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## **Exploiting Crosscurricularity to teach vocabulary: Content analysis of textbooks of the Greek language as a second/foreign language**

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The arrival of repatriates from the former Soviet Union, alongside with increased immigration and a recent surge in refugees, has necessitated a redefinition of Greece's traditionally monocultural educational system. In this line, the importance of creating appropriate educational institutions which will cater for the newcomers' education and acquisition of Greek as an L2 came to the limelight. To this end, intercultural schools in the 90s, and recently reception classes were established to aid newcomers to acquire Greek as an L2, learn to communicate and develop the necessary digital skills so as to be able to process information and become active citizens of the newly emerging inclusive as well as multicultural and multilingual societies. The present paper delved into appropriate methods of teaching vocabulary to newcomers. In this line, three books were put under the lens to determine their contribution to the students' lexical improvement. The crosscurricular approach (Karatzia-Stavlioti, 2002; Matsaggouras, 2003) was selected as the optimal framework for securing a revealing setting within which the lexis of the three books were investigated through the use of content analysis (Bonides, 2003, 2004, 2005) with a view to unveiling the capacity of the crosscurricular methodology to augment the learners' linguistic and metalinguistic capacity. The accrued data advocated that the books under discussion capitalized on crosscurricularity to boost the learners' linguistic dexterity. Tentative suggestions were introduced for ameliorating newcomers' lexical ability by taking into account their diverse educational and cultural backgrounds.

**Key words:** Newcomers in Greece, school coursebooks, content analysis, linguistic enhancement.

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### **1. Introduction**

Vocabulary exhibits a complex function, as it is used not only for representing words but also contributes to the extraction of the meaning of a text and the attainment of successful communication (Zafeiriou, 2022) as well as the classification of natural phenomena and various entities of the world, triggering, thus, the attainment of order in a world which would, otherwise, be overwhelmed by chaos (Cassirer, 1989; Τσοδούλου & Πλιάτσικα, 1999). This trait of categorizing different phenomena and unearthing complex relationships among various concepts pinpoints that rather than being static

units, the words are functional entities, which may present diverse interpretations in relation to the linguistic, social and cultural context fueling a variety of connections within a linguistic framework.

Teaching and learning vocabulary has a pivotal role in the acquisition of both a mother tongue (L1) and a second/foreign one (SL/FL). Marulis and Neuman (2010) support that vocabulary is attributed paramount importance for increasing linguistic competence, considering it the core of language. According to Kafki (2016) the impact of acquiring vocabulary is even stronger for L2 learners as compared to their L1 counterparts.

The multifaceted dimension of vocabulary in different settings when teaching a FL/SL can be highly maximized through the use of Crosscurricularity. This optimal exploitation of lexical items is due to the fact that the crosscurricular context manages to unify knowledge into interdisciplinary subjects aiming to teach the various notions simultaneously or successively by means of many diverse subjects, instead of compartmentalizing it into separate fields. Additionally, alternative teaching strategies have been proven utterly useful to the boost of communicative competence, such as the learners' ability to develop positive interpersonal relationships in the school community as well as enhance respect of their peers and increase of their self-esteem (Asher, 1969), which constitutes a highly desirable goal for the newcomers who not only crave to learn the target language, but also seek to be gradually included in the local society.

Crosscurricularity is achieved in three ways: a) the intradisciplinary version within each subject as can be seen in school coursebooks, b) interdisciplinary interrelations among diverse subjects and c) crossthematic approaches which constitute the authentic version of Crosscurricularity (Παπαρίζος, 2004). Taking into account, that in this study Crosscurricularity is explored within the teaching of vocabulary in language coursebooks, it can be claimed that our focus is the intradisciplinary aspect of language as depicted in the corresponding school textbooks. In an effort to strengthen the impact of our study, we traced a similar research. Seeking to examine the potential of crosscurricularity, Ζερδελή (2009), put under the lens its contribution in the 3<sup>rd</sup> unit of coursebook of Greek language in the second grade of junior high school in an intercultural school in Northern Greece. The participants were assigned in four groups with a view to investigating the timeless value of friendship. The first team focused on Homer, Plato, Aristotle and Xenophon drawing also information from paintings. The second group studied films like *Oliver Twist* along with both Greek (*Η ζωή εν τάφω*) and international literature (*The little Prince*). The third team utilized newspaper articles and journals, while the last one was requested to seek whether "friendship is feasible nowadays". The collected data highlighted that not only did the learners manage to cooperate with their fellow students, to treasure the importance of friendship and acceptance of otherness, but they also managed to air their view without fearing any negative criticism. Furthermore, Crosscurricularity appealed to low performers who did their best to offer to their team.

