

**Jerneja Kavčič**Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana  
jerneja.kavcic@ff.uni-lj.si

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## THE REPRESENTATION OF MODERN GREEK IN ANCIENT GREEK TEXTBOOKS: A LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This article discusses attempts to introduce elements of Modern Greek into the teaching of Ancient Greek, focusing on Agnello and Orlando (1998), Elliger and Fink (1986), and Weileder and Mayerhöfer (2013). These textbooks occasionally introduce Modern Greek words and phrases; for instance, by presenting students of the ancient language with lists of Modern Greek words similar to those in Ancient Greek texts. I provide linguistic evidence in support of such attempts. This evidence concerns phenomena of convergences between the vocabularies of Ancient Greek, as taught in Ancient Greek classes, and the modern language.

According to Weileder and Mayerhöfer (2013: 4), the aim of incorporating elements of Modern Greek into their textbook is to show the “modern European dimension” of Greek, and thus, it seems, to increase the popularity of classical studies among students. Moreover, it should be emphasised that Ancient Greek continues to have a (relatively) stable position in the educational system of European countries. As a consequence, the first contact that students in many European countries (apart from Greece and Cyprus) have with Greek is often the ancient language rather than the modern one. Therefore, the idea of incorporating elements of Modern Greek into teaching its ancient predecessor deserves attention from the perspectives of both Modern Greek and classical studies.

Nevertheless, these attempts may seem more controversial from the linguistic and didactic perspectives, as it could be argued that Ancient Greek is too distinct from standard Modern Greek to render such attempts reasonable. To begin with, it is normally taught with the Erasmian pronunciation, which is significantly different than the pronunciation of Modern Greek.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence, it seems that no serious attempt at incorporating Modern Greek into teaching Ancient Greek can avoid explaining a significant number of pronunciation rules. This process may even have negative effects on learning the ancient language, because it may result in spending a significant amount of time explaining

<sup>1</sup> To be exact, there are several regional/national varieties of this pronunciation; see Allen (1974: 125–144).

differences between the pronunciation of Modern Greek and its ancient predecessor, or perhaps even cause students to confuse the former with the latter.

However, it is clear that Ancient and Modern Greek are related to one another by a degree of similarity and continuity, a phenomenon that most histories of Greek draw attention to. An example is Browning, who claimed back in 1969 that “It cannot be too much emphasized that Greek is one language, and not a series of distinct languages. If one wants to learn Greek, it does not really matter whether one begins with Homer, with Plato, with the New Testament, with the Romance of Digenis Akritas, or with Kazantzakis” (1969: 10).<sup>2</sup> This claim appears to speak in support of incorporating Modern Greek into teaching the ancient language because, according to Browning, it would be possible to start with Modern Greek in order to learn its ancient predecessor. Nevertheless, the claim goes back to the time before the adoption of Standard Modern Greek as the official language of the Greek state.<sup>3</sup> As a consequence, it is perhaps based on a notion of Modern Greek that had more in common with Ancient Greek than what applies nowadays. It is also clear that Browning’s account disregards phenomena displaying discontinuity between Ancient and Modern Greek, which are of course more than a few, and, in addition to the phonology (already referred to earlier), concern the syntax, the morphology, and lexicon.<sup>4</sup>

More recently, Joseph (2009-a: 369) has drawn attention to words in Greek that “have remained more or less intact over the years, e.g. *ἄνεμος* ‘wind’, *ἄλλος* ‘other’”. His account can be additionally supported by Allen (1974: 63), who at least in some cases – for instance, in the case of the Ancient Greek short vowels *ο* [o] and *ε* [e] – suggests that there is no significant difference between their ancient and modern pronunciations.<sup>5</sup> These are additional linguistic arguments supporting the incorporation of Modern Greek into the teaching of its ancient predecessor. It appears that at least some Modern Greek words could be used without explaining the differences between Ancient and Modern Greek in much detail.

## 2 AIMS

My aim is to discuss the attempts at incorporating Modern Greek (MG) into Ancient Greek (AG) textbooks from the linguistic perspective, focusing on the vocabulary. I examine the vocabulary taught in AG classes from the perspective of formal and semantic relations between the vocabularies of AG and MG.<sup>6</sup> I thus provide data that speak in sup-

2 On the concept of Greek as “one language”, see also Joseph (2009-b: 192–193).

3 This happened in 1976 with the abolition of Katharevousa as the official language of the Greek state (e.g., Mackridge 2009: 319).

4 See, for instance, Horrocks (2010: 160–188), Joseph (2009-a: 358–369).

5 See, however, Sturtevant (1940: 33, 47) for a different view.

6 In this article, the term *Ancient Greek* (AG) includes the language taught in AG classes, which is typically Classical Attic with elements of Ionic. The term *Modern Greek* (MG) includes the standard Modern Greek language (cf. footnote 3).

port of incorporating elements of MG into teaching AG and concern the degree of convergence between the AG vocabulary of the textbooks investigated in this study and the vocabulary of MG. It is assumed that, in linguistic and didactic terms, a non-controversial way to incorporate elements of MG into teaching the ancient language is to make students aware that by learning AG they also learn a part of MG, and that raising this awareness should be the first step towards students of AG learning the modern language.

My second aim is to evaluate the aforementioned attempts at incorporating elements of MG into AG textbooks. In order to do this, I explore the extent to which these AG textbooks reflect the relations of convergence (and divergence) between AG and MG vocabulary. For example, I examine whether or not these textbooks take advantage of the fact that some MG words (e.g., κρέας ‘meat’, γράφω ‘write’) have the same meanings and written forms as their AG predecessors.

It is worth emphasising that I refer to “relations of convergence” rather than to “continuity” between Ancient and Modern Greek. This terminological modification is related to the fact that the vocabulary of MG contains many words that originate from Katharevousa rather than being directly inherited from the ancient language.<sup>7</sup> As a consequence, similarities between AG and MG vocabularies may not necessarily be a matter of continuity between the two language stages, and the term *convergence* appears more appropriate than *continuity*.

### 3 METHOD

#### 3.1 MG words of AG origin

My analysis is based on a classification of AG words in MG vocabulary, which is explained in this section.

