

Teaching the Morphology of Classical Languages in Sweden and elsewhere

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1 Introductory

This document discusses the position of morphology in the teaching of the classical languages in Europe today. Most of the space is devoted to the following questions: What segments of the morphology of Greek and Latin are the crucial ones for the students in the elementary courses, and how should morphology be presented most effectively?

It is presupposed that the students should be required to memorize the paradigms of standard morphology up to such a degree that they will without hesitation recognize the word forms that are likely to appear regularly in the texts that they study. For the achieving of that level of competence there is a need for training in the form of elementary drills which today should preferably be made available by digitalized media. The knowledge to be achieved should be of the “passive” variety: the students should be able to recognize the forms when appearing in the texts they read and to identify them correctly; they should not be required to be able to produce forms themselves.

“Standard morphology” is a concept that does not lend itself easily to an unquestionable definition, and deviations from “standard morphology”, however defined, are likely to appear in the texts that the students will study. The students should therefore be warned not to believe that the standard forms that they are required to memorize represent the only alternatives existing in the language; the notion that any school grammar describes the only correct variety of the language and that deviations from it are errors caused by imperfect knowledge of the language should be effectively eradicated. Instead the students should be prepared to accept the existence of such deviating forms and taught how to identify them with the aid of existing hand-books (dictionaries and grammars).

The compilers of the report have had access to Nicoletta Natalucci’s contribution *Apprendimento della morfologia e “nuovo metodo grammticale”* and profited much from it. Their own contributions are based on their experience of teaching Latin and, above all, Greek in Swedish schools and universities and from their acquaintance with the didactic situation in the other Scandinavian countries.

2 What is “standard morphology” in Greek and Latin?

How much of the rich morphology of the classical languages should the students be required to learn? To speakers of most European languages of today, the morphology of Greek and Latin at first sight must give the impression of being overwhelmingly rich and complex on the verge of the immeasurable; as for Greek, even a trained philologist sometimes will feel the same despair. It is therefore indispensable that the assignments set for the students are defined with a view both to how much a student reasonably may be supposed to learn within the time-limit of the course and to what morphological data are the most relevant ones.

So far, when speaking of what is to be memorized by students in the elementary courses, we have defined the assignment as the standard morphology of Latin and Greek but, as already pointed out, “standard morphology” is a problematic concept. As for Latin, the problem could be solved rather easily in a pragmatic way. The morphology used by the ancient writers normally studied by our students is rather homogeneous. Both poets and prose writers adhere, on the whole, to the same morphological standard and deviant morphology appears mostly in older texts (archaic inscriptions, Plautus) or in texts produced for specialized purposes (Lucretius) or by illiterates (vulgar inscriptions); dialectal varieties of classical Latin are not known from the preserved texts.

This does not mean that morphological phenomena unknown to the average student will be absent from the texts; probably, they are more common in the genuine texts than the current school grammars presuppose. However, one important reason why Latin morphology, as compared to Greek, seems to be so homogeneous is that an overwhelming majority of the classical texts that have been preserved were written by people who had been to school and had been taught by their teachers what was “correct” Latin. Even if no contemporary example has been preserved, we must presuppose that, e.g. when Cicero was at school, there existed grammatical hand-books for Latin schoolboys that described correct Latin morphology in much the same way as the Latin school grammars of our time do. We can follow the tradition of Latin grammar through late antiquity and the Middle Ages up to the present day, and it may be claimed that what is standard morphology has been defined by that tradition. The impact of that grammatical tradition has been immense, since the purpose of grammars of previous centuries mostly was to provide rules for writing Latin. The grammars were normative and prescriptive in the first place, not descriptive, and that contributed to the standardization of their content.

Consequently, if we are content with a pragmatic definition that will work in practical contexts, we may define “Latin Standard Morphology” as Latin morphology as described in reasonably comprehensive school grammars of the last fifty years. Given the homogeneous character of the classical Latin texts, this definition is not too far from truth. Of course, some of the irregularities that occur in the texts are not covered by the school grammars, but with knowledge of the standard morphology as defined here the student will stand a good chance to solve such problems, too.

With Greek morphology it is another matter. Morphological regularity is not a characteristic of Greek, and the homogeneity of the Latin texts of the classical period has no parallel in Greek at any period. The rule is rather the phenomenon of *polytypia*, i.e., the simultaneous existence of two or more alternative allomorphic varieties of the same grammatical form.

The students will typically start their Greek studies with prose texts written in the variety of the language that developed in Athens in the classical period (fifth and fourth centuries B.C.) and from then on remained the norm for prose literature throughout antiquity and for many centuries to come. This was the variety of Greek taught at schools in antiquity and afterwards, up to the present day. In antiquity, this variety of the language was subject to few changes of the sort that normally occur in natural languages but, since the Attic variety of Greek was, at an early period, canonized as the only acceptable means of communication in most formal contexts and was defended against alterations by conservative, not to say reactionary, forces—such as the Atticistic movement of the first centuries A.D. Because of its importance in the system of education, it was subject to regulation and, when presented in the school grammars, it may give the impression of being both regular and homogeneous.

But that impression is deceptive, for most ancient writers of Greek allow themselves certain individual features also in the area of morphology to a greater extent than their Latin colleagues do. This also applies to those Greek prosaists whose language follows the norm laid down by classical Attic, including even those of the classical period, for they were active before grammar was invented and, consequently, before the concept of grammatical regularity had gained ground.