## 2. Vocabulary

Vocabulary acquisition comprises an essential pillar when learning a F/S language, as the familiarization of the form, the meaning and usage of a gamut of lexis can aid the learner not only to advance the four skills but also manage to communicate successfully (Kremmida, 2022; Papantoni & Anastasiadou, 2023).

### 2.1. The significance of vocabulary in the FL/SL context

Lexical knowledge had long been assigned an inferior role in the L2/SL mastery confining it to linguistic analysis, since its main use was considered its contribution to grammar learning (Chomsky, 1957), prioritizing, in this way, grammar as compared to vocabulary (Αναστασιάδη-Συμεωνίδη, 2000).

Later, though, the importance of vocabulary acquisition in adequate interaction in the L2/FL came to the limelight. Various researchers (Alexiou & Milton, 2020; Huckin *et al.* 1993; Nation & Webb, 2017) claim that vocabulary learning is highly conducive to the acquisition of an FL/SL and, thus, it is imperative to focus on lexical teaching after ensuring that the grammatical structures have been adequately assimilated. It should also be noted that learners acquire lexis gradually (Kafki, 2016) and even though successful communication with other people is attained, lexical assimilation is continuously enriched throughout their whole life (Κατή, 1992).

Moreover, vocabulary provides students with syntactic, pragmatic and emotional information and enables them not only to simply convey meaning but also understand deeply their interlocutor which triggers effective communication (Gu & Johnson, 1996). So, lexical acquisition is a prerequisite for fruitful L2/FL mastery. McCarthy (1990) highlights that no matter how well has a learner internalized grammar and pronunciation in L2, he/she cannot convey a rich spectrum of notions or successfully communicate in L2 without a plethora of words. Going a step further, Ur (1995) contends that, when reading is involved, students cannot understand a text unless they have assimilated a number of lexical items in L2/FL.

Introducing another dimension of vocabulary, Szpotowicz and Szulc-Kurpaska (2009) aver that students cherish learning new words due to their inherent curiosity to experiment with novel lexical items, unravelling, thus, that unknown vocabulary constitutes a springboard rather than a deterrent. Much in the same vein, Thornbury (2002) prioritises the significance of lexis by supporting the view that without grammar little interaction is attained, while inadequate knowledge of vocabulary hinders any communication, whatsoever. He also puts forward that many learners complain about shortage of lexis and claim that the amount of vocabulary they have mastered so far does not enable them to communicate properly.

Finally, a rich repository of words is significant in SL acquisition (Mehta, 2009) and instructors should take advantage of every chance and all the proper means so as to empower the students to augment their lexical knowledge and enhance their communicative capacity.

## **2.2. Vocabulary teaching methods**

There are two ways of teaching vocabulary: the direct and the indirect one (Nation, 2008; 2013). The former aims at purposeful vocabulary teaching and learning, that is intentional or explicit learning whereby the focus is on language and lexis acquisition, while the latter involves the incidental teaching of lexical items, that is non-explicit teaching of vocabulary both in oral and written discourse, while the focal point shifts to meaning rather than the language itself. The indirect method of vocabulary teaching resembles the way native speakers acquire both the lexical repertoire and the totality of linguistic repository in their L1.

In an attempt to determine the prevalence of one of the abovementioned methods, Gousiou (2022) claims that it is difficult to coin a well-defined answer regarding which of the two approaches could be more effective. In other words, if the various dimensions of lexical knowledge and its complexity are taken into consideration (Schmitt 2007), along with the fact that its assimilation is a cyclical, gradual and cumulative process, it can be deduced that a balanced implementation of both methods would safeguard a well-rounded vocabulary advancement (Nagy 1997 as cited in Αντωνίου, 2008). In this sense, both approaches are significant and instead of excluding, they complement each other in vocabulary acquisition and an effective programme of lexical teaching should embed both of them to cater for diverse functions (Nation, 2008; 2013).

This balanced use of direct and indirect lexical teaching is more imperative when teaching Greek as an L2 at A1-A2 (CEFR, 2011) levels, since students are beginning to get familiarized with the core lexis of the language which will enable them to boost their communicative dexterities and safely enrich their lexical repertoire in a short period of time (Παραδιά, Γκλαβάς, Μήτσος & Τζιμώκας, 2011).