An example of such a classification is found in Eleftheriades (1993: 7–11), who distinguishes between five different classes of AG words in MG vocabulary:<sup>8</sup>

1. Inherited Ancient Greek words that “still retain their original form and meaning, but with an appropriate adjustment to the phonological system of Modern Greek;” examples include ακούω ‘listen, hear’, άνεμος ‘wind’, άνθρωπος ‘man’, αριθμός ‘number’, γράφω ‘write’, μαθητής ‘student’, ουρανός ‘sky’, θεός ‘god’, μέλι ‘honey’, ύπνος ‘sleep’, and φως ‘light’.
2. Ancient Greek words that “have been modified morphologically and phonologically, but have retained their original meaning;” examples include αλάτι ‘salt’, άντρας

<sup>7</sup> As is well known, this is an archaising variety of Modern Greek (cf. footnote 3). On its impact on the vocabulary of standard MG, see, for instance, Petrounias (1998; 2000), Joseph (2009-a: 369), Manolessou (2013), Anastasiadi-Symeonidi & Fliatouras (2018: 40–43), Fliatouras (2020: 529).

<sup>8</sup> For a similar classification, see Anastasiadi-Symeonidi & Fliatouras (2018: 40), as well as Fliatouras (2020: 528).

- ‘man’, γιος ‘son’, δίνω ‘give’, κόβω ‘cut’, ελιά ‘olive’, μητέρα ‘mother’, παιδί ‘child’, χέρι ‘hand’, χειμώνας ‘winter’, and πέφτω ‘fall’.
3. Ancient Greek words that changed their meanings and subsequently replaced other Ancient Greek words. An example is άλογο, which was originally the neuter form of the adjective άλογος ‘illogical’ and replaced the word ίππος ‘horse’.
  4. Ancient Greek words that retained their original forms but changed their meanings. Examples include αστειός ‘funny’ (AG ‘urban’), δουλεύω ‘work’ (AG ‘be a slave’, and δρόμος ‘road’ (AG ‘race, running’).
  5. So-called αντιδάνεια, or foreign words of Greek origin, such as ευρώ ‘Euro’, ντίσκο ‘disco’, καναπές ‘couch’. These are words that were borrowed from AG or Medieval Greek into another language, but subsequently re-entered Greek as loanwords. As a consequence, they are considerably modified in phonological, morphological, and/or semantic terms.<sup>9</sup>

It has to be stressed that, in this classification, the term *word* subsumes the head-words introducing lexical entries in AG/MG dictionaries rather than their inflected forms. The same applies to the term *word* as used in the present study, except for Section 4.3.

Another classification is provided by Manolessou (2013), who distinguishes, in addition to loanwords, the following classes of MG words with AG origin:

1. “Inherited words, in continuous use since the Ancient/Koine period, which have undergone all major phonetic and morphological changes”; for example, βλέπω ‘see’, θάλασσα ‘sea’, τρία ‘three’.
2. AG words “surviving through the learned tradition in high register texts”. In general, these display fewer phonological differences with respect to their AG predecessors than inherited words; for example, έλευθερία ‘freedom’.
3. “[I]nnovative creations ... , on the basis of native (inherited or learned) elements”; for example, MG χέρι ‘hand’ (AG χείρ).<sup>10</sup>

As already mentioned, AG elements in the MG lexicon are also discussed by Joseph (2009-a: 369). He argues that, in addition to words such as άνεμος ‘wind’, which may not have significantly changed in forms and meanings (and were mentioned earlier), the MG lexicon contains the following words of AG origin: a) words displaying “the effects of the regular sound changes” (e.g., γράφω ‘write’); b) those displaying changes “in form and meaning” (e.g., χῶμα ‘bank, mound’); c) words with “morphological reshapings” (e.g., AG φύλαξ vs. MG φύλακας ‘guard’); and d) “words built on native elements but with no direct ancestor in the ancient language”, including modern scientific terms.

9 For instance, the word καναπές ‘sofa’ goes back to AG κωνοπέτον ‘bed or litter with a mosquito curtain’, which first entered Latin as *conopeum* ‘mosquito net’ and afterwards French as *canapé* ‘sofa’, subsequently re-entering Greek as καναπές ‘sofa’ (loc. cit., LKN, s.v. καναπές).

10 For a similar account, see Petrounias (1998: xx–xii).

In contrast to Joseph (loc. cit.), none of the aforementioned classifications specifically mention words that may have not undergone any significant change.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, Joseph (loc. cit.) refers to words that remained “more or less intact” rather than claiming that at least in some cases there may be a formal and semantic identity between a MG word and its ancient predecessor. This is far from insignificant, because the existence of such words, as argued above, can provide an argument in support of introducing elements of MG into the teaching of the ancient language. In the absence of a definition of which MG words may be characterised as lacking any significant difference with respect to their ancient predecessors, I avoid adopting any such concept in this article.<sup>12</sup>

It is therefore important to note that in the first of the above classifications (Eleftheriades 1993: 7–11) there is an apparent correspondence between MG words and their ancient predecessors in the case of two classes of words; namely, in the first and fourth classes.<sup>13</sup> The use of the term *form* in this classification can be misleading. Note that the word  $\chi\omega\mu\alpha$  ‘bank, mound’ is analysed by Joseph (loc. cit.) as displaying changes in both “form and meaning”, whereas it displays no formal change in Eleftheriades’ terms. In Joseph’s terms, words of the first and the fourth classes in Eleftheriades’ classification lack “morphological reshapings” (Joseph 2009-a: 369). It is true, however, that the written forms of MG words from these two classes correspond to the written forms of their AG predecessors in text editions of ancient authors. To be more precise: they are identical when these words are written with capital letters (e.g.,  $\text{AN}\Theta\text{P}\Omega\text{I}\text{I}\text{O}\Sigma$  ‘man’,  $\Theta\text{E}\text{O}\Sigma$  ‘god’,  $\Gamma\text{P}\text{A}\Phi\Omega$  ‘write’). Furthermore, the written forms of these words are often identical even when written in lowercase letters (e.g.,  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  ‘god’,  $\gamma\rho\acute{\alpha}\varphi\omega$  ‘write’). In other instances, the MG lowercase forms, when compared with the corresponding written forms in AG texts, are different in terms of diacritical marks (cf. AG  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  vs. MG  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  ‘man’). In such cases, the identity between the AG and MG written forms is largely a result of the MG orthographic system (which remains relatively conservative) rather than of the lack of any change in form. Nonetheless, this is not an insignificant phenomenon in terms of this article. Owing to these orthographic correspondences between AG and MG words, I assume that, at least when speaking in terms of words’ written forms, some MG words are readily recognisable by students of AG and can constitute a basis for introducing elements of MG into teaching its ancient predecessor—if one does not adopt the view that some MG words may also have the same pronunciations as their ancient predecessors.

