your classes[. I]t's been so awesome and I appreciate you giving us the opportunity to try something so different.*

Thus, the game was a clear hit among the students.

When asked whether they felt that they had learned a significant amount about Roman history by playing the game, 88.8% of the students who responded indicated that they had indeed learned a significant amount. Responses included:

*Definitely! I considered myself a Roman history buff prior to the game, but, as we played the game, I found myself doing more and more research to advantage my own character as well as others.*

*Absolutely...I'd write more but I'd wear my hand out. I'd say I improved 100% in my knowledge of Roman history.*



*Definitely. Although the game doesn't have to follow history, the research required to play the game correctly includes a lot of research on Roman history.*

*Yes. I know the punishment for patricide, the cursus honorum, and lots of stuff about Roman culture I never would have known otherwise.*

*Absolutely! This is the area in which I think I learned the most. From understand[ing] the Roman political system to concepts such as the cursus honorum.*

Only two students reported that they had not learned a significant amount about Roman history. One of these reported that he already knew a significant amount about Roman history before starting the game and that his knowledge improved only slightly in that he learned more about individual historical figures. The other student wrote: "Not a significant amount but a good bit. I learned a lot about the way things work in the Roman Senate, which I found interesting."

When asked whether they had learned more about Roman authors in general, 88.8% of respondents reported that they had. Similarly, 85.7% of respondents reported that they felt more engaged with Latin texts after playing the game. Responses included:

*I understood the circumstances in which these works were written.*

*I read a lot of Roman and Greek historians such as Suetonius, Salust, [and] Polybius describing various aspects of Roman politics [and] warfare.*

*I did some research on Cicero and a few other authors for the paper; and I did not have much prior knowledge of them.*

*I feel more interested in the writings current to my character, specifically Cicero's work.*

Several students reported that the writing assignment in particular contributed to greater engagement with Latin authors and texts. In talking with students throughout the semester, it was apparent that many students had never thought about which authors were writing at the time of significant historical events such as the assassination of Julius Caesar or the foundation of the principate. In general, students seemed to realize during the course of the term that the ablative absolutes, passive periphrastics, and jussive noun clauses which they were dissecting in class added up to texts which carried real meaning for understanding Roman history and culture. Because one of my goals was to get students to contextualize the Latin we were translating in class, I was pleased with these results.

In general, it was clear during our game that many students were actively researching various Roman laws, customs, and procedures, and in our class meetings students often referred to specific Latin texts as evidence. One moment in class stands out. The student who played Dolabella argued that Caesar's assassins should suffer the traditional punishment for parricide—namely, that they should be whipped until they bled; sewn into a sack with a dog, a rooster, a viper, and an ape; and tossed into the sea, if possible. The other students were impressed with such colorful

detail, and much noise was made after his speech. A few of the Republicans challenged him for his evidence, however. He successfully defended his information by citing Cicero's *Pro Sexto Roscio Amerino*. When I asked him later how he had discovered this information, he said that he had first seen it in an introduction to a book but had kept searching for ancient sources until he found Cicero's text, a work which he had never thought about previously. He had also found a useful reference to *Justinian's Digest* in the introduction to the Loeb edition of Cicero's text.

When asked whether they thought the composition exercises helped to improve their skills in Latin, 83.3% of the students who responded reported that the exercises had helped to improve their Latin. Responses to questions about the compositions included the following:

*Latin composition is incredibly difficult, so getting that practice helped me better understand the grammar and syntax of Latin.*

*Every time I have to do a Latin composition, I feel like it gets better. It was hard, however, to employ English rhetorical devices I wanted to use and translate them.*

*By writing two speeches in Latin my Latin skills dramatically improved. I mastered many constructions and other areas of grammar.*

*The Latin compositions were the first "serious" composition exercises I have taken part in, and they definitely pushed my Latin skills to the limit. It was fun to be able to use all of the obscure grammar we had learned throughout the introductory Latin sequence.*

*Working backwards from the way we normally practice helps a lot; I actually like it better and think you should assign more of it, especially in the beginning level classes.*

*Once you have to write a speech in Latin, you really pay attention to grammar and word construction.*

*The speeches...were really hard for a 2000 level class, but I am going to take away skills that I would not have normally had in a pure translation class.*

*Writing the speeches really helped, but really writing anything in Latin helps me practice. It helps you to recognize which words go with each other when you go back to translating because you know how to make words agree. It was also fun seeing how I improved ([I] felt I improved) from the first to the second speech. Again, I highly recommend assigning composition in the future, even though it takes a long time. [I]t is worth it.*

When asked which exercises helped to improve their Latin skills most, 64.3% of respondents reported that composing the Latin speeches was the most beneficial exercise of the entire semester. Interestingly, 66.6% of respondents who reported that the composition exercises most benefitted

their Latin skills also reported that the composition exercises were the most difficult activities of the semester. One student, who actually reported that the composition exercises were his favorite activities of the whole term summed this up well when he wrote this about composing the speeches: "It was bittersweet; I hated it but I learned a lot."

When asked if they thought that their Latin had improved during the course of the semester, 92.8% of the students who participated in the study reported that their Latin had improved. One student reported that his Latin had only slightly improved during the course of the semester. I initially was concerned that students' progress in developing reading skills might suffer as a result of incorporating the game. Four students did report that playing the game detracted somewhat from the skills which they had developed in the first part of the semester, so this concern turned out to be legitimate. Still, overall, the overwhelming majority of students reported that their Latin had improved despite the time away from the traditional method.

### CONCLUSION

I would definitely use the game in another intermediate Latin class. To be sure, I had taught several of the students in the class previously and thus had a natural advantage in assigning some roles. Still, I assigned most roles randomly, and most students did not know each other before taking the class. The game broke up the monotony of the traditional routine and helped breathe real life into our daily class dynamics. It not only provided context for the Latin texts we were reading but also allowed the students to experience Latin as a spoken language. The game generated excitement about learning Latin among the students, and it also generated interest in classics as a field. Several students in the class even talked to me about majoring or minoring in Latin or classical culture at the end of the semester.

In using the *Reacting to the Past* pedagogy in Latin class again, however, I would make a few changes. First, although I do not typically use much oral Latin in my classes, I would encourage some simple spoken Latin during the game. In my class, most students referred to each other by the Latin name of their character, and I noticed that, as our game developed, some students were mixing Latin words into their comments and conversations. For example, I remember one Republican turning to another after a powerful speech by a Caesarian and saying: "That was *stuprum*." So, my students were using a small amount of informal spoken Latin on their own. Anderson and Dix include a glossary of important terms in their Student Manual (49-51), and it would be easy to distribute a short list of Latin phrases at the beginning of the game which would be useful in senate meetings. Hearing even a few basic phrases regularly would help to maintain focus on the language when formal speeches were not being delivered in Latin.

Second, I would include short translation exercises during the game. The five-week break we had away from the traditional routine not only negatively affected the reading speed which students had built up before the game started but also resulted in a slower start to reading poetry. Brief translation exercises would help to mitigate this effect. During the game, I would assign short readings from Caesar and other relevant authors such as Catullus and Cicero. To facilitate composition of graffiti during the game, I would assign some passages for translation from Matthew Hartnett's *By Roman Hands: Inscriptions and Graffiti for Students of Latin*. I also would post information for each senate session and any important documents in Latin rather than in English so that students would be reading Latin regularly as part of the game.

Finally, I would certainly have the students compose formal speeches in Latin again, but I would assign four or five shorter speeches rather than two long speeches. To some degree, students

were intimidated by the length of the composition exercises, and I believe the composition practice would be even more effective if done with more frequency and with more feedback. In *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*, John C. Bean discusses how informal writing can be useful for developing students' ability to think critically and process information (Bean 120-145). In keeping with this idea, I would add opportunities for less formal Latin composition by requiring the students to write the proposed *relatio* for each senate session in Latin rather than English as well as any other materials they create for the game. Rather than offering extra credit for graffiti, I would require each student to post three graffiti on the class website. Encouraging students to compose short statements in Latin in addition to their formal speeches and adding opportunities for translation throughout the game would help continue the momentum of language instruction and, thus, ensure that the game enhances students' appreciation for Latin without distracting them from developing necessary skills.

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# Team-Based Learning to Promote the Study of Greek

Henry Bayerle  
Oxford College of Emory University

## ABSTRACT

To meet the demand from my Latin and mythology students for an introduction to Ancient Greek, I offered a course meeting one hour per week. When 43 students enrolled, I decided to try a new pedagogy that has been increasingly popular in medical schools and business schools, Team-Based Learning (TBL). Despite the high enrollment and low number of contact hours, the results were very positive. Students retained information at a high level and were extremely enthusiastic, generating interest in the study of Greek on my campus. Students were more active in their learning and I was able to administer more challenging tests than I had done in standard introductory language classes. This is consistent with second language acquisition research on collaborative and cooperative learning. However, TBL differs from these established methods of group learning in several important ways. As a result of the success of this class, I have been able to add Greek 101 and 102 to our curriculum and have included aspects of TBL in my Latin classes.

## KEYWORDS

Team-Based Learning, Collaborative Learning, Cooperative Learning, Second Language Acquisition Research, Greek

## INTRODUCTION: THE NEED FOR GREEK

As the only Classics professor at Oxford College of Emory University, I was fully occupied by Latin language and literature in translation courses and consequently unable to offer a standard introductory sequence of Ancient Greek. Nevertheless, I believed that there was interest in Greek among our students. Enrollment in Latin was strong and my mythology and Roman culture courses were very popular. Like many Classics teachers, I used my mythology class as an introduction to the rewards of the discipline. I structured many of my lectures around important thematic Greek words such as κλέος, νόστος, σωφροσύνη, αιδώς, and others; I read poetry aloud to my students in Greek as much as possible, reminding students of what they were missing by reading it in translation; I gave them extra credit for memorizing and reciting a few verses in Greek; I spent a day each semester teaching the Greek alphabet; I mentioned etymological details of English words frequently. I did these things in my Latin courses as well, in addition to introducing comparative linguistic data from Greek as much as possible.

Eventually the demand from majors, minors, and other interested students for a Greek class reached such a high level that I decided to offer one as an overload. I did not have the time to offer a full course, so I decided to create a course that met one hour per week. The limitations of this structure are immediately apparent; it is generally considered desirable to increase and not to decrease the contact hours in introductory language courses. Nevertheless, for me it was once a week or not at all, so I decided to try it. I limited my goal to covering one fourth of the normal

Greek 101 curriculum since the course would have one fourth as many contact hours. There were also some potential advantages: I believed that the small commitment in terms of time and effect on overall GPA would encourage more students to try Greek. This introduction, however incomplete, would give students enough Greek grammar to make them familiar with the basic structure and the methods of learning ancient languages, and they would understand that they do have the capacity to learn Greek, just as they can learn any other language.

To my surprise, 43 students enrolled in the class. Of these, 28 were former or current students in other classes of mine. I was excited about this number, quite substantial on a campus of 830 students. It is the equivalent of about 260 students studying introductory Greek on a campus of 5000 students. Now, however, I had another concern. In addition to designing a course with very few contact hours, I had a course with too many students for the necessary amount of active student participation in the classroom. The statements in the Standards for Latin Teacher Preparation prepared by the Joint Task Force on Teacher Training and Certification of the American Classical League and the American Philological Association (13) apply to Greek as well:

*Latin teachers recognize that learning is fundamentally an active process, incorporate active learning strategies whenever possible, and promote active use of the target language. They also strive to move students as quickly as possible from rote recall to application, analysis, and synthesis of what they have learned.*

The pedagogies I had been using would not allow every student in a class of 43 to translate and practice the language actively in every class meeting.

### TEAM-BASED LEARNING

As I was organizing this course, I decided to try a new kind of pedagogy designed to promote active learning in large classes. Team-Based Learning (TBL), developed by Larry Michaelsen initially for use in business classes at the University of Oklahoma, is now becoming increasingly popular in medical schools and across the curriculum.<sup>1</sup>

In TBL, small group learning is the primary in-class activity. As opposed to casual use of group work or more organized cooperative learning, TBL utilizes teams that are permanent and are graded as a group (Fink 7). The ultimate goal is to have the teams apply course content to a complex intellectual task. First, however, the teams must show that they have mastered the course content through a five-step process of testing which Michaelsen calls the Readiness Assurance Process (“Getting Started” 42-43):

- Pre-Readings: Students are initially exposed to new concepts through assigned readings.
- Individual Test: Students take a multiple-choice test individually to test their ability to remember, understand, and apply the concepts in the reading.
- Team Test: After submitting their answer sheets, students take the same test a second time as a group. This time they discuss the answer to each question and choose an answer as a group. A special type of scratch-off scoring card (similar to

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the material in this section is paraphrased from Fink and Michaelsen. Much of the information can also be found at <http://www.teambasedlearning.org/>.

scratch and win lottery cards) is used.<sup>2</sup> If the team does not discover a star when they scratch off the letter corresponding to their answer, they continue to discuss the question and select another choice. Partial credit is given if the team finds the correct answer on the second or third attempt.

- Appeals: If a group feels that a question they missed on the test is inadequate, they may file an appeal that builds a case using references to the assigned reading. The instructor may choose to award credit for the missed question.
- Oral Instructor Feedback: In a mini-lecture, the instructor reviews the concepts that the students found most challenging.

On subsequent class meetings of the course unit, the group must solve a significant problem. The final grade of each student is based on the individual test scores, the group test scores, and peer assessment of the student's contribution to the group.