### 3. Implementing Crosscurricularity to teach vocabulary in the Greek language as an L2

Crosscurricularity views education as a system within which the diverse subjects convey knowledge from different perspectives which are interdependent, though, and supplement each other in the process of information transmission (Karatzia-Stavlioti, 2002; Matsaggouras, 2003). Regarding the teaching of newcomers, Crosscurricularity plays a pivotal role as it interrelates the necessary knowledge and values of the novel environment the newcomers live in, through the interaction of the various school subjects.

Moreover, Crosscurricularity prioritises the universal values of respect and acceptance of otherness, with the view to successfully diminishing any conflicts among people from different cultural, national and religious origin. Finally, the crosscurricular approach is the appropriate methodology that can trigger the inculcation of ideas and values to the learners which results in the elimination of any quarrels between the native and foreign students and, at the same time, builds constructive relationships within the school community (Γκόβαρης, 2001).

### 4. The significance of school coursebooks

Μπονίδης (2004) acknowledges the beneficial role of coursebooks for teaching and learning as they constitute the framework within which a syllabus is structured defining, thus, the main guidelines of the oncoming course. Moreover, they are easily accessible, and the students resort to them to gain knowledge and check the information they have acquired so far. Going a step further, Koutsoupiā (2016) referring to language textbooks claims that they safeguard a similar pace of learning for learners who attend classes of the same level but may be of mixed ability by providing the teachers with the core framework and enabling them to adapt and supplement the material so as to meet the diverse needs of their students (Charalambous, 2011).

Textbook research is of utmost significance (Ξωχέλης, 2008), since the coursebook is deemed one of the most important means of conveying knowledge as well as influencing learners both in the cognitive and emotional (i.e. formation of attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices) fields. This exploration informs the stakeholders not only about the quality of the books but also the effectiveness of education. Moreover, suggestions for their further improvement arise concerning their form and content, highlighting, at the same time, any shortcomings which should be rectified.

### 5. Literature review

Having elaborated on the significance of vocabulary teaching in the L2 context, the contribution of Crosscurricularity to the enrichment of FL/SL lexis along with the importance of the textbooks in the foreign/second components. language classroom, this section will concentrate on relevant studies regarding the abovementioned

#### 5.1 Teaching vocabulary in the L2 classroom

A significant body of research has investigated the teaching of lexical items in the L2/FL environment.

Papantoni (2021) conducted action research in the first year of a Greek Senior High School for approximately four weeks in the English language classroom. To this end, forty-six teenage learners attended six song and poem-based lessons, focusing on vocabulary activities. A pre- and post-vocabulary test was implemented to determine the lexical knowledge of the participants prior to the study and explore any advancement at the end of the implementation. The two tests ensured the numerical data of the study, whereas an observation list provided the qualitative presentation of the accrued findings. The results pinpointed that the students' lexical performance was highly improved reaching a statistical significance of  $<0.001$  concerning the participants' performance in the two tests. This finding unraveled that the learners' vocabulary repository was greatly enhanced in the L2 after the application of song and poem-based lessons. These results are in line with the findings of Gortsou (2022) who also explored the contribution of songs and poems to the vocabulary amelioration and motivation enhancement in the primary EFL setting by using similar research instruments. The findings disclosed that the employment of songs and poems can enrich the vocabulary repertoire of sixth EFL grades in the Greek state school and they can be a motivating factor that encourages learners' participation and interest.

Kapatsioulas (2020) attempted to implement an alternative method for vocabulary instruction with young learners in the Greek EFL milieu by using Data Driven Learning (DDL) and corpus-based teaching with a view to augmenting vocabulary acquisition. This approach revolves around the exploitation of electronic corpora to capitalize on authentic linguistic resources and pertinent tasks which will enable learners to draw the meanings of words. The research involved experimental and control group students who were administered a pre- and post-test. The results did not unearth any spectacular differentiation between the two groups regarding linguistic amelioration and lexical enrichment. Nevertheless, the participants exhibited a positive stance in relation to the FL as they experimented with language and managed to utilise their skills so as to extract word meanings. This process could serve as a steppingstone for learners to assume responsibility for their own learning.

Researching the teachers' attitudes towards teaching Greek as an L2 to adults, Diamantopoulou (2021) concluded that the instructors acknowledged the contribution of digital means in vocabulary teaching as the majority of the participants attested the importance of digital books and applications in the linguistic improvement of the learners and sought for more training courses in relation to the use of digital material in the teaching of Greek as an L2. Furthermore, they put forward the shortage of digital hardware in schools and the necessity to fully equip all educational institutions with computers.

## ***5.2 Employing Crosscurricularity to teach vocabulary in the L2 context***

Given the significance of crosscurricularity to ensure a meaningful real life learning environment in the classroom, the demand of employing an interdisciplinary curriculum has been stressed by various theorists (Jones, 2010; Catapano, 2016). Under this light, a host of studies has investigated Crosscurricularity in teaching an L2 from diverse perspectives.