11 Note that according to Anastasiadi-Symeonidi & Fliatouras (2018: 40) and Fliatouras (2010: 528), some AG words retain the same form and meaning in MG (cf. “λέξεις με ίδια μορφή και σημασία,” Fliatouras, loc. cit.). However, their examples (και ‘and’,  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  ‘man’,  $\alpha\delta\epsilon\lambda\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$  ‘brother’) display phonological change (AG  $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}$  [kai] vs. MG  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  [ke], AG  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  [antʰrōpos] vs. MG [anθropos], AG  $\alpha\delta\epsilon\lambda\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$  [adelpʰos] vs. MG [adelfos]). For another analysis of processes of change, see Pappas & Mooers (2011: 212), as well as Wilson, Pappas & Mooers (2019: 598–599). They also do not seem to allow for the possibility that some words may not have undergone significant change.

12 For further discussion of this concept, see Kavčič, Joseph & Brown (forthcoming).

13 See also the discussion of the noun  $\epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$  (AG ‘assembly’, MG ‘church’) in Fliatouras (2020: 528), as well as footnote 11.

### 3.2 Classification adopted in this article

Based on these considerations, for the purposes of this article I adopt the following classification of AG words:

- Class 1: AG words whose MG counterparts have the same written forms and meanings (e.g., γράφω ‘write’, κρέας ‘meat’). When written with lowercase letters, the AG and the MG word may differ in terms of diacritical marks (e.g., AG άνεμος vs. MG άνεμος ‘wind’).
- Class 2: AG words whose MG counterparts have the same written forms and different meanings (e.g., AG δουλεύω ‘be a slave’ vs. MG δουλεύω ‘work’). When written with lowercase letters, AG and MG words may differ in terms of diacritical marks (e.g., AG άστεϊος ‘urban’ vs. MG αστεϊός ‘funny’).
- Class 3: AG words whose MG counterparts display differences in their written forms other than in the use of diacritics but retain the same meanings (e.g., AG υίός vs. MG γιος ‘son’, AG έλαία vs. MG έλιά ‘olive’, AG μέτωπον vs. MG μέτωπο ‘forehead’). Inflected forms can have the same written forms (and meanings) in both AG and MG (e.g., nom./acc. pl. form μέτωπα).
- Class 4: Other AG words, including those whose MG counterparts have different written forms and meanings and may have replaced other AG words, as well as those that left no traces in MG vocabulary.<sup>14</sup>

Class 1 in particular contains a number of words originating from the learned tradition (Katharevousa) rather than being directly inherited from AG. This issue is further discussed in Section 4.2.

In distinguishing between these classes of words, I follow the etymologies of Triandafyllides’ dictionary of MG (Λεξικό της Κοινής Νεοελληνικής, LKN).<sup>15</sup> I first assume that an AG word has a counterpart in MG if the latter is referred to, within an etymology of LKN, as an origin of a MG word; for instance, according to the etymology below, the AG word έλαία is the origin of the MG word ελιά (which is already attested in this form in Medieval Greek (μσν.)):<sup>16</sup>

[μσν. ελιά < ελία < αρχ. έλαία με συνίζ. για αποφυγή της χασμ.]  
 [Medv. ελιά < ελία < Anc. έλαία with syniniz., for the avoidance of hiat.]

14 Because this article focuses on the convergences between AG and MG vocabularies, I do not analyse these words into further subclasses. For a somewhat modified approach, as well as terminology, see Kavčič, Joseph & Brown (forthcoming).

15 For their background and a comparison with etymologies in other MG dictionaries, see Petrounias (1985). For a similar approach to the origins of MG vocabulary, see Fliatouras (2020: 528–534).

16 In this case, my search included the text of LKN’s lemmata (available online at [www.greek-language.gr](http://www.greek-language.gr)).

Another issue raised by the classifications above concerns the semantics. Judging from the works that were referred to in Section 3.1, there appears to be no commonly accepted method of distinguishing between words with different meanings in AG and MG. In order to avoid subjective judgments, I use the etymologies of LKN in this case as well, thus adopting the proposal of Petrounias (2010: 514).<sup>17</sup>

In some cases, these etymologies suggest that there is no significant semantic difference between the AG and the MG words. An example is the MG verb *έχω* ‘have’, which is represented in this dictionary in the following way:

[αρχ. *έχω*]  
[Anc. *έχω*]

In other cases, the etymology indicates that the MG word goes back to an AG word with a different meaning (cf. Petrounias 1998: xxii). An example is the verb *παιδεύω* (AG ‘bring up, teach’, MG ‘pester, torture’), which is represented in the etymology of LKN as follows:

[αρχ. *παιδεύω* ‘ανατρέφω, εκπαιδεύω’ (η σημερ. σημ. μσν.)]  
[Anc. *παιδεύω* ‘bring up, teach’ (modern meaning Mediev.)]

In my analysis, the former words were classified in the first class and the latter in the second class of the classification in Section 3.2. Furthermore, the MG word *ελιά* ‘olive’ (its etymology was discussed at the beginning of this section) was classified in the third class.

