

An investigation into the epistemologies assumed by English language secondary education teachers in Greece and their impact on English language learners' collaborative construction of learning in web 2.0.settings:
An exploratory case study

Submitted by George Georgios Giorgos Antoniou as a thesis to the University of Exeter for the Degree of Doctor of Education in July 2018

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Signature: George Georgios Giorgos Antoniou

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List of Abbreviations

ADSL: Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line

CALL: Computer-Assisted-Language Learning

CSSSC: Civil Servants Selection Supreme Committee

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

GPI: Greek Pedagogical Institute

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

ITT: Information Technology Teaching

L1: Mother Tongue

RECs: Regional Education Centers

TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of

Other Languages

WWW: World Wide Web

List of classroom discourse extracts revealing the interactional patterns between the teachers and the students and between students themselves

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Abstract

This study explores the emerging epistemologies of EFL language teachers in the context of Edmodo digital platform which is a web 2.0. tool in secondary education in Greece and the impact of these epistemologies on EFL students' collaborative learning. In this thesis, a general picture of the current situation is depicted based on data obtained from the EFL teachers' and students' questionnaires, interviews and participant observations. The main goal of this thesis is to propose an alternative look to English language teaching which occurs with the incorporation of web 2.0. tools mainly as a means of urging EFL students to discover peers'-based learning. The findings indicate that the epistemologies assumed by the EFL teachers affect their teaching practices that are employed by them. It also reflects the conscious effort of the English language practitioners to move away from an autocratic, know it all stance, and focus on the learners as experts and legitimate holders of their reality. This entails a closer inspection of the learner-based reality which is best captured within the boundaries of Edmodo digital platform- based community whereby issues of immediate interests to the learners are accessed and analysed. There seems to be a desire on the part of the EFL teachers to forge an establishment of a learning community with the same concerns and a common goal. Also there seems to be a partial transformation of the role of the EFL practitioners to catalyse the reflection process, to contextualize matters of concerns and to forge a learning community in order to reach a consensual meaning that is gauged to their learners' immediate needs. The findings raise implications for Language Learning Educational Policy in Greece, as well as the EFL teachers themselves.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

This study reports on an investigation regarding the epistemologies assumed by English language teachers in secondary education in Greece based on their beliefs and educational practices that occur in web 2.0. settings in terms of collaborative meaning construction. This chapter is divided in five parts. In the first part, the background of the study is provided. The second and the third part present the purpose and significance of the study. In the fourth part the teaching context in question will be described, as well as the issues related to English language teaching and learning. The final part provides an overview of all the chapters in this thesis.

1.1. Introduction

“Effective education requires a teacher who both anchors the human relationship and mediates the learner’s connection to the world of ideas and learning” (Behar and Mishra, 2016, p. 74)

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have rapidly penetrated every aspect of human society and affect social and educational change. ICT-related pedagogical changes envisage English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners as active participants who are engaged in collaborative projects which promote sustained investigations and interactions in order to generate new ideas by building on and extending these ideas to their fellow peers. In such a networked world, the pedagogical role of EFL teachers is to structure and facilitate such practices by providing resources and prompting EFL students to embrace these practices (Kozma, 2008). In this respect, the expertise and the nature of the teachers’ intervention “should aim to place student’ experiences and knowledge at the center of the pedagogical process” (Hall and Eddington 2000, p.146).

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in Greece can be no exception to the above quote. Given the need for educational reform in Greece, the Greek ministry of Education and Lifelong Learning decided to insert

an innovation namely the new English language curriculum which according to the ministry of education treats knowledge as a learning experience which is not a linear process. Knowledge is considered as a spiral process in which new information is connected to previously assimilated information. Within this innovative curriculum “the ministry of education decided to equip all schools of secondary education with computer rooms and internet access to facilitate English language learning and promote learners’ autonomy” (Ministry of Education and Lifelong Learning, 2016, p. 71).