If Greek prose is less regularized than its Latin counterpart, the grammatical peculiarities of Greek poetical language are incomparably more evident. It is common to speak of "literary dialects", for the differences between the language varieties used in Greek epic, monody, choral lyric and drama are no less conspicuous than the differences that distinguish the geographically defined dialects of the Greek-speaking area from each other. Already on a relatively elementary level, the student of Greek is likely to read such literary texts with individual grammatical features frequently occurring in them; in Swedish universities, e.g., the students will read Homer, lyric poetry and drama during their second semester of studies. This means that the students must be prepared for what they are going to be confronted with in those poetical texts. In fact, differences between literary genres generate a greater grammatical diversity than chronological differences; there is, on the grammatical level, much greater disparity between two contemporary writers such as Lysias and Euripides than between Lysias and a much later prose writer, e.g., the author of the *Acts of the Apostles*.

Also dialects in the proper sense of the word, i.e. geographically defined varieties of the language, will be actualized for the students of Greek, whereas Latin had no dialects. The *Histories* of Herodotus belong to the regular curriculum. The *Histories* are written in an East Ionic dialect, although it is a literary medium rather than the vernacular of a particular Ionian region. Scientific texts are today introduced in the curriculum to a greater extent than earlier, and among them most of the writings of the Hippocratic corpus also

represent the East Ionic dialects (although different from that of Herodotus). In addition to these literary texts, there exist a great number of inscriptions composed in non-literary local dialects of different periods.

It is evident that the students cannot be required to memorize all the varieties of morphology that are likely to appear in the Greek texts that they study; not even trained Hellenists with decades of study behind them will be able to master that. The memorization must be limited to what we have defined as “standard morphology”, i.e., the variety of Greek morphology that is used in prose texts written according to the norm provided by the Attic dialect of the classical period.

But this is not enough. The students must be prepared for the morphological surprises that they will meet with when reading, e.g., Homer, the drama or lyric poetry. The student must be made aware that the peculiar morphological phenomena that appear in such texts are not illegitimate deviations from the Attic norm or incorrect forms; those texts follow other norms, and the morphology used in every one of them is a manifestation of its peculiar norm and, consequently, perfectly “correct” within the frame-work of the text.

Also the chronological dimension is important for the understanding of Greek and Latin morphology. The Greek alphabetical texts preserved from antiquity span a period of more than one thousand years, and the Mycenaean tablets push the time limit back to the Bronze Age; the Latin texts cover more than half a millennium, and both languages continue their existence into subsequent centuries (although in this report we are mostly concerned with the era that we call antiquity). Even if the classical languages have changed much less than many other languages over a comparable period of time, changes have occurred, and they also influence morphology.

3 Historical linguistics and morphology teaching

The changes that the language has undergone over time comes as a natural ingredient in the study of the classical languages. The history of Greek can be followed on the basis of preserved texts for more than 3,000 years. No other language existing today offers such a rich material for historical linguistics. The only rival is Chinese, but since the Greek writing systems are not ideographic but reflect the phonetics of the language, even the oldest preserved Greek texts offer much more detailed information on the language than their Chinese counterparts. This makes the history of the Greek language relevant *per se*.

The history of Latin is just as interesting. Its most ancient texts do not stand comparison to the Greek ones in purely chronological terms, but its subsequent history as the dialect of a small city state that became the language of an empire and, later on, the common language of the Western world, is certainly worthy of study.

But also for the learning of classical Greek and Latin morphology, language history is highly relevant. In the preceding section it was claimed that Greek morphology is so rich that nobody can be expected to memorize all its varieties but that elementary teaching must aim at least at making the students prepared for some of the surprises that expect them when they leave the standard language of the Attic prose texts and turn to drama,

Herodotus or Homer. In that context an awareness of the changes that the language has undergone is of prime importance.

In Herodotus, e.g., the student will discover a number of non-contracted word forms (Περσέων, γενέων, ἀληθέα, οἰκέουσι, etc.). The students who, while learning the standard Attic morphology, have been taught that the corresponding Attic forms (Περσῶν, γενῶν, ἀληθῆ, οἰκοῦσι, etc.) are the result of contraction will be able to identify, without difficulty, the non-contracted forms of Herodotus' dialect, whereas students who have merely learnt the Attic forms without being informed of their prehistory will be much less prepared for the Herodotean forms.

Homeric Greek of course includes many more examples of archaic or otherwise divergent forms than Herodotus' language. Non-contracted forms are abundant, but there are also examples that show that contraction is a relatively late phenomenon in the history of the language and that the author of the Homeric poems has been forced to introduce artificial word forms in order to cope with metrical anomalies arising when contraction occurred in words belonging to inherited formulae (e.g. ὀρόωσα, which was introduced for the contracted ὀρώσα because the poet needed a word with the syllable sequence short-short-long-short; the historically correct, uncontracted form would be ὀράουσα). In this case, language history allows a glimpse of the technique used by the poet when he was faced with the problem of adapting the traditional epic language to the linguistic situation of his own time.

