

**GAME-INFORMED ASSESSMENT FOR
PLAYFUL LEARNING
AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

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To Orestes

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

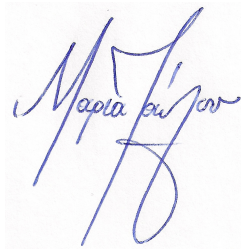
Warm thanks should go to my Tutor, Clara O'Shea, for all her support, patience and encouragement. I would also like to thank Dr Hamish Macleod, who has been a great inspiration throughout my MSc. Last but not least, I am most grateful to my husband, George, for his unfailing love and support. The dissertation is affectionately dedicated to my one and only three-years old son Orestes.

ABSTRACT

The educational value of play has long been acknowledged. During the last decades, much attention has been paid to video games and the multifarious ways in which they can promote and enhance learning. The main objective of this dissertation is to weave game principles, learning and the notion of playfulness with assessment principles in an attempt to investigate how what I call “game-informed playful assessment” (GIPA) may affect student learning and, more particularly, student experience *of* learning. The GIPA was introduced to an undergraduate Ancient Greek poetry course at a University in Cyprus. My data was generated through in-depth interviews with ten of the students that attended the course. Even though the GIPA, which was designed so as to promote student agency, autonomy, collaboration and playfulness was favourably, even enthusiastically, received the research also served to bring to the fore several other issues that call for attention, such as the stress that innovative assessment may evoke to students and student readiness to be playful within an academic framework that typically juxtaposes serious work with playfulness and play.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

Having reviewed the programme handbook and course-specific guidance on good academic practice, and reflected on the nature of plagiarism and the ethical representation of academic knowledge, I confirm that this piece of work is submitted without any misappropriation of sources.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Maria Eugenia', with a large, stylized flourish below the name.

31.08.2018

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INTRODUCTION

“I don’t think there is any point in knowing this Sapphic distich by heart”. I once received this response to a relevant question on a final exam paper from one of my ancient Greek students. When I emailed the student emphasising the importance of the distich, the student apologised, but indicated nevertheless that he would have preferred to be asked to reproduce a distich that meant something to *him*. Considering that throughout the semester students had been given various opportunities to express themselves freely and communicate their ideas in class, I found this remark somewhat unfair. However, the incident prompted me to reflect upon the design of my assessments. What quality was I rewarding through my question on the Sapphic distich, and what meaning was I communicating to my students? Was the design of my assessment responsive to my innovative teaching methods? How might I have designed the exam differently, and how would this have affected the student experience? This dissertation is primarily about assessment. Its main objective is to weave assessment principles, games, learning and the notion of playfulness together in an attempt to investigate how what I call “game-informed playful assessment” (GIPA) can affect student learning and, more particularly, student experience *of learning*.

My research concerns an ancient Greek course delivered at a university in Cyprus. The ancient Greek language holds a prominent position in the educational curriculum of Greece and Cyprus. In both countries, secondary education has a duration of six years, divided into two equal phases: gymnasium (ages 12–15) and lyceum (ages 15–18). All secondary students have to attend many hours of ancient Greek language courses throughout gymnasium and for the first year of lyceum. In the second year of lyceum, students choose their area of specialisation, and those majoring in the humanities attend several additional hours of ancient Greek for the remaining two years (Fig. 1). On the basis of this, one would naturally expect students entering university to have a relatively good command of the ancient Greek language. In reality, the level of the great majority is very low. Moreover, many students also come to nurture strong negative feelings about ancient Greek, considering it to be inaccessible, difficult, useless and parochial. Even though there

is no consensus on the causes of this phenomenon, all stakeholders seem to agree that there should be a radical change in the way ancient Greek is taught in both secondary and tertiary education (Maronitis 2001).

Whereas in many other countries the study of classical languages has undergone an innovative shift during the last few years (Bodard and Romanello 2016; Hill 2003), in Greece and Cyprus ancient Greek is still typically taught in a very conservative and old-fashioned way that offers little if any scope for exploration and playfulness. Even ancient Greek literature courses are language-centred and place excessive emphasis on form, leaving little space for interpretation and meaning (Tsafos and Seranis 2013; Polkas 2011; Chatzimavroudi 2007). Furthermore, ancient Greek texts are still often approached with a feeling a reverence and awe, as if they conceal valuable meanings waiting to be discovered inside them. The methods used for the assessment of ancient Greek language and literature courses are of a similar nature. To be in position to pass their exams, students have to passively memorise hundreds of declensional and conjugational patterns and various grammar and syntax rule exceptions, must learn to recite long lists of regular and irregular verbs, and must even learn by heart extensive chunks of modern Greek translations of ancient Greek texts. Except for a handful of attempts to change these methods of assessment (e.g. at the Open University of Cyprus ancient Greek is assessed though open-book examinations), students are still almost exclusively assessed through high-stakes methods: mid-terms and final written exams.

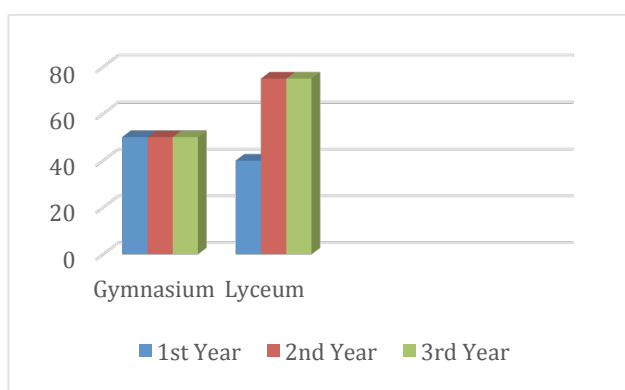


Figure 1: Ancient Greek language workload (in teaching hours) in secondary education in Cyprus

As a graduate of both a Cypriot secondary school and a Greek university, and having taught ancient Greek in a higher education institution in Cyprus for several years now, I know first-hand the negative implications of this method of assessment for both student learning and student experience. When I enrolled on the Game-Based Learning (GBL) module during my MSc a few years ago, I was intrigued by the vivid discussions of games and learning, and by how educators often try to leverage the great potential of video games for their teaching. Although these discussions had been in circulation for many years, especially in the UK and the US, they were entirely new to me—indeed, they are still relatively new in Greece and Cyprus. Accordingly, for my MSc dissertation I decided to build upon this new knowledge and connect it to the other issue that troubled me, that of assessment, in order to examine whether and how it might affect the student experience of assessment. This seemed to be a potentially fruitful area for research, considering that student experience apropos “innovative assessment” (Hounsell et al. 2007) has not yet been adequately investigated (Bevitt 2015). Furthermore, whereas GBL has been widely used in a number of disciplines, in classics—except for a couple exceptions—the educational potential of games has not been an issue (Pike 2015; Evans 2016). Last but not least, the timing was also apt for such a research project, as at that time I was asked to undertake an ancient Greek course which I had taught twice in the past and which I felt was “mature” enough for this kind of radical experimentation.

Bearing all the above in mind, my research question was formulated as follows: *how is GIPA received by students enrolled on an ancient Greek poetry course at a university in Cyprus?* My main objectives were to investigate:

- whether students had experienced other innovative forms of assessment before
- the differences that students would identify between GIPA and traditional forms of assessment
- how students would articulate and describe their experience with GIPA in terms of enjoyment and learning

For the purposes of this research, I designed a number of activities that were underpinned by game principles and that could allow some scope for playfulness. I also tried to leverage the affordances of new technologies through the use of my university's virtual learning environment and the students' smartphones, so as to add a digital dimension to the course.

This dissertation falls into two parts. In the first part, I discuss some of the seminal literature on assessment practices and the use of games in education, also touching upon the notions of motivation, engagement and playfulness. In the second part, I lay out my methodology: I describe my method of approach, the research tools I used to generate my data, the process I followed for the data analysis, and some issues concerning ethics and the trustworthiness of my research. The dissertation closes with the presentation and discussion of my findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since I am a classicist, let me open this section with a reference to *Theaetetus*, a dialogue by the fourth-century (BCE) Greek philosopher Plato, which masterfully interweaves many of the themes I am concerned with in this dissertation. The *Theaetetus* is the Platonic dialogue par excellence that centres on and seeks to scrutinise the nature of knowledge (Burnyeat 1990). The participants in the dialogue are Socrates; a promising Athenian lad called Theaetetus; and Theodorus, a mathematician and Theaetetus' teacher—a fervent advocate of instructional teaching. The scene is at the *palaestra* (i.e. a place for wrestling), a semantically significant venue which predisposes us to perceive the ensuing conversation as a wrestling match, or an *agon* according to Caillois' (1962) classification: a game that is competitive and entertaining and requires sustained attention, discipline, training and perseverance.

The question of the nature of knowledge is posed by Socrates, who claims to have long been troubled by it and expresses the desire to investigate it with those present. In his attempt to get everyone involved in the discussion, Socrates suggests that they cast their conversation in the form of a children's ball game; anyone who makes a mistake should sit down and be "donkey", and anyone who comes through without a miss will be "king" and can make the others answer any questions he likes. The others remain silent at Socrates' unexpected proposal: how would it possible to pursue such a difficult philosophical question as the nature of knowledge by playing a children's game? And, in any case, who wants to be called a "donkey" and be exposed for making a mistake? When Socrates ponders whether his suggestion was "boorish", Theodorus encourages Socrates to address all his questions to Theaetetus, claiming that he himself is too old for this kind of conversation, dialectical as is.

Although Socrates' suggestion about the ball game draws a blank, the discussion that follows is repeatedly cast in terms of play/games: we move, therefore, from a focus on actual play to the notion of playfulness. In order to pursue their goal, Socrates encourages Theaetetus to formulate his own definitions of knowledge, and then puts these definitions under scrutiny, so as to help his young interlocutor to self-assess what he really knows and to straighten out his beliefs.

Although some of the philosophical issues that come up during the discussion are quite challenging, Socrates adopts a playful attitude throughout the conversation; as well as continuously pleading ignorance on the issue under investigation and presenting himself as Theaetetus' co-learner, he impersonates other thinkers, makes extreme hypotheses, presents Theaetetus with puzzles, narrates stories etc. As he keeps emphasising to Theaetetus, who on several occasions appears to be in a state of wonder and even confesses an inability to deal with various matters, the effectiveness of their discussion depends on their *genuine* and *mutual* willingness to keep “playing” the philosophy game. If they reach a dead end, neither of them should stop—the game needs two players—but rather they should make a different hypothesis together and take another route, that is, play the “game” in a different way. The main point is not to lose sight of their ultimate goal: to find the truth.

