



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**H.Q.A.A.**

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

## **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

School of Modern Greek Language

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**External Evaluation Committee**

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the School of Modern Greek Language of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. Dr. Marie-Paule Masson (President)  
Université Paul Valéry- Montpellier, Montpellier, France
2. Dr. Yoryia Agouraki  
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
3. Dr. Constantin Bobas  
Université Charles de Gaulle- Lille III, Lille, France
4. Dr. Freiderikos Valetopoulos  
Université de Poitiers, Poitiers, France

**N.B.** The structure of the “Template” proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.

The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.

## **Introduction**

### I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit.

7<sup>th</sup> of February-9<sup>th</sup> of February.

7<sup>th</sup> of February: Brief meeting with the Steering Committee and the two representatives of the permanent teaching staff of the School of Modern Greek Language (SMGL) of the University of Thessaloniki. The Vice President of the Steering Committee, Prof. Dimitris Mavroskoufis, gave a short presentation of the structure and the range of activities of the SMGL (i.e. teaching and research programmes). Next there was a meeting with the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs of the University, who expressed her dedicated interest in the further development of SMGL.

8<sup>th</sup> of February: Visit at the French Institute premises of SMGL. Meeting with the students and the teaching staff during the half-hour break. Attended a phonetics course. Visit at the main (i.e. campus) premises of SMGL. Meeting with graduates of SMGL. Meeting with one category of temporary teaching staff, namely the hourly-paid teaching staff. Meeting with the administrative staff of SMGL. Separate meeting with the former secretary of SMGL.

9<sup>th</sup> of February: Visit at the Computer Lab of SMGL (French Institute premises). Meeting with the other category of staff under open-ended contract, i.e. ΙΔΑΧ. Meeting with the permanent teaching staff of SMGL. Meeting with the Steering Committee.

- Whom did the Committee meet?

Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs

Steering Committee of SMGL

Three categories of teaching staff

Administrative staff

Students of SMGL

Graduates of SMGL

- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the Committee.

Internal Evaluation Report for SMGL

DVD used for the brief presentation of SMGL to the External Evaluation Committee

SMGL’s state-of-art (2006-2010)

Range of textbooks used by the teaching staff

Syllabus of SMGL

Evaluation forms for SMGL (teaching staff, administrative staff, infrastructure) and samples of completed evaluation forms

Evaluation reports for the different groups of SMGL

Budget

Internal Regulations for SMGL

SMGL semestrial newsletter

A Standardised Curriculum for the less widely taught European languages

2011 Taste Diary, compiled by the students

Handouts of courses

Handouts of 2010 seminars for the teaching staff and samples of completed evaluation forms by the teachers

- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed

Three groups-categories of teaching staff

Administrative staff (chief administrative officer and six other members of administrative staff)

The former chief administrative officer of SMGL

- Facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee.

University campus premises of SMGL

'French Institute' premises of SMGL

Classrooms

Computer Lab

Library

Secretariat

Archives

Cafeteria

## II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used

The sources and documentation provided, both initially and upon demand, were both clear and useful.

- Quality and completeness of evidence reviewed and provided

The evidence reviewed and provided was both adequate and to the point. The report is very clear and offers detailed information on all relevant points.

- To what extent have the objectives of the internal evaluation process been met by the Department?

The internal evaluation of SMGL gives a detailed picture of the history and the current state of the School and has constituted the sound basis for the external evaluation.

## **A. Curriculum**

*To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.*

### **APPROACH**

- What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?

SMGL offers courses in Greek language and culture to L2 learners at three levels (intensive or non-intensive), based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and supplemented by a syllabus constructed by the School's teaching staff. In addition it offers tailor-made courses for particular groups of individuals (e.g. L2 learners with a common L1, Erasmus students, prospective students of medicine and so on). For the tailor-made courses in particular, SMGL is in the process of constructing corpora for specific purposes (e.g. corpora for Spanish speaking learners of Greek).

- How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?

