

Fostering multi-cultural and multi-lingual terminology in the Performing Arts: The case of "*Thymele*", a Greek-based innovative dynamic multimedia dictionary

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Dans cet article, nous présentons le projet *Thymèle*, un dictionnaire des Arts du spectacle déployant un large matériel multimédia et en libre accès, conçu pour renforcer la langue grecque dans un contexte européen multilingue. La création de *Thymèle* s'inscrit dans les politiques linguistiques européennes et vise à répondre aux défis liés au plurilinguisme et à l'interculturalité. Le dictionnaire *Thymèle* constitue un outil essentiel pour contrer l'anglicisation croissante dans l'enseignement supérieur et pour promouvoir la diversité linguistique et culturelle. Il établit des correspondances entre les termes grecs et leurs équivalents dans plusieurs autres langues, tout en standardisant les définitions et les traductions dans le domaine des Arts du spectacle. Cette approche facilite le dialogue interculturel et l'échange académique. La plateforme ouverte de *Thymèle* démocratise l'accès à des ressources éducatives et favorise les collaborations internationales, tout en adoptant un langage inclusif et non genré. De plus, une collaboration entre des expert-es issus de disciplines différentes garantit la pertinence et l'accessibilité du contenu. Enfin, *Thymèle* constitue un modèle pour des outils similaires dans d'autres domaines académiques, en valorisant la diversité linguistique et l'enrichissement culturel au sein des universités européennes.

Στο παρόν άρθρο παρουσιάζουμε το έργο *Θυμέλη*, ένα λεξικό Παραστατικών Τεχνών ελεύθερης πρόσβασης, με πλούσιο πολυμεσικό υλικό, σχεδιασμένο για την ενίσχυση της ελληνικής γλώσσας σε ευρωπαϊκό πολυγλωσσικό πλαίσιο. Η δημιουργία της *Θυμέλης* εντάσσεται στις ευρωπαϊκές γλωσσικές πολιτικές και στοχεύει στην αντιμετώπιση προκλήσεων που συνδέονται με την πολυγλωσσία και τη διαπολιτισμικότητα. Το λεξικό *Θυμέλη* αποτελεί ουσιαστικό εργαλείο για την ανάσχεση της αυξανόμενης



αγγλοποίησης στην ανώτατη εκπαίδευση και για την προαγωγή της γλωσσικής και πολιτισμικής ποικιλομορφίας. Καταγράφει αντιστοιχίες μεταξύ ελληνικών όρων και των ισοδυνάμων τους σε τέσσερις άλλες γλώσσες, τυποποιώντας παράλληλα ορισμούς και μεταφράσεις στον τομέα των Παραστατικών Τεχνών. Η προσέγγιση αυτή διευκολύνει τον διαπολιτισμικό διάλογο και την ακαδημαϊκή ανταλλαγή. Επιπλέον, η ανοικτή πλατφόρμα της *Θυμέλης* εκδημοκρατίζει την πρόσβαση σε εκπαιδευτικούς πόρους και ευνοεί τις διεθνείς συνεργασίες, υιοθετώντας ταυτόχρονα συμπεριληπτική γλώσσα, χωρίς έμφυλες διακρίσεις. Παράλληλα, η συνεργασία ειδικών από διαφορετικά γνωστικά πεδία εγγυάται την καταλληλότητα και την προσβασιμότητα του περιεχομένου. Τέλος, η *Θυμέλη* συνιστά πρότυπο για αντίστοιχα εργαλεία σε άλλους ακαδημαϊκούς τομείς, αναδεικνύοντας τη γλωσσική ποικιλομορφία και τον πολιτισμικό εμπλουτισμό στο πλαίσιο της ευρωπαϊκής πανεπιστημιακής εκπαίδευσης.

Mots-clés:

lexicographie numérique; terminologie; arts du spectacle; plurilinguisme; diversité linguistique; politique linguistique; plateforme ouverte; grec moderne.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά:

ψηφιακή λεξικογραφία, ορολογία, παραστατικές τέχνες, πολυγλωσσία, γλωσσική ποικιλομορφία, γλωσσική πολιτική, ανοικτή πλατφόρμα, νέα ελληνική γλώσσα.

Keywords:

digital lexicography; terminology; Performing Arts; plurilingualism; linguistic diversity; language policy; open platform; modern Greek language.