### **COLLABORATIVE AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Group learning that goes beyond casual assignments in which students discuss a question in pairs or complete a worksheet in groups is not new in language classes. Collaborative learning, which is frequently defined by contrast with competitive learning, "entails students working together to achieve common learning goals" (Nunan 3). It defines learning as "acculturation into knowledge communities" which are different from the knowledge communities to which students already belong (Oxford 444).

Mark Williams (258) described the goal of his use of collaborative learning in a Latin class in the following way: "to turn students from being "passive receptors" of information imparted by an instructor into "owners" of the subject matter such that they are capable of imparting it themselves to their classmates." Williams used this form of group learning in his language class "to help students make the jump from grammar and syntax to the great themes and values conveyed by language" (Williams 258). He concluded that collaborative learning can help the student "to kindle the sparks in himself and in his peers" (Williams 261).

Cooperative learning, another form of group learning in which students participate in sustained, organized group activities, shares the goals of collaborative learning but is generally more structured and more directive than collaborative learning (Oxford 443). Researchers generally agree that two conditions must be present for cooperative learning to take place: positive interdependence, "the perception among group members that what helps one group member helps all group members, and what hurts one group member hurts all," and individual accountability, which requires that "the team's success depends on the individual learning of all team members" (McCafferty, Jacobs, and DaSilva Iddings 5). When students are motivated to ensure that their peers achieve the instructional goal, intensive cooperation is generated (Dörnyei 483).

Already in 1997, Zoltán Dörnyei (482) wrote that cooperative learning was "one of the most thoroughly researched areas in educational psychology." A significant amount of research has supported claims of improved language acquisition when cooperative learning is used in lan-

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for images of the test forms. These forms are available at [epsteineducation.com](http://epsteineducation.com). Some TBL instructors who prefer not to use these forms replicate the process by having students write answers on a blackboard. Some instructors require students to indicate their degree of certainty about their response by assigning a specific number of points to each of the four possible answers to a question.

guage classes. One benefit is a notable increase in the in-class production of the target language by individual students. When the teacher presides over the entire class, normally one student, or the teacher, speaks at any given time. With groups, multiple students speak at the same time, so that each individual student speaks or translates much more in group-based classes. Groups can also reduce the anxiety level of students (Jacobs and McCafferty 27). Applying the work of educational psychologists to cooperative learning in language classes, Dörnyei (485) has concluded that the affective domain of groups plays a crucial role in producing heightened motivation, more positive attitudes toward learning, more higher order thinking, and higher self-esteem among students. While some might feel that groups allow students to focus less on individual achievement and to lean on their fellows, McCafferty, Jacobs, and DaSilva Iddings argue that groups can also encourage individual students to take more initiative in language classes: “[O]n a continuum from teacher lecture to self-study, cooperative learning represents a major step away from dependence on teachers and toward greater reliance on self and peers” (16). When students teach each other, they are more active in class and rely less on the teacher.

Latin teachers have written favorably about the potential of cooperative learning. Martha G. Abbot referred to multiple studies indicating that “cooperative learning resulted in higher level reasoning, more frequent generation of new ideas and solutions, and greater transfer of what is learned within one situation to another” (40). She emphasized the ability of groups “to make our students see themselves as responsible for their own learning” (40). Karen Lee Singh described in detail her use of cooperative learning in Latin classes. Among the benefits she listed is that it allowed her to relegate “low level skills” such as practicing forms and vocabulary to the students’ study time at home so that she can focus on tasks that require critical thinking skills in class (93).

More recently, Kathryn Argetsinger has described her goals in using cooperative learning in Latin classes in the following terms:

*to provide maximum practice opportunities for students in a low-anxiety and noncompetitive atmosphere; to provide opportunities for students to actively engage with new material and to consciously develop new strategies for mastering that material; and to provide opportunities for structured interaction with peers and near-peers that can result in more positive attitudes to as well as more secure mastery of the material. (70)*

Argetsinger adds that standards of linguistic achievement were never compromised in the cooperative classroom activities she describes (82).

### TEAM-BASED LEARNING AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING

TBL is one form of cooperative learning that has also received attention from researchers wishing to document the benefits of sustained group work.<sup>3</sup> Of all the forms of collaborative and cooperative learning that I am aware of, as described in second-language acquisition research, TBL places the greatest emphasis on group work. Some characteristics of TBL are:

- The groups are permanent; students work with the same team all semester.
- Almost all classroom activity is group work.

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<sup>3</sup> See Birmingham and McCord for an overview of the research on the TBL.

- The groups are chosen randomly. While some cooperative learning guides allow for this, Michaelsen recommends random group formation since it fosters “the perception that none of the teams was given a special advantage” (“Frequently Asked” 221).<sup>4</sup>
- Students are not assigned specific roles within the group, as in the cooperative Latin unit described by LeaAnn Osburn (83), in which each team has a vocabulary expert, a syntax expert, a translator, and a recorder. In TBL, each student on the team is responsible for all of the work.
- Positive interdependence is fostered to the extent that what helps one group member can help all, but it is not as much the case in TBL that what hurts one group member hurts all. The fear of losing points because of the bad performance of other team members has been a primary reason why students’ parents and others have opposed cooperative learning (Jacobs 40). Since the final grade in TBL is based on a combination of individual test scores and group test scores, and since free riders can be punished through peer grading, students are motivated to perform well individually and also benefit from the hard work of teammates.<sup>5</sup>

### TEAM-BASED LEARNING IN AN ELEMENTARY ANCIENT GREEK CLASS

On the first day of my Greek class, I formed groups of 6 students randomly by having students count off. Allowing students to see how the groups are formed is perceived as fair by students and prevents them from wondering if the teacher had some specific agenda in putting them together (Birmingham and McCord 80).

Next I explained the system and the three components of their grade: individual performance, team performance, and contribution to the team. This last part, which is included to provide accountability and prevent free riders, is measured by peer assessment. To prevent teammates from simply agreeing among themselves to give each other all perfect scores, I required each student to divide 100 contribution points among their five teammates, with the stipulation that they must give a different number of points to each student and with the understanding that 25 was an A. This made it impossible for every student to earn an A in the contribution grade, so that students had to perform well on individual and team tests to earn an A in the course. I allowed the students to set the weighting of grade components, within limits set by me. I required that individual test scores count for at least 30% of the final grade, group tests at least 30%, and peer-assessed contribution at least 10%. After discussion in groups and in the class as a whole, students settled on 40% individual tests, 50% group tests, and 10% participation. Michaelsen has found that giving students the power to set the grading scale helps alleviate concern about grades (“Getting Started” 41).

I then walked the students through the five steps of the Readiness Assurance Process:

- Pre-reading: On the first day of class, I introduced the Greek alphabet quickly. On subsequent meetings, I introduced the grammatical concepts for the following week after the oral instructor feedback session (see section 5 below).

<sup>4</sup> See Singh (100) and Argetsinger (76) on the formation of groups in cooperative Latin classes.

<sup>5</sup> Argetsinger (76) rejects group grading on the college level. Singh (101) has described ways of dealing with group members who perform poorly or refuse to contribute in cooperative learning. In my experience with TBL, peer grading solves this problem efficiently.



- Individual test: Students then took a multiple-choice test containing ten questions with four possible answers. Transliteration was the topic of the first day; I covered the material very quickly with the intention of showing the students the power of teams. When asked to process large amounts of information quickly, groups regularly outperform individuals. In fact research has indicated that this is virtually always the case in TBL classes (Michaelsen, Watson, and Black 834-839). This is one area in which language classes can differ from other subjects in which TBL has been used. In some of my first-year language courses there have been individual students who achieved a score of 100 per cent on every quiz and exam. Nevertheless, TBL not only allows but in fact requires that I give quizzes that are more difficult than any I gave in my standard language classes. For team discussions to be meaningful, it is essential to challenge all of the students to minimize the number of perfect scores on individual tests. Thus, questions rarely measured factual knowledge, such as the translation of individual vocabulary items or the listing of morphological paradigms, but were normally designed to make students apply knowledge.<sup>6</sup>
- Group test: After submitting their answer sheets, students took the same quiz a second time in teams. This is where students actively communicate with each other about language on a meta-level as they negotiate to choose which answer to try on the scratch-off scoring card. I gave students five points if they scratched the correct answer the first time, indicated by a star under the scratch-off coating. If their first guess was wrong, they discussed the question further and agreed on a second choice. If the second choice was right, they got three points, and one point for the third choice and zero for the fourth. The instant feedback and partial credit motivated the students to keep trying until they got the right answer. This is a very powerful learning tool in a course that is organized sequentially, in which students must ideally master one concept before moving on to the next one.
- Appeals: Students had the opportunity to challenge the legitimacy of questions or responses by referring to the textbook. This is designed to give students a sense of control over grading and to encourage them to re-read the text with great attention to detail. In practice, I never gave credit to an appeal in this class, but I may be more likely to receive convincing appeals in a more advanced class where questions will not be as objective.
- Oral Instructor Feedback: Each team submitted one group-scoring card. There were seven groups, so I was able to look at all seven cards quickly to see which questions students missed most frequently. Using this information and also encouraging them to ask questions, I reviewed the most challenging concepts. I then introduced the new grammar for the subsequent week. Our testing center also gave me information about which questions students missed most often on individual quizzes. If a large number of students missed a question on the individual quiz, I reviewed that concept again at the beginning of the subsequent class meeting.

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix B for sample quizzes.

I changed two aspects of TBL, as presented by Michaelsen. I did not give the students a long-term project on a significant problem. While many have written that the power of TBL is often most apparent in long-term projects, my goals for this one-hour class were more limited (Fink 8).<sup>7</sup> I also added a final individual test containing ten multiple-choice questions taken from the tests students had already seen over the course of the semester and some Greek to English translation. Students took this quiz only as individuals, not in teams, but they were allowed to retake the quiz (with a different selection of questions from earlier quizzes) two more times if they wished to do so. I wanted to discover how much Greek students had actually learned and to encourage them to review all of the material individually at the end of the semester.

## RESULTS

The most gratifying result was almost immediate. Seeing 43 undergraduates, most of whom had never studied an ancient language before, speaking with enthusiasm about Greek grammar was unlike anything I had witnessed before. This excitement continued throughout the semester. Sometimes the class was so loud that I suspected professors in the same building must have thought that it was some kind of party. Yet each time I approached a group, the members were speaking clearly to each other and were so focused that they did not miss any words uttered by their teammates. They were arguing vigorously, referring to pages in the text to explain which grammatical points were being tested in the question at hand. In this way, TBL can enable active learning in large classrooms. At any given time in my class, multiple students were speaking passionately about Greek grammar, motivated by a desire to convince their classmates.

This enthusiasm was also reflected in the best attendance of any class I have ever taught. Of the 43 students enrolled, five students missed class once and one student missed class twice over the course of the semester. The student evaluations at the end of the course were also very high, easily placing in the top fifteen per cent of all courses in the IDEA Database of student evaluations the first time I offered it and in the top ten per cent (the highest category) the second time.<sup>8</sup> Most students wrote in their comments that they thoroughly enjoyed the group work.

In addition to increased enthusiasm, this class demonstrated increased learning. Quiz scores were on average higher than in standard introductory Greek classes I have taught. Several factors may have contributed to this. The frequent, immediate feedback of the group quizzes increases learning. Every student leaves each test knowing the correct answer to every question. The need to make very challenging quizzes to ensure that group discussion was fruitful also raised the level of difficulty in the class. While it took longer to make good multiple choice quizzes that covered all of the material adequately and focused on challenging problems than it had taken me to make standard drill and translation quizzes, I was pleased with student learning. Since students were applying knowledge instead of merely listing forms and vocabulary items, the classroom activities required them to use higher-order thinking skills more often than I have experienced in the first weeks of my other introductory language classes. Class time is devoted more to analyzing and evaluating than to remembering. The structure of class meetings shifted a great deal of the basic knowledge acquisition out of the classroom to students' private study time, just as Singh (93) observed in her cooperative learning Latin classes. This emphasis on application of knowledge instead of rote recall is also consistent with the Standards for Latin Teacher Preparation.

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<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, I do believe that students apply course information to solve problems in introductory language classes.

<sup>8</sup> Along with many other colleges and universities, we use the evaluation forms of the [IDEA Center](#) on our campus.

Studies on cooperative learning have described a “positive identity interdependence” through which “group unity is heightened when group members develop a group identity” (Jacobs 41). Several teams in my TBL Greek class developed group names, or otherwise assigned specific characteristics to their group. They were also motivated by positive reward interdependence to encourage each other to attend. Since they understood that each time a team member skipped class, they had fewer resources and perspectives and thus had lower odds of finding the correct answer, they insisted that all team members come to each class to maintain a full cohort. Likewise, unprepared students got quick feedback from their teammates, either overtly or subtly, to encourage them to help the team by studying more. I believe that this atmosphere of intense cooperation can compensate for the difficulty in finding the social aspects in an ancient language classroom that can add a useful affective component to the modern language classroom.

I also witnessed increased confidence in many students; naturally quiet students and students with low quiz averages regularly were able to help the more confident students. This can happen in a standard language class, but the increased opportunities for interaction make it much more common in TBL. I believe that the increased contribution from previously shy students can be explained by research that has shown that students become better at assessing each other’s skills and abilities as they move from stereotypes and superficial observations to evidence-based analysis from watching each other perform and contribute to the group (Birmingham and McCord, 84). A more accurate understanding of the level of their own skills can give quiet students the confidence to contribute more frequently in class.

More objective measures also describe this class as successful. Student evaluations were very high and the average performance on the final test was better than I have seen in my other language classes.