The objectives were decided by the Steering Committee in association with the permanent teaching staff according to the guidelines of the CEFR. Collaboration with the relevant departments of the University has not been instituted as such. However, given that SMGL is directly accountable to the Faculty of Philosophy and the members of the Steering Committee come from the departments of this Faculty, there is collaboration to a certain extent.

- Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?

The curriculum is consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society. In particular, it facilitates integration both in the Greek society and higher education (in the case of prospective undergraduate or postgraduate students). It aims at facilitating student mobility within a European or world context, providing the basics of Greek language and culture. These students will subsequently constitute the link between Greece and their respective countries.

- How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?

The curriculum was decided by the Steering Committee in association with the teaching staff according to the guidelines of the CEFR.

- Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

Evaluation forms completed by the students could give indications for necessary changes in the curriculum.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

- How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?  
SMGL has implemented the syllabus based on the CEFR guidelines proposed by the European Council and subsequently revised to cater for all European languages.
- How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study?  
See the answer to the previous question.
- Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated? Is the curriculum coherent and functional?

The structure of the curriculum is both rational and clearly articulated. We can see the long experience of SMGL and the high quality of supervision by the Steering Committee.

- Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?  
The teaching hours are sufficient and the course material well targeted. SMGL is currently testing the inclusion of a most-needed thirty-minute activity of corrective phonetics and conversation.
- Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement the curriculum?  
SMGL has well-equipped classrooms. A Phonetics Lab would be most useful (in connection to the point made in the answer to the previous question). The teaching staff is adequately qualified. There is also in-service training for the teaching staff.

#### RESULTS

- How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives?
- If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with?
- Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?

The implementation undoubtedly achieves SMGL's predefined goals and objectives, as shown by the L2 competence of students, their integration in the Greek society and/or educational system, and the steady number of students attending SMGL, even though SMGL is no longer the only school of Modern Greek in Greece.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved? Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?

The teaching staff checks new materials in the classroom, gets the feedback of the students and improves the materials accordingly. It would help towards the improvement of curricula, if evaluation forms also included questions about the curriculum (e.g. programme of studies, content selection).. The anticipated results of the current research programmes (e.g. corpus of Spanish-speaking L2 learners) will need to be incorporated in curricula planning.

## ***B. Teaching***

At present, as far as their employment status is concerned, there are three distinct groups of teaching staff. Notably, these three groups are not distinguished in terms of their qualifications. They are mainly distinguished in terms of their employment date and sometimes in terms of their recruitment process. The first group of teaching staff, which is the first group to have been employed is the permanent staff (ΕΕΔΙΠ). According to their terms of employment, they are entitled to teach between 8 and 14 hours per week. The current arrangement is that they teach 10 hours per week. As part of their contract, they only teach during term time, as university teachers do. This group includes 5 members. There are two more posts in this category which cannot be advertised for the time being due to the unavailability of funds. The second group of teaching staff has, strangely enough, the same employment status as administrative staff (ΙΔΑΧ). This group includes 6 members. They teach 20 hours per week and have the same holidays as administrative staff. The third group of teaching staff consists of hourly paid language teachers. This group currently includes 15 teachers. They are recruited from a continuously updated list of candidates on the basis of their qualifications. There used to be a fourth category of teaching staff. This included secondary school Greek language teachers who were normally given a temporary leave from their schools for as long as their employment at SMGL lasted.

The members of the Steering Committee come from the different departments of the Faculty of Philosophy, and the supervision of SMGL has always been an additional voluntary task for them. They are fortunate in this task given that SMGL teachers have all been qualified in Language Teaching. However, given the three different categories of teaching staff and the variety of teaching programmes at SMGL, as well as the need for further development, the assignment of a pedagogical coordinator could be beneficial for SMGL.

The distinct status of the three categories of teaching staff, and in particular the small number of permanent staff, has not been favorable for the development of SMGL, and has not made it possible to cultivate a sense of belonging to the members of the teaching staff.

### **APPROACH:**

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?

Please comment on :

- Teaching methods used

Given that SMGL teachers have all been qualified in teaching Greek as a foreign language, their teaching methods are up-to-date.

- Teaching staff/ student ratio

15 to 19 students per group.