1. Introduction

This paper presents *Thymele*, an ongoing project conducting foundational research in the field of the Performing Arts, with a particular focus on theoretical and terminological frameworks. Its primary aim is to establish a state-of-the-art multilingual and multimedia online dictionary in the Greek language. This dictionary aspires to contribute to the European vision of plurilingualism, enhancing linguistic diversity and empowering national languages within academic and cultural domains.

More specifically, the project *Thymele* (<https://thymele-project.uop.gr/>) has developed and launched an innovative multimedia dictionary, now publicly accessible at <https://thymele-lexicon.gr/>. At the time of writing, the platform hosts 156 entries and continues to expand. The dictionary contributes towards the creation of a commonly accepted conceptual and interpretative framework for the Performing Arts and the terms and concepts commonly used in this field. The project involves specially designed digital applications (dictionary writing software-DWS and front-end user interface-GUI), which allow the precise linguistic and formal description and documentation of these terms and notions, their semantic interconnection, the recording of the rationale behind their gradual formation, as well as the location of primary and secondary material which could serve as illustration/exemplification. The system takes the form of an open access interactive internet platform, which offers dynamic multimedia content, with crowd-sourcing features involving the addition of material and the use of hypermedia. At the same time, given its freely accessible online status,

the project promotes the diffusion of knowledge on the subject of the Performing Arts to wider audiences.

The domain of the Performing Arts constitutes an ideal testing ground for modern online lexicography for a variety of reasons, including the rapidly changing and evolving nature of the field, its widely divergent local instantiations, its interdisciplinarity, and its binary status between theoretical/academic discourse and practical artistic endeavour.

The project title draws inspiration from the ritual and stage-architectural feature known as the *θυμέλη* (thymele), a central element of ancient Greek theatre. Located at the focal point of the orchestra, the thymele functioned as a nexus of scenic energy and theatrical action. Its origin is rooted in Dionysiac rites, as the thymele served as an altar-hearth deeply connected to ritual. Etymologically, the term combines the verb *θύω* "to make a burnt offering to the gods" with the root *μελ-*, which also appears in the word *θεμέλιον* "foundation" (Chantraine 1944: 449), symbolising notions of infrastructure and stable foundations – a central aim of this dictionary. In Late Antiquity, the term "thymelic" came to denote performers presenting songs and dances, and more broadly actors in general, thereby directly linking *Thymele* to the Performing Arts (theatre, music, and dance).

At its core, *Thymele* emphasises accessibility and engagement, providing open access to its resources via a dynamic, interactive online platform. The integration of multimedia content and crowd-sourcing features facilitates collaborative knowledge creation and dissemination among researchers, educators, practitioners, and the wider public. Through its innovative tools and methodologies, *Thymele* challenges traditional approaches to performance studies, transforming it into a dynamic, inclusive, and multidisciplinary field while aligning with modern global directives for open access and digital transformation in the Humanities and the Arts.

2. The state of the art and the need for a new terminological framework

2.1 Evolving definitions and interdisciplinary challenges

In recent years, the term "Performing Arts" has gained prominence within academic and artistic discourse, replacing narrower terms such as "theatre," "music," or "dance." This shift reflects the broader recognition of the composite, interconnected nature of these art forms and their tendency toward hybridisation and osmosis between disciplines (Lehmann 2006). The Performing Arts now encompass not only theatre, dance and musical theatre, but also Tanztheater, performance art, and other contemporary hybrid forms that interact with fields such as cinema, visual arts, lighting, digital sound processing, robotics, and virtual reality.

Despite the evolving definitions of these dynamic artistic practices, significant disparities persist between their practical-artistic and theoretical-scientific approaches. For instance:

Practical focus: Training in drama, music, and dance schools focuses on live performance and hands-on practice, often with limited theoretical grounding.

Theoretical focus: University departments tend to prioritise historical, philosophical, and scientific perspectives, studying the Performing Arts as part of broader academic inquiry.

This divide frequently results in terminological inconsistencies, fragmenting dialogue between academic researchers, practitioners, and the wider public. Without a standardised lexicon, theoretical frameworks remain diffuse, hindering effective communication and analysis across disciplines.