The most significant impact of this course was a greatly increased awareness of Ancient Greek on my campus. Students spoke about Greek outside of the class. They also spoke about having fun in my class. The year after I taught this course, I succeeded in adding a full two-semester introductory sequence of Ancient Greek to our curriculum with the help of colleagues from Emory’s Atlanta campus. I believe that the success of this course helped convince administrators and faculty in other departments and university divisions to support me in this endeavor. Last fall, thirteen students enrolled in Greek 101, also a significant number on a campus of our size. I also believe that students whose first experience in studying Greek is both enjoyable and intellectually challenging are more likely to continue studying Greek. Of the students who completed my Greek 101/102 series, all except one continued to take Greek language courses afterwards.

### USES OF TBL IN OTHER CONTEXTS

TBL allows the active learning and higher order learning endorsed by the Standards for Latin Teacher Preparation to take place in a large class. I am now offering my large one-hour introduction to Greek for the third time as a TBL course. Nevertheless, I do not plan to base all of my language courses exclusively on TBL. I have experimented with a more limited use of TBL in my more traditional Greek and Latin courses in ways that may be useful in contexts such as the high school classroom. My standard first-year courses are small enough to allow me to continue to use the traditional pedagogy in which individual students translate in front of the entire class and receive feedback from the teacher every day, so I use TBL in only one of the four weekly meetings in those courses. In my current second-semester Greek class, I use TBL for morphology quizzes.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix B.

During the non-TBL portions of this class, students are much more likely to correct each other's in-class translations and to seek help from fellow students while translating than in other Greek 102 classes I have taught. They pay attention to the other students' translations instead of trying to prepare the next section in the text in case the teacher plans to call on them. I believe this may be the result of weekly group work.

I have also used TBL for simpler tasks such as quizzes on vocabulary and principal parts in my first-semester Latin course. Although students do not achieve the full potential of cooperative learning in these contexts, many have told me that the energy generated by group work has helped to make some of the more repetitive tasks interesting and enjoyable.

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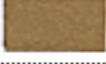
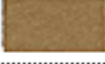

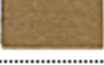








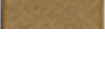
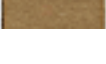

## APPENDIX A

**IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE (IF AT®)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Test # \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Total \_\_\_\_\_

**SCRATCH OFF COVERING TO EXPOSE ANSWER**

	A	B	C	D	Score
1.					_____
2.					_____
3.					_____
4.					_____
5.					_____
6.					_____
7.					_____
8.					_____

**IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE (IF AT®)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Test # \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Total \_\_\_\_\_

**SCRATCH OFF COVERING TO EXPOSE ANSWER**

	A	B	C	D	Score
1.					_____
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**IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE (IF AT®)**

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**SCRATCH OFF COVERING TO EXPOSE ANSWER**





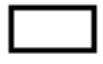



























	A	B	C	D	Score
1.					_____
2.					_____
3.					_____
4.					_____
5.					_____
6.					_____
7.					_____
8.					_____

**IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE (IF AT®)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Test # \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Total \_\_\_\_\_

**SCRATCH OFF COVERING TO EXPOSE ANSWER**

	A	B	C	D	Score
1.					_____
2.					_____
3.					_____
4.					_____
5.					_____
6.					_____
7.					_____
8.					_____

## APPENDIX B

## Greek 102Q Group Quiz 2

1. πίπτω 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural aorist active
  - A. ἔπεσον
  - B. ἔπιπτον
  - C. ἐπέπταντο
  - D. ἔπεισαν
2. πράττω future active participle feminine singular accusative
  - A. πράξασαν
  - B. πράττουσαν
  - C. πράξαν
  - D. πράξουσιν
3. ἀμύνω aorist active participle masculine singular nominative
  - A. ἀμύνας
  - B. ἡμυνας
  - C. ἀμύνων
  - D. ἄμυνον
4. γράφω aorist imperative active singular
  - A. γράψε
  - B. γράψαι
  - C. γράψον
  - D. γραφαί
5. ἀναχωρέω imperfect active third person plural
  - A. ἀνεχώρουν
  - B. ἀνεχώρον
  - C. ἀνέχον
  - D. ἀνεχώρησαν
6. ὁράω aorist active participle masculine plural accusative
  - A. εἰδόντας
  - B. ἰδόντες
  - C. εἰπόντες
  - D. ἰδόντας
7. φράζω aorist third person singular aorist active
  - A. ἔφραζε
  - B. ἔφραξε
  - C. ἔφρασει
  - D. ἔφρασε

8. βαίνω aorist active participle masculine singular accusative

- a. βάσον
- b. βάντα
- c. βάν
- d. βάς

9. πείθω future active participle neuter singular accusative

- πεῖσον
- πείσοντα
- πεσούμενον
- πέσον

10. ἀφικνέομαι aorist middle participle plural feminine accusative

- a. ἀφικομένας
- b. ἀφιζομένας
- c. ἀφικνούμενας
- d. ἀφικόντας

# Blended Learning in an Advanced Course on Greek Tragedy

**Nikos Manousakis**  
**University of Athens**

## ABSTRACT

In recent years, computer supported learning has gained ground in a whole range of courses. The study of classical literature (ancient Greek and Latin), a course that has been taught for centuries around the world, is not an exception. This paper reports on a theoretical and practical approach to the computer-assisted study of Classics in higher education. We make reference to the main theoretical guidelines and some influential digital media and resources used in this direction, and we also present the conditions and results of a study that took place in order to test the approach under analysis in the field.

## KEYWORDS

blended learning, Greek tragedy, educational technology, LMS, classics, higher education

## INTRODUCTION

From the slate of the ancient world to the modern laptop, from real-world practice to virtual world role-play, from classroom lecture to recorded recitation, from solitary study to a community of learners, technology continues to develop; and with it the techniques to learn languages [spoken and non spoken] (Reinhard). Traditional media are being transformed into digital ones and the texts and tools of classical studies are no exception. Dictionaries, encyclopedias, commentaries, repositories of articles and books of philological interest, and corpora of ancient Greek and Latin texts are some of the resources that are being digitized to replace traditional forms and to allow a more direct, better, and safer approach to texts by ‘trapping’ the ancient knowledge in a network of digital information (Bolter). The great challenge for the rising generation of scholars is to build a digital infrastructure with which to expand our intellectual range (Crane, et al.). In this paper we report on a pilot project and present how classics and digital media can be combined in a functional way to enrich the process of teaching and learning ancient Greek in higher education. We focused on the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) technologies ([Moodle platform](#)), and how students can be motivated through blended learning to embrace classics, a so called “tough” area of studies.

As far as the educational planning is concerned, our choice for this study was blended learning. Blended learning as described here is “a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home” (Staker and Horn 3). It is characterized by its student-centered-humanistic approach (Derntl and Motsching-Pitrik; Ginns and Ellis), which was developed by the

American psychologist Carl Rogers (Derntl & Motsching-Pitrik). Learners participate actively in the learning process by undertaking various roles. Another feature is its multi-dimensional communication. Specifically, the increased interaction between the learner and the teacher, among learners themselves and between students and external sources, is very noticeable. Moreover, according to Gray, blended learning by combining tested traditional methods with technology creates a collaborative and dynamic environment for learning.

For the design of the learning material, our focus has been to mitigate the static way that students perceive and approach Greek Tragedy. This means that we have tried to escape the logic of teaching Greek Tragedy in universities by only aiming at the grammatical-syntactical-metrical etc analysis of the text. According to Alessi and Trollip, in order to make effective use of educational technology, the first rule is that you must choose when and where is it more likely to be used beneficially. A good example is the usual lack of motivation, “mobilization” of students for courses concerning the study of the ancient world. Therefore, since our program falls into this category, we chose to enrich our material with hypermedia, such as video and audio recordings. The fact that the text we want to teach is a stage play gave us many options of this kind. The video as a medium is attractive, fun and motivating. The information provided through recorded videos is easier to be remembered, due to the visual experience and the emotional impact (Swan).

## METHODS

### *Goals*

The main research target for this study was to present how blended learning can affect the teaching of classics in higher education, depicted both in student achievement and satisfaction.

The overall objective of teaching ancient Greek literature is for students to understand the structures and norms of the ancient Greek language, and to gain insight into the work of the major representatives of each historical period of ancient Greece and of the foreign areas that have been affected by this language. Our goal in this project was the modernization of the field, especially concerning teaching. To do so, we organized the abovementioned course design using blended learning. It is an educational approach that balances multiple face-to-face educational techniques with coherent technologies, and is perhaps the fastest growing form of the kind (Bliuc, Goodyear, and Ellis; Köse; Cohen, Manion, and Morrison).

The experimental use of digital media in teaching classics in higher education in a Greek University is depicted in the case study we describe here (*Cf.* Donmoyer). The major elements of the study and teaching of ancient Greek language that we tried to improve by incorporating digital means are the:

- grammatical, syntactical and metrical phenomena of the ancient Greek language;
- clear distinction between the several textual types (genres) of ancient Greek literature and introduction to the work of its main representatives;
- ways of linking the textual type with its mythological framework;
- political, historical and literary context of the texts;
- concept of intertextuality;



- overall influence of classical texts on modern times.

### ***Participants***

Our research took place at the University of Athens (UOA) and investigated the teaching of ancient Greek Drama from the actual Greek text to undergraduate students (3rd semester in a total of 8). The participation in the program, which ran in parallel with the teaching process, was voluntary. One hundred and five students, approximately one eighth of the class, registered for the program.<sup>1</sup> Their motive for participation was their desire to see if and how the subject of their study can co-exist with the use of technology and what results this combination can bring.

Approximately 85 students were informed about the opportunity during the first lecture by the researchers. 105 students were registered in the virtual course created in Moodle platform for the needs of the course (male and female students with an age range from 20-34 and moderate technology skills). Comparing our class attendance record with our Moodle one we noted that 83% of the students who were registered in our study were also attending the lectures. The gap between the number of the students who were originally informed of the study at the first lecture and the number who finally participated shows that the program gained its own momentum.

### ***Blended Learning Program Design***

The experimental program consisted of web-enhanced learning activities in addition to regularly scheduled face-to-face classes. Class sessions occurred once a week and were all given by the same professor. Each class lasted three hours. The theme of the course was ancient Greek Drama and especially the Sophocles' tragedy *Philoctetes*. The course was taught in the winter semester (3rd) of 2009-2010, in the School of Philosophy, department of Greek Philology, domain of Classical Philology of National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (UOA). The primary objective of this department is to provide students with many different literary interests and to encompass the whole spectrum of knowledge about the Hellenic literary production across the centuries and its ongoing dynamic discourse with the western civilization. The course ran from September 29, 2009, until December 15, 2009. Class structure consisted of one and a half hour lecture analysis (grammatical, syntactical, lexical, metrical and factual) of specific verses of the text (see Appendix A) and one hour and a half discussing the issues arising from that analysis. This discussion was always left open to the students. The students were given hints through the Moodle program to research more on their own. The results of their research were always discussed in the next lecture.

The digital media that we had at our disposal and that we used in order to teach ancient Greek literature were:

- digital text corpora of ancient Greek literature in form of critical editions,
- electronic Dictionaries of ancient Greek language,
- online grammar and syntax of ancient Greek language,

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<sup>1</sup> 820 students of all semesters from the third and beyond had chosen to attend this course. 433 of the participants had chosen this course for the first time (third semester students). The attendance of the lectures in the School of Philosophy of the UOA is not obligatory, as in all Greek universities. Thus, 80 to 90 students were attending the lectures of the course each time, according to the attendance record that we kept.

- repositories of articles and books concerning ancient Greek literature,
- additional digital material concerning ancient Greek literature, such as videos of ancient drama performances, animated movies of Philoctetes' cave in Lemnos and 3D presentations of the island.<sup>2</sup>

For the implementation of our study, the Moodle platform was divided into twelve units, one per week (see Appendix A for week-to-week syllabus). These units divide the subject of the course by the creation of an equal number of specific Moodle assignments, allowing students to be better engaged. The first two units were introductory (without textual analysis), concerning the ancient Greek Tragedy in general, its particular features and its main representatives, with an emphasis on the works of Sophocles (see Appendix B for an indicative lesson plan). Afterwards, the text of *Philoctetes* was presented in its mythological context and textual dimensions. The remaining lectures were devoted to the text analysis (grammar, syntax, meter, factual) that largely follows the existing common structure of the Tragedy division: prologue, episodes, stasima and exodus. The learning material we created for each unit followed the auditorium lectures and consisted of: explanatory texts concerning the specific issues of the course subject; articles from academic journals; learning objects presenting specific aspects of Greek Drama; videos of educational content; and videotaped performances and rehearsals of Sophocles' *Philoctetes*.

The students had to follow some very specific steps that were presented in the Moodle assignments in order to approach in the most constructive way the subject of each section of the program. Those steps were:

Textual analysis of a certain passage:

- Use of the hypertext and scholia of [Philoctetes](#) provided through the Perseus Digital Library, in order to study the grammatical, syntactical, lexical and factual analysis of the certain passage.

Analysis concerning the concepts and ideas given in the certain passage:

- Use of the Modern Greek translations of *Philoctetes* (provided by [www.mikros-apoplous.gr](http://www.mikros-apoplous.gr) and other sites), in order to conceive more clearly the meaning of the certain passage and the form that it gets when translated.