It also has to be stressed that the distinction between these classes of words is not a clear-cut one. An example is the verb *προσφέρω*. According to LKN, the MG verb *προσφέρω* was adopted from the learned tradition (or Katharevousa) and retains the AG meaning of *προσφέρω* ‘bring to’. However, it also acquired an additional meaning under the influence of French *s’offrir*. This is indicated in the etymology as follows:

[λόγ.: 1, 2: αρχ. *προσφέρω*; 3: σημδ. γαλλ. *s’offrir*]  
[learn.: 1,2. Anc. *προσφέρω*; 3rd meaning French *s’offrir*]

According to LKN, this word can be used in MG in the same meaning as in AG, and so one could hardly treat it as a word with a different meaning in AG and in MG. Another option would be to treat it as a word with the same written form and meaning in both AG and MG, neglecting the fact that it has an additional meaning in MG. This method would assume that knowing the corresponding AG word will help students in recognising and (correctly) understanding the same word in MG, although there is no one-to-one

17 See also Fliatouras (2020: 528–529).

correspondence between the AG and MG meanings. This is a common phenomenon in learning the vocabulary of a foreign language, and cannot be entirely avoided.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, in order to account for the lack of semantic correspondence between AG and MG, words such as *προσφέρω* ‘bring to’ are treated as two separate words in this article. One word is treated as a word with a common AG/MG written form and meaning, and thus belongs to the first class in my classification, and the other word is treated as a word with the same written form and different meanings in AG and MG (thus belonging to the second class in the same classification).

## 4 THE VOCABULARY OF THE TEXTBOOKS INVESTIGATED

As already mentioned, I examine the vocabularies of three AG textbooks that contain reference to MG; namely Agnello and Orlando (1998), Weileder and Mayerhöfer (2013), and Elliger and Fink (1986). Furthermore, I add to my corpus two textbooks that contain no overt references to MG but are widely used in teaching AG (Keller & Russell 2012; Mihevc-Gabrovec 1987).<sup>19</sup>

### 4.1 Classes of words in AG textbooks

Each of the textbooks investigated contains a list of words they include and their meanings (typically at the end).<sup>20</sup> Each of these lists contain a few hundred items.<sup>21</sup> When the above scheme is applied to these word lists, it is found that more than half of the words from these lists also occur in the same written forms in the dictionary of standard MG; that is, in LKN. Examples include: *νόμος* ‘law’, *γράφω* ‘write’, *γράμμα* ‘letter’, *κρέας* ‘meat’, and *παιδεύω* (AG ‘bring up, teach’, MG ‘pester, torture’). This is shown in Figure 1: in the textbooks investigated in this study, the amount of such words ranges between 54 and 62%.

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18 See, for instance, Nation (2001: 304).

19 Mihevc-Gabrovec (1987) has traditionally been used for teaching AG in Slovenia.

20 Note that the term *word* includes the headwords introducing lexical entries; cf. Section 3.1.

21 Numbers of words in the word lists: Mihevc-Gabrovec (1978): 916, Elliger & Fink (1986): 946, Agnello & Orlando (1998): 1,816, Weileder & Mayerhöfer (2006): 783, Keller & Russell (2012): 642.



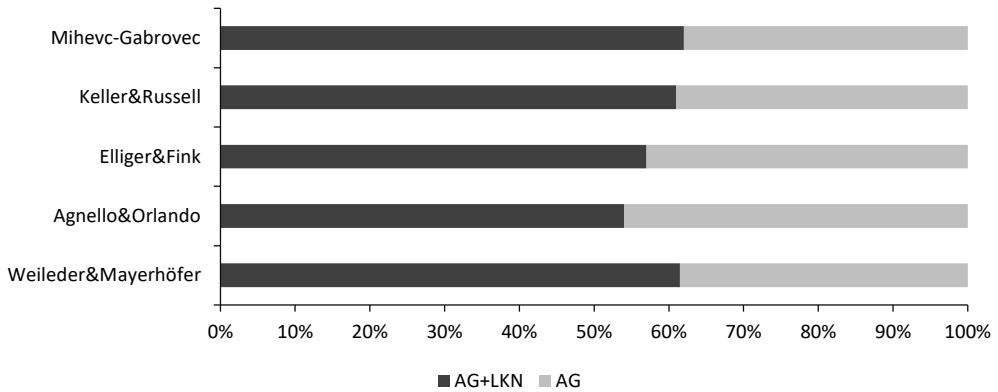


Figure 1: AG words in LKN (common written form)

As noted above, my analysis also included two AG textbooks that do not contain any references to MG (namely, Keller & Russell 2012 and Mihevc-Gabrovec 1987). It is interesting to observe that they display a similar ratio between AG and MG vocabulary as the textbooks containing references to MG (as is shown in this figure).

Some of these words – for instance, παιδεύω (AG ‘bring up, teach’, MG ‘pester, torture’) and δουλεύω (AG ‘be a slave’, MG ‘work’) – arguably have a different meaning in MG than AG, thus belonging to the second class in my classification (see Section 3.2). Other words, such as κρέας ‘meat’, γράφω ‘write’, and νόμος ‘law’ appear to retain the same meaning in MG as in AG, and correspond to the first class of words in the same classification. The method adopted in Section 3.2 shows that the relation between the two classes of words is the following:

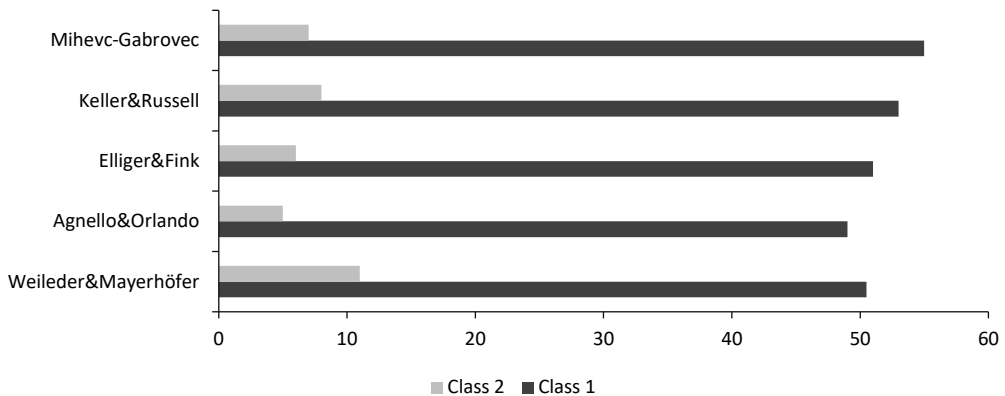


Figure 2: Classes 1 and 2 in AG textbooks

This figure shows that words retaining their AG written forms and meanings in MG account for 49 to 51% of the words in the word lists of the textbooks investigated, whereas those with the same written forms and different meanings in AG and in MG are significantly less frequent, accounting for 5 to 11% of all words in these lists.

