



# **Tuition Of The Course Of Sophocles' "Antigone" From Prototype Script In Secondary Education Using Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (Moodle)**

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## **Abstract**

*Keywords: group cooperative, active participation, initiative for search, educational software*

*The target of this paper, initially, was to intrigue the students for the course of "Ancient Greek Language", as it is widely considered to be a difficult and discouraging course for the average student. It is a pilot application that encourages group cooperative and active participation, as Moodle initially reinforces the initiative for search in sources similar to the subject of "Antigones", such as: ancient drama, social status of women in ancient Greece and the importance/meaning of the mask and clothing in ancient tragedy. The research program lasted eight (8) hours and the evaluation made by the teacher and students lasted two (2) hours. Twenty-two (22) students from the second grade of Lyceum participated in this program. Tutor's role was both coordinative and directional as well. Prior to starting the program, it was considered a necessity for a preparatory lesson to take place, in which students were familiarized with the usage of Moodle platform, its working interface and its tools. The following passages were chosen for study: Prologue (verses: 42-68) and Episode B' (verses: 441-471). Students responded positively and, even those who in first place considered the course not to be interesting, were excited and able to comprehend it. During the evaluation, which took place in the form of a questionnaire, emerged the values of using educational software and the versatility of the teacher's role.*

## **1. Introduction**

The tuition of the course of "Ancient Greek Language", in Greek secondary education, is widely considered to be a difficult task for any instructor due to both course's nature (grammar and syntax seem particularly discouraging) and students' frequent opposition and frustration, as they often feel stressed being unable to deeply comprehend everything this course includes. In addition to that, students commonly believe that this course's tuition is rather teacher-centered and mechanistic. By adopting the use of "Moodle", teacher's main anticipation is to surpass some "obstacles" related to this particular course's approach. Thereupon, students should be released from any form of pressure or tension and find themselves more interested in enriching their knowledge regarding ancient drama, in general.

## **2. Objectives**

- Getting students familiar with the use of "Moodle".
- Helping students understand the significance of ancient drama in the ancient world and its moral values, in general, in ancient and present times as well.
- Students should be able to conceive (through verses: 42-68 of Prologue and verses: 441-471 of Episode B') the different social status of women in ancient world in comparison to present times.
- Course should be carried out in a way that keeps students vividly interested, even those who are considered to be weaker learners.



### 3. Duration

Eight (8) credit hours. Two (2) credit hours spent in students' evaluation of the method used during this course.

### 4. Setting Groups

Professor divides students into groups, not bigger than five members each. Each group has one leader who is responsible of informing professor about the progress of their project.

### 5. Means of implementation

The course is carried out in school's Room of Informatics as Internet connection is considered essential.

### 6. Planning of activities

#### 6.1 Worksheet No.1 (1 credit hour)

In the first course, professor introduces the subject and the objectives of this project to the whole classroom and presents the first passage of the tragedy to be examined. In addition to that, the passage is translated into modern Greek language followed by a brief commentary of these specific verses (verses: 42-68).

#### 6.2 Worksheet No.2 (1 credit hour)

Students will be asked to answer the following questionnaire:

A. Which of the two sisters seems to be more dynamic?

B. Write down 5 (five) adjectives that, in your opinion, describe Antigone and 5 (five) that could describe Ismene.

Thereupon, professor gives the definition of the Greek word: στιχομυθία (stehomethia- meaning crosstalk or dialogue), as it is a widely used word in ancient drama.

#### 6.3 Worksheet No.3 (1 credit hour)

Using YouTube website, we watch parts from the dialogue between Ismene and Antigone, reenacted by actors, in order to help students visualize the scene. Thereafter, we set under discussion actors' body language and face expressions. Thus, we introduce next credit hour, which is associated with the importance of the mask in ancient theatre.

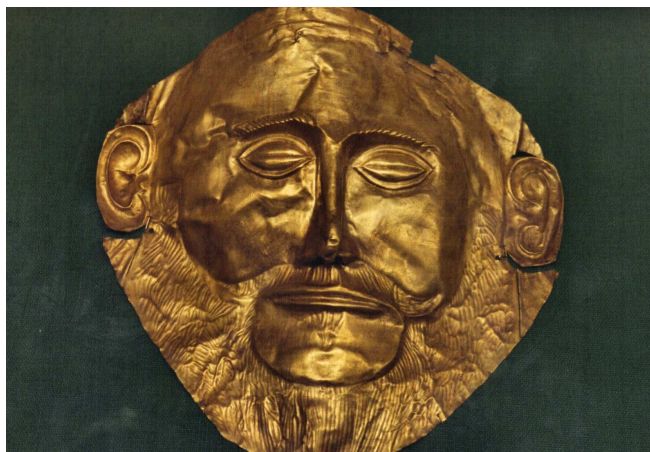


(Fig.1 Greek tragedy chorus)



#### 6.4 Worksheet No. 4 (1 credit hour)

We comment on the role of the mask, while browsing the website: <http://odysseus.culture.gr>. In addition to that, we observe the evolution of the mask from burial masks (Agamemnon's gold death mask, Mycenae) to modern carnival masks. Students are allowed to browse the website freely.