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<sup>2</sup> Our study presents the use of various educational “tools” in an effort to design the optimal blended learning model for teaching classics in higher education: The first and foremost of the digital media we used to approach the themes of our program is the Perseus Digital Library, a significant effort for a computer-supported holistic and interactive view of classical literature. The Perseus Digital Library is an evolving digital library of the Tufts University in the USA, used by researchers, academics, teachers and students in many schools, and hosted as a link to many humanitarian nodes on the Internet. The Perseus Digital Library includes a large interactive text corpus of the ancient Greek literature. From Homer to the Hellenistic age, it presents a vast amount of important sources concerning the ancient Greek literature. That is why we used it as the main tool in our program. The digital texts included in the library, which can be accessed freely, allow scholars to gain time in their study by being able to look up the definition or the grammatical type of words just by clicking on them. The vast commentary of texts included in the Perseus Digital Library is also an important factor in the approach of their meaning. By searching the analysis of the texts made by the philologists, students and scholars get the chance to acquire insight into the subject that they study.

In our program, we also used tools such as the [Portal for the Greek language](#), retrieving mostly translations of *Philoctetes* in Modern Greek, [Google Books](#), retrieving books about classics, [National Theatre of Greece online Archives](#), retrieving videos about the play under analysis, and many more. The applications mentioned here have been used partially or combined at times, depending on the features that made them useful in the study of classical literature that we designed.

- Following links to other educational sites (scientific papers, videos of the play etc.), in order to perceive important aspects of the text under analysis.

A weekly structured Web Quest covering a full spectrum approach for each section (see Appendix B) was provided via Moodle, leading participants to these digital learning resources, which allowed them to engage more deeply with the texts and themes of each week's face-to-face class session. Web Quests are defined as research activities, where all or most of the information used by students is derived from the Internet. Web Quests are designed and developed to creatively use the training time and put the emphasis on using information rather than searching for them (Dodge, 2001). Each Web Quest was implemented through the use of detailed web assignments. These included a brief factual analysis of the text being studied that week and a series of specially selected digital educational resources covering the full spectrum approach of each section.

### ***Research Design***

The evaluation study of the program was multifaceted and it was performed by analyzing students' performance in the final course exams, by studying the records of the course that were kept by the researchers, primarily of in-class questions and statements of the participants about the program; and also by analyzing the students' opinion about the learning effectiveness of the program. The latter was identified through a post-test questionnaire (see Appendix C) that was filled out by the students on the last day of the course. It consisted of 19 questions and was largely based on the post-test questionnaire CADMOS-E (Retalis et al.; Psaromiligkos and Retalis), which is a mixed method approach using questionnaires to elicit quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire consisted primarily of Yes/No, multiple choice, and 3- or 4-point rating scale questions that were used to evaluate the contribution of various factors to the programs' effectiveness, such as the type and quality of the various learning resources, the usability of the utilized tools, etc. It was given at the final lecture of the course and was completed by 81 students who were present. The data analysis was performed through the SPSS program for statistical analysis.

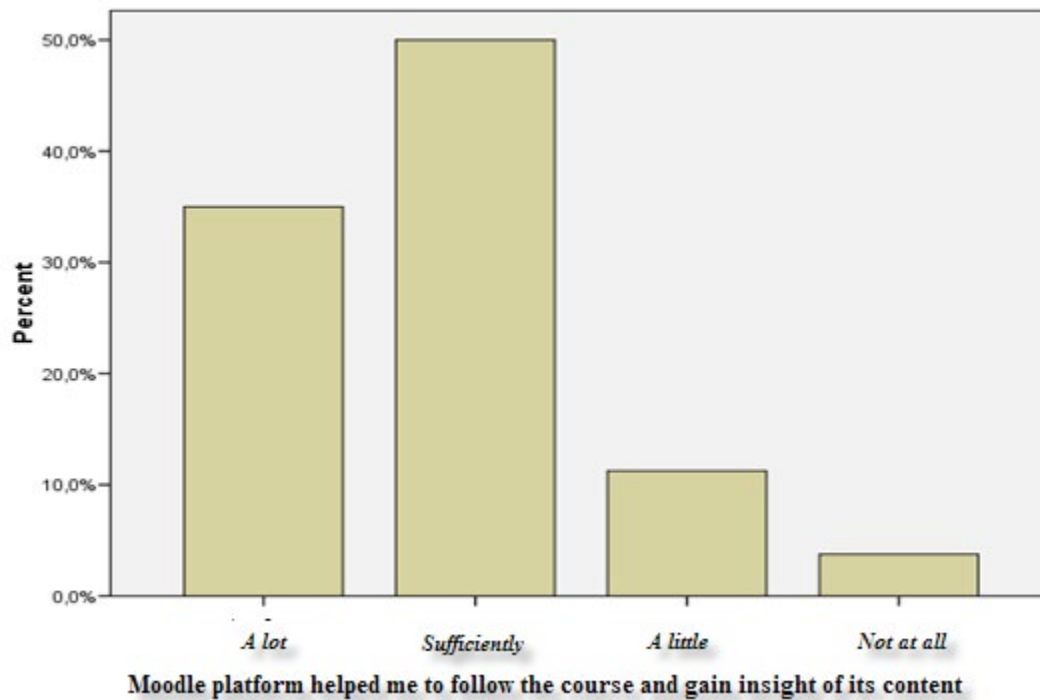
We also looked at student success measured via the course examination grade. The questionnaire also included a section with a number of open-ended questions in order to supplement the quantitative data. The open-ended section was about students' likes and dislikes regarding the learning material. In addition, we also decided to compare the results of the students who participated in our program with the results of those who did not. Thus, we examined a corpus of 177 tests, corresponding to the total number of the students who took the exams of the course at the end of the semester, with grades ranging from 1 to 9.

## **RESULTS**

### ***Student Questionnaire***

The attitude of the students towards the auxiliary role of the program provided through the Moodle platform was generally positive. Students declared through the questionnaire that they were supported in the study of Greek Drama. The strongly positive opinions represented 85% of the respondents (Appendix C, Question 9; see Figure 1).

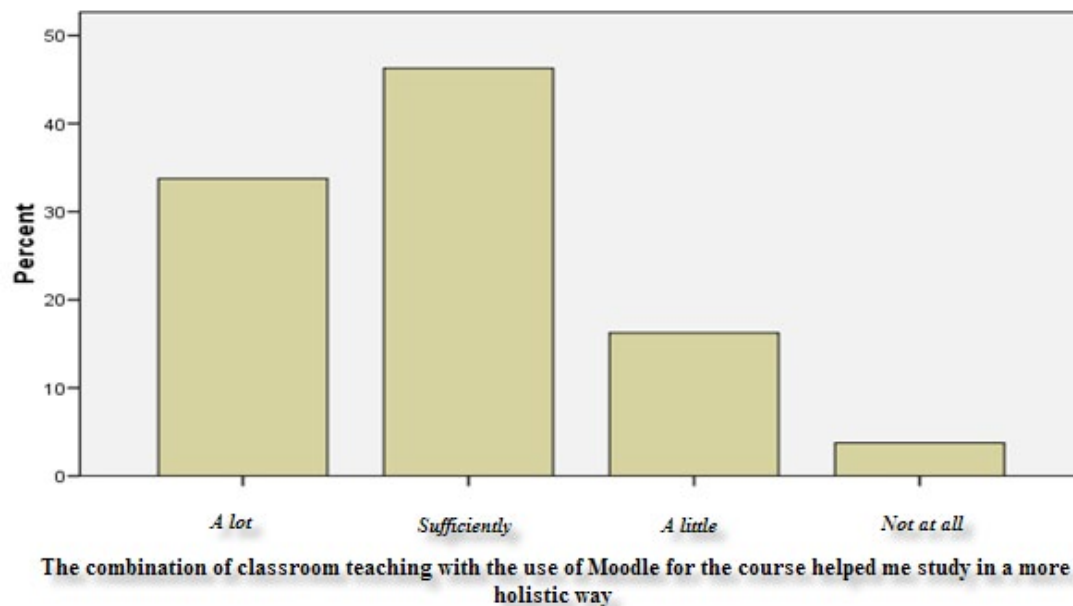
**Figure 1. Student survey results regarding the helpfulness of the class's Moodle component**



Moreover, 51.3% of students gave the Moodle platform the highest rating for usability and another 40% rated it “[e]asy to use with minor difficulties” (Appendix C, Question 2).

The combination of the face-to-face lectures with the use of the digital platform in teaching Greek Drama also received positive feedback. 80% of the respondents stated that this combination was sufficiently or very helpful for the study of the specific course. (Question 11; see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Student survey results regarding the holisticness of the class's Moodle component**



The learning resources that emerged as most interesting were the audio-visual material and the videos particularly. The use of audio-visual material as a learning resource seemed to encourage the involvement of the participants in the program and to motivate them in the process of study: 64.5% of students ranked this as one of the three most stimulating resources (Question 17). Surprisingly, featured articles and reviews from scientific repositories ranked second on the preferences of the students, with almost one-third of students naming this as a most stimulating resource. Thus, students seem to have discovered through the program the great value of featured articles and reviews from scientific repositories about classics.

### *Exam performance*

Of the 105 students enrolled in the study, 85 (81%) participated in the final exam of the course. An additional 92 students who had not enrolled in the blended learning study also took the exam. The grading scale covered a range from 1 (total failure) to 10 (excellent), but no test was graded with 10.

Among students who did not participate in the study—about 52% of the total of 177 tests that were examined—approximately 50% managed to get a passing grade (5 or above), but only 10% of them managed to get an excellent (9 or 8) or a very good one (7).

Students participating in the blended learning study were significantly more successful, with 87% receiving a passing grade. Even more striking is the fact that 37% managed to obtain an excellent score (9 or 8; there were no 10s scored) and 40% obtained from good to very good rating (6 or 7). Only 13% did not pass the exams (1-4). The blended learning program was apparently quite beneficial for its participants concerning the final exams. Furthermore, the opinion of the course professor about our program (especially the process of teaching classics through an LMS), summarized in a report that he prepared for us, clearly reflected his positive opinion and the positive opinions of the students about our effort.

## DISCUSSION

As we hoped, students had the opportunity to communicate with each other and discuss the course of the project, using the discussion forum provided by the Moodle platform. They posted questions mainly concerning the use of the projects' tools and learning material, and also some more specific queries addressed to the tutors concerning metrical, grammatical and other related issues. The participation of the students in the discussion forum was average (not adequate for statistical processing) but satisfactory, bearing in mind that the educational use of the medium was totally new to them. There was also a News Forum in use, mostly to motivate students to get involved more, by informing them through email each time something new was added to the platform.

This research has as its main objective the fullest possible enhancement of the combination of classics and educational technology (*Cf.* Lister & Smith). Our effort, judging by the data mentioned above, seems to be effective. Both the professor of the course and the students who participated in the program declared that our program was beneficial for them in several ways and also stated that they believe it can be generalized to other courses too. Nevertheless, existing deficiencies and problems concerning "mixing" classics with informatics have to be taken under serious consideration for further research in the field. For example, the digital tools available are continuing to evolve. Furthermore, the way digital tools and practices are combined with the actual subject of the course in the educational practice can evoke much discussion and debate.

The use of educational technology in teaching classics offers new perspectives in the field. Traditional pedagogies will not be abandoned: the examination of Greek Tragedy using the analytical method of Aristotle will continue. What will eventually happen is that with the support of technology and informatics, the dramatic texts of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, not to mention Aristophanes and Menander, will come alive. By the use of hypermedia, written information gets visual and audio format, giving students a strong motivation to deal with their subject of study under a new light.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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APPENDIX A<sup>3</sup>

## WEEK BY WEEK BY SYLLABUS

Week 1 (Introduction 1):

A. Introduction to the dramatic genre:

- Birth of Tragedy
- Typical structure
- The main representatives (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides)

B. The Poetics of Aristotle:

- Tragedy and structure

Week 2 (Introduction 2):

A. The myth of Philoctetes:

- The elements of the myth
- The different perspective given by Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles
- Subsequent use of Philoctetes' myth: from Heiner Müller to Yiannis Ritsos.

Week 3 (Verses 1-53):

A. The ethos of the tragic hero in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*

- The "deceitful" Odysseus
- The "naïve" Neoptolemus

B. Iambic trimeter. The meter of Greek tragedy

C. The stagecraft of Greek Tragedy

D. References to the hero Philoctetes by ancient writers

Week 4 (Verses 54-218):

A. The arms of Achilles. The myth of Tragedy.

B. Deceit, violence and persuasion in ancient Greek tragedy. The example of *Philoctetes*.

G. Lessons of Sophists in Tragedy.

D. The style and language of Sophocles' plays.

Week 5 (Verses 219-358):

A. The bow of Hercules. Myth and symbol.

B. The friendship between Philoctetes and Neoptolemus.

C. The Limnos of Philoctetes (video presentation).

Week 6 (Verses 359-541):

A. The chorus as a functional feature in ancient Tragedy in general and in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* in particular.

B. Tragic irony.

C. Neoptolemus and the path to self-knowledge.

---

<sup>3</sup> All appendices originally in modern Greek.

Week 7 (Verses 542-645):

- A. The concept of deception in Sophocles. The conclusive example of *Philoctetes*.
- B. The scene of the trader. Theater within theater.
- C. The seer Helenus and the oracle in *Philoctetes*.

Week 8 (Verses 646-864):

- A. The path of Neoptolemus to self-knowledge in the second episode.
- B. Mythical Persons:
  - 1. The myth of Ixion and exploitation by Sophocles at *Philoctetes*' first stasimon.
  - 2. The Sleep as a mythological figure (verses 827-838)
- C. The concept of pity and envy in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*.

Week 9 (Verses 865-909):

- B. Dilemma as an element of Tragedy in general and as the focal point of the third episode of Sophocles' *Philoctetes*.
- C. The nature of Neoptolemus. Shame as a hero's virtue.