As shown in Figure 3, the second most common class of words occurring in the vocabularies of the textbooks investigated in this study corresponds to the third class of AG words in my classification (see Section 3.2). Examples include: υιός ‘son’ (MG γιος), παῖς ‘child’ (MG παιδί), and δένδρον ‘tree’ (MG δέντρο). Although these retain the same meanings in MG as in AG, the headwords of their lexical entries show significant formal changes, and their written forms are different in MG than in AG. The number of these words ranges between 12 and 16% of all AG words occurring in the word lists of the textbooks investigated.

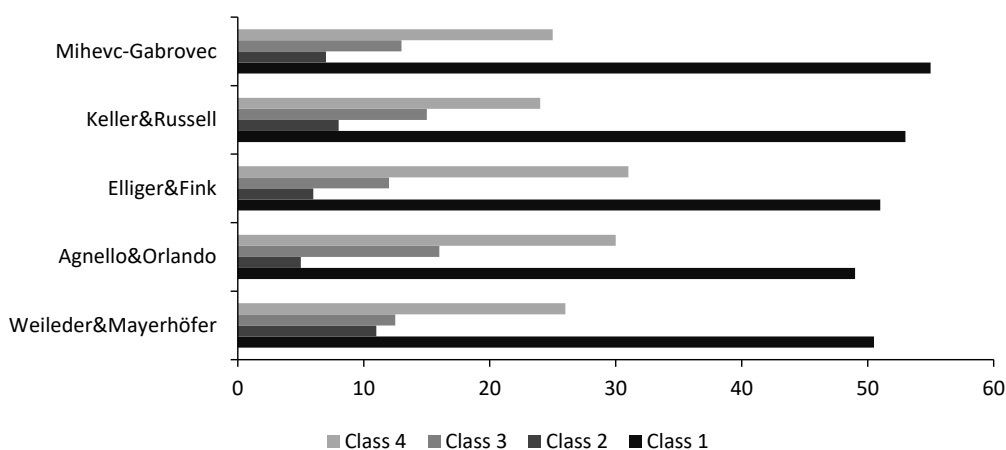


Figure 3: Classes 1–4 in the textbooks investigated

As shown in the same figure, the rest of the vocabulary occurring in the textbooks contains words corresponding to the fourth class of words in my classification (e.g., κάμνω ‘work, labour’, υπάγω ‘bring under’, οϊομαι ‘mean’, ὕς ‘pig’); see Section 3.2. These words represent 26 to 31% of all AG words in the focal textbooks.

## 4.2 Applied aspects

The data from Section 4.1 show that students of AG, when learning AG words and their meanings, also learn a proportion of words with common AG/MG meanings and written forms. Sometimes there is a difference between these words in terms of the use of the diacritical marks, but only when these words are written with lowercase letters.

Of course, these words may not be pronounced in the same way in MG and AG, although this possibility should not be excluded in at least some cases, as already mentioned in Sections 1 and 3.1. However, there is no reason to believe that students of AG cannot use their language skills in AG to understand written forms of these words in various MG contexts; for instance, when written with capital letters in MG public inscriptions. In such cases, there are no differences in the use of the diacritics between MG and AG texts. Examples include passages (1)–(3), which consist only of words pertaining to the first class in my classification:<sup>22</sup>

- (1) ΕΞΟΔΟΣ ‘Exit.’
- (2) ΕΙΣΟΔΟΣ ‘Entrance.’
- (3) ΚΙΝΔΥΝΟΣ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ ‘Deadly danger.’
- (4) ΞΕΝΟΣ ΕΓΩ ΞΕΝΟΣ ΠΟΛΥ ‘I am a foreigner, a real foreigner.’<sup>23</sup>

My data also show that the textbooks contain words with the same written forms but different meanings in AG and MG (e.g., δουλεύω AG ‘be a slave’, MG ‘work’). These words draw attention to the fact that knowledge of AG may lead to interference errors.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, they are much less frequent in the textbooks than words with common AG/MG written forms and meanings. Therefore, such examples can be avoided, at least at the earliest stages of introducing elements of MG into the teaching of its ancient predecessor—which is also the focus of my article.

As is well known, it is important to distinguish between high-frequency and low-frequency words when teaching the vocabulary of a foreign language.<sup>25</sup> It is noteworthy that the class of words in question (i.e., those with common AG/MG written forms and meanings) also contains a number of MG words that appear to be uncommon in MG because they are of learned origin or appear only in specialised uses. High frequencies of such words would clearly speak against incorporating MG into AG classes, because this would be an indication that the MG vocabulary learned in AG classes cannot easily be used in most common speaking situations.

As I have already stressed in Section 3.1, a proportion of the vocabulary of MG goes back to the learned tradition. Although some words have entered common usage,

22 For similar examples, see Weiler & Meyerhöfer (2006: 51).

23 This is a verse by the poet Constantine P. Cavafy, which was used in 2013 in a public campaign initiated by the Alexander S. Onassis Foundation. Note also that there is a lack of semantic correspondence between the words ξένος in AG and in MG; cf. LKN, s.v. ξένος (AG ‘guest, foreigner, stranger’, MG ‘foreigner’), as well as Section 3.2 above (on προσφέρω). Nonetheless, students of AG also learn the meaning ‘foreigner’, which is its meaning in the MG passage (4) (cf. Agnello & Orlando 1998: 509).

24 This has also been observed by Petrounias (2010: 513) who also argues that “classicists have several advantages in the study of MGr.”