- Teacher/student collaboration

Due to the limited space of SMGL, the teachers are not in a position to offer extra student hours. The main premises of SMGL and the French Institute premises each have a single space which functions as teachers' room, facilities room and common room. We believe that if there were two rooms in each premises which only served the function of teachers' rooms, this would strongly enhance teacher/student collaboration outside the classroom. However, as we have had the opportunity to attest for ourselves, the teachers are always available for the students' queries and there was a positive learning atmosphere among the teachers and

their students, as well as a friendly atmosphere in the cafeteria, the corridors and the yard.

- Adequacy of means and resources

We have felt the need for a Phonetics Lab.

The Library is at the main campus, and difficult to access for the students of the French Institute campus. We were pleased to hear that a sufficient number of textbooks and reference books were shortly due to be transferred to the French Institute premises.

A larger budget for books is required.

- Use of information technologies

SMGL has invested a large sum of money to establish a new Computer Lab with an interactive whiteboard. Each classroom has a projector. A larger budget for DVDs and multimedia documentation is required.

- Examination system

The examination system meets the requirements of both ALTE and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. SMGL is an associate member of ALTE.

Another positive point is that SMGL is shortly introducing an online placement test for their prospective students. This will ensure keeping the same standards and will also save time.

SMGL has a data basis of the exam papers set. This facilitates keeping the same standards for the papers set for each level across the years.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

- Quality of teaching procedures

The teaching staff are graduates of the two-year Master's programme in Greek Language Teaching of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki or programmes in Applied Linguistics of other universities. The teaching procedures are of high standard and make use of recently developed pedagogical methods. As shown by the competence of the students, the teaching procedures used are very effective.

- Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.

Over the years SMGL has been producing teaching materials which are subsequently tested in class. At the same time they use teaching materials produced by others. As a general comment, the materials could be improved if textbook writers took into account the findings of current research in the phonetics, morphology and syntax of Greek, as well as the findings in comparative linguistics as far as the cross-linguistic differences are concerned and how these differences could influence L2 acquisition. Teaching materials could also include information on how aspects of culture, mentality and way of life differ from those in other countries.

- Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?

The teaching materials are brought up to date, or simply supplemented, with the use of authentic pedagogical materials. The Computer Lab offers students access to the internet, where they can look for more authentic materials or they can produce their own written texts.

- Linking of research with teaching

Since 1991 they have taken part in a number of European programmes of applied research (e.g. Παιδεία Ομογενών on L2 acquisition by second generation Greeks, instructors' training). SMGL is in the process of composing a number of corpora (e.g. academic discourse) in the aim of improving L2 teaching for specific purposes.

- Mobility of academic staff and students

Not pertinent given the status of the teaching staff and the students. The teaching staff are in principle interested, if the possibility arises.

- Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources

Students fill in evaluation forms, and their comments are in general very positive. As already pointed out, the External Evaluation Committee believes that evaluation forms, should also include questions about the curriculum.

## RESULTS

Please comment on:

- Efficacy of teaching.
- Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.
- Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.
- Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?

Teaching in SMGL is of high standard. The success percentage of 70% is satisfactory. In addition the grade distribution is normal. A more systematic analysis of the results could be interesting. The Steering Committee plans to take measures in order to improve the success rate, both qualitatively and quantitatively. One such measure would be to introduce continuous in-service training of the teaching staff.

## IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?
- What initiatives does it take in this direction?

The Steering Committee organizes on a regular basis seminars on the content of teaching (cf. Theoretical Linguistics), the teaching methods (cf. Applied Linguistics and Education) and the teaching of culture (cf. (Inter)cultural Studies).

### **C. Research**

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

The main objectives of SMGL do not include research. Research is carried out in the aim of improving the content of teaching. At the same time the teaching staff take part in research programmes organized by the School and supervised by linguists in different departments. These projects include analysis of academic discourse, error analysis, inter-phonology variability, among other projects. Members of the teaching staff carry out their own research in a number of areas. In the last five years there have been 98 conference presentations, 11 articles in journals with a selection committee and 5 textbooks by members of staff. The members of teaching staff who carry out research would ultimately want to hold research and teaching positions, if such positions are advertised for SMGL.