New archaeological finds may make the language history more relevant for the teaching since they necessitate corrections of traditional doctrines. The Mycenaean texts that were deciphered about fifty years ago brought many interesting details. The termination -οιο in the genitive singular of substantives in -ος was previously known from the epic language and from the Thessalian dialect of the classical period. Now it appeared also in the Mycenaean texts (written *o-jo*). That was no surprise, for the original Greek termination of the genitive had since long ago been reconstructed as -ο-σyo. It was more of a surprise when, in 1977, a *Latin* inscription with precisely this genitive termination was discovered; this is the so-called *Lapis Satricanus* with the text *Popliosio Valesiosio*.¹

The appearance of this termination in a Latin text indicates that the archaic language must have had more than one way of forming this genitive, not only the one that resulted in the classical termination *-i*. In the same way, the Mycenaean material indicated the existence of two genitive endings in proto-Greek *-syo* and *-so*. Whereas the substantives in *-os* invariably have *-o-jo* in the genitive, the masculines of the first declension end in *-a-o*. This should be interpreted as *-a-ho*, which should be explained as derived from *-a-so*. The ending *-so* is not a normal ending of the first declension but must have been introduced from masculines of the second declension.

Previously, it was assumed that proto-Greek had only one genitive termination in these substantives, viz. *-o-syo* and that Homeric/Thessalian *-οιο* had developed from this by loss

¹ C. M. Stibbe *et alii*, *Lapis Satricanus. Archaeological, Epigraphical, Linguistic and Historical Aspects of the New Inscription from Satricum*, 's-Gravenhage 1980 (Archeologische studiën van het Nederlands instituut te Rome. Scripta minora 5).

of -s- and that the additional loss of intervocalic -y- and subsequent contraction had resulted in the classical varieties -ου and -ω (with Homeric, elided -ο' as an intermediate stage). This was a problematic solution, for in other words intervocalic -σy- did not disappear completely but manifested itself as a -ι- (γελοῖος < *γελοσ-γος). Thus, proto-Greek -o-syo can explain only -οιο. Classical -ου/-ω is more likely to have developed from proto-Greek -o-so with the regular loss of intervocalic -s- and subsequent contraction (or elision of the second -o as in Homeric -ο').

These examples illustrate how forms divergent from the Attic standard can be explained if they are put in their historical context and if the language is imagined, not as a static set of grammatical rules, but as a dynamic process in which changes constantly occur. The student will also be attentive to the fact that an isolated archaic form inserted by the author in an otherwise standardized text will be part of the ideological or aesthetic message that the writer wishes to convey.

However, a historical approach is relevant not only for explaining non-Attic forms. It could also be used in order to facilitate the learning of the standard morphology. This becomes apparent if we assume that the morphological phenomena should not be learnt as isolated, unrelated forms but as elements of a system that can be perceived as such at least by mature students with an ability to reflect over the matter. The examples that illustrate the importance of a historical approach are taken from Greek verb morphology.

Our first example concerns the Greek augment, the prefix that occurs in verb forms denoting past time. School grammars normally teach that there exist two augments (or types of augment) in Greek verbs: in verbs beginning with a consonant it is an ἐ-, in those beginning with a vowel the augmentation consists in a lengthening of the vowel. The explanations appended to this rule imply that the first type consists of a syllable added to the verb stem, whereas the second is not a syllable but essentially a lengthened pronunciation of an already existing initial vowel; hence the traditional, Latin terms for the two phenomena, *augmentum syllabicum* and *augmentum temporale*, respectively).²

A reflecting student is likely to ask at least two questions when confronted with this doctrine: First, why the grammars insist that the augment is a prefix. A prefix would normally consist of at least one syllable, but no syllable is added in the case of the so-called temporal augment (and it cannot be regarded as a zero prefix, for a zero prefix must be in opposition to a non-zero prefix). So why is it classified as a prefix? Secondly, the school grammars do not make it clear why the augment realizes itself by two totally different manifestations in these two groups of verbs; the explanation “because one of them begins with vowels” begs the question and is not sufficient, for there are no phonotactic rules in Greek that prevent placing an ε before another vowel.

² Recently published grammars where explanations of this sort appear include Chr. Gorm Tortzen, *ΒΑΣΙΣ. Græsk grammatik for begyndere*, København 1994 (p. 48), James Morwood, *Oxford Grammar of Classical Greek*, Oxford 2001 (p. 67), and Tor Hauken, *Lógos grammatikós. Gresk grammatik*, Bergen 2002 (pp. 63–65). Tortzen even preserves the Latin designations, and Hauken translates them into Norwegian (*stavningsaugment, temporalt augment*).

These uncertainties caused by the traditional doctrine are dispersed when the student realizes that the augment was always an $\acute{\epsilon}$ - (except in the rare cases where it was an $\acute{\eta}$ -) and that lengthened initial vowels of augmented verb forms are the result of a contraction of the augment with the vowel of the verb stem (or lengthening of the augment by a laryngeal).³ This is what more advanced grammars teach, and there is no reason to conceal the truth from the students.

The historical approach also explains why augmentation of verbs with the same initial vowel may yield different results; e.g. $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\rho\omega$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\chi\omega$, which both have initial $\acute{\epsilon}$ -, appear, one with $\acute{\eta}$ - and the other with $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ -, in the augmented forms ($\acute{\eta}\gamma\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha$, $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\chi\omicron\nu$). This difference is explained by the fact that the contractions occurred at different stages in the development of the language. In both cases the long initial vowel is the outcome of two short e 's that have been contracted. The contraction resulting in $\acute{\eta}$ - occurred early in the history of Greek, perhaps even in PIE times, when the long and short e sounds were pronounced with the same degree of openness and long e sounds resulting from contraction of two short ones would result in a long e sound that could be identified with the long e sound which already existed in the language and which later on was written with η in alphabetic Greek. At that time, the initial phoneme of the verb that was to become $\acute{\epsilon}\chi\omega$ was not a vowel but the verb stem retained its initial s . That s first became h and then disappeared altogether, and it was only at that stage that the contraction resulting in $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\chi\omicron\nu$ took place. In the meantime the short e sound (written ϵ) had changed its pronunciation in some Greek dialects (Ionic, Northwest Greek); it had become more closed than the old long, relatively open e sound (η) and, when two short e 's were contracted, the result was a long, closed e sound, which was written $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$.

