

Case study from Vasiliki Hadjinikola

- 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 secondary school in Cyprus. A class of 15 16-year-old students who studied English for 6 periods a week (B2). They were being assessed during the term and they were also going to take an exam at the end of the term.

*What was the status of the assessment?*

A reading comprehension test – part of the term's assessment.

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

The test was uploaded before the lesson and students had 45 minutes to read three texts. For the first text they had to write answers to comprehension questions; they had to do a multiple-choice activity for the second text and write a guided summary for the third. They had to write the answers in their notebooks, take a photo and send the photos immediately after the end of the lesson. It was a memorable experience as it was the first time that I had tried that, and I was not certain whether all students would follow the instructions. What is more, I could not know whether they would answer the questions on their own. However, all students sent their answers on time and the results were consistent with tests students had taken in the classroom earlier that year.

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

Teachers need to be flexible and always willing to try new methods of teaching (and assessing). Teachers should be trained on new methods and tools and how these can be used.

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

At the beginning it was quite hard as most teachers were not trained to cope with online classes. Students were assessed based on their participation and the homework they sent. Later, some teachers started using online tools or they uploaded tests a few minutes before the lesson and students were asked to answer the questions and send them back to the teacher before the end of the lesson.

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

At present, most students come to school. However, as there are students who are quarantined, either because they are sick or they are contacts, we have hybrid classes.