2.2 Terminological issues in the Greek context

Several terminological challenges are particularly visible within the Greek academic and artistic landscape. Terms such as *περφόρμανς* [perfórmans] (performance), *επιτέλεση* [epitélesi] (enactment), *επιτελεστικότητα* [epitelestikótita] (performativity), *δραματουργός* [dramaturgós] (dramaturg), *δραματουργία* [dramaturgía] (dramaturgy), and *μελόδραμα* [melódrama] (melodrama) have often been hastily adapted or inconsistently translated into Greek. Additionally, newer terms such as *post-dramatic theatre* and *immersive theatre* remain untranslated and lack adequate contextual definitions, creating further ambiguity.

Compounding the problem is the interdisciplinary nature of contemporary Performance Studies, which draws upon diverse fields such as philosophy, sociology, anthropology, gender theory, reception theory, and psychoanalysis (Schechner 2013). Each discipline introduces its own specialised terminology, further complicating efforts to achieve conceptual and semantic cohesion.

An additional layer of complexity arises from the rapid incorporation of digital tools (e.g., Artificial Intelligence, robotics, virtual/augmented reality) into the Performing Arts. These innovations necessitate the introduction of new technical vocabulary, intensifying the urgency for terminological standardisation.

2.3 The limitations of existing lexicographic resources

While there are existing dictionaries and manuals relevant to the Performing Arts, the majority suffer from key shortcomings:

Outdated content: Many Greek-language dictionaries date back several decades and have therefore become outdated, reflecting an artistic and academic context that has since evolved (e.g. standard Performing Arts dictionaries still in general use were published as early as the 1950s, while most of them date to the 1990s; consequently they lack reference to contemporary

art forms, especially the hybrid forms developed in the 21st century such as *immersive theatre*, *theatre of the oppressed*, *augmented reality*, etc.)

Non-optimal translations: Greek adaptations of foreign dictionaries fail to fully account for the distinct linguistic and cultural particularities of the Greek language, despite its rich historical depth and productivity. They also fail to acknowledge that much of the terminology in the Performing Arts originates from Greek and has been reinterpreted internationally. As a result, an originally Greek or Greek-derived word may have a totally different semantic content as an international technical/scientific term and as a regular word of the Greek language (Mackridge 2016), e.g. the terms *didaskalia* and *dramaturgia*. A case in point is the Performing Arts term *biomechanics*, which is of Greek derivation (a so-called neo-classical formation, Melloni 2023), but cannot easily be back-translated into Greek as *βιομηχανική* (*viomichaniki*) since the adjective *βιομηχανικός* already exists with the meaning "industrial" (see e.g. Watts 2000:38, entry «βιομηχανία ~ικός»).

Lack of interconnectivity: Most available resources which include the Greek language focus exclusively on specific art forms, without addressing the hybrid and interdisciplinary nature of the Performing Arts as a whole.

Author-centric models: Existing dictionaries often reflect the perspective of one or two contributors, lacking the collective and multidisciplinary input needed for terms in the Performing Arts to accurately reflect broader contexts.

Static print-based formats: Many resources remain bound by traditional print limitations, offering static content that cannot evolve alongside the rapid transformations in the field. *Thymele* goes beyond the traditional format of the printed dictionary, thanks to the introduction of multimedia, which allow a much more global and accessible approach to the terms presented, especially since one is dealing with terminology belonging to the Performing Arts, which by definition are not limited to lexis, the spoken medium, but also inherently include *melos*, *orchesis* and *opsis*, i.e. image, sound and movement. The benefits of modern electronic lexicography (e-lexicography) as opposed to older print-form lexicography are also self-evident: increased search capabilities including complex searches, increased findability, ease of cross-referencing, etc. And of course, e-lexicography frees dictionaries from entry length limitations, and does away with practical hindrances such as physical size or cost of a dictionary work. Furthermore, the online format offers the possibility of regular and constant reviewing, correcting and adding/deleting entries, since, as Fuertes-Olivera and Tarp (2014: 134) aptly put it, regular updating "is a must in specialised lexicography".

3. The innovations of *Thymele*: A lexicographic milestone

3.1 Innovative features

The innovative features of *Thymele* are already evident in its implementation and development, and can be outlined as follows:

Interdisciplinary theoretical grounding: The project draws on three distinct but interlocking bodies of knowledge, each represented by a dedicated group of specialists: a) the Performing Arts, comprising theoreticians and practitioners across the full range of this rich and complex cultural domain (theatre, dance, music, and hybrid forms); b) lexicography, involving linguists who specialise in the compilation of print and online dictionaries and in scientific terminology, terminography, and ontology; and c) digital architecture, encompassing technical experts with experience in system and online platform development and corpus construction.