But Socrates does not merely encourage and support Theaetetus to keep “playing”; he is also at pains to actively show him what it means to play this game well, that is, to be a good player (see Appendix A). Among the features that characterise a good player, according to Socrates, are a combination of seriousness and playfulness (Plass 1967; Ardley 1967) and a complete indifference to time. The last point comes to a climax in the middle of the dialogue, when Socrates juxtaposes the philosopher, whom he portrays as a man of *scholê* (leisure),¹ against other wise men, particularly litigants and orators. The portrait of the philosopher as a man entirely immersed in the serious play of learning, as intrinsically motivated to learn for learning's sake, and as experiencing what in modern terms we would call “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi 1990) reflects in the most eloquent way the immersion that educators seek to achieve for their students. How can academic learning and assessment (i.e. “work”) be experienced as leisure in the Platonic sense of the word? How can we support students to become good players in a state of constant wonder? How can we enhance student engagement, that is, students' investment of time, effort and interest (Trowler 2010) in their learning?

¹ For Plato, the term *scholê* (σχολή), which translates as “leisure”, was not simply equated with “free time”, but was used to indicate free time dedicated to the pursuit of higher things (i.e. learning); cf. Hemingway (1988); Hunnicutt (1990).

Games, Play and Learning

During the last few decades, an answer to the above questions has been sought in computer and video game play (Squire 2003). To be sure, the educational value of play and its impact on children's cognitive development in general was first recognised by Plato, and in the twentieth century it was spotlighted once again through the work of educators and psychologists such as Piaget (1962) and Vygotsky (1978). The recent upsurge in the video games industry has rekindled this interest, but has refocused it on digital games and their affordances. Logo, the educational programming language designed by Feurzerig, Papert and Solomon, constituted one of the first attempts to leverage the power of computers to help children with geometry (Papert 1999). Since then, video games have been extensively used for educational purposes, although the various attributes occasionally attached to certain categories of video games betray an "anxiety" on the part of educators and game designers to promote such games as not merely fun and to present them as respectable. Thus, from the "educational games" of the 1980s, which were designed primarily to meet specific educational purposes, we then moved on to "serious games", whose gamefulness was not sacrificed to their educational orientation (Deterding et al. 2011). Two other terms in use today are "transformative games" (McGonigal 2011) and "persuasive games" (Bogost 2007). The former term seeks to present video games as drivers of social change, the latter to advance them as an expressive medium that can influence and persuade its players.

Although the use of actual games in education—a practice known as "game-based learning"—has gained several encouraging results and many enthusiasts, it is also in many respects problematic and difficult to implement in terms of time, cost and pedagogy (Kapp 2012; Dicheva et al. 2015). Apart from video games specifically designed to meet the purposes of particular courses, in all other cases video games are used mainly in a supplementary way: as extrinsic motivators and stimuli for learning, instead of being a central aspect of the learning experience (Begg et al. 2005). It is therefore not surprising that many educators have tried to take advantage of the educational value of video games in ways that do not require the use of actual games. One such example is gamification. According to one definition, gamification is "the integration of elements of game design into non-gaming contexts" (Deterding et al. 2011). To date, most attempts to apply

gamification to an educational context have concentrated on the use of game vocabulary and mechanics, such as points and reward systems (Hamari et al. 2014; Dicheva et al. 2015). This has led to the criticism that gamification offers a superficial experience—a game veneer—instead of a real game with a backstory and a design that caters to specific learners’ needs (Jagoda 2013; Bogost 2015; Mak 2013). A game is a system, and its gamefulness depends on a range of factors that go far beyond the use of external rewards and game lexis. It is on these terms that Bogost castigates gamification as “bullshit” (2015) and “exploitationware” (2011), and the term “gamification” is often pejoratively referred to as “pointsification” (Robertson 2010). For all its drawbacks, gamification continues to be a buzzword today, and there have been some serious recent discussions of how it might become more sophisticated and meaningful (Fuchs 2014). In my field, even though gamification is not widely used, it has been adopted by a handful of teachers with some promising results (Gloyn 2015; Pike 2015).

Like gamification, game-informed learning (GIL)—a term coined by Begg, Dewhurst and Macleod (Begg et al. 2005)—does not presuppose the use of actual games or game worlds. However, whereas current practices of gamification typically employ game mechanics to offer a game veneer, GIL focuses mainly on game principles, such as role-playing, collaboration and storytelling, with a view to rendering learning more fundamentally game-like. GIL draws its rationale from James Paul Gee, whose seminal book *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* extensively discusses the intriguing ways in which video games facilitate learning whenever a game player encounters and attempts to master a new game. According to Gee, video games can provide numerous insights into how people learn, because such games build a theory of learning into their design. Following from this, Gee put together a list of thirty-six principles which, according to him, underpin good video games and represent central truths about the human mind and human learning (see also Whitton 2010; Deterding 2014).

Gameplay as a Voluntary Act

“The inner life of videogames is bound up with the inner life of the player” (Poole 2000)

Although educators’ attempts to leverage the potential of games as learning tools—whether through GBL, gamification or GIL—have been quite extensive, an

important issue that is often surprisingly absent from discussions of games and learning but is also one of the biggest challenges is that game-playing is first and foremost a voluntary act (Nicholson 2012). Although it is true that in many good video games gamers are allowed to move around freely, explore various environments, and extend their reach to unforeseen spatial localities (Gee 2007), the satisfaction emanating from this internal autonomy is largely premised on their external autonomy and the simple fact that game play, like any other form of play, is a free and voluntary act performed for its own sake (Suits 1978; Deterding 2014). The gamer is the one who chooses when to play, which game to play, for how long, where and with whom (Deterding 2014). Even in cases where a game is not played recreationally but is rather a means to a specific end (e.g. to facilitate social interaction at a gathering), the gamer still retains some control over their decision to play (Whitton 2010).

The external autonomy enjoyed by gamers raises a number of questions: would a gamer enjoy a video game if they were forced to play it? Would they feel the same pleasure, enjoyment and fun if someone else had decided what and how they were going to play? How free would they feel within a game space that allowed them to make several choices if they had been coerced into playing that particular game in the first place? Inevitably, although the immersive nature of video games results from a complex of elements and techniques (Shute and Ke 2012), their appeal is largely premised on the fact that game-playing is a leisure activity. No matter how engaging a video game is supposed to be, if it is imposed and not freely chosen it might quickly lead to a cessation of participation (Mollick and Rothbard 2014) and even be perceived as a kind of “electronic whip” (Deterding 2014: 308–10). Consequently, if with GBL and GIL we seek to attract student engagement in order to achieve deep learning, it is important to at least partly redeem the loss of external autonomy. As Mollick and Rothbard (2014) have shown, the detrimental effects that an externally imposed game may cause can be alleviated if the game is consented to, a condition that can be achieved if the participants have choices. Accordingly, it is important that students be provided with a range of options to choose from (Nicholson 2012).

As well as providing choices, however, it is also important to give students the opportunity to customise their learning and even design activities that are meaningful to them (Nicholson 2012). By allowing them to become “co-designers”,

not only do we enable students to take ownership of their learning and enjoy some autonomy—an important reinforcer of intrinsic motivation (Lepper 1988)—but we also contribute to the formation of what Kolb and Kolb have called a “ludic learning space”, namely a “free and safe space that provides the opportunity for individuals to play with their potentials and ultimately commit themselves to learn, develop and grow” (2010). In addition to play, “ludic spaces” can also foster the development of a playful attitude. The term “playful” is used here to indicate “a state of mind in which an individual can think flexibly, take risks with ideas (or interactions), and allow creative thought to emerge” (Youell 2008: 122). Consequently, playfulness can lead to playful play, and this in turn can generate radically new approaches and become a significant driver for creativity (Bateson and Martin 2013). Moreover, as Fizek (2014) points out, playfulness can also lead to fun, an element that has mostly been ignored in discussions of learning.

The crucial question is: how easy is it for students to be playful with their learning? The complexity of the notion of playfulness is illustrated in the two



Figure 2: Musical Staircase, Stockholm

following examples, both of which constitute attempts to apply game elements to a non-game context. The first example concerns the installation of an exergame aboard a public

tram in order to motivate users to do pull-ups. While the installation of the exergame would justify its use, people did not use it, because they found it embarrassing and inappropriate to play-exercise aboard a tram (Toprak et al. 2013; Deterding 2014). The second example concerns an experiment carried out in Odenplan underground station in Stockholm, where in an attempt to encourage people to use the stairs rather than the escalators, the Fun Factory team turned the staircase next to the escalators into a piano (Fig. 2). In this case not only were people willing to use the musical staircase, but they also played with it in various playful ways. Why were the outcomes so different in these two cases? Why was embarrassment not an issue in the second example? Some conjectures: first, the piano staircase did not require any musical knowledge and could be easily used by anyone, regardless of age, size or gender. For the exergame, however, we can assume that it might have been inaccessible to certain groups such as small children, the old and the unfit. Second,

whereas in order to get out of the underground people had to use either the piano stairs or the escalators, the exergame did not form an indispensable part of the passengers' travelling experience, in so far as people did not have to use the exergame in order to reach their destination. Third, even though the exergame was placed on a tram, one could not be really playful with it, but had to use it properly in order to justify its use—otherwise one might be accused of showing off. In the case of the piano staircase, however, people could adopt a playful attitude, because the very appearance of the staircase evoked the impression of something playable and therefore justified such behaviour. Last but not least, it is important to note that whereas the piano steps could be used simultaneously by a number of people, the exergame could only be used by one person at a time, a particularity that might heighten the “exposure” of its user to the eyes of other passengers. One ponders what might have happened if passengers had been offered a reward for using the exergame, or if the exergame had been accompanied by a note stating that when a total of 1000 pull-ups was reached a certain amount of money would go to a charity. Would people dare to be more playful in those circumstances? If so, would they be extrinsically or intrinsically motivated, or both? What would happen to the feeling of embarrassment in that case, and why? And what about the musical staircase? Would more people use it if there were a reward, or would this have a detrimental effect? One last crucial question: did the use of the musical staircase have merely ad hoc or wider implications? These questions are more easily asked than answered. What the abovementioned examples make clear, though, is that the appeal of a game, and even its perception *as* a game, is not inherent to the game alone. Rather, it is subjective and situational, and depends both on the interaction between the game and the player and on the conditions within which game-playing takes place. One player may thoroughly enjoy a video game, another may not, while the same player may experience diverse feelings even when playing the same video game, depending on the situation in which they find themselves each time. As Fuchs (2012) notes, if we were to drop some Lego bricks into a 1970s European child's room, in an Egyptian temple in 2000 BCE, and in front of the curator of a contemporary design museum in central Tokyo, those bricks would be perceived differently in each case, owing to the different context in which they were placed: as a toy, a sacred object and a piece of design respectively. A game exists as a game only when it becomes one in somebody's mind (Philippette 2014). Accordingly, a

player's disposition towards a game and their willingness to play with it are essential for a game to reach its full potential (Deterding 2014). This observation gains in significance if we think of the role that play holds today in formal education and its usual conceptualisation as a purposeless, silly and frivolous activity. As Kolb and Kolb (2010: 26–27) observe:

In reality, play has been devalued and continues to be squeezed out of our formal education institutions under the misguided view that learning is reserved to the classrooms and play should be confined to the playgrounds.