25 For further discussion, see Nation (2001: 21).

others continue to belong to learned vocabulary and are marked in LKN as “λόγ.” (λόγιος ‘learned’).<sup>26</sup> An example is the verb πέμπω ‘send’:<sup>27</sup>

πέμπω [pémbo] -ομαι P αόρ. *έπεμψα, απαρέμφ. πέμπει, παθ. αόρ. πέμφθηκα, απαρέμφ. πεμφθεί* : (λόγ.) στέλνω  
 πέμπω [pémbo] -ομαι aor. *έπεμψα, inf. πέμπει, pass. aor. πέμφθηκα, inf.. πεμφθεί* : (learn.) στέλνω.

In the textbooks investigated in this study, the frequencies of such words range between 14 and 23% of all words in the word lists; additional examples include *αεί* ‘always’, *έν* ‘in’, *κλίνη* ‘bed’, *πανταχοῦ* ‘everywhere’, and *οὔδεις* ‘no one’. These words typically belong to the first class in my classification.

Although this may not be an insignificant number, it also has to be stressed that the textbooks contain many words with the same written forms and meanings in AG and MG, and that are used very frequently in the modern language. This has been observed by other scholars as well (cf. Petrounias 2000: 57; Manolessou 2013). I already mentioned some very common words such as *κρέας* ‘meat’, *άνεμος* ‘wind’, *θάνατος* ‘death’, *άνθρωπος* ‘man’, *άλλά* ‘but’, *νόμος* ‘law’, *γράφω* ‘write’, *κίνδυνος* ‘danger’, *θεός* ‘god’. Additional examples include the words *μέλι* ‘honey’, *έχω* ‘have’, *άκούω* ‘hear’, *νέος* ‘young, new’, *μικρός* ‘small’, *πίνω* ‘drink’, *οὔρανος* ‘sky’, *κακός* ‘bad’, *μόνος* ‘alone’, *πρώτος* ‘first’, *χώρα* ‘land’, *μέχρι* ‘up until’,  *τρίτος* ‘third’,  *τέταρτος* ‘fourth’,  *νομίζω* ‘think’.<sup>28</sup>

### 4.3 A morphological remark

Words with the same written forms and meanings in AG and MG (Class 1 of my classification) do not always have the same inflections in MG and AG. For instance, the accusative singular of the word *πόλεμος* ‘war’ is *τὸν πόλεμον* in AG and *τον πόλεμο* in MG. So far, I have discussed words in terms of headwords introducing lexical entries rather than words in terms of their inflected forms.

On the other hand, words such as *πατήρ* ‘father’ are represented in the MG dictionary with different headwords than in the AG dictionary (namely, *πατέρας*) while retaining the original meanings. In my classification, these words belong to the third class. At the same time, some words of this class have in MG at least one inflected form

26 For a more detailed discussion, see Petrounias (1998: xxii–xxiii), as well as Anastasiadi-Symeonidi & Fliatouras (2018).

27 Such words should be distinguished from those that also originate from the learned tradition but are not characterized as learned expressions in the main lemma (see Petrounias 1998: xxii–xxiii.).

28 Cf. also: *πρός* ‘to’ *σῶμα* ‘body’, *τρόπος* ‘manner’, *ἀριθμός* ‘number’, *μαθητής* ‘pupil’, *ἀδελφός* ‘brother’, *ἀδελφή* ‘sister’, *έρχομαι* ‘come’, *ἀρχή* ‘beginning’, *γελάω* ‘laugh’, *εἰρήνη* ‘peace’, *ἐργάζομαι* ‘work’, *θέλω* ‘want’, *νίκη* ‘victory’, *ὁδός* ‘road’, *ὄνομάζω* ‘name’, *ὅτι* ‘that’, *πειθω* ‘convince’, *φωνή* ‘voice’, *νικάω* ‘win’, *πλούσιος* ‘rich’, *σκιά* ‘shadow’.

with exactly the same written form (and meaning) as in AG (cf. Section 3.2). Examples from the textbooks investigated in this study include AG third-declension nouns such as *πατήρ* ‘father’ and *μήτηρ* ‘mother’ or verbs such as *μανθάνω* ‘learn’ and *πίπτω* ‘fall’, whose MG present stem is different than the AG present stem (namely, *μαθαίνω* and *πέφτω*), but retain—at least in terms of the written form—the same aorist stem as in AG. The AG accusative singular forms *μητέρα* and *πατέρα* are correct AG as well as MG forms (when speaking in terms of their written forms). In addition, students learn a number of AG active aorist forms whose written forms correspond to their MG counterparts as well. Examples include the third-person singular aorist indicatives of the aforementioned verbs (namely, *μανθάνω* ‘learn’ and *πίπτω* ‘fall’). Their AG and MG written forms are identical when written with capital letters (ΕΜΑΘΕ, ΕΠΕΣΕ), whereas in lowercase letters the MG written forms lack the smooth breathing mark on the first letter (AG *ἔμαθε*, *ἔπεσε*, MG *έμαθε*, *έπεσε*).<sup>29</sup>

Figure 4 shows the frequencies of AG words that retain at least one form in MG with the original AG meaning and the same written form as in AG texts, with potential differences occurring only in the use of diacritics when these words are written with lowercase letters:

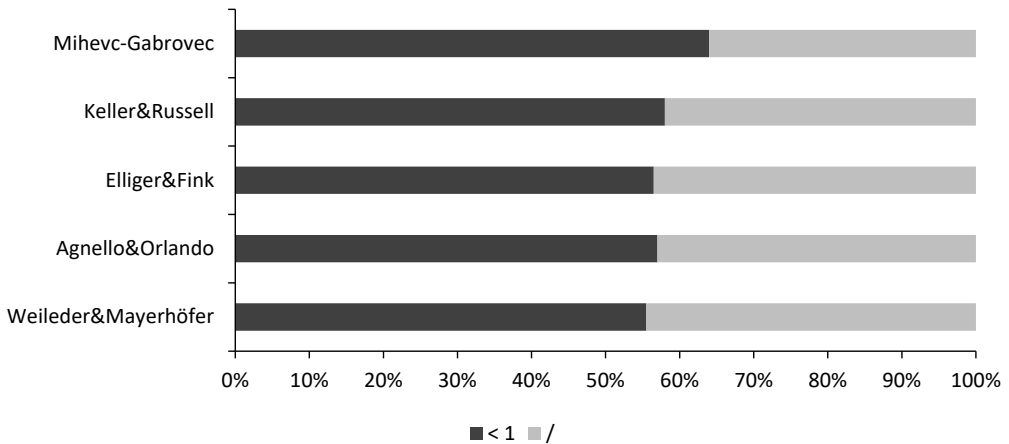


Figure 4: AG words with at least one corresponding form in MG

The figure shows that in the textbooks such words represent between 54 and 64% of words occurring in the AG vocabulary. Furthermore, these words are common enough to be arranged into plausible MG phrases; examples include passages (5)–(11):

- (5) Θεέ μου. ‘My God.’  
 (6) Μένει μόνος. ‘He stays alone.’