Kostikou (2003) delved into the contribution of the interdisciplinary approach to the promotion of the teaching of EFL reading in the Greek lyceum. Her findings pinpointed that within the crossthematic milieu learners manage to realise that knowledge gained from various disciplines is connected rather than compartmentalized through the exploitation of a specific topic. Translated in the English language classroom, text reading is interrelated with other subjects, multicultural acknowledgement is gained, and problem-solving skills are stimulated, rendering, thus, learners autonomous citizens.

Iliopoulou & Anastasiadou (2014) put under the lens the potential of the crosscurricular approach to empower the students of the first grade of the Greek state high school to juxtapose the Greek and

English language in order to detect correlations and dissimilarities between the two subjects in terms of vocabulary, morphology, pronunciation, grammar and pragmatics. The findings showed that the learners uncovered the impact of one language on the other, gained insight in both linguistic versions and developed literacy across the curriculum. Moreover, students' self-directed learning was fostered. In another framework, Anastasiadou & Iliopoulou (2016) conducted a case study with Greek high school third graders focusing on a project of the water cycle which involved teachers of different subjects namely the teacher of English, Greek language, Chemistry, Music, Literature, Computer Science, History, and Arts and Crafts. These instructors participated in an interview with the aim of airing their opinions in relation to the capacity of crosscurricularity to advance the students' Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 2011). The results disclosed that the different frames of mind were fully built on through the crossthematic approach and moreover the learners' abstract thinking was promoted as they learnt to compare and contrast information from diverse resources.

To the best of our knowledge, although a lot of studies focused on Crosscurricularity, little attention was paid to vocabulary advancement through the specific approach in the intercultural classroom (Ζερδελή, 2009; Χαραλαμπίδου, 2020).

### **5.3 Using coursebooks to teach Greek as an L2**

A lot of studies addressed the challenge of exploiting various textbooks to teach Greek as an L2/FL. In this sense, Tzola (2020) investigated the existence of "the unfamiliar other" in textbooks assigned for teaching Greek as an L2 to refugees. Seven teachers took part in a semi-structured interview concerning their attitudes about eight coursebooks addressing newcomers. The findings pinpointed that the term of the "unfamiliar other" is missing from the textbooks which are monolingually oriented, aiming only at teaching the dominant language. In this vein, the real needs of newcomers are ignored, and multilingualism is not promoted, since their mother tongue is totally absent. The researcher recommended the establishment of committees of language specialists who will trace any shortcomings of the books and design remedial action for each case.

Fragkalexi (2022) conducted content analysis of the textbooks *Geia sas- Hello* which address migrants and refugee students in reception classes on the grounds of the existence of gender stereotypes. More specifically, it concentrated on male and female roles as parents, their profession, the exploitation of leisure time by boys and girls and the presence of sexist language. The interviewed teachers highlighted the existence of gender stereotypes in the books and attested that the learners' cultural origin affected their perception of gender representations. The researcher suggested that an effort should be made to redesign teaching materials which will present contemporary alterations in gender roles in order to provide inclusive education which caters for student equality.

Fouflia (2022) put under the lens the teaching approaches that inform ten books addressing A1 and A2 level newcomers by employing the qualitative content analysis Mayring (2000). The results revealed that the books combined various approaches, namely the communicative approach with more traditional ones. The research also unearthed that most coursebooks incorporate role-playing tasks that enable students to develop their communicative competence. The researcher recommended the adoption of authentic texts related to the learners' everyday life so as to facilitate them to master the L2 in real life contexts.

The literature review by the researchers unveiled that only one study (Χαραλαμπίδου, 2020) dealt with the incorporation of Crosscurricularity in the coursebooks of the first and second grade of primary school which serve the teaching of Greek as an L2 to refugees and migrants (level A1 and A2). Both the texts and the illustrations of these coursebooks were investigated while detecting crosscurricular components. The conducted content analysis brought to the limelight the following common topics:

self-introduction, greeting and getting to know other students, game rules, services, everyday activities (i.e. nutrition, jobs) and more complex notions (entertainment, respect of diversity, peace) to mention but a few. The researcher concluded that the books under discussion adequately address both the newcomers' linguistic needs and the necessity of being accommodated in the Greek society.

## 6. The study

The main purpose of the present study was to measure the extent to which the pedagogical dimension of Crosscurricularity is embedded in the teaching of vocabulary in school course books intended for A1 and A2 level newcomers. To this end, the following research questions were articulated to serve as axes for the analysis of the content of the predetermined coursebooks.