The marginalisation of play in academia raises crucial questions, as it might be detrimental to a student's willingness to play *qua* student. Having been attuned to an educational system where the work/play, seriousness/playfulness dichotomies prevail, students are very likely to be apprehensive about the idea of mixing play with education or readily adopting a playful stance towards their material (Whitton 2010).

Assessment and Learning

Assessment has always been an indispensable part of the educational system. Especially today, with the growing commercialisation of higher education, the need for apparent objectivity in metrics on the performance and competencies of students, academics and institutions is more urgent than ever (Nørgård et al. 2017). Yet, far from being merely a means for measuring performance, assessment also circumscribes the behaviour of all stakeholders. As Rowntree (1987: 1) notes with reference to student assessment: “if we wish to discover the truth about an educational system, we must look into its assessment procedures... The spirit and style of student assessment defines the *de facto* curriculum”. As such, assessment can have a profound effect on the way that students learn (Russell et al. 2006) and can largely shape what and when students study, how much work they do, and the approach they take to their learning (Entwistle & Entwistle 1991; Swan et al. 2006; Struyven et al. 2005). It is therefore not surprising that students very often skip or devote little time and effort to non-assessed tasks, tailoring their study to what is assessed and mainly to what is graded (Gibbs and Simpson 2004–5; Elton 1988). In

the past, assessment was mostly seen as a measurement of factual knowledge, normally occurring after learning had been completed. This kind of assessment, known as summative assessment, is typically juxtaposed against so-called formative assessment, whose overarching objective is to improve and support learning and teaching (Sadler 1989). Although these two modes of assessment are often treated as forming a binary, their character is rather situational. What really differentiates summative from formative assessment is not so much the practice as the intention (Knight 2002). If a facilitator designs an assessment with the intention to use it merely for validation, the assessment has a summative function; if the same assessment is used with the intention to create feedback that will be used to adapt the teaching to meet learning needs and promote learning, then its function is formative (Knight 2002; Shepard 2000; Black et al. 2004). Of course, to fulfil its ends, feedback should meet certain conditions: it should be timely, specific and targeted (Gibbs and Simpson 2004–5), functions which have nowadays been optimised by the affordances of technology (Russell et al. 2006). Nevertheless, the final word on whether formative assessment is true to its name rests with students, who may ignore the feedback and focus on the grade (Rowe 2017; Black & William 1998) or even feel discouraged by feedback, since it is liable to generate strong emotions (Rowe 2017; Deterding 2014). As studies have shown, a good way to acculturate students to feedback is by means of peer- and self-assessment activities (Race 2001), getting students involved in the creation of their own assessment (Carless 2007) and building on their ability for self-regulation (Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick 2006).

Although discussions of assessment often concern the quality of feedback and ways of motivating students to act upon it, another crucial factor is the design of assessment itself. Assessment should be designed in a way that promotes intrinsic motivation and sustains engagement: it should be authentic, involve collaboration, promote autonomy and higher-order thinking skills, and allow students to retain some control over their material. It should also be relevant (Lepper 1988; Trowler 2010). As many researchers have pointed out, as well as contributing to knowledge acquisition and understanding, assessment should also be geared towards the needs of the twenty-first century by helping students to develop the attributes and skills required to deal successfully with a complex and rapidly changing world: to be creative, be capable of learning independently, take risks, be flexible, have the

capacity to use particular knowledge in context, etc (Dolin and Evans 2018). Drawing on the way in which assessment works in good video games, Shute and Ke (2015) have also pointed out that assessment should not be isolated from context and focus merely on the final product, but rather should take into account the whole process and even be invisible. In other words, assessment should be designed in a way that would make students forget that they are being assessed and shift their attention to their performance instead. In light of all the above, I find the term “assessment for learning” useful and quite handy, to the degree that it refers to both the intentions and the design of assessment (Wiliam 2011). According to the definition provided by Black and colleagues (2004: 10), “assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students’ learning” (see also Taras 2010).

Game-Informed Playful Assessment (GIPA)

Drawing on all the above theories of games, learning and assessment, and on the notion of playfulness, I have formulated the term “game-informed playful assessment” to refer to a type of assessment that is underpinned by game principles and whose aim is not merely to record student achievement (assessment *of* learning) but rather to promote learning (assessment *for* learning) by motivating and engaging students. In designing the GIPA I have tried to allow at least some scope for student autonomy, so as to compensate for the fact that, unlike games, graded assessment is not a voluntary activity. The use of the adjective “playful” also points to the intention in this kind of assessment to foster a ludic attitude, thus encouraging students to see the world’s structures as opportunities for playful engagement (Zimmerman 2009). Seen from this perspective, the purpose of GIPA is twofold: it seeks not only to increase intrinsic motivation and enhance student engagement in order to promote learning, but also to change student perceptions *of* learning.

METHODOLOGY

Epistemology

Coming from the Humanities and having been trained as a classicist whose objective is the reconstruction of a bygone past by means of tattered papyri, fragmented artefacts and distant voices, my philosophical positioning is rather that of an interpretivist. I believe that reality is a social construct and, therefore, too multiple and complex to allow us to define universal and timeless laws. Being time and context bound, experience is always subjective and the only way to make sense of the multiple experiences and perspectives is by looking at the specific and concrete. Following from this, this study was underpinned by a qualitative approach, which allowed me to understand in depth students' perceptions of their learning experiences (Scotland 2012).

Phenomenology

The strategy of design best suited for such a study was phenomenology, to the degree that phenomenology is concerned with the understanding of social and psychological phenomena from the perspective of the people involved. The phenomenological approach puts experience into the limelight in order to gain insight into people's motivation, feelings, thoughts and actions and obtain comprehensive and accurate descriptions that portray the essences of a lived experience (Giorgi 1997; Moustakas 1994).

Field site

The GIPA that I designed, was applied to an ancient Greek literature course titled "Introduction to Archaic Greek Lyric Poetry". The course is credited with 5 ECTS and is offered as an undergraduate course at a Higher Education Institute in Cyprus. It is predominantly a face to face course, although facilitators may, if they want, blend their teaching with Blackboard, the University's Virtual Learning Environment. The overarching aim of the course is to introduce students to the Greek lyric poets of the archaic period (7th-5th c. B.C.E.) through the study of a range of representative

fragments in the original. Among the course's main objectives is also to train students in some of the most significant lyric meters, and to incite them to reflect upon the universal and timeless character of archaic lyric poetry (Appendix B).

Researcher role

While conducting my research I was both a researcher and the students'/interviewees' teacher. My twofold role raised several issues concerning power relations, that needed to be addressed. One of the major issues concerned the timing of data generation. On the one hand, conducting the research before marking the various activities could restrain students from expressing themselves freely during the interviews. On the other, the conduction of the interviews after the students had received their marks, could have the drawback that their views would be biased by their grade and that the time lapse from the activities they would be asked to reflect upon would be greater. I decided to conduct the interviews after the allocation of a grade, as I deemed this option to be less compromising. The place of the interviews was another issue that needed to be carefully thought through. To render the interviewing process less stressful for the students, the research was not held at my office, but at the University's café, where the environment was more relaxed and the atmosphere less hierarchical. Given that the students' responses were planned to be recorded, all interviews were conducted at off-peak hours.

Even though power relations in qualitative research is a very complicated and thorny issue (Karnieli-Miller & Strier 2009), the above measures, were—partly at least—conducive to the formation of what Taylor & Bogdan (1998: 48) call “a feeling of empathy for informant” that can encourage disclosure and authenticity on the participant's side. A third factor that contributed to this was, I believe, the mutual respect that had been established between me and the students. Throughout the semester I tried my best to pass on to students the message that their views matter and are highly valued by keeping asking for their feedback on the style of teaching and by trying to encompass, whenever possible, their suggestions. As a result, the research was not perceived by students as being conducted merely for the utilitarian purpose of completing an MSc dissertation, but as being underpinned by a genuine interest in the advancement of teaching and learning.

Participants

My criteria for recruiting my sample were: a) the students' willingness to be interviewed; b) their involvement in all the activities under investigation. Accordingly, all interviewees had attended my Archaic Greek Lyric course taught in the Spring Semester 2017/18. The size of my class was 72 students: 59 female and 13 male. All students were from Greece and Cyprus, except for two Erasmus students from Italy and Spain. "Introduction to Archaic Lyric Poetry" is a core module for second-year students studying Classics, but it can also be taken as an elective by second-, third-, and fourth-year students of the Faculty of Letters that study History, Archaeology, Modern Greek & Byzantine Studies and Philosophy (Table 1). Considering that what really matters in phenomenological research is not the size of the sample but rather the deeper meaning of one's experience of an event (Hycner 1985), I kept my sample relatively small (10 students), so that I could provide a more in-depth analysis of my data. Students were chosen randomly, as is normally the case in phenomenological research (Hycner 1985; Englander 2012), even though preference was given to students that also attended the lectures of the course.

Pseudonym	Year of Study	Field of Study
Penny	4	History
Miranda	2	Philosophy
John	2	Classics
Tonia	4	Modern Greek & Byzantine
Anna	4	Mod. Greek & Byzantine
Rania	2	Classics
Nicholas	4	Mod. Greek & Byzantine
Vicky	2	Classics
Simone	1	Mod. Greek & Byzantine
Chara	3	Mod. Greek & Byzantine

Table 1: Demographics of Interviewees

Procedure

In designing the GIPA, I made sure to align all the assessment tasks with the objectives and intended outcomes of the course. I used as a basis James Paul Gee's (2007) list of thirty-six learning principles underpinning good video games, laying particular emphasis on the eight principles that a) I deemed most appropriate to the objectives of my course, b) could encourage student engagement with both activities and other students, and c) could help students to develop twenty-first century skills, which I included among the course's secondary objectives. More specifically, I tried to provide students with opportunities to get actively and critically involved with their material (the active, critical learning principle), to work and learn with their peers (the affinity group principle), to evaluate their peers (the peer-review principle), to use and reflect upon modalities other than words (the multimodal principle), to make choices (the multiple routes principle), to have small-scale embodied experiences (the situated meaning principle), to use the skills and knowledge they gained from one activity in the next (the transfer principle), and to have the autonomy to customise the various activities according to their own interests and concerns (the insider principle). In order to encourage students not only to work on the activities but also to engage with them and adopt a playful attitude, I tried to take into account motivational theory (Malone 1981; Lepper 1988) and include tasks that encouraged students to associate things with no obvious relevance and to look at their surrounding environment inside and outside the university in alternative ways (see Appendix C).