<sup>29</sup> For the same view, see Anastasiadi-Symeonidi & Fliatouras (2018: 45).

- (7) Θέλετε πολλά. ‘You want a lot.’  
 (8) Λέγονται πολλά. ‘A lot is being said.’  
 (9) Τι πίνετε/θέλετε/έχετε; ‘What do you drink/want/have?’  
 (10) Έπεσε κάτω. ‘He fell down.’  
 (11) Τι σε έσωσε; ‘What saved you?’

All the words in these passages have the same written forms and meanings in AG and MG, except for the use of the diacritics in passages (9)–(11). In pedagogical terms, however, this is not necessarily a shortcoming. They show students of AG convergences between AG and MG, gradually also drawing attention to distinctions between the two language stages. Additional differences between AG and MG can be introduced through passages such as (12) and (13):

- (12) Νομίζω ότι πλησιάζει πόλεμος. ‘I think that war is coming.’  
 (13) Εάν/Αν θέλεις, έρχομαι. ‘If you want I will come.’

These passages reflect additional syntactic differences between AG and MG: passage (12) contains a finite complement rather than an infinitive, as would be the case in AG; in passage (13), the temporal clause contains the indicative rather than the subjunctive, which would be used in AG. Otherwise, the written forms and meanings of the words in these passages are the same as in AG, except for the use of the diacritics in the case of *ότι μανθάνω* ‘that’, *Εάν/Αν* ‘if’, and *έρχομαι* ‘I am coming’.

## 5 REPRESENTATION OF MG IN AG TEXTBOOKS

The textbooks examined in this study introduce MG in different ways. Sometimes they ask students to solve exercises that contain lists of MG words; an example is passage (10):

(14) Units 1–5 contain a number of Ancient/Modern Greek words. Try to read the following words according to the Modern Greek pronunciation rules:

Χαίρετε, ο βίος, ο λόγος, ο φίλος, ο φιλόσοφος, ο γεωργός, ο χορός, λέω (Ancient Greek λέγω), γράφω, διδάσκω, λύνω (Ancient Greek λύω), φέρω, φυλά(γ)ω (Ancient Greek φυλάττω), καί, ο νόμος, ο ύπνος, ο φόβος, ο τρόπος, ο δήμος, ο τύραννος, ο θάνατος, ο ήλιος, θαυμάζω, ο άθλος ...

(Weileder & Meyerhöfer 2006: 16)

In other cases, MG is presented in more complex sentences and texts (cf. Weileder & Meyerhöfer 2006: 43, Agnello & Orlando 1998, *pass.*). Applying the aforementioned classification of AG words in MG vocabulary to the vocabulary of these MG passages

(see Section 3.2), it can be concluded, first, that these MG passages contain words of Greek origin as well as loanwords.<sup>30</sup> Most words of AG origin in these passages can be analysed as words with the same written forms and meanings in AG and MG; for example, θάνατος ‘death’, φιλόσοφος ‘philosopher’, γράφω ‘write’, and νόμος ‘law’ in passage (14).<sup>31</sup> This appears to be a reflection of the generally high (absolute and relative) frequencies of such words, a phenomenon that has been referred to earlier in analysing the AG vocabulary of the textbooks (see Section 4.1). However, there is also a disproportion in terms of incorporating MG into AG textbooks. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

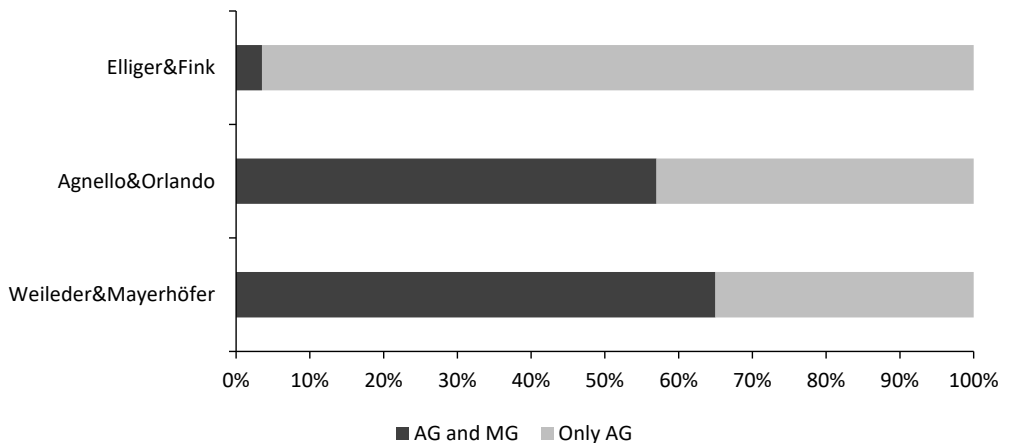


Figure 5: Class 1 in AG textbooks containing MG passages

The figure refers to AG words (in the three textbooks that also contain MG passages) whose lexical entries have the same headword (in terms of the written form) and meaning in AG and MG. It shows that approximately 40% of such words are not referred to at all in MG passages of these textbooks. In one of the textbooks, this proportion is significantly higher (reaching more than 90%).<sup>32</sup> As a consequence, students using these textbooks may not become aware of the volume of AG words that they learn, and that also occur (in the same written forms and meanings) in MG dictionaries.<sup>33</sup>

30 In the textbooks investigated, loanwords represent up to 20% of words in MG passages.

31 On the term *word* in this article, see footnote 20.

32 Note, however, that MG passages are much shorter in this textbook (sixteen words) than in Agnello & Orlando (1998) and in Weileder & Meyerhöfer (2006) (3,225 and 418 words, respectively).