Week 10 (Verses 910-1046):

- A. The monologues in tragedy.
- B. Silence as a dramatic feature in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*
- C. Supplication in Greek Tragedy

Week 11 (Verses 1047-1408):

- A. Kommos as a structural element of Tragedy in general and its role in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* in particular
- B. The exodus as part of the tragedy and pseudo-exodus in *Philoctetes*

Week 12 (Verses 1409-1470):

- A. Virtue in Greek Tragedy.
- B. The Deus ex Machina as a functional part of Greek Tragedy and its use in *Philoctetes*.
- C. Divine and human level in Greek Tragedy

## APPENDIX B

## SAMPLE WEB QUEST ASSIGNMENT

## Lecture 3: Text analysis. Verses 1-53 (Prologue)

Now that you have read the whole text once, let's study it...

Presentation

A. The ethos of the tragic hero in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*

- The “deceitful” Odysseus
- The “naïve” Neoptolemus

B. Iambic trimeter. The meter of Greek tragedy

C. The stagecraft of Greek Tragedy

D. References to the hero Philoctetes by ancient writers

You have one week to... follow the steps

1. Study the text (verses 1-53) using the grammatical and lexical tools. Try to make your own translation

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0193%3Acard%3D54>

(the hyper-text of Sophocles *Philoctetes* by Francis Storr)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0026>

(introduction to the text)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0026%3Atext%3Dcomment%3Acommline%3D1>

(text commentary)

2. Consult the given translations (verses 1-53). Go back to the main text and try to understand the choices the translators have made

<http://www.mikrosapoplous.gr/sophocles/phil00.html> (G. Blanas)

[http://www.greek-language.gr/greekLang/ancient\\_greek/tools/corpora/anthology/content.html?m=1&t=567](http://www.greek-language.gr/greekLang/ancient_greek/tools/corpora/anthology/content.html?m=1&t=567) (I. N. Gyparis/ S. Mpazakou)

## 3. Odysseus and Neoptolemus

Study the texts below and make a list of similarities and differences in the ethos of the two heroes. Who would you choose to be and why?

“[Νεοπτόλεμος](#),” Wikipedia

“[Οδυσσεύς](#),” Wikipedia

[Blundell](#)

4. Iambic trimeter: Study the texts below and then go back to the hyper-text of Sophocles’ Philoctetes given above (verses 1-53) and track down 3 examples of the specific meter

“[Iambic Trimeter](#),” Wikipedia

[Holtsmark](#)

5. Stagecraft: Take a look on the links below and try to navigate through them to at least 3 other web pages with additional information about the stagecraft of the Ancient Greek Theatre. Write down what you have discovered.

[Phillips](#)

[Αγγελικόπουλος](#)

6. The hero Philoctetes in the Ancient Greek sources:

First of all, try to find the 3 missing web links... it’s not that hard. Then study the passages and try to find out what antiquity was thinking about Philoctetes. Locate the controversies...

**Homer:**

-*Iliad*: B. 718, 725 (...)

-*Odyssey*: γ. 190, θ. 215 (...)

**Ilias Parva:**

Fragments 1 & 12 ([link](#))

**Cypria:**

Fragments 1 ([link](#))

**Pindar:**

*1<sup>st</sup> Pythionikos*, στ. 50 (...)

**Dio Chrysostom:**

(Very important source: Orations 52 and 59 by Dio are about the myth of Philoctetes and the texts written concerning his story)

-Oration nr. 52: *Philoctetes* by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides ([link](#))

-Oration nr. 59: The prologue of Euripides' *Philoctetes* ([Greek text](#)), ([English translation](#))

**Quintus Smyrnaeus:**

-Book 9: fr. [353], [438] ([link](#))

-Book 10: fr. [50], [219] ([link](#))

-Book 11: fr. [54], [494] ([link](#))

-Book 12: fr. [86], [337] ([link](#))

-Book 14: fr. [126] ([link](#))

All your findings will be discussed in the classroom, so don't forget them at home!

## APPENDIX C

University of Piraeus – Digital Systems Department

University of Athens – Greek Philology Department

Ancient Greek Philology Course – 3<sup>rd</sup> semester

### **Supplemental program for teaching Ancient Greek literature with the use of digital resources**

**-The data obtained from the questionnaires will be used exclusively for research purposes-**

### **PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE - QUANTITATIVE RESULTS**

**1. I am a ..... semester student**

(3<sup>rd</sup> sem.: 81%/ 5<sup>th</sup> sem.: 5.1%/ 6<sup>th</sup> sem.: 1.3%/ 7<sup>th</sup> sem.: 3.8%)

**2. The course platform (Moodle) was:**

A) Totally easy to use (51.3%)

B) Easy to use with minor difficulties (40%)

C) Manageable but with important difficulties (6.3%)

D) Unmanageable (2.4%)

**3. I have used Moodle L.M.S. before in an other class:**

A) Yes (56.8%)

B) No (43.2%)

**4. I have studied for this class:**

A) Through the whole semester (36.45%)

B) Only in the exam period (63.55%)



**5. I follow the supplemental program through Moodle from the beginning:**

- A) Yes (66.7%)
- B) No (33.3%)
- C) I do not know about the program

**6. I visit Moodle to study for the course:**

- A) Every day (7.7%)
- B) 3 times a week (21.8%)
- C) Once a week (46.2%)
- D) Once in two weeks (24.3%)

**7. I am familiar with Perseus Digital Library and the hyper-text corpus of Ancient Greek literature :**

- A) Yes (75.3%)
- B) No (24.7%)

**8. I am familiar with the course forum in the Moodle platform:**

- A) Yes and I have used it (17.3%)
- B) Yes but I haven't used it (61.7%)
- C) No (21%)

**9. Moodle platform helped me to follow the course and gain insight into its content:**

- A) A lot (35%)
- B) Sufficiently (50%)
- C) A little (11.3%)
- D) Not at all (3.7%)

**10. Was it difficult for me to deal with the Moodle resources given in English:**

- A) Not at all (82.5%)
- B) A little (16.9%)
- C) Very difficult (0.6%)

**11. The combination of classroom teaching with the use of Moodle for the course helped me study in a more holistic way:**

- A) A lot (33.8%)
- B) Sufficiently (46.3%)
- C) A little (16.2%)
- D) Not at all (3.7%)

**12. The Moodle platform gave me motivation to study for the course throughout the whole semester:**

- A) Yes (71.3%)
- B) No (28.7%)

**13. My expectations for the supplemental program were confirmed:**

- A) Very much (68.8%)
- B) Moderately (26.2%)
- C) Not at all (5%)

**14. The Moodle platform resources helped me study for the final exams of the course:**

- A) A lot (76.6%)
- B) A little (18.5%)
- C) Not at all (4.9%)

**15. Moodle platform is more manageable than other learning management systems I have used before:**

A) Yes (86.4%)

B) No (13.6%)

**16. The use of audio and video resources as learning material in the Moodle platform motivated me to get involved into the supplemental program:**

A) A lot (73.1%)

B) A little (19.2%)

C) Not at all (7.7%)

**17. Which were for me the three (3) most stimulating resources given in the Moodle platform throughout the whole course:**

A).....  
.....  
.....

B).....  
.....  
.....

C).....  
.....  
.....

(videos of performances (64.5%), multiple modern translations (31.6%))

**18. I believe that Ancient Greek literature course becomes more interesting when taught with the use of digital resources:**

A) Totally (88.7%)

B) At some point (7.6%)

C) Not at all (3.7%)

**19. Improvements I would like to see in the supplemental program:**

A).....  
.....  
.....  
.....

B).....  
.....  
.....  
.....

C).....  
.....  
.....  
.....

# De Lingua Latina Discenda

## Five Recent Textbooks for Introductory Latin

*Between the old-fashioned 'grammar-first' method and the older-fashioned and new fashioned 'reading-or-speaking-first' method lie endless possibilities; hence, the almost endless number of textbooks for beginners...*

October 9, 1916. Carr, W. L. Review of *Introduction to Latin* by J. Kirtland and G. Rogers. *The Classical Weekly* 10.2: 15.

**Doug Clapp**  
**Samford University**

### ABSTRACT

This review article examines five recently published introductory Latin textbooks in light of the author's efforts to guide his elementary Latin students toward an engaging and effective experience with the language of the Romans. The pedagogical approach adopted by each text is considered alongside research into the psychology of learning and Second Language Acquisition.

### KEYWORDS

introductory Latin, elementary Latin, textbook, pedagogy, grammar, reading, Second Language Acquisition, psychology of learning

### TEXTS REVIEWED

Kitchell, Kenneth and Thomas Sienkewicz. *Disce! An Introductory Latin Course, Vols. 1-2*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011. ISBN: 978-0-13158-531-7. \$55.20 each.

Maltby, Robert and Kenneth Belcher. *Wiley's Real Latin: Learning Latin from the Source*. Malden, MA; Oxford, UK; Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-470-65507-8. \$29.95

Mannetter, Drew A. *I Came, I Saw, I Translated: An Accelerated Method for Learning Classical Latin in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Boca Raton, FL: BrownWalker Press, 2011. ISBN: 978-1-61233-511-7. \$46.95

McKeown, J. C. *Classical Latin: An Introductory Course*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-87220-851-3. \$40.00

Minkova, Milena and Terence Tunberg. *Latin for the New Millennium: Student Text, Levels 1-2*. Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc., 2008. ISBN: 978-0-86516-560-1. \$75.00 each.

Each fall, I walk into my Elementary Latin classroom with great hopes of introducing the students to the voices of the Romans and of all who have expressed beautiful and powerful ideas in the Latin language. Each summer, I ponder how, next time, I will finally teach in such a way that I promote the genuine learning that seems to have largely slipped away with the academic year. Yes, my dreams are dashed on the complexity of Latin compressed into two semesters, eighty classes, fewer than one hundred hours. Yes, I am trying to woo students whose flat expressions indicate that, for most, my course is an annoying hoop on the path to a career credential. But I am determined for Vergil to have his day. I want to provoke the curiosity of the class and to meet that curiosity with a clear approach to developing a dawning comprehension of Latin.

Because a large majority of my students arrive motivated only by a curricular checklist, I want and need them to decide, and quickly, that Latin makes sense and that the sense it makes is worth their investment of time and energy. So I have been learning in general about how the human brain learns (*e.g.* Ambrose *et al.*) and in particular about how the human brain can acquire a second language (*e.g.* Lightbown and Spada; Burns and Richards), and I am working to implement practices grounded in the psychology of learning that promote comprehension by working with rather than against the brain's cognitive processes. I would like help accomplishing this from the textbook I ask students to buy, since creating sufficient teaching and learning materials *ex nihilo* looms as a Sisyphean labor. Thus, I am constantly trolling for useful materials from publishers of Latin textbooks. Their introductory works typically fall into one of the two camps that date back to at least the World War I-era epigraph for this article, into the division between grammar-first and reading-first approaches. This century-old conversation within Classics continues to inform our discussions of Latin pedagogy, but I need a textbook that also heeds the relevant findings of current research into learning and language acquisition.<sup>1</sup>

Although a textbook cannot bear the blame for my own limitations, I do want more from the textbooks that I have used over the years. Evidence suggests that I am in good company, as textual frustration seems to be a conversational staple in our profession (Johnson 246; May 151; Verger). I cannot complain, however, about the lack of choice. Table 1 outlines twenty-three options.<sup>2</sup> Seven of these were first published in the twenty-first century—colleagues productively distilling their dissatisfaction with the available choices into a new addition to the corpus (*e.g.* Keller xvii; Mannerter 3). In this article, I will examine five recent offerings in light of my own efforts to resolve a nagging sense that I should be guiding students down a more engaging and more effective path to an encounter with Latin. I will first provide an overview of the works in question, then I will set out my pedagogical premises, and I will conclude by considering the textbooks in light of my initial encounters with the science of learning.

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1 Carlon provides a clear overview of some principles of Second Language Acquisition. Classics need more of this, both incorporating research on learning languages and generating empirical data within our own discipline. I confess my own limited awareness of the current state of affairs, and my initial explorations have found daunting the actual and virtual shelves filled with contributions to the field of language learning, much of it written in technical prose.

2 My own search, which began at the now silent LATINTEACH blog, affirms the usefulness Judith Sebesta's annual textbook survey in *Classical World*.

**Table 1. Elementary Latin Textbooks**

- 2013 *Wiley's Real Latin: Learning Latin from the Source* (Maltby and Belcher, Wiley)
- 2011 *Disce! An Introductory Latin Course* (Kitchell and Sienkewicz, Pearson)
- 2011 *I Came, I Saw, I Translated* (Mannetter, BrownWalker)
- 2010 *Classical Latin: An Introductory Course* (McKeown, Hackett)
- 2008 *Latin for the New Millennium* (Tunberg and Minkova, Bolchazy-Carducci)
- 2013 *Introduction to Latin* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Shelmerdine, Focus)
- 2003 *Learn to Read Latin* (Keller and Russell, Yale)
- 2012 *Oxford Latin College Edition* (Balme and Morwood, Oxford)
- 2011 *Wheelock's Latin* 7<sup>th</sup> Edition (LaFleur, HarperCollins)
- 2009 *Ecce Romani*, Fourth Edition (Prentice Hall/Pearson)
- 2007 *Latin For Americans* (Ullman et al., Glencoe/McGraw-Hill)
- 2007 *Latin Alive and Well* (Chambers, University of Oklahoma Press)
- 2011 *New First Steps in Latin* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Klaasen et al., Focus/Pullins)
- 2002 *Lingua Latina* (Traupman, Amsco)
- 2001 *Cambridge Latin Course*, Fourth Edition (Pope et al., Cambridge)
- 1997 *Reading Classical Latin* (Ball, McGraw Hill)
- 1986 *Reading Latin* (Jones and Sidwell, Cambridge)
- 1986 *Latin for Reading* (Knudsvig et al., University of Michigan Press)
- 1982 *Latin Via Ovid* (Goldman and Nyenhuis, Wayne State Univ. Press)
- 1977 *Latin: An Intensive Course* (Moreland and Flesicher, University of California Press)
- 2011 *Lingua Latina per se Illustrata* (Ørberg, Focus)
- 1990 *The Jenney Latin Program* (Pearson)
- 1995 *Latin Course for Schools* (Wilding, Bloomsbury)

### TEXTBOOK OVERVIEW

In *Latin for the New Millennium*, Milena Minkova and Terence Tunberg have produced a lavishly published and comprehensive series for introductory Latin (Bolchazy-Carducci 2008). Two hardback texts, Level 1 and Level 2, introduce the grammar with readings, exercises, cultural information, and abundant images. Each volume is supported by a workbook, audio files, a massive teacher's manual, and two enrichment texts by Rose Williams, one on history and one on mythology. As proclaimed in the marketing material, this system aims to combine "the best practices of the reading method and the traditional grammar approach" into a "fusion approach to Latin."



