

An investigation into how pupils' use of learning journals affects their understanding of how to translate Ancient Greek. Pupils' habits and responses in a year 10 Ancient Greek class.

Abstract:

This study examines the use of learning journals by a year 10 class of 4 pupils learning Greek in a selective and high achieving boys' grammar school. The journals were used during lessons over a six week period by pupils to record errors and lacunae in their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary revealed in oral and written translation work. Pupils made a final entry in which they were asked to assess their strengths and weaknesses over the period and suggest ways they might improve. Key findings: pupils developed the independence to use the journals, after an initial period of difficulty. Pupils were able to assess themselves and make relevant entries; memory deficiency prevented journaling of all relevant material. Pupils were able to extrapolate more general trends in their translation performance from particular entries. They showed cognitive and meta-cognitive awareness. Pupils' reactions were mixed, with 50% considering the journals useful as they were being used. Despite using the journals appropriately, 75% of pupils suffered from a lack of confidence or certainty in their use of the journals. Findings, notably pupils' suggestions for improving the use of journals, suggest potentially valuable further lines of enquiry.