Schematically, the development of the two verbs that we have used as examples in this paragraph could be reconstructed as shown below in *Fig. 1.*:

<i>PIE</i>	<i>proto-Greek</i>	<i>Mycenaean</i>	<i>classical</i>
<i>e-eger</i> ⁴	$\acute{\eta}\gamma\epsilon\rho$ ⁵ ----->		
<i>e-segh</i> ⁴	$\acute{\epsilon}-\sigma\epsilon\chi-$	$\acute{\epsilon}-h\epsilon\chi-$	$\acute{\epsilon}-\epsilon\chi-$
			$\epsilon\acute{\iota}\chi-$

Fig. 1. Augmentation of the verbs $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\rho\omega$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\chi\omega$

It is important to make the students aware of the fact that every morphology item is not an isolated entity but belongs to a system. For that reason the student should be presented not only with paradigms but also with surveys that show how morphemes relate to each other in the systems to which they belong and how the morphemes realize themselves in the concrete forms that make up those systems. An example of such a survey is given in *Fig. 2*, which tabulates the personal endings of the Greek verb.

³ Cf. Helmut Rix, *Historische Grammatik des Griechischen*, Darmstadt 1976, pp. 226–229.

⁴ Or *e-H₁ger-*, if the first phoneme of the stem is reconstructed as a laryngeal.

⁵ In later Greek, the vowel of the second syllable becomes $-\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ - by compensatory lengthening.

ÖVERSIKT ÖVER DET GREKISKA VERBETS ÄNDELSER				
1. Ändelserna i aktivum				
<i>A. Primära ändelser</i>				
	<i>protogrekiska</i>	<i>historisk grekiska</i>		
		<i>indikativ</i>		<i>konjunktiv bindevokal + ändelse</i>
		<i>atematisk böjning</i>	<i>tematisk böjning bindevok.+änd.</i>	
<i>1 sg.</i>	<i>-mi/-ō</i>	<i>-μι</i>	<i>-ω</i>	<i>-ω</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>-si</i>	<i>-ς</i>	<i>-εις</i>	<i>-ης</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>-ti</i>	<i>-σι(ν)</i>	<i>-ει</i>	<i>-η</i>
<i>1 pl.</i>	<i>-men/-mes</i>	<i>-μεν</i>	<i>-ο-μεν</i>	<i>-ω-μεν</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>-te</i>	<i>-τε</i>	<i>-ε-τε</i>	<i>-η-τε</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>-(e)nti</i>	<i>-(ā)σι(ν) <-(ε)ντι</i>	<i>-ουσι(ν) <-ο-ντι</i>	<i>-ωσι(ν) <-ω-ντι</i>
<i>B. Sekundära ändelser</i>				
	<i>protogrekiska</i>	<i>historisk grekiska</i>		
		<i>atematisk böjning</i>	<i>tematisk böjning bindevokal+ändelse</i>	
<i>1 sg.</i>	<i>-m</i>	<i>-ν (-μι)</i>	<i>-ο-ν</i>	
<i>2</i>	<i>-s</i>	<i>-ς</i>	<i>-ε-ς</i>	
<i>3</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>-∅</i>	<i>-ε-(ν)</i>	
<i>1 pl.</i>	<i>-men/-mes</i>	<i>-μεν</i>	<i>-ο-μεν</i>	
<i>2</i>	<i>-te</i>	<i>-τε</i>	<i>-ε-τε</i>	
<i>3</i>	<i>-(e)nt</i>	<i>-(ε)ν (-σων)</i>	<i>-ο-ν</i>	
2. Ändelserna i medium-passivum				
	<i>A. Primära ändelser</i>		<i>B. Sekundära ändelser</i>	
	<i>atematisk böjning</i>	<i>tematisk böjn. bindevok.+änd.</i>	<i>atematisk böjning</i>	<i>tematisk böjn. bindevok.+änd.</i>
<i>1 sg.</i>	<i>-μαι</i>	<i>-ο-μαι</i>	<i>-μην</i>	<i>-ο-μην</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>-σαι</i>	<i>(-ε-σαι >)-η/-ει</i>	<i>-σο</i>	<i>(-ε-σο >)-ου</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>-ται</i>	<i>-ε-ται</i>	<i>-το</i>	<i>-ε-το</i>
<i>1 pl.</i>	<i>-μεθα</i>	<i>-ο-μεθα</i>	<i>-μεθα</i>	<i>-ο-μεθα</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>-σθε</i>	<i>-ε-σθε</i>	<i>-σθε</i>	<i>-ε-σθε</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>-νται</i>	<i>-ο-νται</i>	<i>-ντο</i>	<i>-ο-ντο</i>

Fig. 2. A survey of the personal endings of the Greek verb (from J. Blomqvist & P.O. Jastrup, *Grekisk – Græsk grammatik*. 3rd ed., København 2006)

The regularity that exists in the shaping of the endings becomes still more apparent if a section of the system is selected where its quality of a regulated structure is particular evident. Such a section is illustrated by *Fig. 3* below.