#### **APPROACH**

- What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?
- Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?

Not pertinent given the status of SMGL.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

Not pertinent given the status of SMGL.

#### **RESULTS**

- How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.
- Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.
- Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department?  
Rewards and awards.

Not pertinent given the status of SMGL.

#### **IMPROVEMENT**

- Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.
- Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department .

Not pertinent given the status of SMGL.

### **D. All Other Services**

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

The fact that there is not a single campus affects the quality of offered services. Next there is specific reference to the advantages and disadvantages of each one of the two campuses.

French Institute campus: The students do not have direct access to the Library. Hence, they cannot, for instance, spend their half-hour break in the Library. There is no Secretariat at the French Institute campus, either. It is also more difficult for the students in that campus to develop a sense of belonging to the University. At the same time technical support cannot be as prompt as in the main campus. The classrooms are well-equipped and conducive to learning. Common facilities (e.g. toilets) need improvement. Small common room. No office for the teaching staff.

Main campus: A very upright staircase leads to one of the classrooms and to the Secretariat. No access for the disabled. Common facilities (e.g. toilets) need improvement. The classrooms are well-equipped and conducive to learning. Small common room. No office for the teaching staff.

#### **APPROACH**

- How does the Department view the various services provided to the members of the academic community (teaching staff, students).
- Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?

A well-tuned administrative team of seven adequately supports the teaching staff and the students. Moreover, SMGL has a well-informed webpage in both English and Greek, where one can get information on the various courses, syllabus, staff and scholarships. In addition, an online placement test will be shortly introduced. SMGL participates in a transparency programme launched by the Ministry of Interior Affairs. An Electronic Protocol for SMGL has been in effect since November 2008.

- Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?

Attendance of classes is obligatory. A reading room would certainly increase student presence on campus. If the University could allocate more classrooms in the main campus to SMGL, that would, among other things, also increase student numbers in campus.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

- Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).

A well-tuned administrative team of seven adequately supports the teaching staff and the students. They have been assigned distinct duties each. A re-assignment of duties would perhaps allow one of the secretaries to be located in the French Institute campus. All the administrative duties are carried out efficiently. These include student reception, giving information, registration, classroom and exam coordination, among other duties. The chief administrative officer ensures the efficient functioning of SMGL

- Form and function of academic services and infrastructure for students (e.g. library, PCs and free internet access, student counseling, athletic- cultural activity etc.).

There are PCs in the computer lab, and there is a fixed four-hour slot per week during which students have access to the computer lab under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff.

SMGL secretaries also play the role of welfare officer for the students.

#### RESULTS

- Are administrative and other services adequate and functional?

They are both adequate and functional. In the future the plan is to make them more efficient through the use of e-governing.

- How does the Department view the particular results.

SMGL has realized the advantages of e-governing, where that is possible.

#### IMPROVEMENTS

- Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?

They have pointed out themselves a number of areas where improvement is both possible and desirable. Namely, the ultimate need for a larger and, ideally, single site campus. Also the need for increased e-governing.

- Initiatives undertaken in this direction.

Steps have been taken in that direction: search for new premises, the possibility for constructing new premises, transparency programme, e-protocol.

### **Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations**

Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives.

SMGL collaborates closely with a number of institutions (e.g. museums, galleries) and women coops (involving agrotourism, Greek cuisine, handicrafts) in the aim of acquainting the students with Greek history and culture. A museum educator offers guided tours and recreational learning to SMGL students. One- or two-day visits to archaeological sites and cities are organized on a regular basis. These activities contribute to (inter-)cultural education. We also think that the students could benefit from a 2-hour culture course per week, which will offer them the opportunity to learn more about life and people's mentality in Greece.

### ***E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors***

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

Please, comment on the Department's:

- Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.