Level 1 contains twenty-one chapters with seven review sections, while Level 2 has fifteen chapters and five review sections along with ten readings from the *Life of Atticus* by Cornelius Nepos. Each chapter opens on a beautiful full-color page with an image and a quotation (*Memorābile Dictū*) anticipating the subsequent reading passage (see Figure 1). That passage, adapted from a Latin author, contains several new but unmarked grammatical elements that will then be explained (*Language Facts*) and practiced in exercises. A list of *Vocabulary to Learn* follows the first point of grammar, and the chapter concludes with a dialogue among modern students which is designed to promote the “oral element of language learning” and to become “a bridge between the lives of modern students” and the ancient authors (TM viii). After each set of three chapters, a review section revisits the vocabulary, sets additional grammar exercises, and presents three essays exploring the cultural context of Latin literature and connecting it to contemporary concerns. The Level 2 text adds to each chapter an unadapted but annotated selection from the *Life of Atticus* by Cornelius Nepos.

Three elements set *Latin for the New Millenium* apart from a typical introduction to Latin. First, the course encompasses the whole of our Latin heritage. Level 1 uses the adapted readings to provide a chronological survey from Plautus and Terence up to Augustine and Boethius. Level 2 continues the adapted readings from the medieval writings of Bede and Einhard on to the neo-Latin of Copernicus and *The Underground Journey of Nicolaus Klum* by Ludvig Holberg (1684-1754). The cultural essays maintain this broad perspective, exploring topics from Roman slavery to the scientific revolution.

Second, the series encourages conversation in Latin, starting with the modern dialogues that conclude each chapter. More significantly, the *Teacher's Manual* facilitates the practice of oral comprehension and production with multiple exercises constructed for each chapter. A script is provided, so teachers need not speak extemporaneously in Latin. These exchanges range from transformation (e.g. TM1.182 Change the plural form into the singular. Teacher: *aedificābāmus*. Expected response: *aedificābam*) to comprehension (e.g. TM1.257. Teacher: *Quis ad villam venit?* Expected response: *Seneca ad villam venit*). Also available for purchase are MP3 files of the adapted passages read by Anna Andresian and Professor E. Del Chrol.



**Figure 1. *Latin for the New Millenium*, Chapter 7, p. 1.111**

Third and last, the authors and publisher have created an extensive network of support. Each level has a thick, legal-sized, spiral-bound *Teacher's Manual* that reprints every page of the textbook alongside notes, tips, activity suggestions, exercise answers, passage translations, and oral exercises. An online *Teacher's Lounge* for registered instructors offers free downloads of reproducible worksheets, answer keys, test banks, maps, and more, and it also hosts a forum and blogs to encourage sharing instructional ideas and resources.

Jim McKeown breathes fresh air into the traditional Grammar-Translation approach in *Classical Latin: An Introductory Course* (Hackett Publishing 2010) with the addition of vocabulary reinforcement, brief reading passages with comprehension questions, some creative exercises, and a generous portion of whimsy in the *porcus* who consistently appears in examples of syntax (see Figure 2). Each chapter opens deductively with an introduction and explanation of grammatical concepts, accompanied by charts and illustrative sentences. Practice exercises and readings (*Prōlūsiōnēs*) centered on the new grammar and vocabulary follow, and the chapter concludes with some fun (*Lūsūs*) exploring derivatives (*Thēsauros Verbōrum*) and Roman culture

Compare these three sentences:

The pig is singing.

The farmer says, "The pig is singing."

The farmer says that the pig is singing.

The first two are both examples of **direct statements**. The first is the original direct statement. The second simply quotes that direct statement in its original form. The third, however, is an example of **indirect statement**, in which the original statement is not quoted but **reported**.

In Latin, as you might expect, the two direct statements would be expressed as *porcus canit* and *agricola "porcus canit" ait*. An **indirect statement, however, uses the infinitive in the appropriate tense, and puts the subject of the original statement in the accusative**:

*agricola porcum canere dicit.*

The farmer says that the pig is singing.

To translate an indirect statement involving the negative of "say" or an equivalent verb, *nōn* is rarely used; rather, you use the verb *negō*, literally, "I deny":

*agricola porcum canere negat.*

The farmer says that the pig is not singing.

What happens, though, if the verb in the indirect statement takes a direct object?

*agricola porcum carmen canere dicit.*

The farmer says that the pig is singing a song.

In this sentence, both the subject (*porcum*) and the object (*carmen*) of the infinitive are in the accusative case. You cannot use case here to determine which is the subject and which is the direct object, but common sense and context usually prevent confusion.

Figure 2. *Classical Latin, Chapter 21, p. 245*



(*Vita Rōmānōrum*). More exercises populate the separate Workbook, which includes a key for self-correction, and a [website](#) presents a potpourri of learning resources.

The clear repetition of these elements exhibits an attractive simplicity, as do the twenty-eight chapters, which permit an uncomplicated division of a chapter per week for a two-semester college sequence. That reasonable pace is supported by a text that is easy to read, with ample room on the 8½ x 11 inch pages. Page headers indicating chapter number and grammatical subject let you know where you are, while bold headings visibly divide the chapter sections.

*Disce!* by Ken Kitchell and Tom Sienkewicz (Prentice Hall/Pearson 2011) has been carefully constructed to fulfill the *Standards for Classical Language Learning* by building on the foundation of a continuous narrative newly written for the text. This element of the reading method, however, is married with a more traditional presentation of grammar because the authors find pedagogical value in both approaches (I.xix). *Disce!* has two relatively slim volumes incorporating reading, grammar, and culture, supported by two workbooks, audio files, a subscription website, and two PDF Instructor's Resources Manuals containing a wealth of teaching materials.

The twenty chapters in each volume present two 250-word reading passages (*Lectiō Prīma* and *Lectiō Secunda*), each preceded by pre-reading material and followed by the explanation of new morphology or syntax (*Grammatica A* and *B*). Each chapter concludes with sections considering salient cultural information (*Mōrēs Rōmānī*), the influence of Latin today (*Latīna Hodierna*), the geography of the Roman world (*Orbis Terrārum Rōmānus*), and a deeper look into the chapter's grammar (*Angulus Grammaticus*). The text, though using smaller type, is attractively printed with distinct headings and effective use of color and images.

*Disce!* distinguishes itself first by its three-pronged approach to grammar. New concepts are briefly previewed before a reading passage. After the reading (see Figure 5), the concept is fully explained. The chapter ends with additional grammatical explanation of aspects deemed useful but not essential to reading. The series also offers tremendous support for the classroom, including three suggested syllabi for utilizing the *Disce!* materials in two or three semesters with four or five meetings per week. A unique feature of *Disce!* is *MyLatinLab*, an online subscription to practice and review materials. This learning management software, parallel to a broader product like Blackboard or Moodle, presents a digital version of the exercises from the *Student Activity Manual*.

A bold approach informs *I Came, I Saw, I Translated: An Accelerated Method for Learning Classical Latin in the 21st Century* by Drew A. Mannetter (BrownWalker Press 2011), which squarely faces the dilemma of teaching the Latin language while introducing an authentic Roman voice within the constraints of a one-year language requirement. Students dive immediately into the first chapter of Caesar's *Gallic War*, and the unadapted text determines the introduction of morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. The whole of the first paragraph is presented to open *Pars Prima* and is then broken down into eight sentences, which are broken down into clauses, which are broken down into the constituent words. Students focus on the form, meaning and syntax of one word at a time and then work upward to translate the clause, the sentence and the paragraph (see Figure 3). This procedure continues in *Pars Secunda* (BG 2), while *Pars Tertia* (BG 4, 5, 24-28) presents sentence and clause, but not individual words. Caesar begins his work *Gallia est omnis dīvisā in partēs trēs*, so students first meet *Gallia*, which introduces them to the concepts of noun, inflection,

Before beginning Sentence X, read *The Gallic War*, 6.21-44: ethnography of the Germans; the campaign against Ambiorix and answer the questions provided in the appropriate study guide in Appendix E.

Translate the following sentence using the notes below.

**X) Is, M. Messālā et M. Pisōne cōsulibus, rēgnī cupiditāte inductus coniūrātiōnem nōbilitātis fēcit, et cīvitatī persuāsit, ut dē finibus suis cum omnibus cōpiis exirent, perfacile esse, cum virtūte omnibus praestarent, tōtius Galliae imperiō potiri.**

Be prepared to discuss the translation: choices for word meanings, word order, difficulties involved and the solutions to those difficulties. What aspects of this sentence are not able to be translated? What are the nuances involved in the Latin by which Caesar uses words to suggest connotation beside denotation?

**Figure 3. *I Came, I Saw, I Translated*, Chapter 10, p. 186**

declensions, case, number, gender, and then to the paradigm of the first declension. Worksheets residing in Appendix B are assigned to provide additional practice of the grammatical concepts.

Because Caesar's account of his campaign against the Helvetians organizes this introduction to the Latin language, the demonstrative pronoun *hic* occurs on Page 81 in Sentence 2 of Paragraph 1, while the demonstrative pronoun *ille* appears as the last grammatical item on Page 325 in Sentence 5 of Paragraph 28. The *Endnote* alerts the student preparing for further study that three major points of grammar have not appeared in the text: the imperative mood, the future tense, and the future perfect tense. These grammatical idiosyncrasies are the trade-off for immersing students in a meaningful text. Students also encounter the larger context with English-language reading assignments for the whole of the *Gallic War* (not included), supplemented by study questions in Appendix E. A single volume contains the text and grammatical explanations, along with glossary (Appendix A), reference grammar (Appendix C), and more. Thorough tables of contents, one for the whole book and one to begin each section, lay a clear map of the ground to be covered. I find, however, that the lack of a content header on each page impedes navigation, as do the densely printed, numbered but not titled, grammatical explanations. By contrast, a dark box with white numbers makes it easier to identify the sentence and word under consideration in the first two parts, though the third part abandons this device.

Wiley-Blackwell has entered the market with the Grammar-Translation approach of *Wiley's Real Latin* by Robert Maltby and Kenneth Belcher (2013). Its intensive approach relies for its readings exclusively on sentences and passages unchanged from their ancient Roman sources. Twenty-one chapters outline the morphological and syntactical patterns encountered in Latin texts, and the grammatical explanations are frequently accompanied by a "Try This" section providing morphological practice via parsing, constructing forms, and translating single words to and from Latin. All chapters after the first have nine Latin sentences for translation into English (see Figure 4) as well

**TRANSLATION FROM LATIN**

1. veni Athenas, inquit Democritus, neque me quisquam ibi agnovit. (Cicero *Tusculanae Disputationes* 5.104)
2. in eo itinere persuadet Castico . . . Sequano, cuius pater regnum in Sequanis multos annos obtinuerat. (Caesar *De Bello Gallico* 1.3.5)
3. magna est hominum opinio de te, magna commendatio liberalitatis, magna memoria consulatus tui. (Cicero *Epistulae ad Familiares* 1.7.9)
4. ego eo die casu apud Pompeium cenavi. (Cicero *Epistulae ad Familiares* 1.2.3)
5. de litterarum missione sine causa abs te accusor. (Cicero *Epistulae ad Atticum* 1.5.3)
6. hic locus aequum fere spatium a castris . . . Ariovisti et Caesaris aberat. (Caesar *De Bello Gallico* 1.43.2)
7. omnia tela totius accusationis in Oppianicum coniciebantur, aperiebatur causa insidiarum, Fabriciorum familiaritas commemorabatur. (Cicero *Pro Cluentio* 50).
8. proximique <Belgae> sunt Germanis, qui trans Rhenum incolunt, quibuscum continenter bellum gerunt. qua de causa Helvetii quoque reliquos Gallos virtute praecedunt, quod fere cotidianis proeliis cum Germanis contendunt. (Caesar *De Bello Gallico* 1.1.3–4)
9. nostri milites facile superabant . . . quod in conspectu Caesaris atque omnis exercitus res gerebatur . . . omnes enim colles ac loca superiora, unde erat propinquus despectus in mare, ab exercitu tenebantur. (Caesar *De Bello Gallico* 3.14.8–9)

**HINT!** Abs is simply a variant spelling of the preposition ab.

**Figure 4. Wiley's Real Latin, Chapter 10, p. 116**

This document also contains a melange of pedagogical resources, including teaching tips, additional examples of complicated syntax, answer keys for the exercises, and further reading passages. The online component features a growing library of resources and directs students to [www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com) for digital vocabulary flashcards.