33 It is also noteworthy that MG passages in the textbooks investigated do not always sound like correct MG; cf. το στάδιον ‘stadium’ (instead το στάδιο) and ουσάκι ‘ouzo’ (instead of ουζάκι) (Weileder & Meyerhöfer 2006: 16, 24).

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of the article I quoted Browning (1969: 10), who claimed that “if one wants to learn Greek, it doesn’t really matter whether one begins with Homer, with Plato, with the New Testament, with the Romance of Digenis Akritas, or with Kazantzakis”. This seemingly radical view appears to have a basis in fact.<sup>34</sup> It is clear that one can learn AG and use part of this knowledge in MG; (and, *vice versa*, one can learn MG and use part of this knowledge in understanding AG texts). To put it in numbers: my analysis showed that approximately half of the lexical entries occurring in AG textbooks investigated in this study display the same written forms and meanings in MG. This ratio applies to both textbooks that contain elements of MG and those that make no reference to the latter. As a consequence, students using one of these textbooks also learn part of MG, although they may not be aware of this at all – given that some of the textbooks investigated, as well as most AG textbooks in general, do not refer at all to MG.

Of course, the aim of any AG textbook is to teach Ancient rather than Modern Greek. It is also true that, for many centuries, this has been done (and continues to be done) successfully without referring at all to the modern language. Nevertheless, attempts to incorporate elements of MG into AG classes are based on a correct intuition concerning the relation between MG and its ancient predecessor. On the other hand, it can be argued that the existing attempts to do so fail to represent the actual relations of convergence between Ancient and Modern Greek. My suggestion is that introducing elements of MG into teaching its ancient predecessor should start with drawing attention to convergences between the vocabularies of AG and the standard modern language, which primarily concern high frequencies of words with the same meanings and written forms in both forms.

### List of abbreviations

AG = Ancient Greek

aor. = aorist

Anc. = Ancient

hiat. = hiatus

Mediev. = Medieval

MG = Modern Greek

learn. = learned

λογ. = learn.

pass. = passive

syniz = synizesis

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34 As an anonymous reviewer noted, this view may seem radical if one adopts the idea of AG and MG as two separate languages. Still, the overwhelming presence of MG vocabulary in AG textbooks clearly speaks in its support when it comes to teaching practice.



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POVZETEK

## PRIKAZ NOVE GRŠČINE V STAROGRŠKIH UČBENIKIH: JEZIKOSLOVNI POGLED

V pričujočem prispevku obravnavam nekatere novejšje poskuse uvajanja elementov novogrškega jezika v pouk stare grščine, pri čemer se osredotočam na učbenike Agnello in Orlando (1998), Elliger in Fink (1986), Weiler in Mayerhöfer (2013), Mihevc-Gabrovec (1978) ter Keller in Russell (2012). Analiza, ki izhaja iz etimologij slovarja novogrškega knjižnega jezika (LKN, Λεξικό της Κοινής Νεοελληνικής), pokaže, da približno polovica besed v obravnavanih starogrških učbenikih v novi grščini ohranja enako pisno podobo in pomen kot v stari grščini; pri tem sem izrazil beseda naša na slovarske oblike. Bistveno manj je po drugi strani besed, ki imajo v novi grščini enako pisno podobo, a drugačen pomen kot v stari grščini: v to skupino se v obravnavanih učbenikih uvršča od 5 do 11% besed. Isti učbeniki nadalje vsebujejo med 12 in 16 % besed, ki imajo v novi grščini enak pomen, a (praviloma zaradi formalnih sprememb) drugačno pisno podobo kot njihove starogrške ustreznice. Obenem pa za nekatere izmed besed te iste skupine velja, da ohranjajo v novi grščini vsaj eno pregibno obliko z enako pisno podobo in enakim pomenom kot njihove starogrške ustreznice. Ti

podatki kažejo, da je mogoče na osnovni stopnji učenja nekaj elementov novogrškega jezika vpeljati v pouk stare grščine, ne da bi se spuščali v podrobnejšo razlago slovničnih in pomenskih razlik med obema jezikovnima fazama; na primer preko stavkov, sestavljenih izključno iz besed, ki imajo v novi grščini enako pisno podobo in pomen kot v stari grščini. Na tej podlagi v nadaljevanju članka ovrednotim obstoječe poskuse uvajanja elementov nove grščine v pouk starogrškega jezika.

**Ključne besede:** nova grščina, stara grščina, pomenoslovje, besedje, didaktika

## ABSTRACT

Focusing on Agnello and Orlando (1998), Elliger and Fink (1986), Weileder and Mayerhöfer (2013), Mihevc-Gabrovec (1978) and Keller and Russell (2012), I discuss attempts at introducing elements of Modern Greek into teaching its ancient predecessor. My analysis, which is based on the etymologies of LKN (Λεξικό της Κοινής Νεοελληνικής), shows that approximately half of the words in the textbooks investigated in this study retain the same written forms and meanings in Modern Greek as in Ancient Greek; the term *word* in this analysis subsumes headwords introducing lexical entries. On the other hand, words with the same written forms and different meanings in Ancient and Modern Greek are significantly less frequent, accounting for 5 to 11% of all words in the textbooks. Furthermore, these textbooks contain between 12 and 16% of words that retain the same meaning in Ancient and Modern Greek, and also show significant formal change. As a result, their written forms are different in Ancient than in Modern Greek. It is also found, however, that at least some inflected forms of the words belonging to the latter class retain in the modern language the same written forms and meanings as in Ancient Greek. These data suggest that it is possible to introduce elements of Modern Greek into teaching its ancient predecessor without drawing attention to grammatical and semantic differences between Ancient and Modern Greek. Based on these data I also evaluate at the end of the article existing attempts at incorporating elements of Modern Greek into teaching the ancient language.

**Keywords:** Modern Greek, Ancient Greek, semantics, lexicon, didactics