Tasks were accompanied by specific rules, but did not have a factual orientation. All were designed to invite students to think up and formulate their own answers driven by their personal interests, concerns, and social and cultural backgrounds, rather than searching for model answers. I tried to keep all assignments quite short, for two reasons: a) I wanted students to enter into a dialogue and spend most of their time brainstorming, discussing and reflecting on their material, with others and by themselves—to pay more attention to the process than the product, to avoid surface approaches to learning (Drew 2001) and to have time to think and look around them (Levy 2007); b) I wanted to promote concise and focused written communication, and to encourage students to boil down their answers to the essence.

For three of the four activities, students had to work in groups of four or five, which they could form on their own. I put any remaining students into groups alphabetically. For each group a forum for discussion was created in Blackboard, in

order both to facilitate asynchronous communication and to enable monitoring of their learning in progress for the provision of continuous formative feedback (Russell et al. 2006). Teams were encouraged to use these fora, although it was not set as a requirement. All assignments had to be submitted in digital form via Blackboard, even though in my department students' graded work is still predominantly submitted in printed form. Detailed guidelines for each activity along with relevant material were published on Blackboard and were also automatically sent to the students' email addresses. The four activities were revealed to the students one at a time, in order to provoke a feeling of suspense and curiosity. Students received ample feedback on all their assignments with the use of "track changes" in Microsoft Word. However, in order to increase engagement with the feedback, the grades for each activity were withheld until the completion of all activities in week nine (Carless 2006; Boud and Falchikov 2007). It needs to be stressed that my intervention in the course's assessment method meant that many other changes also had to be introduced into my teaching, so that the teaching and informal formative activities carried out in class during weeks two to eight would scaffold the GIPA.

Although the main purpose of the GIPA was formative rather than summative, since formal assessment is a direct indicator of importance to students (Keppell et al. 2006; Russell et al. 2006) I decided to substitute the course's mid-term exam, weighted as forty per cent of the final grade, with the GIPA and another innovative assessment, allocating twenty per cent to each (Table 2). My previous experience of the course had shown that students concentrated their efforts on the two or three days before the mid-term exam. In order to mitigate this phenomenon, I divided the GIPA into four smaller activities that each counted for five per cent, and I spread these between weeks two and eight so that student engagement would be equally spread across the first half of the semester (Gibbs and Simpson 2004). The activities were scaffolded, so that the experience gained from each activity could be applied to the next and feedback could be used as feedforward (Hounsell et al. 2007).

Weeks	How?	What?	Grade
2-8	Teamwork/In couples or Individually	Four game-informed activities	Assessed 20%
9-12	Individually	Small-scale creative projects inspired by the lyric poets (painting, musical composition, play, collection of poems, polls, interviews to the University's radio station etc)	Assessed 20%
14	Individually	Final written examination	Assessed 60%
1-12	Individually	Digital Multiple-Choice Questions	Non- Assessed [Badges]

Table 2: Methods of Assessment for "Archaic Greek Lyric Poetry"

Data generation

I elicited my data through the conduction of in-depth individual interviews (Mears 2012). This method of data collection is widely used in phenomenological research, as it allows the researcher to get an accurate and complete description of the experience that a participant has lived through (Giorgi 2009; Bloor and Wood 2011). For this reason, in this kind of research interview questions tend to be very generic; generability on the one hand allows interviewees to freely express themselves and touch upon issues that mattered to *them*; on the other it allows the researcher scope for probing potentially promising remarks that crop up during the discussion. Accordingly, in designing the interview questions I tried to get rid of various biases and not to superimpose upon the participants my own concepts and concerns. Of course, even though the desideratum is for the researcher to become, in Kvale and Brinkmann's terms, a "deliberate naiveté" (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009), this is easier said than done. The issues that a researcher lays emphasis on or singles out for more clarification are de facto "contaminated" by his own interests and concerns. In fact,

the very research question puts a frame around the issue under investigation from the very beginning.

All the interview questions were formed with the view to prompting students to recall the situations within which particular tasks were performed and to eliciting concrete events and experiences. However, being a novice in phenomenological research, I felt that it would be safer to adopt the more structured phenomenological approach to interviewing proposed by Bevan (2014). As Bevan points out, whereas in phenomenological interviewing questions should be kept generic, at the same time, it is important to apply some structure to these questions, in order to get richer and more holistic descriptions. On these grounds, he suggests that a phenomenological interview should contain questions based on themes of 1) experience contextualisation; 2) apprehending the phenomenon; 3) and clarification of the phenomenon. Drawing on this model, I designed three main questions. My first question sought to contextualise the participants' experience by exploring their feelings towards ancient Greek, taking into account that all students had attended many hours of ancient Greek both at school and at the University. Accordingly, even though this question manifests what has been noted above about the subjectivity of the researcher, it was deemed to be a crucial one. Through the second question I sought to apprehend how students experienced the game-informed activities that they were asked to perform, trying to elicit, by means of four probe sub-questions, an in-depth description of how each activity was lived through. Considering the time lapse between the implementation of the activities and the time of the interview, I deemed it essential to provide brief reminders of the activities, so that students could retrieve the experience more easily. For purposes of further clarity in the presentation of the phenomenon, the third question was designed so as to exploit imaginative variation to explore experience (Bevan 2014, Table 5; see also Appendix D).

Phenomenological Attitude	Researcher Approach	Interview Structure	Method	Example Question
Phenomenological Reduction (Epoché)	Acceptance of Natural Attitude of Participants	Contextualization (Eliciting the Lifeworld in Natural Attitude)	Descriptive/Narrative Context Questions	"Tell me about becoming ill," or "Tell me how you came to be at the satellite unit."
	Reflexive Critical Dialogue With Self	Apprehending the Phenomenon (Modes of Appearing in Natural Attitude)	Descriptive and Structural Questions of Modes of Appearing	"Tell me about your typical day at the satellite unit," or "Tell me what you do to get ready for dialysis."
	Active Listening	Clarifying the Phenomenon (Meaning Through Imaginative Variation)	Imaginative Variation: Varying of Structure Questions	"Describe how the unit experience would change if a doctor was present at all times."

Table 3: A structure of phenomenological interviewing (reproduced from Bevan 2014)

All interviewees were met at a preliminary meeting, where we reviewed the ethical considerations and they completed the ethical forms. During this instance participants were also asked to go through the research question, so that they could have time to ponder, if they wished, on their experience before the interview. A possible objection to this practice could be that such a reflection may "spoil" the participants' spontaneous, pre-reflective responses and lead them to self-interpretation of the experience. A counter-argument would be that this may enable interviewees to provide a richer description during the interview by retrieving more details on their feelings, memories, thoughts and sensations of an experience (Englander 2012: 27). A spontaneous response is not de facto more trustworthy, sincere or authentic; even an ad hoc description of a past event is the outcome of reflection and interpretation, to the degree that such an event is necessarily described in retrospection and is, therefore, understood through the scope of the present. Given that in re-collection we always have an overview of the whole and know the ending, our narration of past events is always informed by this ending (Ricoeur 1980). Besides, as Englander (2012: 27) correctly points out, "the goal of the later data analysis is to describe the psychological meaning and this also includes describing the psychological meaning of the participants' self-interpretations".

Analysis

Upon completion of the interviews, I moved on to the transcription of the recordings. Given that the interviews were held in modern Greek, the students' mother tongue, the transcription was done in modern Greek; I only translated into English those passages which I chose for verbatim quotation in my dissertation. Although I paid much attention to issues of accuracy, I am aware that my transcriptions were not an exact replica of what was said during the interview. As Jen Ross (2010) cautions, whether we like it or not, transcription is an interpretative act; the transcriber has to make many assumptions during the transcribing stage and a great deal of the authenticity of the data is compromised—albeit unconsciously—through one's cultural-linguistic filters. Similar remarks, but to an even greater extent, apply to translation; on several occasions I had to make difficult decisions as to what the students meant in order to be able to provide a translation.

Another thing that needs to be noted here concerns the non-verbal and para-linguistic levels of communication (e.g. intonation, pauses, gestures), which can shed light upon a student's experience and contribute to its better understanding (Hycner 1985). Whereas in my initial research proposal I stated that such information would also be recorded, this was only partly achieved owing to my being a neophyte in phenomenological research. In my attempt to keep eye contact and empathise with the participants, so that they open up and freely express themselves, I was “immersed into” the interview, thus missing some important non-verbal information. Because of my inexperience I also missed some opportunities to probe interesting issues that were worth of further exploration. I came to realise this when listening to the recordings and during the data analysis. Following pure phenomenology, I attempted to simply describe my data, even though an interpretative element has also been added. To be in position to portray the essences and “thickness” of the participants' experience and pull out emerging themes, I went through both the recordings and the transcriptions several times, I tried to break down the data and use codes (Moustakas 1994).

Ethics

The research was conducted in accordance with the British Educational Research Association *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (BERA 2018). Prior to the research administrative consent was acquired from the University of Edinburgh under the auspices of which the research was conducted. My own Institution and the Head of my Department were also officially informed about my prospective research. No permission or any other approval was needed in this case, owing to the fact that the interviews were conducted with my own students and the learning activity fitted in my on-going teaching practice. Written voluntary consent was obtained from all prospective interviewees (Appendix E). Participants were also informed both about their right to withdraw from the interview at any stage and about my intention to use the collected data for future research after the submission of the MSc dissertation. Upon completion of the interview process special attention was paid to the appropriate handling and storage of the collected data through the creation of a password-protected file. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the identity of all participants and my own Institution were concealed in all documents pertaining to this study.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of the procedure followed I evaluated the quality of my research by taking into consideration the following four constructs: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba 1981; Shenton 2004). *Credibility*: Even though the use of only one research method (interviews) to collect my data did not allow for their validation through triangulation, I tried to support my findings with ample references to relevant bibliography. *Transferability*: In qualitative research replicability is not possible to the degree that research is grounded in a very specific context; however, I made sure to provide sufficient detail on the context within which the research was carried out, so that to allow some transferability of the study and future application of my findings to a similar environment/situation. *Dependability*: To ensure the future repetition of my research I tried to provide a detailed description of its various steps. *Confirmability*: I made

sure to carefully transcribe and analyse my data, trying to leave aside—to the degree possible—my own predispositions and biases.

Challenges and Limitations of Design

One of the main challenges of my design is, I think, that participants were chosen mainly from the students that regularly attended the lectures and not from the students that submitted the activities but had never showed up in class. What is more, there was no correlation between student remarks and their actual performance or their overall achievement in the course, so as to verify that deep learning occurred. Last but not least, even though the Archaic Lyric Course is not for first-year students, due to a system error, this time one fourth of the students were freshers. This contingency not only radically increased the size of the class, thus leading to great workload implications for me (as the facilitator), but it also raised serious questions on these students' readiness and maturity to come to grips with this kind of innovative assessment, considering that they only had experienced one full term (i.e. the Winter Semester) of Higher Education. This was the main reason why the use of the discussion groups on Blackboard was recommended but was not set as a requirement. Given that most of the freshers did not even know what Blackboard is, because only a handful of teachers make use of it, I preferred to allow students to use more familiar means of communication, if they wished. The implication of this was that I was not able to monitor their discussions and provide immediate feedback, a significant motivational reinforcer.