- Is Crosscurricularity capitalized on in teaching vocabulary in the books under investigation?
- Which topics are involved?
- Are there adequate activities which combine the various subjects?

### a. The coursebooks under investigation

The selected coursebooks were the following:

- First Grade: GREEK LANGUAGE: Lettters, Words, Stories – Student's book Volumes 1,2.
- Second Grade : GREEK LANGUAGE: Travelling in the world of language-Student's book Volumes 1,2 .
- Βάσσου, κ.α (2007). Hello. A first encounter. Student's book. Athens: National and Kapodis-trian University of Athens (it addresses newcomers who attend the second grade of recep-tion classes).

The first and second graders' level is A1-A2 (CEFR, 2011) signifying that their mastery of the Greek language is elementary. In particular, non-native speakers at this level can use simple words and phrases to introduce themselves, communicate with native speakers and understand simple everyday notions and information (<http://www.greek-language.gr/certification/node//63/>).

### b. Research methodology

The research methodology used in the current study is both quantitative and qualitative "Content Analysis", which seeks to determine the ways in which the topics of a text are negotiated along with the frequency of their existence in context on the basis of predetermined questions and categories (Τσιώλης, 2015).

Content analysis was used to systematically categorize and interpret data, ensuring a structured approach to identifying crosscurricular themes in the textbooks.

In this sense, a researcher should take care to select an adequate number of appropriate texts in order to manage to provide plausible answers to the questions under consideration (Bengtsson, 2016).

Various discreet subjects were determined as the unit of recording and analysis. More specifically the following subjects were put under the lens:

- Literature
- History
- Maths
- Environmental Education
- Physical Education

- Theatre/ Educational drama
- Civics Education
- Health Education
- Road Safety
- Music
- Arts & Crafts & Various Games

The first recording unveiled the following quantitative results (Table 1)