Scientific quality and excellence: The content of *Thymele* is curated by a team of over 70 expert scholars specialising in the Performing Arts, humanities, and related disciplines. Each contributor's collaboration was sought on the basis of their expertise in specific sub-fields, ensuring the authoritativeness, reliability, and comprehensiveness of the dictionary entries. This collaborative approach aligns the project with the latest advancements in research, offering users access to well-structured and accurate information.

Collaborative framework: The interdisciplinary nature of *Thymele* is evident through active collaboration among academics, researchers, and practitioners from diverse fields, including theatre studies, music studies, dance studies, philosophy, archaeology, education sciences, anthropology and digital humanities. These researchers are affiliated with 12 distinct university departments and research institutions, including the University of the Peloponnese - Department of Theatre Studies (host institution), the Academy of Athens and the National Centre for Scientific Research "Demokritos". This approach draws upon the notion of the 'prosumer,' a term coined by Kotler to describe individuals actively contributing to the production of goods or knowledge (Kotler 1986). The participatory framework of *Thymele* extends beyond its core scientific team. The system incorporates mechanisms for engaging the wider academic and artistic community through structured levels of crowd-sourced contributions and periodic updates. This philosophy of collaboration embraces dialogue between diverse "Schools" of thought, emphasising interaction as a key process to achieve dynamic and inclusive knowledge production.

Multi-media integration and digital innovation: Each dictionary entry in *Thymele* combines textual descriptions, images, audiovisual files, and other multimedia elements, offering users a dynamic and interactive experience. Furthermore, entries are enriched with cross-references to other entries within

the dictionary and hyperlinks to external academic resources such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and the V&A Collections. Additionally, the archives of prominent Greek institutions such as the Greek National Opera and the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT) further enhance the platform's interconnectivity and academic value.

Iterative design and continuous evolution: Due to its digital and collaborative nature, *Thymele* is designed as a dynamic lexicographic resource that undergoes constant updates and refinements. The iterative process aligns with modern electronic lexicography, moving beyond the traditional limitations of static, print-based dictionaries. Contributors and users alike play an integral role in sustaining the platform's growth and adaptability. This iterative philosophy is concretely reflected in the platform's user interface, which includes a dedicated prompt ("Προτείνετε αλλαγές / διορθώσεις στο λήμμα αυτό" / "Suggest changes / corrections to this entry") inviting users to submit corrections, additions, and alternative formulations for each entry. *Thymele* is ultimately an open, and not closed version dictionary, as it is geared towards continuous extension through addition and revision (in the terms of Klosa-Kückelhaus 2024: 33-34).

Open access and democratic values: The open-access design of *Thymele* aligns with the principles of FAIR data (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) as endorsed by the European Union. Its accessibility feature ensures that both academic users and the wider public can engage with Performing Arts terminology seamlessly and inclusively. In doing so, the platform embodies democratic principles, fostering equal access to knowledge and enriching cultural understanding.

2.2 Empowering the Greek language and plurilingualism

One of the principal aims of *Thymele* is to promote the Greek language as a dynamic and authoritative component within the Performing Arts domain, empowering its integration into the global academic and artistic discourse. The project currently includes the development of approximately 600 dictionary entries, reflecting both established scientific terms and newly introduced terminology (neologisms), tailored to meet modern linguistic requirements.

The lexicographic approach of *Thymele* can be described as a hybrid model, situated at the intersection of an encyclopaedic dictionary and a terminological glossary (see Fuertes-Olivera & Tarp 2014: 8-12). In practice, the encyclopaedic layer offers definitions, historical notes, usage contexts, and examples that delineate each concept, while the terminological layer standardises the preferred term, records synonyms and cross-language equivalents, and encodes relations such as 'broader', 'narrower', and 'related'. This combination provides rich descriptions and supports precise application in teaching, cataloguing, and research.

Since the project's inception, the *Thymele* team has focused on safeguarding and promoting Greek in domains where English is increasingly used, specifically in higher education in Greece and in Performing Arts scholarship and practice. Particularly in the Performing Arts sector, cross-border collaboration displays an uncritical and often excessive reliance on English as a convenient lingua franca, which reduces the regular use of Greek in joint work. Despite its ancient origins and its prominent role in the development of global scientific terminology (see Melloni 2023 and references therein), Greek remains a language with a limited number of speakers and readers, and its digital presence on the internet is relatively weak. The challenge of safeguarding and promoting the Greek language, which faces increasing pressure from the anglicisation of linguistic practices, reflects broader dynamics observed in the global marketplace of languages, where English often dominates as the default linguistic standard (Dor 2004).