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The interviews were illuminating in many respects. Due to limitations of space, here I concentrate on the most important issues that came up, illustrating these with ample evidence, so as both to show the richness of the experience and to allow the students' own voice to be heard. The findings are presented by question.

Ancient Greek language and the Emotional Baggage of Students

Student responses to the first Question (*Tell me how you would describe your experience studying Ancient Greek so far?*) varied. Five students characterised their relationship with ancient Greek as good, specifying that they had high marks at this subject at High School. The rest of the students emphasised that ancient Greek was not among their favourite subjects, mainly owing to the conservative way ancient Greek is taught. Simone and Miranda explained that their experience was better at the University, because the focus was not exclusively on grammar and syntax but also on interpretation. Anna, who claimed to have received one of the highest marks in the subject at the National entry exams, stated that her experience with ancient Greek at the University was worse, as she was expecting that her teachers would adopt an alternative mode of teaching and would make use of technology.

Innovative Assessment and Student Emotions

Responding to the second Question (*Could you recall your thoughts and feelings upon announcement of the activities*) six of the students reported that they experienced strong negative feelings including anxiety, confusion, insecurity, stress, perplexity and fear. These students identified two main sources of stress: 1) the fact that they were not accustomed to this kind of assessment and 2) their inexperience in working in groups in the past. Miranda's response is illustrative:

Well....my reaction was not good (*laughing*). So.. my first concern was associated with the groupwork. I said: Gosh! How would the teams be formed? With whom shall I work? I do not know many of my peers... And what if the collaboration doesn't work? What will happen then? And if I am the one who cannot collaborate? This was a problem... My second concern had to do with the fact that we had to be creative... Having spent so many years practicing on rote memorisation, it is veeery hard to be asked to be creative again within the framework of merely one semester. To cultivate, in any case, this kind of thinking....

Rania spotlighted the novelty of the assessment:

I hated you for five minutes, you know. For sure! (*giggling*). I was so stressed! This kind of things stress me up.... They stress me up because we haven't done anything similar in the past. It was something entirely alien...

We are not used to it.... Something entirely alien.... We had none of this kind of assessment in our other courses.... Alien and entirely new.

Chara further specified that she did not like the idea because she felt that this kind of activities would not prepare her for the final written exam. When asked if their initial feelings remained the same throughout the activities, all six students reported that there was a radical shift. As John observed, “From the first activity the anxiety was gradually developing to creative stress, critical thinking and creativity”. Five of the students credited this change of feelings to the good collaboration they had with their teams from the very beginning.

Two students remarked that, upon hearing about the activities, they experienced mixed feelings. Penny stated that she was caught by surprise, which she defined as both positive and negative, while Tonia noted that she felt both stress and curiosity. Tonia also commented on the fact that she was surprised to hear that the activities would be graded and count as 20% of their final evaluation.

Finally, Vicky and Anna reported that their reaction was ultimately positive. Anna saw the innovative assessment as a challenge:

Well... when a lecturer tells you that you won't have a mid-term, you take it as a good thing... Of course, after you explained how this would work, it was not that easy.... but it was more creative. But... given that this was the only module that was creative—in the other modules nobody has never asked us to do something similar—most of the students, after I had spoken with them— were stressed ... because they have learnt—this also applies to me— only to write academic essays... But... I mean... we keep complaining about the mid-terms and then, when a lecturer suggests something new we complain again... at least we should give it a try!

Engagement, Motivation, and Flow

The third Question (*Could you describe your experience for each activity separately?*), brought several issues to the fore.

Activity One: Playfulness and Situated Learning

The great majority of students reported that the composition of the poem had been by far the most difficult task. Three students underlined the joy and satisfaction that they shared with their teams upon completing the activity. Rania's report is illuminating:

Rania: I remember that at the beginning it seemed to us impossible!

Interviewer: What exactly?

Rania: Especially the idea of the poem... We had in mind that we must follow the instructions, in order to get it right, be right....the requirement that all even syllables had to be accented, stressed us up! And this stressed us up primarily because two of us were living in Nicosia, the other two in other cities...therefore we Skyped in the evenings. For the first 3-4 days we were Skyping and sitting there for hours—just staring at each other trying to make sense... In vain! And then we started taking notes and, all of a sudden, it was going well... I remember our screaming and how glad we were, when we finished the very first verse (*giggling*). We were so excited! Just the first verse! And then all the rest just followed...it was also the message that we wanted to pass...it was good that we hadn't interpreted the poems in class... we had more freedom... This helped a lot... And at the end it was such a relief! We couldn't believe that we had written all that. I don't know how it came out, but *we* liked it very much.

Students found the association of Archilochus' poetry with a painting easier. Rania



Figure 3: One of the paintings given to students

noted that without realising it, this association prompted them to embark upon the analysis of art as well. Miranda commended on the feelings of surprise that she experienced, while working on the association:

I would never think about it... When you get into the process of making the association, you are surprised. You realise that it is possible.... To think of things other than the ones that *they* tell you that are right.... In our attempt to analyse the colours, the posture of the figures... indeed, so many ideas sprang to mind.

Activity Two: Authenticity & Playfulness

All students described the second activity as being an authentic task and commented on the fact that, by adopting the identity of a secondary-education teacher, they felt that they were applying their knowledge to a real-world challenge, which they would probably face in the future. To quote Anna:

This was much better than the first assignment, because we had to get into the role of a teacher—which is what we study.... For instance, what we did with the photo, I would like to adopt it as well for my own teaching. I would not have thought about it before...



Figure 4: One of the photos captured for Activity 2

Many students reported that the restriction of having to take their photos from the University Campus incited them to draw attention to aspects of the university environment that had not been previously attended. As Penny noted, even though initially she and her team were put off by this

limitation, after they started looking around, they realised that they had

several choices and that the restraint was necessary for the “awakening” of their creativity. Simone described how her team decided to re-write the finished assignment for the second activity all over again, because they did not feel entirely satisfied with the first photo that they took and commented upon. Tonia described how she captured her photo, which was then chosen by her team, at a moment of leisure:

Personally I spend too much time at the University’s Library... I stay until late in the evening... I remember that one evening I went downstairs to make a break. When I looked up for a moment, I saw a peer passing by... While he was walking, he looked like a shadow, because it was dark... I immediately captured a photo with my smartphone... While reading the poem I (and my team agreed) wanted to compare man to a shadow that, despite the difficulties, moves on and struggles to keep the balance... the “measure”...

Whereas for the second activity students were given the opportunity to illustrate Archilochus’ fragment using either photos or a video, only one out of the fifteen teams prepared a video. Rania, a member of that team, explained that one of the other team-members had a friend whose sister (at the students’ age) had gone through a difficult illness. Considering that one of the points raised by Archilochus 128 is that humans should not succumb to difficulties, the group decided to contact the girl and asked her if she could share her experience with them and be video recorded. When the girl consented, the students had to deal with another problem—the rule that all videos (and photos) had to be captured at the University Campus. The team solved the problem by having a conversation with the girl via Skype at the University’s

premises. Rania singled out the emotional bearing that the activity had upon her and how this outweighed even my feedback, as the facilitator:

This was an experience that I have never had before... I was sure... even before your feedback, that the outcome was very good, very good... in the sense that it was something unique... I was feeling very touched....from the moment I talked to the girl and she explained to me what she went through ... how she managed... she went abroad alone... I was so touched.... For the moment that we decided to include her story in our assignment, we said that it is worth, regardless of the result. We didn't care about how it would be assessed.... We knew that we included something good... Inside me I knew that it was something good.

When Rania was asked to comment on the fact that, whereas they received feedback on their assignment, they did not receive a grade until the end of all the activities, she replied as follows:

I did not care about my grade... We had a great time. We have learnt. I didn't even bother about my grade. We engaged more with the texts and I did not have the assessment in mind... I do care about my grades, but not this time... I do not know why...

Activity Three: Peer-Assessment

Students reported that they had never been asked to assess their peers before. Penny noted that, while being an Erasmus student in Germany, she had noticed that the practice of peer-assessment was well-established. She contrasted this to Cyprus, where, according to her, peer-assessment is still “a taboo”. Eight students said that they found this activity to be difficult, owing to the fact that they were anxious to use the right wording, so that they would not offend or hurt the feelings of their peers. As a result they spent a lot of time thinking of how to articulate their thoughts and suggestions. John's report is illuminating not least because it also provides a list with the features of what he and his team considered as “good feedback”:

To assess the assignment of another team ... this means that you get into the process of making judgements... this is something that happens in our lives as well. People judge us on what we say, on what we do. Hmm... So we had to be very careful about what to say and how to say it. To be precise and ... support our comments.... Be clear... not to write generalities... We also thought of our own assignments and how the other teams would judge us...

So, we agreed that we should evaluate them in an objective way, as we would like our own assignment to be evaluated.

Tonia stated that she and her team felt weird and a bit puzzled because they did not feel confident that they were in position to understand and appreciate what the other teams have written. Three other students paid attention to the fact that this process enabled them to rethink their own assignments and even trace some of their own mistakes. Penny also argued that this process helped them to get into the lecturers' head and understand how lecturers think, while grading their assignments. Finally, one student claimed that this kind of assessment enhances critical thinking. Half of the students observed that the whole process would have been different, if they had not worked on the same assignments themselves. As Vicky pointed out, it was interesting and revealing to see that other students approached the same topics in so different and diverse ways.

Activity Four: Autonomy & Agency

All students commented on the strong feelings that they experienced by addressing the lyric poets in the second person singular. Penny noted that the use of the second person contributed to the “resurrection” of the lyric poets, while Chara stressed that the abandonment of the third-person singular— typically used in academic essays— made her feel that she could freely express herself. The great majority of students also laid emphasis on the fact that through their “dialogue” with the lyric poets they managed to appreciate the timeless and universal value of archaic lyric poetry. As Vicky commented:

I did not believe that we could use such an old poem to talk about contemporary things... Honestly, I did not believe this.... I would never think about this...

The notions of autonomy and agency also came to the fore. Simone explained how the opportunity to talk to a lyric poet by adopting the perspective of a young person of her age “liberated” her from her identity as a student and as a philologist-to-be and allowed her not only to speak with her very own voice—as a 20-year old Greek-Cypriot—about several issues that concerned her but also to send a message. A similar point was made by Vicky, who confessed that she faced difficulties in deciding upon the fragment that she would work on for her assignment:

Initially I worked on a fragment by Archilochus (*the student here confused Archilochus with Tyrtaeus*) which I felt that I didn't really understand when we went through it in class. I didn't get the gist... it was about the youth... the dead bodies.... war... sacrifice for one's fatherland... I believe that we ought to love our fatherland... Gradually I felt that the message that I wanted to pass could be better illustrated through a different poem...