Based on the previous premise, the students’ experiences ought to be at the core of the EFL learning community which in turn necessitates the exploration of the nature of the contribution of the key agents i.e teachers and learners. There is a growing consensus in educational research that net-worked classrooms promote the collective construction of learning through mediation and negotiation. Web tools 2.0 might proclaim themselves as promising tools of establishing a large group of consciousness by communicating, sharing and accessing information (Warschauer and Kern,2000). Literature suggests that the advent of World Wide Web (WWW) and the development of web-based communication tools have afforded opportunities for collaboration within new and potentially different learning communities (Chang, 2012). Similarly, literature on the role of the teacher in web-based settings indicates that these new technologies provide a challenge to make learning an interactive and collaborative experience that is guided by a social constructivist approach to teaching and learning (Tobin and Tippins,1993; Maor and Taylor, 1995; Jonassen and Reeves, 1996; Blanton et al.,1998). The organizational strategies that shape the future role of the teacher in web-based learning environments and the way 2.0. web tools shape these organizational strategies which underpin this future role employed by EFL teachers capture only a small slice in relevant body of literature. There is a growing consensus in ICT literature that effective education requires a sound anchoring in human relationships and engagement with the world of people, ideas and views. This is mainly achieved by the teachers who are mainly responsible for anchoring human relationships in the classroom and mediate the world of ideas, and learning. Teaching with ICT tools seems to be an extremely sophisticated and demanding activity that

requires a multimodal, complex approach to its development (Egbert,1997; Behar and Mishra, 2015). The multimodal and complex nature of ICT-based pedagogy has led researchers like Yeh and Yang (2011), Batsila (2014), Ouk Jeong (2017) and Basoz (2016) to conduct research to identify the nature of the teachers' intervention in web 2.0. settings. Given the complexity of ICT pedagogy regarding the role of the teachers in web 2.0. settings the purpose of the study is set out below.

1.2. Purpose of the study

In this study I explore the epistemologies to learning that are assumed by EFL teachers in web 2.0. settings. The epistemologies that are assumed when the Edmodo digital platform is used in junior high schools in Greece to enhance the students' collaborative efforts in order for them to create meaning in the classroom are also explored in this study. Therefore, the research questions emerging are the following:

1. "What are the epistemologies of the EFL teachers in web 2.0. learning environments regarding EFL secondary education in Greece?
 - a) What opportunities do the EFL secondary education teachers provide for collaborative language construction?
2. What is the impact of the teachers' epistemological stances in web 2.0 settings onto secondary education EFL learners?

1.2.1 Definition of Web 2.0. tools in the present study

The utilization of the internet as a learning environment has been an issue of debate for a long time. With the emergence of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) back in 1960 EFL mainly focused on grammatical drills that required a minimal interaction between the user and the machine. This impression of early CALL approaches did not require a network as a medium of communication which could provide opportunities for interaction either one - to one-interaction between teachers and learners or between students within classrooms (Peyton,1997).

Although computers and computer networks are becoming a significant element of EFL classrooms today, relevant literature that takes into account the

significance of the teaching/learning environment and the roles of the main actors i.e. teachers and learners captures only a small slice. Indeed, nowadays there have been attempts to expand the focus of CALL to understand the pedagogical practices and the interactive nature between teaching/learning and technology. The advent of web 2.0 tools such as you tube, wikis, digital platforms as Moodle or Edmodo has shifted the attention from the tools themselves to the implications that these tools have on their users. This expands the scope of web 2.0. tools to encompass issues such as opportunities for the EFL learners to interact and negotiate meaning, their opportunities to interact with an authentic audience and the horizons that are opened to the learners in order for them to be exposed and encouraged to produce varied and creative language.

It is within this new philosophy, that web 2.0. technologies provide a non-restrictive environment in which users are encouraged to cooperate and construct knowledge based on the feedback of the teachers and learners that this study is placed. Therefore, the focus of the study will be on the epistemologies that the EFL teachers assume in web 2.0. settings to include sociocultural perspectives and collaborative construction of learning, which as Mitchel and Myles (2004) argue, is social in nature and occurs through the process of collaboration among learners in social settings. Within the context of this study the terms web 2.0. technologies, the internet and ICT will be used interchangeably to include computer related tools and technologies. Also, the terms researcher of the thesis, author of the thesis and I, will be used interchangeably as they all refer to the same person. Similarly, the terms EFL teachers' epistemologies and teachers' stances will also be used interchangeably to denote the teaching practices that are determined by teachers' assumptions regarding the nature of language teaching and learning.

1.3. Significance of the study

Throughout the years, information and communication technology and especially web 2.0. tools like you tube, wikis, digital educational platforms like Edmodo and Moodle have penetrated into many aspects of life such as work, communication, culture e.t.c. In the last decade a considerable amount of

literature abides with ways that web 2.0. tools have penetrated into the teaching profession changing thus the roles and the stances of both key players EFL teachers and learners by enhancing worldwide communication and rendering cyber resources more valuable than ever (Chang, 2012; Vergine and Hosman, 2015; Behroozizad et al. 2015). ICT and web 2.0. tools have augmented the sense of citizenship by providing the entitlement to schools to empower learners to participate in society as active, responsive and critical learners (Behar and Mishra, 2015). The embracement of such tools calls for a more participatory approach in that a larger group of consciousness is established which necessitates accessing and sharing of ideas and information.