The main task of the Steering Committee is to supervise and guarantee the efficient functioning of SMGL. It is a fortunate coincidence that the Steering Committee consists of university teachers who see it as their job to open up new 'worlds' for the teaching staff of SMGL. It is a different thing whether all members of the teaching staff can always take advantage of these opportunities. It would be the job of a director of studies for SMGL to ensure that this takes place. We see this post as a new university position where the specialization area is Linguistics and L2 Learning. This is actually the first proposal of the Steering Committee to the Ministry of Education (Σχέδιο για Τροποποίηση του Προεδρικού Διατάγματος 1051/1977 dated 6/2/2008).

This ties in with a dysfunctional aspect of SMGL, namely the three different status of the teaching staff. The Steering Committee has tried to make up for this problem. However, this inequality can potentially seriously affect the normal functioning and the further development of SMGL, as well as create tension among the different groups.

Having a two-site campus is a disadvantage. Ideally, all parts of SMGL premises should be at the university campus. Due to the University's growth this seems to be no longer possible. However, there are buildings in the campus that are not currently in use, or have never been used, and could be reallocated to SMGL. Another possibility would be to use some state-owned building in central Thessaloniki where all the activities of SMGL could be hosted. Given that SMGL has a successful history of 34 years, the city of Thessaloniki could 'offer' or rent a building to be used as the School premises. There is a striking discrepancy between the pride the University and the city claim to take in the School and the efforts they have taken to solve the premises problem. The state or the municipality could join their efforts in this endeavour.

After 34 years of presence, we think that this is a critical point in the development of SMGL. There is a long teaching experience, and at the same time there is a number of ongoing research programmes (textbook writing included). What could make a difference at this critical point is perhaps an ingenious interaction of the two. One possibility we strongly suggest is to rethink the basis of what is needed in a textbook. A specific proposal is to carefully think how a contrastive analysis of languages could indicate the grammatical items to be included in a textbook and the order of these items. The School has already started thinking in that direction if we take into account the programme of contrastive phonetics recently implemented, as well as the error analysis of Spanish-speaking learners. The two

programmes are in their initial stages, but they can offer the frame for rethinking what is presented in a textbook. The emphasis so far has been on how to present grammatical items. It is equally important to specify the core functions expressed in languages. A large part of that has to do with syntactic and semantic structures, and with identifying how universal semantic notions and structures (e.g. emphasis or the distinction between known and new information) are expressed in Greek. We are not saying that other textbooks and other Schools of Greek have achieved this. We are proposing that this is a worthwhile objective, which ties in with the objectives of university education, and could be taken up by SMGL.

## ***F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC***

*For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.*

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement
- the Department's readiness and capability to change/improve
- the Department's quality assurance.

The External Evaluation Committee recommends:

- (a) As a matter of principle, as well as for the good functioning of SMGL, the main two categories of teaching staff, i.e. ΕΕΔΠΠ and ΙΔΑΧ, should have the same number of teaching hours per week, the same number of working weeks per year, and be paid the same salary. An additional reason for this proposal is that the members of the two categories have the same qualifications. One way of implementing this proposal is to have a teaching load of fourteen hours per week for each teacher. There are two points that should be clarified with respect to the implementation of our proposal. The first point has to do with the terms of employment for ΕΕΔΠΠ. As specified in the University's internal legislation approved by the State (cf. ΦΕΚ 1099), ΕΕΔΠΠ must work for at least 8 hours per week, depending on the provisions made by the relevant Department, allot at least four hours a week to office hours and have a physical presence on campus for a total of at least 22 hours per week. According to what was said to us by the ΕΕΔΠΠ themselves when we asked them about their terms of employment, they may work between 8 and 14 hours per week, and the 'arrangement' is that they work for 10 hours. At the same time we have been informed that the ΕΕΔΠΠ who work at the Language Centre of the University work longer hours than the ΕΕΔΠΠ of SMGL. The second point is that ΙΔΑΧ currently have more or less the same salary as ΕΕΔΠΠ only because they work twice as many hours as ΕΕΔΠΠ do during the week and for more weeks per year. In particular, ΕΕΔΠΠ work term-time only (for a total of twenty-six weeks per year) while ΙΔΑΧ have to work the same number of weeks as administrative staff in order to be paid their monthly salary.