The emotional attachment confessed by Vicky is best illustrated by John's response:

John: I decided to deal with the issue of refugees. I dedicated too much time... I wanted to use the most appropriate words... It was difficult.... But enjoyable... So many ideas squeezed into a condensed text... But at the end they led somewhere... They send a message...

Interviewer: How was it to use an archaic poet to discuss contemporary issues?

John: It is as if... it is as if... Tyrtaeus was living now and I was living back then...I found it very interesting... I am thinking that I could make similar associations with other poets as well...

Interviewer: Your photo was from a street art....

John: Yes... Actually, I was skeptical about this... This street art represents refugees, but contemporary refugees... And street art is also very often criticised... I was skeptical... I would never imagine that I could put down my own thoughts and create something soooo good... By reading it again, and again and again I have learnt it by heart... (*giggling*).

Interviewer: How do feel about it?

John: I feel proud... Whenever I read it—because I am still reading it—I am thinking that when other people read it, they will get my point, I will provoke feelings to them....I have already asked my peers whether they have read it, and I realised that it had an impact upon them.

It should be noted that when students were prompted to comment on the implications that the prospect of having their works publicly displayed had on them, none of them reported of any implications. However, students whose work was chosen for exhibition remarked that they experienced feelings of pride and satisfaction.

Collaboration

Students reported that they had not worked in groups before. However, all spoke favourably about this experience, highlighting the advantages of being able to exchange ideas, persuade others through argumentation, and learn with and from others. As Vicky put it: “with others we think alternatively”. Many students acknowledged that collaboration also involved challenges, and that their experience

would have been entirely different if their teams had been dysfunctional. Chara referred to one such team, pointing out that some of her friends had had a hard time collaborating with their team members. Four students stated that their collaboration with others had had an impact on their character and skills, helping them to become more receptive to other ideas, to learn to compromise, and to accept, as Chara reported, “that occasionally others may have better ideas”. Chara also said that teamwork had made her realise that she had leadership and organisational skills, while Penny highlighted the ability to collaborate with others as a significant lifelong skill. With regard to team dynamics, Rania emphasised that collaboration with the same team for the first three activities had been conducive to her bonding with other team members. She juxtaposed this practice against that adopted on some foreign-language courses, where groups are formed randomly and only for the duration of a class. She compared such episodic teamwork to “children’s play” (in Greek, *paichnidaki*)

Even though students were encouraged to use Blackboard for their discussions, the great majority did not follow this recommendation. Indeed, seven students stated that they had not even bothered to learn how the discussion forum worked. Since they either had never used Blackboard before or had used it merely for downloading course material, they deemed it more convenient to exchange ideas and share their material (photos and drafts) through Facebook and Skype. The majority of students reported that they had mostly communicated face-to-face, either on campus or in nearby cafes. Two students, whose teams had used Blackboard for a couple of weeks, stressed that they had found it useful to receive immediate feedback from the teacher, as this had helped them to stay on track and feel more secure. Nevertheless, eventually they too had had to abandon Blackboard, because not all members of their team used the platform regularly, and because Blackboard did not allow synchronicity. Rania reported that her team had not used Blackboard because their discussions were great fun and they thought it would not be very appropriate for me to read their comments, because they were not very “academic”.

Notably, whereas all students acknowledged the benefits of efficient teamwork, half of them had preferred to work on their own for activity four, because they preferred to have full agency. As Tonia indicated: “in this way I felt that my own voice could also be heard... my own opinion”.

Describing the GIPA in one word.

In answering Question 4 (*Could you describe one thing (thought, sensation, feeling) that you remember more vividly about the experience?*) four students adopted a holistic perspective, juxtaposing their initial negative feelings to the subsequent positive ones. To quote Miranda:

What I take from this course... one thought... a lesson, I would rather say... is that we should never criticise something before experiencing it and trying it out.... I will always remember my feelings when you announced that we would work in groups and how much I enjoyed it at the end ... it really helped me to become more communicative...more **creative**... I really like it! I did not expect it to be like this..... It was something **amazing**! I think that this is what I will always remember....

The rest of the students focused on the positive feelings that they experienced while working on the activities, glossing those activities that made them the greatest impression. As Anna put it:

What is left from all this is the **creativity**... This was the only module that was so **creative**.... I am not just saying this. It is the true. In no other course did *they* allow us to do something **creative**; talk to a poet, take a photo....I remember the other students watching me walking around in the Campus with a digital camera at my hand....(*giggling*). All this was so **interesting**!

In addition to the noun “creativity”, and the adjectives “creative”, “interesting” and “amazing” employed in the above quotations, in describing their experience students also used the terms “joy”, “pleasure”, “critical thinking” and “different”. Furthermore, most of them also reported to have experienced some kind of emotional investment in the tasks (especially with regard to Activities 2 and 4).

Assessment for Learning vs Assessment of Learning

Responding to Question 5 (*Could you describe how your engagement with the archaic Greek lyric poets would be different if the activities were replaced by a different method of assessment*), all students identified the different method of assessment with the traditional mid-term written exam. Chara mentioned the oral exam as another possible alternative. Notably, all students described mid-terms in depreciatory terms, pointing out that the knowledge gained through studying for a

mid-term is retained for a short period of time because it is the product of rote memorisation. In describing mid-terms students used terms like “boring” and “trivial”, pointing out that this kind of assessment requires specific answers, thus allowing no scope for one’s personal view. Penny raised the issue of diversity, arguing that mid-terms and final exams assess very specific skills, thus ignoring that different students have different skills. Simone outlined the “strategy” to be followed for successfully tackling a mid-term:

If we had a mid-term exam we would learn a few things but we wouldn’t remember them forever. It would be the same as we do now; we study, we give the exam and when we leave, we forget...It was much more helpful than a mere mid-term exam... In a mid-term you learn the most important things, but you don’t retain them because you just read them superficially and then everything is gone. You do not do research... if you do some research on a text, you will remember things... when you are asked to do something with a text you return back, you read it, you write, then you return back again, you write, you return back again...In this way you retain more things. While for the mid-term, you can guess what’s going to be about... you will only read this stuff... and then everything will go away!

Vicky explained how the GIPA differed from a mid-term, laying emphasis on the control that she felt to have with the four activities:

A mid-term exam would seem more natural, because this is what I have learned so far. *They* have put me into this mode of thinking and I had the impression that this is helpful. But, now I understand that I have gained much more through these activities... I mean, I was involved with things that I wouldn’t if I only had to memorise some information. First of all, I would not have gained some of the knowledge I have now... And I would not have put my hand to the material. I would have learnt something as the facilitator would have taught it. I would not have put myself into all this... Honestly, I did like it a lot!

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The interviews foregrounded a number of interesting and intriguing findings. Some of the views expressed by students were expected and are supported in the literature. Some of the issues touched upon, however, have not previously received adequate attention. In this section I selectively refer to and discuss some of the issues that I deem the most important.

Game-Informed Learning, Gamefulness and Playfulness

Although the activities were informed by game principles, none of the students used the terms “play” or “game” (in Greek both meanings are expressed by the word *paichnidi*) to describe their experience. While this might be mere coincidence, it may also indicate that students did not perceive the activities as a game/play. This is reasonable, considering that my design was game-informed, not game-based, and that I did not use game mechanics (e.g. achievement points, badges or leader boards) that might have added a game veneer. Another hypothesis is that students might not have felt that defining the activities as a game/play would be congruent with the seriousness of the tasks. This remark might find support in Rania’s use of the term *paichnidaki* (children’s play) to refer to an activity that was not deemed serious enough. Students did not use the terms “playful” or “playfulness” either.² Although this might also be a coincidence, it should be taken into account that in modern Greek the adjective “playful” is not as widely or commonly used as it is in English. In fact, the adjective “creative”, which cropped up many times during the interviews, is often used as a synonym. It might have been worth pursuing these issues further, since the perception of something in a particular way nurtures certain expectations that can affect how one treats one’s material (the “subject-expectancy effect” (Supino 2012)). Following from this, students may feel that it is more legitimate to “play” with their material if they are told that the design of a course is underpinned by game principles. To be sure, even though the four activities were designed to foster playfulness, students’ preoccupation with “being right” and “getting things right” reveals that they need more support to adopt a playful attitude and dare to problematise even the rules and dogmas of correctness. It is important for students to realise that playfulness and seriousness are not mutually exclusive concepts but can and should go hand in hand (Skilbeck 2017).

Innovative Assessment and Emotions

The feelings experienced by students upon the announcement of the innovative assessment during the first lecture call for particular attention. Taking into account

² There are no equivalent words for the terms “gameful” or “gamefulness” in Greek.

student dissatisfaction with summative assessment, one would expect students to have welcomed the proposed alternative mode of assessment and to have experienced positive feelings, such as excitement and curiosity. The initial discomfort and stress experienced by the great majority of students clearly demonstrates that the introduction of a new kind of assessment—no matter how exciting it might seem to the facilitator—can provoke strong negative feelings such as anxiety, stress, uncertainty and even fear. This observation supports the thesis that new kinds of assessment may be risky and engender student distress and discomfort (McDowell and Sambell 1999; Bevitt 2015; Carless 2017). As Gibbs (2006: 20) points out, students are “instinctively wary of approaches with which they are not familiar or that might be more demanding... [and] unhappy about assessment methods where the outcomes might be less predictable”. Consequently, students’ dissatisfaction with current methods of assessment does not entail that they will readily embrace innovative assessment, even though it might point to their readiness to do so. No matter how exciting it may seem, innovative assessment, like all new things, needs to be scaffolded and supported (Vygotsky 1978; Carless & Zhou 2015). It might have helped, for instance, if students had had access to the course handbook, and therefore to the method of assessment, prior to the first lecture. Likewise, more peer-assessment tasks in class might have alleviated the mixed feelings often experienced by students with regards to peer-assessment activities (Segers & Dochy 2001).

Particular mention should be made here of “surprise”, the feeling one experiences when one expected things to be different, which was mentioned by students in relation not only to the couching of the activities but also to the feelings they experienced while working on the various tasks. Surprise can have both negative and positive results, depending on whether one deals with it actively or passively (Hunzinger 2015). Even though surprise has not been examined in relation to GBL, it calls for further investigation, not least because of its association with the notions of “playfulness” and learning. De Koven (2017) defines playfulness as “an openness to surprise”, while in the *Theaetetus* Plato portrays the philosopher—and by extension anyone who pursues knowledge—as being in a constant state of wonder (*Tht.* 155d).