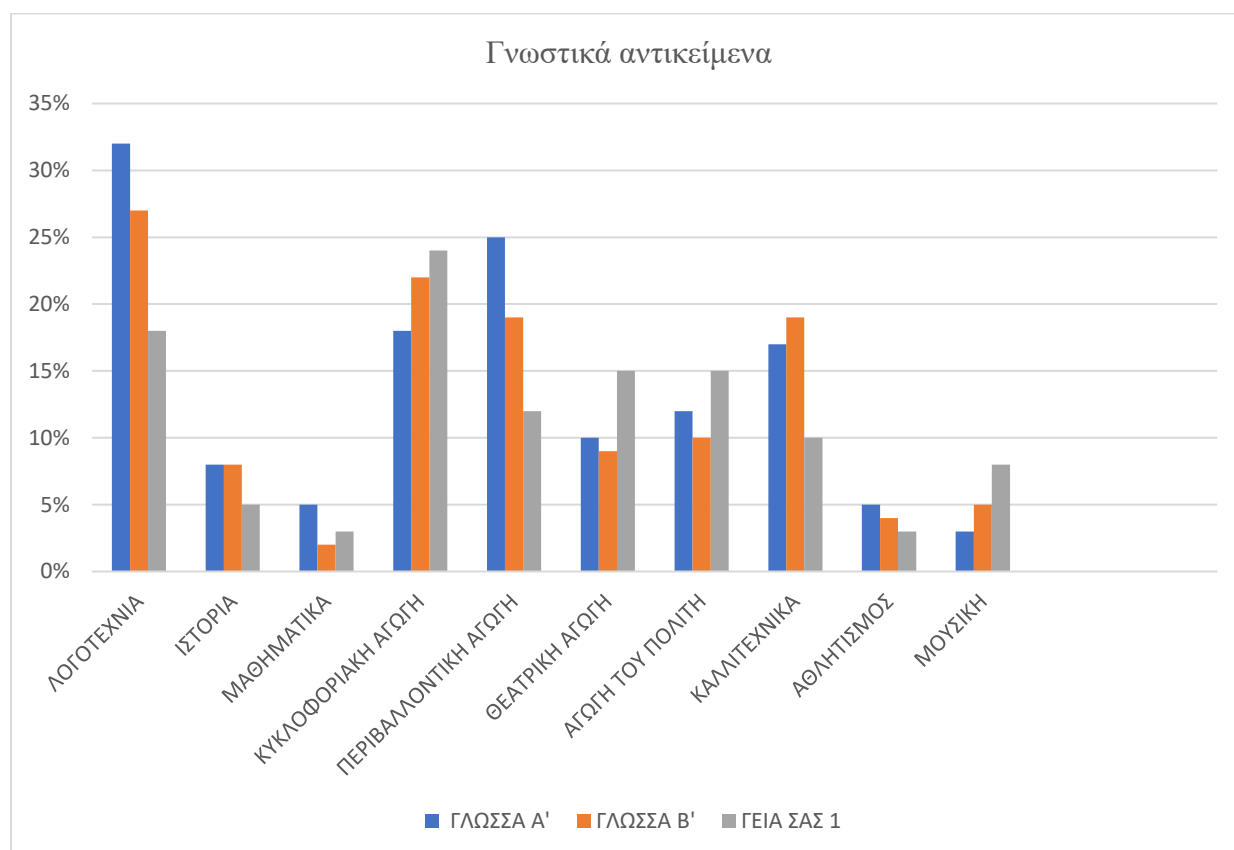


Table 1: The percentage of Crosscurricularity in the three textbooks

This initial recording was supplemented with an internal axis of qualitative categorization of instances of topics in each thematic unit so as to retrieve more reliable and valid conclusions. More specifically, the following results arose:

1. **Samples of poems, prose texts and fairy tales were examined**

(a) **Poems**

In first grade Greek Language the poems by Ζ. Παπαντωνίου (p. 18) and Θ. Χορτιάτη (p. 30) inform learners about animals and angels.

Moreover, by reading the “Hymn to Freedom” by D. Solomos (1923) the students are aided to be introduced to the Greek national anthem as well as learn about the Greek Revolution against the Ottoman Empire.

(b) **Prose texts**

Parts from two literary books (“the Maypole” by Ζωρζ Σαρή and “the three little wolves” by Ευγένιος Τριβιζάς) are capitalised on within the context of teaching various animals.

(c) Various heroes/heroines of well-known fairy- tales can be found in the student’s book 1<sup>st</sup> v. GREEK LANGUAGE for the First Grade – p. 37 and GREEK LANGUAGE: Travelling in the world of language for the Second Grade p. 67 (“Pinocchio”, “the wolf”, “Little Red Riding Hood”, the dwarf, “the liar

shepherd”). Furthermore, by reading the fairy tale “the strange trip of Miss Cloudy”, the students are familiarized with the wind, the snow, the clouds and the sun.

The book “Hello” includes all the abovementioned genres, that is literature, fairy tales as well as prose texts.

### History:

Diverse references to Mythology (which are deemed appropriate for the age group under investigation) and to real historical events of ancient and temporary Greek and World History were examined: Mythology: Various heroes of the Greek mythology (“Theseus”, “Hercules”) are included in the student’s book (st’s b. henceforward). 1<sup>st</sup> volume, pages 55, 69, whereas the Minoan Crete is introduced on p. 34.

### History:

In the Greek language 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, p. 41 the students are acquainted with the Greek revolution by observing a picture with traditional island costumes of that era:



Picture 1: traditional island costumes

### Maths:

- i) Various geometrical shapes (triangle, rectangle, square, circle, polygon) are presented on p. 54 st’s book of Second Grade
- ii) Hello 1 chapter 14 refers to numbers.

**Environmental education:** Since this subject includes a broad range of themes, the following subcategories were researched, namely time/seasons- space (geographical terms), and flora-fauna.

#### ➤ Weather-time-seasons-months

##### 1. Weather-time-months:

a. i.e. the phrase “It is getting dark” – «Νυκτώνει»/ni’ktoni/ on p. 36 1<sup>st</sup> vol. student’s book signifies that the third person singular is used for natural phenomena.

b. “When will the children leave?” (2<sup>nd</sup> vol. student’s book, p. 70) -The students assimilate the chronological order of certain actions.

The second graders can learn about the seasons, i.e. in the 1<sup>st</sup> v. p. 45 they get to know that in autumn the leaves fall.

“Here comes the autumn,                      «Φθινόπωρο φτάνει,                      /fthi’noporo ftanei,  
The leaves keep falling”                      τα φύλλα όλο πέφτουν».                      Ta fila olo ‘peftoun/

##### 2. Fauna

The 1<sup>st</sup> vol. of St’s book pp. 6-7 presents various animals, such as a parrot, a cat, a mouse, a hen, frogs and on p. 63 a bear, a beaver, a horse, an ostrich, a rabbit and a wolf.

##### 3. Nature (lilies, lake, water, night).

##### 4. Flora

On p. 51 του 1<sup>st</sup> vol. st’s book, there is a short poem introducing trees which can be found in Greece.