The main thing we should bear in mind is that SMGL is a language centre within a university. Its students include prospective or current university students, as well other individuals. The teaching staff is neither academic (i.e. research and teaching) staff nor administrative staff. They are not required to carry out their own research nor do they have any administrative duties. They are qualified to teach Greek as a second language. Employing half of the teaching staff as a category in between

teaching and academic staff, and the other half as administrative staff could lead to a number of problems. For this reason it seems to us that reconsidering the different statuses and workload/salary packages for SMGL teachers would be beneficiary for SMGL. At the same time we are fully aware that this suggestion perhaps goes beyond our terms of engagement. However, in view of the general discussion about universities in Greece and potential changes in Universities Legislation, and given that Schools of Modern Greek also exist in a number of Greek universities, this could be an opportune moment for a joint proposal to the state concerning changes to the legislation governing the functioning of Schools of Modern Greek at Greek universities.

- (b) As far as the hourly-paid staff are concerned, we think that their status could be improved in two ways. First, the University could give them 10-month contracts as well as a different social security status, which, jointly, will allow them to claim unemployment benefit for the remaining two months, while now they cannot. The second thing the University could do to improve the working conditions for this group of teachers is to include hours of preparation in the number of paid teaching hours. For instance, one preparation hour for every four teaching hours. To give a specific example, nowadays they teach approximately twenty hours per week and they are paid for the exact number of hours they teach. Alternatively, in line with our proposal, they could work for 16 hours per week and be paid for 20 hours. We are only proposing this because we are aware that this is common practice in a number of universities, including our own vis-à-vis the hourly-paid staff.
- (c) SMGL could start the discussion on establishing a network of schools of Modern Greek within Greek universities. The aim of this network is two-fold. Firstly, to guarantee the quality of teaching programmes of Greek as a foreign language across the Greek universities. And secondly, to constitute the body that will submit proposals to the state concerning the status and the functioning of the schools of Modern Greek in general. This will enable them, for instance, to put forward joint proposals with respect to the status of the teaching staff.
- (d) As things are the members of the Steering Committee come from the various departments of the School of Philosophy. The current head of the Steering Committee is a linguist. We think that this has helped a lot and that the head of the Steering Committee should always be chosen among the linguists of the different departments.

The External Evaluation Committee has found the visit both interesting and productive. It is a very good sign that SMGL was among the first 'departments' of the University to welcome the introduction of the external evaluation process, in accordance with well established international practices and standards.

- (a) SMGL has made a very good effort since its foundation to establish itself as a leading institution for teaching Modern Greek as L2 in Greece.
- (b) The Steering Committee in charge, and the administrative staff of the SMGL are strongly motivated to improve the services provided by SMGL and help it maintain the leading role it has played in the education of L2 learners of Greek in the last 34 years. It was apparent all along during the site visit, and the meetings with the teaching staff and the administrative staff that the President of the Steering Committee, Prof. Anastasiadi-Symeonidi, has identified major thrust areas for the development of SMGL (e.g. a closer link between the developments in Theoretical/Applied Linguistics and the teaching of Greek) and has systematically

worked with the teaching staff, through research programmes and seminars, for the quality development of SMGL.

- (c) The SMGL teaching staff is qualified in teaching Greek as a foreign language, their teaching methods are up-to-date.
- (d) SMGL, being financially independent to an important extent, has invested a large sum of money to equipment.
- (e) SMGL offers, on a pilot basis, additional free of charge support classes to particular groups of students who want to enrol in Greek universities (e.g. Arab-speaking students, Afghan students).
- (f) SMGL collaborates closely with a number of cultural institutions.
- (g) SMGL has invested in a number of research programmes. The results of these programmes will improve L2 teaching and textbooks.
- (h) SMGL is an examination centre on behalf of the Centre of Greek Language for the issuing of the certificate of proficiency in Greek.
- (i) SMGL holds exams assessing the proficiency in Greek for those who want to be employed in the wider public sector in Greece, as part of the employment procedure held by the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ΑΣΕΠ).

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ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI  
SCHOOL OF MODERN GREEK LANGUAGE

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