Collaboration

The enthusiastic way students referred to collaboration with their peers reinforces previous studies that advocate the beneficial impact of teamwork on learning (Entwistle and Waterston 1988; Davies 2009). Peer support can be reassuring, while negotiation and the exchange of ideas can facilitate rich learning experiences (Kaye 1995; Boud et al. 1999; Boud and Falchikov 2007; Watkins 2004; Bryan 2006). The emphasis upon the gradual bonding of team members also supports the view that groups can be more efficient and functional if they are formed early and last for several weeks (Davies 2009). It takes time for a team to become what Gee calls an “affinity group” where members share a sense of common purpose and collegiality (Gee 2007). The comparison of the ad hoc formation of teams to “children’s play” raises interesting questions about the importance of at least some kinds of bonding for “serious” work. The fact that some students preferred to work individually rather than in pairs for the fourth activity is also notable, and might be associated with the need for agency and ownership over one’s own learning. Along with the various challenges that collaboration can involve (Davies 2009), this shows that for all its advantages, collaboration is not a panacea. Accordingly, courses should strike a balance, and students should also be given the choice to pursue certain tasks on their own.

Motivation

Students’ remarks about the time and effort they dedicated to the various tasks, and about their feelings of enjoyment, imply that they felt intrinsically motivated while working on the tasks. This might be associated with the taxonomy of intrinsic motivators for learning identified by Malone and Lepper (1987), such as challenge (tasks were neither too easy nor too difficult), curiosity (there were novel associations, and the activities were revealed one at a time), fantasy (e.g. an imaginary dialogue with a poet) and autonomy (students had a certain level of control over the tasks) (Malone and Lepper 1987). In addition, intrinsic motivation was also increased by other factors such as contextualisation (e.g. preparing a presentation for secondary students (Lepper 1988)), collaboration and creativity (Barab et al. 2005). While intrinsic motivation seems to have persisted throughout the activities, the

negative feelings experienced by the majority of students upon hearing about the new method of assessment imply that several students might have not embarked on the activities if they had not been graded (extrinsic motivation). The shift from external to internal motivation shows that the boundary between these two modes of motivation is porous and that extrinsic incentives might prove significant, especially if we want to motivate students to experiment with something novel outside their routinised ways of thinking and acting. As Lepper (1988) points out, even when one is intrinsically motivated towards an activity, if the activity is challenging and stimulates one's curiosity, its inherent motivational power may be increased. Of particular interest is the example of Rania, who reported that she had felt very stressed at the beginning, but who also stated that the emotional satisfaction of completing the second activity had been so great that she did not even care about her grade. Last but not least, a note should be made on students' reaction to the prospect of having one of their assignments exhibited at a public event. Even though all students claimed that this had no bearing on how they had engaged with the prescribed task, three students stated that they saw it as an opportunity to send a message and be heard. This shows once again that, depending on how and when it is offered, an extrinsic reinforcer may increase intrinsic motivation; it therefore problematises the view that external motivations such as rewards can only lead to superficial engagement (Deci et al. 2001) and might even be detrimental to intrinsic motivation (Hanus and Fox 2015).

Engagement and Flow

A theme that came up in all the reports was the feeling of engagement that students experienced while completing the four activities. This engagement finds eloquent expression in the specific terms in which students couched their experience, but it is also implied in the ways they described particular attitudes and events. For instance, the fact that none of the students mentioned any workload implications is telling. If students had had to study for a mid-term exam, they would have spent less time studying, and the study time would have been concentrated into just a couple days before the exam (Gibbs and Simpson 2004–5). The four assignments that students had to complete covered the first eight weeks and required more time overall, an issue also acknowledged by the students themselves, although not in the form of a

complaint. This different experience of time might be explained by the fact that the students' effort was more evenly spread, thus reducing time pressure. The intrinsic motivation that students seem to have experienced while working on the activities might also have been conducive to this, to the degree that motivated students seem to experience a lowered perception of workload (Kyndt et al. 2014). Furthermore, motivation is also a prerequisite for "flow", the feeling that one experiences when one is fully immersed in an engaging activity (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). In addition to the above, students' stance towards workload might also be associated with the fact that the activities did not require the retrieval of factual knowledge or the use of the library for books. The design of the activities to encourage students to discuss with their teams, think critically, make novel associations, seek inspiration from their environment inside and outside the university, and use their smartphones (Morphitou 2015) and other social media which are typically used for leisure might have made the tasks look less like "formal work".

Technology and Feedback

Students' remarks that my interventions (as a facilitator) in their discussions in Blackboard made them feel secure and in control of their material are supported by research on the benefits of formative feedback during the process of an activity (Hounsell et al. 2008) and on technology's potential to enhance student engagement with feedback (Hepplestone et al. 2011). However, although Blackboard creates the opportunity for continuous feedback, it is notable that the great majority of students did not even attempt to start a group discussion there, preferring instead to communicate via other social media such as Skype and Facebook; this problematises the unquestioned use of Blackboard as a collaborative educational tool (Maleko et al. 2013). This preference might be explained by the fact that Blackboard does not support synchronous communication and sharing of knowledge. Rania's comment that her team had preferred not to have their discussions monitored because of the informal style of their communication raises other significant questions relevant to the provision of continuous feedback in online environments: how does a facilitator's presence in an online environment affect student interaction? Might the facilitator's presence compromise student playfulness? In what ways does continuous feedback from an authoritative voice in an online environment differ from the continuous

feedback received by gamers while playing a game? Another point that needs to be mentioned here concerns the fact that, as well as communicating through social media, all students reported that they had face-to-face meetings with their teams. This detail indicates that the opportunities for synchronous communication offered by new technologies are no substitute for physical presence, at least not in conventional universities. In light of this, before making the use of online environments for collaboration a requirement for students in traditional universities, educators should be able to answer the following crucial question: “why *this* artefact in *this* form?” (Hamilton and Friesen 2013).

Assessment for Learning vs Assessment of Learning

Students’ identification of mid-term and oral exams as the only alternative methods of assessment demonstrates that, in spite of ample research on the benefits of assessment for learning, assessment of learning still prevails. It is also indicative of the lack of diversity in assessment formats and approaches (Race 2001) and of the predominantly traditional way in which assessment is carried out in classics in Greek universities. The negative way all students referred to mid-terms (and written examinations in general) reveals their dissatisfaction with and dislike of this method of assessment, while the “strategies” (e.g. “selective neglecting”) they said they adopted in order to prosper and survive within this assessment culture have been extensively discussed in assessment literature (Entwistle and Entwistle 1992; Tang 1994; Gibbs and Simpson 2004–5). The clear-cut distinctions that students drew between mid-terms and the game-informed activities also resonate with other research on student perceptions of traditional and innovative assessment (Struyen et al. 2005). Traditional methods of assessment are often perceived as promoting surface approaches to learning, and innovative assessment as stimulating deep-level learning (Sambell et al. 1997). Even though students’ inexperience with other forms of innovative assessment renders it difficult to determine whether their enthusiasm derived from the novelty or if they actually felt that the game-informed activities had a deeper influence, their responses support previous research on the different learning approaches that students adopt for different assessment tasks (Scouller 1998). It is also notable that students talked about game-informed activities in a more subjective tone, indicating a more personal and emotional commitment. This is congruent with

the view that, among other things, deep learning also presupposes emotional attachment (Gee 2009).

CONCLUSION

The emotions experienced by students while working on the four game-informed activities specifically designed for the purposes of this dissertation and the vocabulary that they used in order to articulate their experience confirms the dominant view that what renders ancient Greek unattractive to many students is not the nature of the subject per se but rather the parochial and outdated way in which it is taught. The adoption of constructionist and innovative ways of assessing (and teaching) students through tasks informed by game principles and motivational and assessment theories, not only contribute to learning but also serve to advance learning as an enjoyable experience. Instead of forcing students to be strategic and play the game of assessment, it is crucial that we incite them to be playful with their material and play the game of learning instead. This said, the initial reaction of the majority of students to the innovative assessment clearly shows that it does not suffice to simply provide students with ludic spaces and ask them to play or be playful. It is imperative that we help them to foster a playful attitude and support them emotionally and cognitively in order to become “good players”. This holds especially true for students studying ancient Greek in Greece and Cyprus, who are accustomed to instructional and conservative methods of teaching and assessment and, therefore, are more apprehensive with innovative assessment and the notion of playfulness.

Even though the current research was carefully designed it still has many limitations. Accordingly, further research is recommended so that we gain a richer insight into the complexities surrounding student engagement with assessment and so that we appreciate the various factors (subjective, situational etc), that contribute to student engagement, motivation, and the enjoyment of the learning process. More research is needed on the ways in which we can foster playfulness, but also on notions such as surprise and curiosity, that cropped up several times in students’ reports but have not been extensively studied in relation to game-based and game-informed learning and assessment.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: The features of a ‘good player’

As can be gleaned from Plato’s *Theaetetus* a “good player” should be:

- be in a state of constant “wonder”, even about things that are deemed unquestionable, straightforward and well-established.
- not readily accept anything as knowledge, but put everything under scrutiny, even norms that are deemed sacred
- be willing to explore and consider all views, even those to which they do not have a personal commitment
- not get frustrated easily, but welcome every new obstacle and puzzle as a challenge rather than a burden
- defend their arguments, and not succumb in the face of the first sound criticism
- be ready to “expose” themselves without feeling embarrassed
- seek knowledge for the sake of truth not for the sake of “victory”
- respect their interlocutors, not seeking to outweigh them with contentious arguments but rather entering into a conversation with them in order to search for the truth - the game should also be played on fair terms
- not feel constrained by time or other obligations but get immersed into their play/game.

Appendix B: Course Description

Below I cite the course description for the course under question. This was the description of the course before my intervention. When I decided to change the assessment method of the course, I made several changes to the description of the course as a whole, mainly on the methods of teaching.

Course Title	ARCHAIC LYRIC POETRY				
Course Code	AEF 214				
Course Type	CORE				
Level	UNDERGRADUATE				
Year / Semester	2ND YEAR (4TH SEMESTER)				
Teacher's Name	MARIA PAVLOU				
ECTS	5	Lectures / week	TWO (2)	Laboratories / week	
Course Purpose and Objectives	The main objectives of the course are for the students to: • Get to know the main representatives of archaic lyric poetry • Get to know the various kinds of archaic lyric poetry and their main features: themes, musical instruments, mode of performance etc • Familiarise themselves with a number of lyric metres (elegiac couplet, iambic trimetre etc) • Know and use the main critical editions for the archaic lyric poets • Appreciate the close and complex relationship between lyric and epic poetry • Appreciate the socio-political framework within which the lyric poets compose their poetry • Appreciate the public orientation and performative character of lyric poetry				

	• Appreciate the difficulties in the study of the archaic lyric poetry owing to its fragmentary nature • Appreciate the universal nature of archaic lyric poetry		
Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of the course students are expected to: • Be able to use the basic critical editions for lyric poetry • Know the main representatives of the archaic lyric poets • Identify the main features of the four major lyric subgenres (iambic, elegiac, monadic and choral poetry) with regards to their metre, themes, musical instrument, dialect etc. • Identify the metre of various lyric poems and be able to provide the metrical analysis for at least a couple of metres used by the lyric poets. • Examine lyric poetry in conjunction with the socio-political framework within which it was composed • Identify similarities and differences between lyric and epic poetry • Appreciate the public orientation of archaic lyric poetry and the fact that it was composed in order to be performed, two features that distinguish archaic lyric poetry from contemporary lyric poetry. • Appreciate the universal nature of ancient Greek lyric poetry		
Prerequisites	N/A	Required	N/A
Course Content	AEF 214 “Introduction to Archaic Lyric Poetry” aims at introducing students to the lyric poetry of the archaic period, through representative samples from various poets such as Archilochus, Tyrtaeus, Solon, Semonides, Sappho, and Pindar. Among other things, the course focuses on the themes and main features of archaic lyric poetry, their classification, their relationship with their sociopolitical milieu, their performances and re-performances, and their performative and public character. Furthermore, the course reflects upon the lyric poets’ dialogue with the previous poetic tradition and more particularly Homer.		