«Ανεβαίνω στη **μηλιά**,                      “I climb up the **apple tree**  
και πατώ στη **λεμονιά**».                      And step on the **lemon tree**”

##### 5. Countries

Various countries bordering Greece (Albany, Turkey 1<sup>st</sup> v. st. book p. 31) or others which are far away (“Kenya, Mexico, India pp.17, 28, 30 -2<sup>nd</sup> v. st. b.) are presented.

In Hello 1, page 22 the students are required to trace and colour their country on the globe.



Picture 2: Activity in Geography

### Physical Education

In the first volume, pp. 49, 56 the animals are personified and they work out ("the mouse is riding a bike", the frog is skating and the ants are playing with a ball"), whereas on pp 55 and 56, 2<sup>nd</sup> vol. st's b. the learners learn about soccer as they are invited to watch a match between the insects and the snails.

### Theatrical Education

Theatrical Education is incorporated by introducing parts of theatrical plays i.e. on p. 74 there is a section from "the fluffy clouds" by Ξένια Καλογεροπούλου, while in units 2 and four the learners are more actively engaged as they are invited to roleplay various texts.

### Road Safety

Road safety is also included in the coursebooks of the first and second grade, as the students are familiarized with the various means of transport.

The trip of the eagle "by train" "by the mysterious helicopter", "by car", by bus" and "by plane" is presented on pp 24 and 29 (2<sup>nd</sup> v. st's book).

Students get familiar with traffic signs on pp. 23 and 45 2<sup>nd</sup> v. first grade, whereas on p. 43, 2<sup>nd</sup> v. second grade they are aided to assimilate the meaning of traffic signs. Moreover, they are demanded to find their destination by asking and answering appropriate questions.

### Civics Education

Useful information about a post office and a phone company is provided with appropriate pictures



Picture 3: In the post office

Students are also familiarised with various kinds of cards, that is invitation cards for a wedding, a carnival party and a speech or cards sending wishes for birthdays and Christmas. Thus, the students are acquainted with both genres.

### Health Education

Two areas were mainly focused on: nutrition and biology.

The two school coursebooks include a variety of nutrition related words by using pictures of diverse activities.

On p. 25 1st v. the students can learn the Greek equivalent for various foods “cheese, potatoes, carrots, fish, pie and candies” as well as fruit “a pear” (p. 57), “figs” (p. 51), vegetables “tomato” (p.35), “mushrooms” (p. 65) and sweets “ice cream” (1<sup>st</sup> b. p.12), “biscuit” (2<sup>nd</sup> book, p. 25) by reading their names accompanied by pictures.

On p. 24 of 2<sup>nd</sup> v., they are familiarized with the register and form of a restaurant menu and they practice writing and pronouncing the diphthongs «τσ» /ts/ and «τζ» /tz/ like pastitsio, pítsa and a loaf of bread “φραντζόλα” /fran'tzola?.

### **Biology (human and animal body along with hygiene)**

#### **A) Words related to the human body:**

On p. 59, 74 and 78 of 1st v. 1st grade and p. 46 2nd v. 2nd grade (tongue, nose, hair, skin, legs, teeth, lips, eyes, heart and chest)

#### **B) Words referring to animal body:**

“paws” and “feathers” – p. 66 and 71 respectively 1st v. 1<sup>st</sup> grade

#### **C) Words related to body and mouth hygiene:**

“toothbrush” p. 35 and “thermometer” p. 47 1<sup>st</sup> volume 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

### **Music**

There are traditional Easter songs (more particularly the 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> song) on p. 56 2nd v. st book.

### **c. Arts and Crafts and various Games**

The arts (mostly painting) and crafts are represented in numerous cases in both school coursebooks. On p. 76 1<sup>st</sup> v. the students can admire a painting by Λύτρας depicting Christmas, while on p. 77 they are provided with instructions on making a Christmas ornament.

Finally, **games** are exploited to aid the learners improve their reasoning skills, enrich their world knowledge and enhance their lexical repertoire: riddles and crossword puzzles on pp.74-75 and 46, 68 of 1<sup>st</sup> v. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade respectively.

On page 179 of «Hello» the students are required to ask their parents and their grandparents about the games they themselves played when they were young and write them down.

## **7. Relating the results to Previous and future research**

Having presented various studies concerning the teaching of vocabulary in a SL/ FL (in 4.2 and 4.3) it can be safely claimed that our study is in line with one research (Χαραλαμπίδου, 2020) focusing on the use of Crosscurricularity in Greek Language textbooks for the first and second grade which are exploited for refugees and migrants. The abovementioned research prioritized the topics of the two textbooks unearthing that self-introduction, greeting each other and getting to know other students, game rules, services, everyday activities (i.e. nutrition, jobs) and more complex notions (entertainment, respect of diversity, peace) were the most common themes. The researcher came to the conclusion that the two books address the newcomers’ needs as well as facilitate their inclusion in the Greek society.