An additional challenge in safeguarding the Greek language stems from its alphabetic system, which differs from the Latin script, widely used in international contexts. This distinction poses significant difficulties in the incorporation of foreign terms into Greek, as well as the representation of foreign proper nouns, both of which require transcription or transliteration. However, the limited adoption and inconsistent application of existing transliteration standards for Greek (e.g., ISO and national standards) often results in inconsistencies across sources and publications.

Moreover, in the context of anglicisation, the process of transliteration becomes essential for mitigating the widespread adoption of Latin script within Greek texts – a phenomenon commonly associated with *Greeklish*. Greeklish, the use of Latin characters to write Greek words, has become prevalent in digital communication and is often perceived as a threat to the integrity of the Greek alphabet (Koutsogiannis & Mitsikopoulou 2003; Androutsopoulos 2012; Xydopoulos et al. 2019). This perception is especially significant in light of rapid technological advancements, which appear to marginalise less widely used alphabets. By prioritising the development of a systematic approach to transcription and transliteration, projects like *Thymele* not only promote linguistic and orthographic clarity but also actively contribute to the preservation of the Greek script in digital and academic contexts.

Within this framework, *Thymele* seeks to establish a comprehensive and robust Greek-language infrastructure specifically tailored to the domain of the Performing Arts. This effort not only provides a systematic foundation for Greek terminology but also ensures its effective interconnection with equivalent terms in other languages. By doing so, *Thymele* actively works to enhance the visibility and accessibility of the Greek language in the World Wide Web's global linguistic landscape, and thanks to it, to include Greek in the general movement towards digital multilingualism (Kelly-Holmes 2019).

Moreover, *Thymele's* contribution to the revitalisation of the Greek language forms part of a broader national effort to advance educational diplomacy, which itself aligns with the principles of cultural diplomacy. This approach has gained significant momentum in recent years, reflecting a growing recognition of the role of linguistic and cultural initiatives as instruments of international engagement.

From a language-planning perspective, these methodological choices fall under corpus planning (Kloss 1969; Cooper 1989), namely the codification, standardisation, and elaboration of Greek technical vocabulary. In parallel, the project also has a status-planning dimension (Cooper 1989) in Greek higher education, where it supports the use of Greek as a working academic language.

To support the unique characteristics of the Greek language, *Thymele* incorporates key methodological principles:

- Linguistic precision: Addressing all levels of analysis, from morphological and syntactic to semantic and ontological frameworks.
- Diachronic depth: Exploring the vocabulary and derivational mechanisms across all linguistic registers and historical stages of the Greek language.
- Preference for native alternatives over direct insertion of loanwords: Avoiding hasty foreign term adoption and promoting neologisms that follow the patterns of Greek morphological productivity (for the anglicisation of Greek through extensive direct borrowing see e.g. Mackridge 2016; Papadopoulou 2020 and references therein)
- Standardisation: Limiting excessive terminological variation and ensuring consistent use across academic and artistic communities.

Furthermore, *Thymele* actively promotes plurilingualism by linking Greek terms to their corresponding counterparts in four other languages: English, French, German, and Italian. This multi-language framework highlights the interconnections between the Greek language and the linguistic roots of these languages, offering a deeper understanding of how terms acquire diverse meanings and dimensions across different temporal, geographical, and cultural contexts. In addition to this linguistic interconnectivity, *Thymele* provides bibliographic references in at least five languages, further broadening its scope and fostering inclusivity in academic research and cultural dialogue. By facilitating access to multilingual resources, the platform encourages comprehensive exploration and comparative analysis of the Performing Arts and their terminology.