	<i>PIE:</i> <i>secondary</i> <i>endings</i>	<i>Latin:</i> <i>imperfect</i> <i>active</i>	<i>Greek:</i>			
			<i>active endings</i>		<i>mid.-passive endings</i>	
			<i>secondary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>
<i>1 sg.</i>	<i>-m</i>	<i>-m</i>	<i>-ν</i>	<i>-μι</i>	<i>-μαι</i>	<i>-μην</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>-s</i>	<i>-s</i>	<i>-ς</i>	<i>-ς</i>	<i>-σαι</i>	<i>-σο</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>-∅</i>	<i>-τι > -σι</i>	<i>-ται</i>	<i>-το</i>
<i>1 pl.</i>	<i>-mes/-men</i>	<i>-mus</i>	<i>-μεν (-μες)</i>	<i>-μεν (-μες)</i>	<i>-μεθα</i>	<i>-μεθα</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>-te</i>	<i>-te</i>	<i>-τε</i>	<i>-τε</i>	<i>-σθε</i>	<i>-σθε</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>-(e)nt</i>	<i>-nt</i>	<i>-(ε)ν</i>	<i>-(ε)ντι > -(ᾶ)σι</i>	<i>-νται</i>	<i>-ντο</i>

**Fig. 3. There's a system in it:
selected Proto-Indo-European, Latin and Greek personal endings**

Here the continuity and relative consistency of the Proto-Indo-European system of personal endings is clearly illustrated. The starting point is provided by the PIE secondary active endings. The PIE series *-m*, *-s*, *-t*, *-mes*, *-te*, *-nt* recurs almost unchanged in the Latin active imperfect, the only deviation being the vowel in the first plural ending; for that form Latin has chosen one of the two PIE alternatives *-men* and *-mes*, whereas proto-Greek must have retained both, since *-μες* is the regular ending in the West Greek dialects and *-μεν* in the rest. In Greek some other endings have undergone the changes typical of Greek words; final *-m* has become *-ν* in first singular, and final *-t* has been dropped in third singular and plural, resulting in a coincidence of first singular and third plural. Thus, these deviations are explicable with reference to Greek sound history.

In the Greek primary endings it is easy to recognize the PIE series *-m*, *-s*, *-t*, *-men/-mes*, *-te*, *-nt*; the Greek endings differ by the *-ι* that appeared originally as the word final in singular and in third plural. Subsequent changes that have occurred in some forms are explicable as normal Greek sound changes (loss of intervocalic *-σ-*, the development *τι > σι*). The regularity is apparent also in the passive endings. The PIE series is recognizable in these, too, and the word finals *-αι* and *-ο*, respectively, recur with discernible regularity in both primary and secondary endings.

The recognition of such regularities in the morphological systems of Latin and Greek will, in our view, facilitate the learning of the individual paradigms. This is a good reason for using historical explanations of the classical forms already in the elementary courses.

At the same time a warning is motivated: Historical morphology should not be studied for its own sake in the elementary courses but as an aid to deeper understanding of morphology and its shifting manifestations in different texts. There is no use, on this level,

for phenomena occurring in PIE that are interesting in themselves but of no relevance to Greek or Latin morphology, as we know it from the preserved texts. E.g. laryngeals are relevant for Greek elementary courses, glottalized obstruents are not. The laryngeals have left a great number of reflexes in Greek, and one obvious advantage with laryngeals is that they make Greek apophony simpler and more consistent, as illustrated by *Fig. 4*.⁶

Laryngeals not presupposed			
<i>e</i> -grades:			
<i>short e</i> -grade	τί-θε-μεν	εἶ-μι	
<i>long e</i> -grade	τί-θη-μι	— —	
<i>o</i> -grades:			
<i>short o</i> -grade	— —	οἶ-μος	
<i>long o</i> -grade	θῶ-μος	— —	
<i>zero</i> -grade	— —	ῖ-μεν	
Laryngeals presupposed			PIE roots reconstructed
<i>e</i> -grade	τί-θη-μι	εἶ-μι	<i>d^heH₁- ei-</i>
<i>o</i> -grade	θῶ-μος	οἶ-μος	<i>d^hoH₁- oi-</i>
<i>zero</i> -grade	τί-θε-μεν	ῖ-μεν	<i>d^hH₁- i-</i>
Fig. 4. Laryngeals and Greek apophony			

The diagram shows the distribution of apophonic variants in the paradigm of present indicative (plus a nominal derivation) of two common *μι*-verbs, one with a laryngeal in its root (τίθημι), the other without (εἶμι). It is evident that the introduction laryngeals means a simplification. Without laryngeals the *e*- and *o*-grades must be supposed to appear in two different forms each, long and short; there will be empty slots in the grid, most conspicuously for the zero-grade of τίθημι; and the apophonic grade forms of the two roots will not be distributed in the same way over the grid. All these complications are avoided if the root of τίθημι is reconstructed as containing a laryngeal. Laryngeals make things more transparent in other branches of Greek morphology, too.

Thus, laryngeals make things simpler in Greek morphology. As concerns the Greek consonant system, on the other hand, it is sufficient to present the PIE system of stops as it has been traditionally reconstructed, i.e., with the three components voiceless aspirates, voiced non-aspirates and voiced aspirates (e.g. the labials /*p*, *b*, *b^h*/), even if we know that, phonetically, *b^h* was not equivalent with Sanskrit *bh* but possibly a glottalized obstruent. Everything that the Indo-Europeanists discuss hotly at the moment, is not relevant to the learner of Greek.

⁶ A short but useful survey of the reflexes of laryngeals in Greek is to be found in Francesco Piazza, *Lessico essenziale di greco*, Bologna 2000, p. 16.

4 Comparison between Greek and Latin

In schools and universities all over Europe it has been traditional to study the two classical languages together. In the schools, e.g., in Sweden, it has been possible to study Latin without Greek but not Greek without Latin. On the university level Greek and Latin in most countries have been linked together in one discipline, classical philology, that was created in the first part of the nineteenth century. As concerns university education, Sweden is an exception in this respect; in Swedish universities the two classical languages have always been two separate disciplines, although it was customary for the students to combine them in their exams.

Today the situation is different. The tendency is to separate the two disciplines from each other and to concentrate on one of the two languages at a time. This is particularly evident in university courses for beginners. For the teaching of Greek this new situation has its consequences. Previously, the teacher of Greek could be confident that the students in the elementary courses had learnt Latin and had acquired a basic knowledge of grammar and were acquainted with a language with a morphological and syntactic structure similar to that of Greek (“similar” in the sense that Latin and Greek have characteristics in common that differentiate them from the modern European languages that are the students’ mother tongues). This is no longer the case, but teachers of Greek have to take up more elementary matters in their teaching; they have no longer the advantage of being able to refer to the students’ knowledge of Latin.

As for the teaching of Latin and Greek morphology it is evident that some profit may be gained from pointing out the similarities between the two languages to the students. Nicoletta Natalucci has made this clear in her *Apprendimento della morfologia*. In that contribution Natalucci focuses on the declination of substantives and adjectives, an area in which the parallels between Greek and Latin are striking: in both languages the *a*- and *o*-stems are the most common types of substantives and form a declination class each (first and second declension); the substantives of the third Greek declension correspond to those of the third and fourth Latin declensions; the endings are in most cases derived from the same PIE endings; etc. It is evident that a student who knows Latin will be better prepared for the learning of Greek nominal morphology than a student who is only acquainted with one or more of the modern European languages.

Natalucci also points to similarities in the verb morphology, primarily certain phenomena that occur in the perfect of a few Latin verbs but are normal ingredients in Greek verb morphology (-*s*- as a perfect/aorist suffix, reduplicated perfects). In sect. 3 above (cf. in particular *Fig. 3*) we have demonstrated the close relationship of the active personal endings in PIE, Latin and Greek. It is likely that such parallels will facilitate the learning of Greek after Latin or vice versa and result in a deeper understanding of their common Indo-European origin.

However, except for details of this relatively superficial sort,⁷ the Greek and Latin verb systems are not very closely related. This is shown by *Fig. 5*, which is intended to visualize the structure of the two verb systems.

Greek			Latin		
<i>tense stem</i>	<i>form</i>	<i>pre-/suffix</i>	<i>suffix</i>	<i>form</i>	<i>tense stem</i>
present	παιδεύ-ω	zero ⁸	zero	<i>voc-o</i>	present
	ἐ-παιδευ-ον		-ba-	<i>voca-ba-m</i>	imperfect
future	παιδεύ-σ-ω	-σ-	-b-	<i>voca-b-o</i>	future
aorist act./mid.	ἐ-παιδευ-σ-α	-σ-	-v-	<i>voca-v-i</i>	perfect act.
perfect act.	πε-παιδευ-κ-α	πε- + -κ- ⁹	-v-era-	<i>voca-v-era-m</i>	pluperfect act.
	ἐ-πε-παιδεύ-κ-ειν		-v-er-	<i>voca-v-er-im</i>	fut. perfect
fut. perfect ¹⁰	πε-παιδευ-σ-ω	πε- + -σ-	(periphrasis)	<i>vocatus sum</i>	(periphrasis)
aorist pass.	ἐ-παιδεύ-θη-ν	-θη-		<i>vocatus eram</i>	
perf. mid./pass.	πε-παιδευ-μαι	πε- + zero			
	ἐ-πε-παιδεύ-μην				

Fig. 5. A comparative survey of the Greek and Latin verb systems

This diagram shows in fact that, structurally speaking, there are only two perfect matches between the two systems, viz. the simple future and the future perfect, which both may be suspected of being late additions to the systems. For the rest the balance is disturbed mainly by the fact that Greek has more tense stems than Latin; the Greek distinction between aorist and perfect is not paralleled in the Latin system and, where Greek has peculiar stems for aorist and perfect (mid.-)passive, Latin prefers periphrasis. The diagram

⁷ One might add, e.g., the active participle suffix *-nt*, which is common to both languages, and the Latin passive participle in *-tus*, which corresponds to the Greek verbal adjective in *-τος*.

⁸ Verbs in *-εύω* derived from substantives in *-εύς* formed their present stem with the suffix *-y-*, e.g. βασιλεύω (< *-ευ-y-ω*) from βασιλεύς. Since there exists no *παιδεύς from which παιδεύω could have been derived, παιδεύω should be supposed to have been created on the analogy of the original verbs in *-εύω* after the *-y-* had been dropped; hence, arguably, the suffix of the present stem of παιδεύω was zero.

⁹ The element *-ε-* or *-ει-* that is inserted in the active pluperfect forms between the suffix *-κ-* and the personal endings is a relatively late phenomenon. Originally the personal endings were added directly to the perfect stem, without a suffix. At that stage there existed no separate pluperfect stem (and, consequently, most grammars do not recognize one); the feature distinguishing pluperfect from perfect was the augment. The situation changed in the Hellenistic and later periods, when the augment of the pluperfect was gradually abolished. After that the element *-κει-* may be regarded as a suffix peculiar to a pluperfect stem that had become differentiated from the perfect stem.

¹⁰ A rare form in Greek. Only the active forms are listed here. Passive (and middle) forms are mostly periphrastic in both languages, in Latin always; in Greek, also the active forms are often replaced by periphrases.

rather demonstrates the uniqueness of the Greek system in comparison both with Latin and with the modern languages.

One feature of the Latin verbs, which they share with verbs in some European languages, is that they can easily be classified in a number of groups called conjugations. This means that for a great number of verbs their present forms, especially the infinitive, indicates how their perfect stem is formed. In Greek the other tense stems are not predictable from the present stem (or vice versa) to the same degree as in Latin. Of course, also in Greek there exist a considerable number of verbs that form their tense stems according to a regular pattern; παιδεύω, that we have used as model verb in *Fig. 5*, is one of them. But it is undeniable that a great number of the verbs most frequently occurring in the texts are irregular. For example, of the fifty verbs beginning with τ, υ or φ listed in Piazzì's *Lessico essenziale*, no less than thirty-seven appear in the—admittedly generous—list of irregular verbs in Blomqvist & Jastrup's *Grekisk–Græsk grammatik*. This means that the concept of conjugation cannot be applied to the Greek verbs; they lack the regularity in forming the tense stems that is a characteristic of their Latin counterparts.

Unfortunately, the idea that also the Greek verbs could be classed in conjugations has been transferred from Latin to Greek school grammars.¹¹ As a consequence, many school grammars reckon with two conjugations in Greek, one comprising the verbs in -ω, the other one the verbs in -μι. This distinction applies to the conjugation of the present stem and nothing else, and that fact is generally recognized by philologists of today. But even in grammars published in recent years, ω-verbs and μι-verbs are treated as two distinct classes not only as regards the present stem. Typically, the verbs in ω are first given a full treatment, including not only their present stem but all the other tense stems as well; only after that a section on the verbs in μι, with their futures, aorists and perfects, is appended.¹² This gives the impression of the existence of two conjugations of the same sort as those of Latin. It also sometimes has the effect that the μι-verbs—which are very frequent verbs—tend to be pushed towards the end of a beginner's course with the result that their morphology is only imperfectly learned by the students. A more rational approach is to teach the students the complete present system of both ω- and μι-verbs first and only after that embark on the formation of the other tense stems.

We conclude that comparisons between Latin and Greek are of some use for the learning and deeper understanding of the morphology of both languages. This applies in the first place to the morphology of substantives and adjectives, less so to the morphology of verbs, since the verb systems of the two languages are structured in different ways. Also since, in many countries, Latin and Greek are not taught together but separately, comparisons between the two classical languages are made largely irrelevant by the

¹¹ This is one example of many of how the Latin school grammars have influenced the description of other languages and of how Latin grammatical patterns were forcibly applied to languages with different structures.

¹² This is the case, e.g., in Morwood's and Hauken's grammars.

didactic situation (which has not been created by the classicists themselves). This situation calls for new teaching methods and will also necessitate that classicists explore the possibilities of comparison with the students' own mother tongues.

5 Morphology drills

A historical perspective and comparisons with each other and with other languages may be of assistance for an understanding of Greek and Latin morphology. However, for the memorization of the basic facts of standard morphology there is a need for training drills of the simplest and most concrete type.

As for Greek morphology, a set of morphological drills were created in 1974 for Swedish students, when beginner's courses were introduced in the universities. They were used for the elementary course that covered the first half of the first semester of Greek studies. For the course a text-book was used that introduced the grammatical topics step by step. For each new grammatical topic treated in the course two drills were issued, one for the training of the new topic and the other one for repetition of what had been treated in the previous lessons.

The drills aimed at training the identification of word forms that are likely to appear in the texts. A drill consisted of a paper form with the words to be identified in the column to the left and columns for the relevant grammatical categories and the basic form of the word, which were to be completed by the students. Each drill included c. 25 words. *Figs. 6–7* will give an idea of how they were organized:

	<i>case</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>gender</i>	<i>basic word</i>
ἀγροί				
ἀγαθῶ				
ἀδελφόν				

Fig. 6. Drill for training the identification of nominal forms

	<i>pers./number</i>	<i>tense</i>	<i>mode</i>	<i>diathesis</i>	<i>basic word</i>
ἠδίκησα					
ἀκούσης					
ἐπαιδεύσασθε					

Fig. 7. Drill for training the identification of verb forms (sigmatic aorist)

These paper forms may seem primitive in the digital era, but they have filled their function as long as they have been in use, and the basic task of identifying the words forms appearing in a text has not changed much with the introduction of computer technology. With a hypertext, of course, it is possible to get information about the form of

a word by a simple mouse-click, but mouse-clicking every word will be tedious and time-consuming, so memorization of the basic facts is still indispensable. For such purposes computer technology is very useful.

- Pronunciation Guide**
- Pronunciation Practice**
- Accentuation Tutorial**
- Accentuation Practice**
- Principal Parts**
- Vocabulary**
- Verb Drill**
- Noun Drill**
- English-Greek Paradigms**

In one of our previous reports we have pointed to an example of how computer technology can be used for creating learning tools for Greek morphology (*Teaching the Classical Languages in a Changing Europe: Aims and Methods Part II*, pp. 5–11). It is Donald J. Mastronarde’s *Ancient Greek Tutorials*, which are accessible via the Internet (<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~ancgreek/>). In the previous report we discussed the drills for verb morphology. Here an example from the “Noun Drill” section will be presented and discussed. It contains a few interesting features in comparison to the verb drill, which will be pointed out.

What is shown here to the left is the left hand column of the start page. A click on the “Noun Drill” button will bring up a screen like the one shown below, where the word form *ἱερέα* is to be identified:

Noun Drill
(Unicode)
Ancient Greek Tutorials Home

ἱερέα

Drill for Unit 23

Show Answer after:
2 tries

[Instructions](#)
[Go to Random Set Drill](#)
[Go to Drill by Form-Type](#)

CHECK ANS.	DICT. FORM	DICT. INFO	DEFINITION	PARADIGM
FORM TYPE	NOUN	ADJECTIVE	PRONOUN	ADJ./PRON.
CASE	NUMBER	GENDER	DECLENSION	GENITIVE
NOMINATIVE	SINGULAR	MASCULINE	OMICRON	-ου
GENITIVE	PLURAL	FEMININE	ALPHA	-ας
DATIVE	DUAL	NEUTER	VOWEL ADJ.	-ης
ACCUSATIVE		MASC. / FEM.	CONSONANT	-ος
VOCATIVE		MASC/NEUT	OTHER	-ους
NOM. / VOC.		M/F/N		-εως
N. / A. / V.				OTHER
GEN. / DAT.				

ἱερέα

Drill for Unit 23

Show Answer after: 2 tries

Instructions
[Go to Random Set Drill](#)
[Go to Drill by Form-Type](#)

CHECK ANS.	DICT. FORM	DICT. INFO	DEFINITION	PARADIGM
FORM TYPE	NOUN	ADJECTIVE	PRONOUN	ADJ./PRON.
CASE	NUMBER	GENDER	DECLENSION	GENITIVE
NOMINATIVE	SINGULAR	MASCULINE	OMICRON	-ου
GENITIVE	PLURAL	FEMININE	ALPHA	-ας
DATIVE	DUAL	NEUTER	VOWEL ADJ.	-ης
ACCUSATIVE		MASC./FEM.	CONSONANT	-ος
VOCATIVE		MASC/NEUT	OTHER	-ους
NOM./VOC.		M/F/N		-εως
N./A./V.				OTHER
GEN./DAT.				

You give your answers by clicking in the appropriate fields, which then turn black.

ἱερέα

Drill for Unit 23

Show Answer after: 2 tries

Instructions
[Go to Random Set Drill](#)
[Go to Drill by Form-Type](#)

CHECK ANS.	DICT. FORM	DICT. INFO	DEFINITION	PARADIGM
FORM TYPE	NOUN	ADJECTIVE	PRONOUN	ADJ./PRON.
CASE	NUMBER	GENDER	DECLENSION	GENITIVE
NOMINATIVE	SINGULAR	MASCULINE	OMICRON	-ου
GENITIVE	PLURAL	FEMININE	ALPHA	-ας
DATIVE	DUAL	NEUTER	VOWEL ADJ.	-ης
ACCUSATIVE		MASC./FEM.	CONSONANT	-ος
VOCATIVE		MASC/NEUT	OTHER	-ους
NOM./VOC.		M/F/N		-εως
N./A./V.				OTHER
GEN./DAT.				

By clicking on the **CHECK ANS**(wers) button you will get your answers checked. Correct answers will be shown in yellow fields, the fields with incorrect answers will remain black.

For identifying the form of a noun or an adjective the categories case, number and gender would be sufficient. But this noun drill requires more information from its user in order to be satisfied. In the two right hand columns also the declension type and the genitive singular should be indicated. This is supplementary information that is not required in comparative drills that we have seen, and no corresponding information is required in Mastrorarde's verb drill. A completed form will look as shown below, when the answers

Θανάτου

have been checked and accepted; only then it is possible to continue to the next item in the drill.

Drill for Unit 23		NEXT	DICT. FORM	DICT. INFO	DEFINITION	PARADIGM
FORM TYPE	NOUN	ADJECTIVE	PRONOUN	ADJ./PRON.		
CASE	NUMBER	GENDER	DECLENSION	GENITIVE		
NOMINATIVE	SINGULAR	MASCULINE	OMICRON	-ΟΥ		
GENITIVE	PLURAL	FEMININE	ALPHA	-ΑΣ		
DATIVE	DUAL	NEUTER	VOWEL ADJ.	-ΗΣ		
ACCUSATIVE		MASC. / FEM.	CONSONANT	-ΟΣ		
VOCATIVE		MASC/NEUT	OTHER	-ΟΥΣ		
NOM. / VOC.		M/F/N		-ΕΩΣ		
N. / A. / V.				OTHER		
GEN. / DAT.						

The supplementary indications of declension type and genitive form mean that the form to be identified is not regarded only as an isolated item but it is integrated in the declension system. This is a valuable feature of this drill. We have earlier stressed the importance of making the students aware of the overall context to which each form belongs, and the two extra columns of Mastronarde's noun drill evidently serve that purpose.

If we compare this Internet drill to the paper drills that were used at Swedish universities, we notice that one item that the students were required to indicate on the paper forms is missing from the Internet drill, viz. the basic form of the Greek word. The reason for this deficiency may be a technical one: there exists no universally accepted device for writing the Greek letters, so a request to the students who use the Internet to indicate the basic form would not serve any practical purpose. Instead it is possible for the user to bring up the basic form by clicking the button **DICT(ionary) FORM**. However, it is a deficiency, for the basic form is essential for the student to know when looking in a dictionary in order to find the meaning of the word. We must hope that a practicable technical solution of the problem with Greek fonts will be found soon; the Unicode font system probably provides such a solution. For Latin morphology drills this problem will not exist.