Our research examined Crosscurricularity in the form of interaction of the various school subjects within the two Greek language textbooks, while another book “Hello” was also put under the lens. Further research could centre on the teachers’ stances about the contribution of the use of Crosscurricularity of the textbooks assigned for teaching Greek as an FL/SL to the advancement of the learners’ lexical repository.

## 8. Revisiting the research questions- implications for the classroom

This section will revisit the research questions to examine their verification or lack thereof and provide recommendations for the SL/ FL classroom.

First and second research questions:

- Is Crosscurricularity capitalized on in teaching vocabulary in the books under investigation?
- Which topics are involved?

The first research question was corroborated as it was clearly proven that Crosscurricularity augmented the participants' lexical repertoire in a plethora of diverse subjects, that is Literature, History, Maths, Environmental Education, Physical Education, Theatre/ Educational drama, Civics Education, Health Education, Road Safety, Music, Arts & crafts & Various games. It can be assumed from table 1 that literature, environmental education, civics education, and arts and crafts provided an abundance of topics.

As far as the third research question is concerned it can be claimed that a gamut of different topics was put under the lens, namely poems, prose texts, history, Maths, road safety, health education to mention but a few.

Translated into the classroom milieu it could be recommended that the capitalisation of various subjects conduces greatly to the lexical improvement of learners of different culture and origin. Another suggestion which could enrich the vocabulary bank of students from dissimilar backgrounds and improve their empathy and respect for otherness could be the use of location maps, in which the learners would provide their preferences in various themes with a view to accommodating common beliefs in the teaching material (Papalexatou & Zorbas, 2020) who attempted to delineate appropriate teaching practices in a Roma classroom by asking them to express their stances on various values such as family, tradition and school with aim of producing vocabulary appropriate activities which could also mould their identity in the FL.

## 9. Conclusions

The quantitative results (Table 1) unveiled that the majority of the words belong to four subjects, namely literature, environmental education, arts, and road safety. The qualitative findings revealed that all three coursebooks under investigation try to implement Crosscurricularity by interconnecting topics from a plethora of subjects. Nevertheless, Crosscurricularity seems to be complementary rather than dominant as the discrete subject of the Greek language is the main focus. This approach is heavily followed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> book which addresses nonnative speakers who learn Greek as an L2.

More specifically, the vocabulary is introduced in thematic topics, it is consolidated through recycling and enriched with new lexical items which are mostly presented in real life communication settings. Vocabulary is contextualized as new topics surface in the texts, it is recycled enriching, therefore, the learners' word repository and lexical chunks are presented in real life situations. But some lexical units are semicontextualised, since some words are introduced individually clarified by pictures. It can be claimed that rather than being deemed as a component which renders the learners passive, the vocabulary is called upon aiding the learners to become mediators, and active participants with their natural and social world (Maingain & Dufour, 2002). In this way, the students are provided with the opportunity to combine the communicative context (who speaks to whom, using which activity, for which purpose) with the crosscurricular framework (social, historical, scientific, to mention but a few).

To this end, Environmental Education includes both human related and nature related lexical items. In human related vocabulary, the emphasis shifts to words which define the learner's status in micro/macro society, while in nature related vocabulary the students learn about the natural world. Road safety revolves around traffic signs, transportation means and time and, in this way, it conduces to the students' spatial and chronological orientation and the enhancement of their communicative skills.

The qualitative investigation of the various subjects presented in the books under research revealed that the dominant intersection of the various scientific fields lies within the interrelation of Humanities and Physical Sciences on the one hand, with the arts and literature, on the other. This is in line with the quantitative results presented in Table 1.

Vocabulary acts as a crosscurricular bridge, enabling students to acquire thematic knowledge holistically through diverse texts and subject areas. But little is the difference between the cultural and educational background of the students' exploited, as far as vocabulary is concerned (there are clear references only to Greek History and Literature).

Thus, it can be argued that all three books exploit vocabulary thematically and the continuous recycling of topics results in repetition and enrichment of the learners' lexical items. Lexical units are incorporated in communicative contexts and vocabulary is presented in two forms: Contextualised through texts and semicontextualized by means of visuals. Therefore, it can be claimed that while Greek language textbooks for L2 learners incorporate crosscurricularity, they require revision to better address learners' diverse cultural and educational backgrounds in vocabulary acquisition.

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