**Table 2. Textbook Features.**

Textbook	workbook	web exercises	conversation	audio files
<i>Latin for the New Millennium</i>	yes	no	yes	yes
<i>Classical Latin</i>	yes	yes	no	yes
<i>Disce!</i>	yes	yes	yes	yes
<i>I Came, I Saw, I Translated</i>	included	no	no	no
<i>Wiley's Real Latin</i>	no	vocabulary	no	no

### PEDAGOGICAL PREMISES

I preface my evaluation of these five recently published textbooks by echoing the consensus that the learning in a Latin classroom has as its central goal reading authentic literature (Distler 1, Mannetter 4, May 150)<sup>3</sup> within the broader context of the *Standards for Classical Language Learning*.

<sup>3</sup> Wooten (186) questions the feasibility of this goal in such a compressed timeframe, and I heard a similar sentiment expressed at the 2012 meeting of the Alabama Classical Association.

as nine English sentences for translation back into their original Latin. Beginning with Chapter 13, chapters conclude with longer, unadapted reading passages of ten to twenty lines. This shift at Chapter 12 reflects the authorial intention of a mid-year break, twelve chapters in the first semester followed by nine in the second. They explain their strategy in the introduction to an Instructor's Manual, available online for registered teachers.

I want my students to find the meaning that can be lost in translation, so all of the work teaching and learning the forms and functions of words in the Latin language should be means to the ultimate end of understanding ideas expressed in Latin. If my students do learn to read authentic Latin texts, their reading will not result from continuously, consciously applying rules of syntax (McCaffrey 116). Instead, as reading uncovers meaning mediated through a written text, students should experience Latin as an act of communication, not as a corpse for dissection. A painful moment in my Elementary Latin stand-up routine finds me saying, “Latin does not communicate one [pause] word [a second pause] at [more interminable pausing] a time.” Ideas, not individual words, occupy the attention of experienced Latin readers, so novices should likewise focus on ideas. Nor do I want my students to understand reading Latin as a treadmill of perpetual translation. I am also in the habit of asking a confident student with a good sense of humor, “What does this Latin passage say in English?” I make sure that this is an impossible task beyond the competence of the student, and when the student hesitates and then bravely stumbles forward, I step in with, “It doesn’t say anything in English. It says something in Latin.” I chuckle, my students groan.

My course and its textbook should offer students the potential for future fluency by promoting deep learning of how Latin communicates. That learning experience belongs to students and takes place through actual changes to the neural connections housed inside their crania. All of my teaching cannot ‘learn’ my students the morphological, syntactical and lexical awareness that can open a door to Vergil’s epic or Cicero’s oratory. Any learning that does occur will successfully harness cognitive processes operating in the brains of our students. As you may have heard,

*a critical condition for the acquisition of new knowledge is the existence of prior knowledge, which can be built in a mental model or “schema.” Formation of “schemas” is a central event in student-centered active learning, by which mental models are constructed and reconstructed... Recently, evidence has been obtained that new information processed by the hippocampus can be consolidated into a stable, neocortical network more rapidly if this new information fits readily into a “schema.” (Ruiter, van Kesteren, and Fernandez 225)*

Like you, I want Latin consolidated into a stable, neocortical network, the more rapidly the better. From which I deduce that I need students to construct mental models that employ prior knowledge to promote the acquisition of Latin. New morphological, syntactical, and lexical information about Latin needs to connect to what students already know. The research-based principles for teaching published in *How Learning Works* make practical this science of learning (Ambrose *et al.*). Students need to be able to organize what they learn into mental structures that are “well-matched with the way that knowledge needs to be accessed and used” (Ambrose *et al.* 49). Students will move toward mastery of reading Latin when they “acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned” (Ambrose *et al.* 95). At the heart of this enterprise lies “goal-directed practice coupled with targeted feedback” (Ambrose *et al.* 125). Mapping these tested truths about how the brain learns on to the process of communication with an emphasis on reading should drive the approach I and my textbook adopt for introducing students to comprehending ideas expressed in Latin. What are the component skills if we move beyond, “agricola, agricolae, agricolae...”, and what sort of activities will connect form, function, and meaning? Although much of this thinking will reveal that effective teaching practices have been handed

down because they are effective teaching practices, I cannot assume that the way I learned Latin is the way I need to teach Latin. And I need every trick in the book to inculcate real learning in students whose goals do not include a doctorate in classical philology.

### READING

From day one, students should have confidence that words written in Latin can make sense. Meaningful comprehension stands as the central goal for accessing and using the knowledge learned about Latin, and plentiful reading offers the best opportunity to integrate those component skills. Since communication is the end to which the formal grammar is only the means, the morphological and syntactical elements of Latin are not enough—the pieces need to fit together, and ample reading demonstrates for students that the pieces can and do fit together. That requires an abundance of meaningful input. Isolated sentences can offer useful, targeted practice, but continuous passages deliver the abundance that encourages reading comprehension, reading from left to right, and efficient reading strategies.<sup>4</sup> In Stephen Krashen's words, "Reading is the only way, the only way we become good readers, develop a good writing style, an adequate vocabulary, advanced grammatical competence, and the only way we become good spellers" (20). Although Krashen's insistence on the necessity and sufficiency of reading apart from direct instruction has not been sustained by empirical research (Carlon 107), the fundamental premise that readers need to read stands (Fernández 156-7).

My rough calculations indicate that *Disce!* presents students with 20,000 words of connected prose from a single narrative of created Latin about a patrician family and a plebeian family living in Rome in 9 BC; *Latin for the New Millennium* with 10,000 words from adapted passages in a chronological survey of our Latin inheritance with another 2,000 of unaltered Nepos; and *Classical Latin* with 4,000 words in passages selected independently of each other for their intrinsic interest and their grammatical suitability. I appreciate that all three establish the context for the passage, provide lexical support within view of the passage and pose questions that privilege comprehension over translation. *Wiley's Real Latin* waits until Chapter 13 and the second semester to introduce 1,500 words in connected readings of unadapted Latin poetry. *I Came, I Saw I Translated* uses about 1,200 words of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* but proceeds by disconnecting that connected prose into its component pieces.

My own experience using the 1,750 words of Eutropius found in Beyer's *War With Hannibal* as a supplementary weekly reading in the second semester of Elementary Latin convinces me that more is more. With appropriate cultural and lexical support and without stopping to analyze every word, connected passages let students read for meaning (Gruber-Miller 1998: 171). This should encourage deep learning because it can help them structure what they have learned for its true purpose, comprehension, and because it provides plentiful practice in the necessary integration of component skills.

### VOCABULARY

The acquisition of sufficient vocabulary stands as a fundamental skill for Latin students because lexical awareness remains a key component in language acquisition (Richards and Rogers

<sup>4</sup> Teaching fluent reading rather than piecemeal decoding has entered the recent classical conversation with the work of Hoyos and later Gruber-Miller, McCaffrey and Lister. Kitchell has alerted us to the inescapable importance of cultural context. Outside of our discipline, the nature of learning to read a second language has generated its own extensive bibliography, e.g. Bernhardt, Hudson, and Koda.

138).<sup>5</sup> Morphological and syntactical competence can help a Latin student analyze the potential functions of a Latin word ending in ‘-ī’:

### NOUNS

- *Genitive Singular*
- *Dative Singular*
- *Ablative Singular*
- *Nominative Plural*
- *Locative*
- *Vocative Singular*
- *Vocative Plural*

### VERBS

- *Present Singular Imperative*
- *Present Passive Infinitive*
- *Perfect Active First Singular*

But sorting through possibilities is not reading, and a strong vocabulary can preclude such ambiguity. When I audited a course in Biblical Hebrew at Samford’s Beeson Divinity School in 2010-2011, I was introduced to the relatively simple system of prefixes and suffixes for verbs along with the complexity of Masoretic vowel pointing. I have discovered that recognizing the stem allows me to quickly and even unconsciously recognize the form before I come to grips with the vowel points. I suspect that is true for Latin students, so I want to do more than present a list of words with the commandment, “Go and Memorize.” Too many of my students have stumbled over the brute application of memory, so my textbook and I need to deploy the science of learning to develop a strategy for constructing a framework that connects new Latin words to what students already know (Distler Chapter 4). Word frequency lists should help determine which words we ask students to invest their mental energy in learning (Muccigrosso; Francese).<sup>6</sup> The selected words should be learned at a sustainable pace. Images, derivatives, and word families should help connect these Latin words to prior knowledge, and Latin sentences containing new vocabulary, as well as English sentences with the target word in Latin, will situate each new item in a meaningful context. Above all, the targeted words should appear frequently in reading.

*Disce!* and *Latin for a New Millennium* make an intentional effort to support vocabulary acquisition. *LNM* has geared its vocabulary selection for the Advanced Placement examinations, while *Disce!* has consulted several frequency lists to determine which words students should commit to memory (1.xxi). Both textbooks present in every chapter a list of twenty to twenty-five words intended for learning that is distinguished from additional vocabulary printed to assist in reading a passage. Each also offers vocabulary exercises based on derivatives in the book as well as in the printed and online workbook material. *LNM’s Teacher’s Manual* recommends some basic

<sup>5</sup> Vocabulary, like reading, is the focus of research in the field of Second Language Acquisition.

<sup>6</sup> I regularly and gratefully return for guidance on vocabulary to the hard work of the Resources page at the [Dickinson Classical Commentaries](#)..



strategies for vocabulary acquisition: speaking the word aloud, writing it down, making flashcards, identifying derivatives, and pairing the word with clip art (Teacher's Manual Volume 1: 5). *Classical Latin* also highlights the lexical connection between English and Latin with its *Thēaurus Verbōrum*, putting into practice a principle outlined in the Introduction: "You Already Know More Latin Than You Think: Using English to Master Latin Vocabulary" (xvi). It does seem unbalanced that its vocabulary lists vary in length from sixty words in Chapter Seven down to twenty-two words in Chapter Nine. Its online exercises focus on vocabulary acquisition with a recording of the words, a definition matching exercise, and web-based flashcards. *I Came, I Saw, I Translated* places relevant vocabulary before the sentence in which it occurs. Words that have appeared three times are considered learned and will not appear in the vocabulary for later sentences. The student is instructed to commit the vocabulary to memory as part of the work in translating the sentence. *Wiley's Real Latin*, through chapter twelve, separates the learned vocabulary of forty words or so from a longer list of lexical support for chapter readings. The entire vocabulary, for learning and for support, is posted at [Quizlet.com](http://Quizlet.com), which provides a variety of activities based on digital vocabulary flashcards.

All of the texts, however, offer vocabulary as a list of Latin words with English equivalents. Beyond some work with derivatives and digital flashcards, teacher and student are on their own to find ways to achieve deep learning of vocabulary. The potential of the digital world to give meaning to Latin words through imagery and context is untapped.

**Table 3. Vocabulary Quantified.**

Textbook	Approx. Words per Chapter	Approx. Total Words
<i>Latin for the New Millennium</i>	21	749
<i>Classical Latin</i>	varies from 20-60	747
<i>Disce!</i>	20 (Ch. 2-20) / 25 (Ch. 21-40)	897
<i>I Came, I Saw, I Translated</i>	n/a	498
<i>Wiley's Real Latin</i>	38 (Ch. 1-12) / 81 (Ch. 13-21)	1186

### GRAMMATICAL EXPLANATIONS

Latin students, of course, need to recognize the significance of the language's inflected nouns and verbs or their lexical knowledge will result in nothing more than Vocabulary Soup, stirring the English definitions of Latin words in order to fish for meaning. The complexity of the morphology and syntax, according to the science of learning, can only be apprehended when our students' brains connect it to an existing cognitive framework. Grammatical explanations and examples, therefore, need to explicitly build on known concepts, and grammatical analysis should serve the final goal of comprehension and not be an end in itself. Because I have good reason to assume that my students arrive with a limited grasp of English grammar, the text needs to help them triangulate Latin syntactical functions, English syntactical functions, and the language of grammar that describes these functions. Too much information can overload the cognitive capacity of our students: "It is generally accepted that our brain cannot process all the information with which it is bombarded" (Marois and Ivanoff 298, cf. Buschman *et al.*). Clear, simple discussions will connect new syntax to what they have already learned about Latin and to what they intuitively understand about English. All of this should occur in a meaningful context with abundant input so students can repeatedly see forms and appreciate what a form communicates.

*Oratio obliqua* poses an obvious challenge in learning how Latin communicates and will serve here as a proxy for each textbook's approach to grammar. Quickly recognizing indirect statement and easily comprehending it are a *sine qua non* of fluent reading given its ubiquity in Latin texts. Our students, however, may not easily intuit its meaning since English does not use an accusative and an infinitive for this function. A cognitive bridge must be carefully engineered to connect this new and unusual syntax to what student's already know.

*Latin for the New Millenium* has the strength of starting early. [Chapter 7](#) in Volume One (out of thirty-six chapters across two volumes) introduces indirect statements (see Figure 1), so students have most of their elementary Latin experience to digest this important construction. Subsequent chapters (I checked 8, 9 and 10) include indirect statements in the reading, so students get to practice what they have begun to learn. Chapters 20 and 21 offer a reprise when perfect and future infinitives are introduced. Thus, only the present active and present passive infinitives are initially available to students, thereby reducing the cognitive load when students first encounter indirect statements. This approach eschews the traditional ordering, à la *Wheelock's Latin* Chapter 25, that summarizes all of the infinitive forms before showing how they operate in an indirect statement. I think the traditional approach risks stressing the cognitive capacity of students by burdening them with the forms of the infinitive when they should focus, as *LNM* permits, on recognizing reported statements. One *LNM* exercise reinforces that focus with Latin sentences for translation that contain indirect statement and reuse the ideas and vocabulary of the initial reading. A second exercise offers direct quotations to be transformed into indirect statement, the workbook offers similar tasks, and the teacher's manual contains two oral exercises asking students to produce reported statements. This emphasis on the relationship between direct quotations and indirect statements may help students achieve the necessary cognitive connection that will make them comfortable with a seemingly unnatural construction.