Teaching Methodology	Lectures, Discussion in Class and in Blackboard Educational videos prepared by the Lecturer in order to help students with metrical analysis / Various relevant videos from Youtube.
Assessment	Mid-Term Written Exam (30%) Final Written Exam (60%) Presentation in Class (10%)* [this part was introduced by me, when I undertook the course two years ago.]
Bibliography	<i>In Greek</i> • Λ. Αθανασάκη, <i>αείδετο πᾶν τέμενος: Οι χορικές παραστάσεις και το κοινό τους στην αρχαϊκή και πρόιμη κλασική περίοδο</i>, Κρήτη 2009. • C. M. Bowra, <i>Αρχαία Ελληνική Λυρική Ποίηση</i>, τόμ. 1-2, Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης, Αθήνα 1980-1982. • Ν. Καζάζης, <i>Λυρική ποίηση: Ο αρχαϊκός λυρισμός ως μουσική παιδεία</i>, τόμ. Α΄, Θεσσαλονίκη 2000. • Ι. Θ. Κακριδής, <i>Έλα, Αφροδίτη, ανθοστεφανωμένη: αρχαία λυρική ποίηση</i>, Αθήνα 1983. • Ν. Χ. Κονομής, <i>Αρχαϊκή Λυρική Ποίηση</i>, Ηράκλειο 1991, 15-36. • Fr. Montanari, <i>Ιστορία της αρχαίας ελληνικής λογοτεχνίας</i> (επιμ. Δ. Ιακώβ – Α. Ρεγκάκος), Θεσσαλονίκη 2008. • Μ. Παύλου, «Επιτέλεση στα είδη εκτός δράματος», στο Εγχειρίδιο του μεταπτυχιακού προγράμματος σπουδών «Ελληνική Γλώσσα και Λογοτεχνία», Ανοικτό Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου. [στο Blackboard] • Α. Δ. Σκιαδάς, <i>Αρχαϊκός Λυρισμός</i>, τόμ. 1-2, Αθήνα 1979-1981. • Β. Snell, <i>Η Ανακάλυψη του Πνεύματος</i>, μτφρ. Δ. Ιακώβ, Αθήνα 1997, 81-104(Κεφ. 4: «Η αφύπνιση της προσωπικότητας στην αρχαϊκή λυρική ποίηση») • M. L. West, <i>Αρχαία ελληνική μουσική</i>, Αθήνα 2004.

	<i>In English</i> • F. Budelmann (επιμ.), <i>The Cambridge Companion to Greek Lyric</i>, Cambridge 2009. • A. Capra, “Lyric Poetry”, στο B. Graziosi, P. Vasunia και G. Boys-Stones (επιμ.) <i>The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies</i>, Οξφόρδη 2009, 454-468. • M. Davies, “Monody, Choral Lyric, and the Tyranny of the Hand-Book”, <i>CQ</i> n.s. 38 (1988), 52-64. • L. Edmunds και R. W. Wallace (επιμ.) <i>Poet, Public and Performance in Ancient Greece</i>, Βαλτιμόρη και Λονδίνο 1997. • R. L. Fowler, <i>The Nature of Early Greek Lyric</i>, Τορόντο 1987. • B. Gentili, <i>Poetry and Its Public in Ancient Greece: From Homer to the Fifth Century</i>, μτφρ. A. T. Cole, Βαλτιμόρη και Λονδίνο 1988. • D. E. Gerber, (επιμ.), <i>A Companion to Greek Lyric Poets</i>, Leiden 1997. A. E. Harvey, “The Classification of Greek Lyric Poetry”, <i>CQ</i> 49 (1955), 157-175; • L. Kurke, “The Strangeness of “song culture”: archaic Greek poetry’, στο O. Taplin (επιμ.) <i>Literature in the Greek and Roman Worlds</i>, Οξφόρδη 2000, 58-87. • R. Martin, “Festivals, Symposia and the Performance of Greek Poetry”, στο P. Destrée and P. Murray (επιμ.) <i>A Companion to Ancient Aesthetics</i>, Λονδίνο 2015, 17-30. • O. Murray (επιμ.), <i>Symptotica: A symposium on the Symposium</i>, Οξφόρδη 1990.
Language	MODERN GREEK

Appendix C: Activities

Below I cite the descriptions of the four Activities, that were given to the students.
After each activity I also note the principles on which each activity was designed.

Activity 1 (Weeks 2-3)	i. Read closely all fragments of the archaic poet Archilochus cited in the module's Corpus of Poems. ii. Choose, through collaboration, 10 words that to their view best describe Archilochus' poetry, themes and style iii. Use all or some of these words to compose a poem about Archilochus. The poem could be either in rhymes or in free-verse, and be written either in modern Greek or in the Cypriot Dialect. There was one limitation: it had to be composed in the iambic trimeter, a meter extensively used by Archilochus and one of the three meters on which students were to be examined in their final exam. iv. Associate Archilochus' poetry to one of six well-known paintings provided by the facilitator, and explain the rationale of their association in a short paragraph of +/- 400 words.
Mode	Teamwork
Gee's learning principles	active & critical learning, multimodal, multiple routes, situated meaning affinity group
Other motivational factors	
Activity 2 (Weeks 3-4)	"You have successfully completed your studies and have been placed as a teacher of Classics at a High School. In one of your classes, you have to teach your 16-17 years old students Archilochus' fragment 128. Given that you only have ten minutes at your disposal, you decide to teach the fragment by using photos or a short video, in order to capture your students' attention and trigger reflection."

	Challenge: both the video and the photo(s) had to be taken from the University Campus. Photos can be captured with a digital camera/videocamera or your smartphones. If you wish, you can edit your photos using Photoshop or a relevant software. At a later stage all the visual material and texts will circulate to all students.
Mode	Teamwork
Gee's learning principles	affinity group, multiple routes, situated meaning, multimodal, insider
Other motivational factors	
Activity 3 (Week 5)	Each group will receive two anonymised files with the assignments for Activities 1 and 2 of one or two other groups. Go through the assignments carefully and provide constructive feedback to your peers by taking as a yardstick the directions provided for each assignment (e.g. does the poem on Archilochus meet the requirements specified? Is the association of Archilochus' poetry with a painting adequately explained?) Make sure that you open your review by singling out what your team deems to be the strongest aspect of the assignments under review and then continue with the least successful parts. Be careful so that your feedback is specific and clear. The anonymised comments of each group will be sent back to the initial groups along with my feedback. My feedback will concentrate on the peer-assessment (in other words I will give feedback on the feedback that each group will receive by another group)
Mode	Teamwork
Gee's learning principles	peer-review, affinity group
Other motivational factors	
Activity 4	Choose one set of verses that impressed, problematised, or even angered you

(Weeks 6-8)	and compose a text of 450-500 words where you will address the lyric poet of your choice in the second person singular. Structure your text by adopting the perspective of a person of your age, living in Cyprus in 2018. Your texts had to be accompanied by a photo taken by you. For this activity you do not have to explain your use of the specific photo, but merely accompany it with a catchy caption that will encapsulate the main point of your text. The best 10 assignments will be printed out in A3 coloured posters and be exhibited within the framework of a public poetry event I am coordinating in mid-March 2018. The even has received funding by the Ministry of Education and Culture.
Mode	Groups of two or individually
Gee's learning principles	multimodal, multiple routes, situated meaning, transfer, insider affinity group
Other motivational factors	

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. Tell me how you decided to study Greek Philology and describe your experience studying Ancient Greek so far?
2. This semester within the framework of the Archaic Lyric Poetry module you have been asked to perform a number of small-scale activities weighing towards the 20% of your final grade. Could you recall your thoughts and feelings i) upon announcement of the activities ii) during the implementation of the various activities?
3. Could you describe your experience for each activity separately?

For the first activity you were asked to work in teams and collaborate in Blackboard. You were asked to go through Archilochus' poetry, trace its main features and write a poem about Archilochus using a particular meter. You were also asked to associate his poetry with one of five famous paintings. Can you describe your feelings and thoughts during the implementation of this activity?

For the second activity you and your team were provided with a scenario and were asked to discuss a short poem by Archilochus. You were also asked to take photos from the University Campus that would serve to illuminate the poem under investigation. Can you describe what did you experience in implementing this activity?

For the third activity you were asked to comment upon the essays of a different team. How did you experience this?

For the fourth activity you were asked to work in couples or alone and compose a short text where you address a lyric poet adopting the perspective of a millennial living in Cyprus in 2018. You were also asked to accompany your text with a photo and a catchy caption. You were told that the best 10

projects would be exhibited within the framework of a public event. How did you experience this activity?

4. Could you describe one thing (thought, sensation, feeling) that you remember more vividly about the experience?
5. Could you describe how your engagement with the archaic Greek lyric poets would be different if the activities were replaced by a different method of assessment?

Appendix E: Consent Form

TITLE: GAME-INFORMED LEARNING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS

General Information

Based on research findings that show the great learning potential of games, during the last two decades researchers have drawn their attention to what is known as game-informed learning. This approach to learning advocates the integration of gameful elements and game principles into the learning process with the view to rendering learning a more rewarding, meaningful, even enjoyable experience for learners. The interviews will focus on the game-informed learning and assessment activity that you have participated in as part of Activity 1 (Weeks 2-7) of your course. This is the reason why you have been invited to be interviewed on this issue. The interview will be conducted by the facilitator of the course (Maria Pavlou), and it forms part of her MSc dissertation, which focuses on game-informed learning and student experience. The MSc is pursued at the University of Edinburgh (The Moray House School of Education).

***Please Initia
box:***

I confirm that I have read and understood the aforementioned and have had the opportunity to ask questions

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

I understand that my responses will be audio recorded and be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.

I understand that the audio recordings of this interview will be used only for research purposes and that extracts from the transcriptions, in which I would not be personally identified, may be

used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed as a result of future research. I understand that no other use will be made of the transcripts without my written permission and that both the recordings and the transcripts will be safely stored.

I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.

☐

I agree to take part in this interview.

☐

Name of participant

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature