

Case studies from Therapoula Constantinou:

- A. *Please write briefly about a memorable language assessment experience, either particularly challenging or especially successful, as an example of your practice during the pandemic:*

*What is the national context? What kind of institution? Who were the language learners?*

A memorable language assessment took place last year during the second Covid-19 lockdown. There were about 20 Greek-Cypriot students at a Gymnasium (lower secondary school) in Nicosia. All of them were 14 years old.

*What was the status of the assessment?*

I created a quiz in Microsoft Teams to assess students' learning and understanding of a particular subject. I set a start and end date and shuffled the questions to avoid cheating. The results were not shown automatically because I wanted to receive the results, review them, and make comments and then allow students to access their results and feedback.

*Please write a brief description – the 'story' - of what you did/what happened that made this an especially memorable experience:*

Although I prepared my quiz very carefully, I was a bit worried about my students' reactions since that was something totally new, full of new challenges and unexpected problems that could arise. What made that experience an especially memorable one was my students' professionalism and their willingness to face the new challenge. Everything went as planned and I was more than happy about that.

*What lessons might there be in your experience for language teaching in general beyond the pandemic?*

This kind of quiz can be used not only during the pandemic, when online learning is the only way of delivering lessons but in conventional classes as well, since it is a very useful and interactive tool which can offer a lot. In my opinion, technology interventions should be part of our daily lessons.

- B. *In your context, how have teachers and other colleagues coped with modified assessment practices during the pandemic?*

A few teachers found it hard to cope with modified assessment practices at the beginning of the pandemic as many procedures were new and demanded special technical skills. The majority, however, managed to successfully face all the new challenges since they were well-trained.

- C. *The pandemic has now lasted almost two years and is not over yet. How is it affecting your professional practice at present?*

Unfortunately, the pandemic is not over yet. It is affecting my professional practice at present as there is the fear of a new lockdown which causes feelings of anxiety and insecurity. Moreover, some teaching practices like pair work and group work, which help students develop special communication skills, cannot be used as students need to maintain social distance to protect themselves.