*Disce!* teaches indirect statement later in the game, Chapter 29 in Volume Two (out of forty chapters across two volumes). I do like the clever move in the reading: the grandfather, hard of hearing, misunderstands his interlocutors and so needs everything repeated to him—which happens in indirect statement (see Figure 5). The passage highlights the construction with italic and bold type for the introductory verb, accusative subject



Figure 5. *Disce!*, Chapter 29

and infinitive action. I appreciate the clarity in both format and expression of the preliminary overview of the construction and the later, more detailed explanation. The pre-reading and post-reading exercises focus on the relative time represented by the tense of the infinitive in the indirect statement, which I would defer as a later refinement once the notion of an accusative subject and infinitive verb has taken root. I particularly miss additional practice in the workbook and the juxtaposition of sample direct quotations alongside their reported versions.

*Classical Latin* opens Chapter 21 (out of twenty-eight chapters) with clear English examples of a statement, a quoted statement, and a reported statement (see Figure 2), and a helpful exercise asks students to transform direct statements into indirect statement. I am afraid the chapter will test the cognitive capacity of students with an abundance of explanation in sub-sections titled: Infinitives, Agreement in Indirect Discourse, Infinitives of Irregular Verbs, Translating Indirect Statements, Pronouns and Indirect Statement. Perhaps it's an example of the best getting in the way of the good, but these intricacies may be more than a student can take on in a week dedicated to indirect statement. The presence of *CL*'s mascot *porcus* does mean that the vocabulary will be familiar, and the textbook presents twenty Latin sentences and ten English sentences for translation practice.

When *I Came, I Saw, I Translated* introduces indirect statement as it approaches the tenth of thirteen sentences examined in the first two parts (see Figure 3), it advises students that the construction "is a very common feature in Latin prose and consequently one must become very familiar with this construction" (199), but the text's format means that students will have limited exposure to the accusative and infinitive—I count three appearances (Sentences 10 and 13 and Chapter 5.2). Nor is practice provided in the worksheets. The initial explanation contrasts direct and indirect quotations but then shifts its terminology to object clauses, which seems to me to add a layer of complexity. The model sentences for demonstrating the relative time of the infinitive's tense consist of variations on "**dīcit sē facere** / *He says that he is making*). It is short and sweet, but it seems incomplete and so not an example of comprehensible input.

*Wiley's Real Latin* uses Chapter 10 (out of twenty-one chapters) to teach infinitives, indirect statement, reflexive pronouns and syncopated perfects (see Figure 4). Early is good, but one brief English example of direct and indirect speech is lost in a compact paragraph describing rather than demonstrating the concept: "What in English is the finite verb of the clause becomes in Latin an infinitive and the subject of the infinitive goes into the accusative case." I don't have the students who will follow that compact explanation nor apply this deductive analysis to the five unadapted Latin examples from five different contexts, two of which appear in the discussion of reflexive pronouns. I'm afraid the concision of this approach leaves the cognitive engineering to the student.

If *Wiley's Real Latin* presents a condensed version of traditional, deductive grammatical instruction with its descriptive rules incorporating examples followed by practice, all of the textbooks utilize some version of this "presentation-production-practice" model that undervalues the need for students to connect form to meaning via comprehensible input (Fernández 155-6).

### LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

Understanding indirect statement specifically and Latin syntax generally, consolidating vocabulary acquisition, and integrating these component skills to read an authentic text demands more time than is available in the college classroom (May 149, Wooten 186). Students need hours of sustained interaction with Latin in order to enable learning, so they need the opportunity to actively engage the language outside of the classroom with effective practice material. That effort

needs focus and it needs feedback. The time-honored practice of translating sentences at home for review in class lacks both focus and feedback: any given sentence presents multiple morphological, syntactical and lexical variables that hamper an instructor from identifying the real obstacles to understanding, and classroom review delays the feedback until students may not remember the reasoning behind their correct or incorrect responses. The contemporary digital ecosystem should enable the development of exercises in reading comprehension and linguistic competency that can be machine-graded, increasing the student's productivity without overburdening the instructor. A spectrum of practice activities should set simpler tasks before more complex challenges. Such exercises succeed when students can experience accomplishment, when they can see the progress they are making and understand where they need to strengthen their understanding.

A central goal of practice is to promote automaticity (Segalowitz), quickly and unconsciously processing Latin lexical, morphological and syntactic information to recognize meaningful input. Because "it can be helpful to minimize cognitive load temporarily while students develop greater fluency with component skills or learn to integrate them" (Ambrose *et al.* 116), many of the exercises should be brief with a carefully targeted goal, followed by the instant feedback available on a digital platform. This need not involve the traditionally mind-numbing drill-and-kill structural practice performed devoid of meaningful context.

What I spend too many hours doing is scrambling to construct what I hope are more engaging materials for student work in and out of the classroom. I want activities with narrow semantic, syntactic and cultural boundaries so that students' attention is directed to the specific goal of the exercise. I want activities that use questions about meaning to examine form: I do not want students to construct Dative Plurals, but to construct a Dative Plural because a meaningful answer to a question requires a recipient. I do not want students to change verb forms from singular to plural, but to notice, choose or produce a plural verb because a plural subject has been mentioned or depicted. I do not want students to find the verb in a sentence, but I do want them to answer a question about what is happening in a clause or sentence. I want meaningful, *i.e.* communicative, rather than mechanical exercises, exercises based in reading and hearing ideas that are familiar to the students from our readings and discussions in class. I would also like activities that encourage reading strategies and comprehension. Because open-ended responses to questions are difficult for machine-grading, perhaps a sentence or a passage could highlight chunks, the words or phrases that constitute the elements of the idea, and students could choose the information supplied by each chunk. Connecting ideas from readings to images also seems feasible in the digital realm.

The printed workbook seems to have become a standard feature of an introductory textbook and the home for the sort of practice in which I need students engaging outside of the classroom. Four of the five textbooks reviewed offer this feature. None, unfortunately, would save me from the arduous labor of inventing my own activities because reading isn't practiced and forms aren't practiced in the context of reading. Decontextualized grammar and direct translation predominate.

Chapter 7 in the *Student Workbook* of *LNM* starts with declining noun-adjective phrases (*longa pax*) and follows with translating a third declension noun phrases into Latin given cues for the case ("by means of love"). Two of the exercises are direct translations of a passage paraphrasing Catullus. I do appreciate the two exercises that ask students to transform direct statements into indirect statements, but translation, composition and paradigms loom large in this workbook and in the textbook. I was surprised that in *Latin for the New Millenium*—given its emphasis on comprehension and communication—translation, composition, and transformations of words, phrases and sentences supply the bulk of the exercises.

Chapter 21 of the workbook for *Classical Latin* starts with parsing one word from an authentic quotation, and then proceeds to more creative drills. *Errant Etiam Magistri* asks students to identify an incorrect word or sentence in a group. *Respice Finem* requires students to supply endings missing from a Latin idea, often an authentic quote, with the help of the English translation. *Verba Distingue* tests lexical and morphological awareness by presenting a string of letters to be divided into words and translated: *QUANDOPORCAMREPERIREPOTERITIS?* (14). *Verba Segrega* lists three words, one of which does not share a characteristic of the other two: *miserārum*, *mīserimus*, *miserrimus* (99). *Verba Rescribe* scrambles the letters of Latin words in a specified grammatical form for students to unscramble: *ISINGUP* (3<sup>rd</sup> decl. adj.) (36). Finally, *Verborum Formae* sends students to their vocabulary lists and paradigms to identify the requested forms: “Which four forms of **brevis**, **breve** have six letters?” (36). These exercises appear consistently through the workbook, which is a positive; they are brief, another positive; and they are puzzles, a third positive. Students may well enjoy these exercises, even more so with Professor McKeown at the helm, but I don’t see how they will help develop reading habits that are my goal for students. The textbook sets the expected exercises in translation and composition, begins its practice sections with a parsing exercise and often uses a transformation exercise.

Chapter 29 of the *Student Activities Manual* for *Disce!* focuses twelve of its eighteen exercises on identifying, constructing or transforming single words without a context, e.g.

- 29-01. Identify the Gender Number and Case of perfect passive participles  
filium captum \_\_\_\_\_
- 29-02. Select the Present Active Participles from the following list  
\_\_\_\_\_ dicentī
- 29-05. Change the Perfect Passive Participle to a future active participle  
matrem missam \_\_\_\_\_

I do like the two exercises focused on reading comprehension. The first poses Latin questions and asks for open-ended Latin responses. The second presents separate English sentences that together summarize a reading and asks students to number the sentences in order of the occurrence. Like *LNM*, however, the decontextualized grammar overwhelms the reading in the hybrid approach to practicing the language.

*I Came, I Saw, I Translated* tasks the student with a thoughtful translation into idiomatic English (230). Its exercises in the grammar and in the included worksheets focus on paradigms in addition to translation and composition. Metalinguistic questions recur that ask students to explain syntactical concepts. *Wiley’s Real Latin* has no workbook, and the textbook practice sticks to translation and composition with occasional form manipulation in boxes labeled “Try This.” Both of these texts appear to omit developing component skills before asking for the integration required by translation.

So I am not satisfied with how our discipline in general and these textbooks in particular ask students to practice. I am convinced that work on the component skills is necessary to develop the automaticity that enables true integration. So translation of entire ideas needs to be preceded by focus on particular elements of ideas. And I want to prioritize function over form, with students seeing direct objects or objects of prepositions or duration of time and not just accusatives. I want them to recognize the morphological signals not because they will submit to grammatical analysis but because they answer questions about what the idea communicates. And I want all of this available digitally with assessment instantly available to the student and to me.



### ONLINE EXERCISES

Because rapid feedback is central for targeted practice of specific goals, I would like to see all such activities and exercises migrate to the computer, whether floating in the World Wide Web, anchored in some learning management software, or downloaded as an app on a phone or tablet. In my perfect world, preliminary modules would pose simple morphological questions as new concepts are explained and illustrated, practice modules would examine syntax in the context of meaningful ideas, while mastery modules with a vast array of questions would help student and instructor see if the concepts were aiding comprehension. All of this would connect to an extensive reading program that provides a rich cultural context for the more focused instruction on forms,<sup>7</sup> and all of this would have an empirical basis in the scholarship of teaching and learning that identifies the kinds of practice that show real evidence of effectiveness.

*Disce!* moves furthest in the direction of feedback with its *My Latin Lab* subscription. This is a digitized version of the workbook exercises, but incorrect responses elicit questions to guide the student's thinking and a **Need help?** tool directs students to relevant resources. A *Readiness Check* quizzes students on their metalinguistic understanding prior to tackling new concepts. Students who score poorly on the pre-test are directed to brief grammar tutorials.

*I Came, I Saw, I Translated* has no digital presence, while the online components of *Wiley's Real Latin* and *Classical Latin* center on vocabulary acquisition, and do not have the capacity for reporting student performance to the instructor. The website of *Classical Latin* does include an exercise in each chapter that asks students to use a word bank to fill in ten blanks of a new, one hundred word story. This seems particularly difficult but should compel students to build linguistic expectations. The website of *Latin for the New Millennium* describes *Electronic Resources for Students*, but the text does not appear to have its own online or app-based exercises, despite Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers' investment in connecting Classics to the digital universe, as seen in its [iPodius storefront](#) and its presence in *Second Life* and *World of Warcraft*. *LNM* does have digital flashcards for the iPod family by Ed De Horatius, and its *Teacher's Lounge* contains a bank of test questions in a format suitable for use on the educational website *QUIA*. An e-version of the workbooks includes the ability to complete exercises on the screen. A preview of this feature mentioned emailing answers to the teacher—and my email crashed just thinking about it. I prefer for the computer to handle what grading it can and so make my life simpler while giving the students instant feedback. That may be why the publicity materials direct the reader to *Looking at Latin Online*, third-party software sold at *iPodius* that contains over 6,000 self-correcting, illustrated questions based on Anna Andresian's eponymous graphic Latin grammar. This could be a tremendous review tool, but it does not function as an instrument for assessment. Centaur Systems has developed a module of its *Latina* program reviewing forms and vocabulary for *LNM*.

### CONCLUSION

The perfect Latin textbook will never exist, and when it does, it will be a learning system rather than a single printed volume. Although not, to my mind, perfect, I expect that each of these new entries to the unexpectedly crowded field of introductory Latin textbooks will acquire adherents who find it suited to their style of teaching. I commend the authors for the passion to embark on such a formidable task and the diligence to complete it. I particularly appreciate the emphasis on comprehension found in the reading passages of *Disce!*, *Latin for the New Millennium*, and

<sup>7</sup> On extensive reading, see Day and Bamford; on form-focused instruction within a meaningful context, see Anderson and Beckwith.

*Classical Latin*, all of which also provide audio files that reinforce for students that Latin is a language. This convergence on communication provides direction for the cognitive framework constructed to house the syntax of the language. I also like the move toward digital tools common to those three plus *Wiley's Real Latin*, since these tools can accomplish the focused practice and feedback necessary for deep learning. I do hope that in the coming years, such work is further informed by the science of learning so that we carry forward those pedagogical traditions that are proved sound and discard those that do not promote the consolidation into a stable, neocortical network the information required to comprehend Latin.

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