(Fig.2 Agamemnon's gold death mask, Mycenae)

#### 6.5 Worksheet No.5 (1 credit hour)

Students are asked to visit the following websites:

- [www.womenintheancientworld.com](http://www.womenintheancientworld.com)
- <http://www.cycladic.gr/frontoffice/portal.asp?cpage=resource&cresrc=826&cnode=55>

A further discussion on Ismene's words will take place, while the instructor will raise the following questions:

- During ancient times, where there places that women were not allowed to enter?
  - In your opinion, where there any differences between women of ancient Athens and ancient Sparta, as far as their social status is concerned?
  - Students are requested to visit <http://www.fhw.gr/chronos/07/gr/society/index20.html>, in order to learn about the life of women in ancient Rome.
- Last but not least, and as far as time is antequate and students' educational level is satisfactory, each group will be requested to describe:
- ancient Athenian woman's life,
  - ancient Spartan woman's life,
  - ancient Roman woman's life, and finally,
  - in which way Antigone's words contradict the general beliefs, regarding women, during that historical period.

#### 6.6 Worksheet No.6 (1 credit hour)

Teacher introduces the second passage to be studied (Episode B', verses: 441-471). The verses are then translated from ancient to modern Greek language followed by a short discussion on their content.

Students are also requested to answer the following questions:

- What does Kreon want to know when he asks Antigone all these questions and what is the deeper meaning of her "interrogation"?
- Which laws were represented by Antigone and which by Kreon? (unwritten-/Gods' laws in contrast to written/ humans' laws).
- When Antigone is escorted by the guard before Kreon, she has her head bowed. How do you explain her stance? How does Kreon interpret it? (verses: 441-442)



### 6.7 Worksheet No.7 (1 credit hour)

We watch footages from the tragedy on the internet, focusing on the scene that Antigone conflicts with Kreon. Thence, we study concepts regarding these specific footages, such as:

- tragicalness
- written and unwritten laws
- destiny/fate
- dilemma and Sophocles' Antigone

### 6.8 Worksheet No.8 (1 credit hour)

In this part, we are having a recapitulation of the whole project. Furthermore, we read passages from "Antigone" by Bertolt Brecht and Jean Anouilh, comparing them at the same time with "Antigone" by Sophocles (regarding individuals, plot and protagonists' words).

## 7. Evaluation

**7.1 Students are requested to answer a questionnaire regarding the format of the course and their general impression, formed by this different approach:**

### QUESTIONNAIRE

- Rate this form of tuition with the number that best matches your personal opinion (on a scale from 1-10, with 10 being the best)
- I particularly enjoyed this specific form of tuition:
- I believe that this way of teaching, made it easier for me to understand this course:
- This project was able to keep me constantly interested in it:
- My involvement throughout the project:
- I was taught about aspects of ancient Greek drama, that I was not previously aware of, in an easy and intriguing way:
- Instructor's interference was indispensable:
- Moreover, we asked students to answer the following questions as well:
- As far as way form of tuition is concerned, would you like anything to change? If so, state your suggestions, alternatives or additions.
- Which was your favourite worksheet and why?
- Do you believe there were parts of this project that could be possibly considered unnecessary? If so, please explain in brief.

### 7.2 Pros and cons regarding this project

#### 7.2.1 Positive aspects (for both professor and students)

- Each group worked and responded in a positive way, throughout tutoring by the use of Internet and seemed particularly motivated to answer any possible questions (including students that previously did not seem to be intrigued by traditional tutoring methods).
- Students tried to cooperate with each other without having any previous experience in the field of collaborative learning.
- Teacher's role was converted from "teacher-centred" to "advisory- instructive".
- Instructor was able to focus on tutoring, free from tension and stress, often emanating from the "weaker learners' " lack of interest.
- 7.2.2 Negative aspects (for both professor and students)



- In a few occasions, students seemed to be stressed by the time they had at their disposal (in a few worksheets, professor might have had the same problem).
- An English-Greek dictionary was considered an indispensable tool by some students, given the fact that some of the websites visited, were only available in English/American language.

To sum up, after the conclusion of this project, the general opinion that was formed suggested that other courses should be carried out under the same tuition method.

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(Fig.3 Terracotta tragic mask)