Despite its multilingual structure, *Thymele* retains a distinct monolingual aspect. While it translates key terminology into four languages (English, French, German, and Italian), its encyclopaedic component, the entry body, and the user interface operate exclusively in Greek. This configuration provides multilingual access points while preserving the semantic and conceptual nuance grounded

in Greek sources and usage. This design reflects the platform's primary focus on promoting Greek terminology and its conceptual depth. The choice of these four languages is both practical and strategic, as on the one hand they are historically and culturally interconnected with the Greek language and on the other they represent significant academic and artistic traditions. Furthermore, their selection reflects their prominent role in the Performing Arts, not only because much of the associated terminology originates from these languages, but also due to their historical contribution to shaping key concepts and practices in this field. Consequently, *Thymele* serves a dual purpose. For non-Greek-speaking users, it provides translations of key headwords in the Performing Arts into English, French, German, and Italian. The full encyclopaedic entries remain in Greek, which highlights Greek as a foundational linguistic and cultural medium for in-depth understanding of these terms.

Within this framework, *Thymele* aligns with European policy commitments to linguistic diversity in education. It offers multilingual access points while keeping the encyclopaedic layer in Greek to preserve terminological precision, which is consistent with EU recommendations on language learning and with the Council of Europe's emphasis on plurilingual competence (European Commission 2007; Council of the European Union 2019; Council of Europe 2020). For Greek universities specifically, it supports Performing Arts curricula by supplying stable Greek terminology with cross-language mappings that can be integrated in syllabi, assessment rubrics, and research outputs. Translations provide access points for non-Greek speakers, whereas the Greek encyclopaedic entries maintain conceptual precision for teaching and supervision. The terminological and standardisation work described above addresses corpus planning, while the integration of *Thymele* into curricula and research practice concerns status planning (Cooper 1989).

3.3 A model of participatory knowledge creation

Thymele's development process actively engages a diverse and pluralistic scientific community, composed of scholars, researchers, and practitioners from both Greece and abroad. This participatory framework relies on collaborative methodologies, such as crowdsourcing, to foster greater inclusivity, interaction, and engagement. Crowdsourcing methodologies, as discussed by Buzzetto-More (2013), enable platforms to harness collective expertise for enriched innovation. Nevertheless, user participation remains rigidly controlled, and should be viewed as indirect rather than direct (in the sense of Klosa-Kückelhaus 2024: 236-238), since contributions from external users mostly take the form of feedback – ranging from suggestions and comments to error identification – and are systematically reviewed and validated by thematic work groups to ensure the platform maintains its scientific rigour and reliability.

3.4 Innovative digital tools and ontology modelling

A key innovation of *Thymele* lies in its incorporation of ontology modelling, that is, the formal representation of domain concepts and their relationships, which organises the vocabulary hierarchically and supports multilingual labels and cross-references (Gruber 1993), providing the dictionary with an onomasiological access structure alongside the standard semasiological one. By defining terms alongside their multi-level interconnections, the ontology enables improved comprehension of the relationships between concepts. Supported by tools such as Protégé¹ and TemaTres², the project ensures a robust and scalable lexicographic framework. Protégé and TemaTres are widely recognised in electronic lexicography and ontology modelling for their ability to streamline conceptual relationships.

3.5 Alignment with European directives for Open Science

The open-access nature of *Thymele* aligns fully with EU directives to advance the digital transformation of cultural domains. The emphasis on linguistic empowerment aligns with broader discussions on the role of language as a tool for educational and cultural diplomacy (Dimitriadi 2018). By emphasising digital preservation, accessibility, and open-science principles, the project enhances the discoverability and usability of data for researchers, educators, and the general public alike.

3.6 Inclusive language

An additional innovative feature of the *Thymele* Project is its dedication to promoting the use of inclusive and non-gendered language. The modern Greek language, with its rich inflectional morphology, is characterised by grammatical relations that are denoted through specific suffixes. This linguistic structure inherently assigns gender to nouns, with the masculine form often dominant, overshadowing both the feminine and neuter forms (gender asymmetry in the generic use of the masculine gender, non-availability or non-acceptability of agent nouns in feminine suffixes etc., see e.g. Pavlidou 2003).

Recognising the significance of creating an equitable linguistic environment, *Thymele* has made the promotion of inclusive language one of its core ethical commitments. The project explicitly aims to eliminate language bias and to ensure that all terms and definitions within the dictionary reflect principles of gender equity and inclusivity.

To achieve this, all dictionary editors and project contributors undergo specialised training designed to apply non-gendered and inclusive linguistic strategies consistently. In line with *Thymele*'s participatory model, the guidelines are documented and scheduled for periodic community review. Where views

¹ <https://protege.stanford.edu>

² <https://www.vocabularyserver.com>

diverge, entries include a brief "Usage note" that records alternative forms and the rationale for the preferred form, and we invite proposals for updates during consultation rounds. We do not assume full consensus; we set a non-discrimination baseline and document well-attested variants. This balances inclusivity with transparency about editorial choices.

3.7 Educational applications

The *Thymele* Project transcends the limitations of traditional academic frameworks, extending its applicability far beyond the confines of a single university or the boundaries of conventional, print-based dictionaries. As an innovative teaching tool, *Thymele* offers new opportunities for the dissemination and integration of knowledge. Its open-access platform enables students to engage with culture without barriers, fostering interdisciplinary connections and building linguistic correspondences in the rapidly evolving and diverse field of the Performing Arts.

In particular, the entries in *Thymele*, apart from serving as authoritative and reliable informational references, encourage participatory engagement through their crowdsourcing character. Users have the opportunity to contribute to the platform by co-creating and expanding content, transforming dictionary entries into dynamic and collaborative wikis. This participatory model not only enriches the dictionary's content but also fosters active learning by encouraging users to immerse themselves in the process of knowledge creation.

Moreover, in the context of Greek secondary education, where the teaching of the Performing Arts is often sporadic and undertaken by non-specialists, *Thymele* has the potential to function as a versatile educational tool for both teachers and students. By providing access to an extensive repository of information, multimedia resources, bibliographic references, historical overviews, theoretical materials, and more, the platform fills the gap left by the lack of comprehensive teaching manuals. With its user-friendly design, *Thymele* empowers educators to enhance their teaching practices and offers students a rich and engaging learning experience.

Furthermore, *Thymele* facilitates international collaborations among researchers and educators, serving as a central reference resource that is equally accessible to all. By bridging linguistic and cultural gaps, the platform helps to create an inclusive academic environment, promoting the exchange of ideas and the co-creation of knowledge in a global context.

3.8 Promotion of multiculturalism

Finally, *Thymele* adopts a culturally plural perspective on the Performing Arts. It represents cultural identities across ethnological and aesthetic dimensions, avoids defaulting to Western-centric canons by systematically referencing

Eastern performance traditions, and extends entries beyond institutional high art forms to include folk, popular, and cult-classic variants where relevant.

Through its integration of multimedia elements and the audiovisual dimensions of language, the project supports close engagement with culture-specific layers of meaning in performance. To advance this multicultural focus, we curate materials from a range of traditions and institutions, provide multilingual captions and metadata, and include variant practices alongside canonical forms when these illuminate a term's use. To ensure the ethical use of multimedia resources, *Thymele* applies a clear rights framework. Where possible, we integrate material from reliable public sources with open licences, such as Wikimedia Commons, and from digital archives and repositories maintained by major cultural institutions, including the National Theatre of Greece and the Greek National Opera. Audiovisual resources hosted on platforms like YouTube are incorporated through embedded players in line with each platform's policies, and explicit permissions are secured for other copyrighted works. This rights-aware approach safeguards intellectual property, clarifies provenance, and supports equitable sharing of cultural resources in education and research. In this way, the multimedia layer and the rights policy work together to promote multiculturalism in practice, since they expand whose performances are visible, on what terms they are credited and shared, and how learners can access them.

Each dictionary entry combines text, images, audiovisual files, and interactive multimedia material to provide a multidimensional perspective on terms and concepts. These entries are further enriched by cross-references and hyperlinks that connect them to related entries, as well as to external corpora and online resources. By adopting this approach, *Thymele* facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural thickness inherent in the Performing Arts – an approach that acknowledges the multi-layered contextual, historical, and linguistic dimensions shaping artistic practices (Geertz 1973).

Moreover, the dictionary includes a wide array of entries dedicated to forms and genres of the Performing Arts emerging from diverse cultures—many of which operate outside the Western hegemonic model. This focus underscores *Thymele's* commitment to challenging dominant paradigms and fostering greater cultural inclusivity by highlighting underrepresented traditions and voices within the global discourse.

4. Impact and way forward

4.1 Scientific and social impact

Thymele aspires to redefine how knowledge is produced, shared, and applied within the Performing Arts and related disciplines. Among its notable contributions are:

Increased accessibility to cultural heritage: The digital preservation and dissemination of rare, multimodal content—including text, audiovisual material, and metadata—makes previously inaccessible cultural resources available worldwide.

Democratisation of knowledge: By adopting open-access principles, *Thymele* fosters broad participation from researchers, educators, artists, and the general public, facilitating collaborative, inclusive, and user-driven knowledge production.

Educational and social benefits: The project's resources – available across academic levels – help bridge the gap between theoretical research and artistic practice while increasing public literacy and engagement with the Performing Arts.

Combating linguistic imperialism: *Thymele* bolsters the global presence of the Greek language by emphasising its historical contributions to the Performing Arts and integrating it into broader plurilingual frameworks.

These commitments are already operational. The dictionary is publicly accessible at <https://thymele-lexicon.gr/>, where 156 entries have been published to date, with the platform undergoing continuous enrichment and updating. Pilot use in Performing Arts courses at Greek universities, the editorial committee's ongoing standardisation workflow, and the inclusion of audiovisual assets contributed by cultural partners in exemplar entries further attest to the project's tangible impact.

Furthermore, the platform aligns with European Union directives for open access and digital transformation, placing cultural heritage at the centre of educational and research agendas. Its suite of applications – including cultural repositories, online screenings, and tools for comparative search – promotes lifelong learning and international collaboration. This approach aligns with the European Union's *White Paper on Multilingualism*, which emphasises the interconnectedness of language learning and cultural integration (European Commission 2007). *Thymele*'s community-driven network serves higher education and cultural institutions in Greece, pools Greek digital archives and tools under open licences, and connects to European collections through shared metadata and access policies. As Saito (2017) highlights, plurilingualism serves not only as a practical tool for communication but also as a key component in constructing cultural identity and fostering inclusion in diverse cultural settings.

5. Conclusion: Towards a new era for the terminology of the Performing Arts

Thymele represents a transformative initiative for the study of the Performing Arts. By combining technological innovation, linguistic empowerment, and interdisciplinary collaboration, it addresses fundamental challenges surrounding the

fragmentation, misinterpretation, and inconsistency in the terminology of these dynamic art forms. Through its open-access, multimedia platform, *Thymele* actively shapes a new ecosystem for research, education, and public engagement, emphasising inclusivity, sustainability, and innovation.

One of its major contributions lies in establishing a pluralistic research community, which bridges the conceptual divide between theory and practice while facilitating cross-disciplinary dialogue. At the same time, the project promotes linguistic diversity and cultural inclusivity, making Greek-language terminology a thriving part of the global discourse in the Performing Arts and ensuring its relevance in an increasingly interconnected scholarly community.

Looking ahead, *Thymele* has the potential to serve as a model for digital humanities initiatives that seek to link cultural heritage, technological advancement, and academic inquiry. Its forward-looking infrastructure ensures that the vocabulary of the Performing Arts will continue to evolve, reflecting both the artistic breakthroughs and linguistic innovations of the future. At its core, the project invites us to rethink how we document, preserve, and transmit moving, hybrid, and fluid art forms in ways that are both academically rigorous and accessible to broader audiences.

Nevertheless, the ongoing evolution of this field gives rise to pressing questions that merit further exploration in future research efforts. Among these are concerns regarding how terminology can effectively adapt to the accelerating changes brought about by emerging technologies and the evolving modes of artistic expression. Additionally, important ethical considerations arise in relation to the complexities of multilingual and multicultural integration, particularly in contexts that emphasise cultural inclusivity and representation. Finally, the issue of copyright and intellectual property poses challenges, especially when addressing proprietary or culturally sensitive forms of artistic practice.

In conclusion, *Thymele* not only advances the field of Performance Studies but also provides a framework for inclusive, participatory, and future-facing scholarship. It serves as a reminder of the importance of terminological precision and semantic clarity, while also demonstrating how digital innovation can democratise access to knowledge and inspire new forms of cross-cultural collaboration.

Note

AI tools were used in a limited way for drafting. Specifically, GPT-5 High (Open AI) was used for drafting alternative phrasings and de-duplication of corpus entries. All outputs were verified by the authors, and no personal or sensitive data were shared. AI tools were not used to generate citations, and responsibility for any remaining errors rests with the authors.

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Appendix

Project ID

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Collaborating Institutions:

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- National Centre for Scientific Research "Demokritos", Institute of Informatics and Telecommunications

Project website: <https://thymele-project.uop.gr/>

Dictionary platform: <https://thymele-lexicon.gr/>