As an EFL teacher with 20 years of teaching experience in all three levels of education, I realized that the need for the investigation of the nature of the teachers' epistemologies to learning in this networked environment seems more imperative than ever since this issue has received only a subsidiary attention in the field.

In Greece the following quote from the Greek ministry of education and lifelong learning regarding the EFL curriculum is indicative of this need.

“within the framework of the curriculum, the teaching of English-like all other subjects- aims at the general education and the socialization of students through the development of the abilities, skills and techniques involved in the act of analysis, synthesis and validation, necessary for the collection and effective use of information” (Pedagogical institute, 2001, p.68)

Although the above excerpt builds on the effectiveness of the abilities and skills that favour higher order skills like synthesis and analysis, previous research captures a small slice of the epistemologies of EFL teachers as they emerge in web 2.0. settings and the way that these epistemologies ensure the emergence of collaborative knowledge. This information appears to be critical in web 2.0 settings regarding the effectiveness by which these higher order skills are delivered by language teachers. By shedding light on the different facades that teachers assume in web 2.0 settings and how these facades ensure (if at all) the emergence of collaborative consciousness, the present study will provide the Ministry of Education and Lifelong Learning (policy makers, decision

makers) with a comprehensive account of the current situation in Greece. This study will also provide useful insights as to how the teachers' roles guarantee effective learning practices. This information might also help course developers to design courses that are gauged to collaborative teaching/learning practices. The rapid change in information and communication technology in communication and culture is likely to change human action as well. Although there is a significant body of literature regarding the use of web 2.0. tools and how these tools change the communication in the EFL classroom, a limited number of studies have dealt with the use of these tools in secondary education settings. Even more limited is the number of studies regarding the actual role of EFL teachers in web 2.0. environments and the epistemologies that the teachers must embrace in order to enhance student-derived knowledge. Limited are also the studies conducted in Greece pertaining to the issue of the EFL teachers' roles in web 2.0. environments. Internationally wise the issue of EFL teachers' roles in web 2.0. settings is mainly exhausted in attitudes and opinions of either pre-service or in-service teachers and much of this research involves settings other than EFL (Chang, 2012; Lazar,2015; Algasab and Rajab, 2016). Thus there seems to be a need for additional research to identify key aspects of teachers' roles in web 2.0. settings. Therefore, this thesis aims to penetrate into the stages occurred in the transformation of the EFL teachers' stances in web 2.0. environments and the extend to which these tools contribute to this transformation. Table 1 provides an overview of the shortcomings of previous research regarding the epistemological stances of EFL teachers in networked environments. By gaining an understanding in the aforementioned issues in the EFL secondary education in Greece, as well as the impact of teachers' roles to EFL learners, this study will contribute to the current state of knowledge and this understanding might as well be transferred to other EFL contexts.

Teacher's role as presented in relevant field	Gaps in relevant studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly through attitudes and beliefs of pre-service or in-service EFL teachers • Mainly focused on the realistic dimension of web 2.0. tools and the positive attitudes of EFL teachers when using them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The epistemological stances EFL that teachers are called upon to assume in web-based settings is of subsidiary importance in relevant studies • Limited amount of studies regarding the issue of EFL teachers' future role in virtual environments both in secondary education and in Greece.

Table 1. Shortcomings of previous studies

1.4. The researcher's teaching context

In this section, I will provide an overview of the public secondary education in Greece regarding English Language Teaching. I will stress issues related to the qualifications that English language teachers need to have in order to be appointed in the public sector. Also, the EFL students' language proficiency, EFL teacher's pre-service and in-service education opportunities, and EFL classrooms' facilities will also be discussed. Since this study looks into Junior High Schools in Greece, the account will include features of public junior high schools which constitute compulsory education in Greece. I will conclude with the researcher's teaching experience.

1.4.1. Greek Secondary Education in the Public sector

Secondary education in Greece includes students from 12-18 years of age and is offered in two three-year levels. Level one (12-15) pertains to junior high school level and level two (15-18) includes Senior High school students. There are also private junior high schools in Greece which follow the same curriculum as public schools. They differ in the facilities and the infrastructure provided in these schools.

1.4.2. English Language Teaching in Junior High Schools

The secondary Education Curriculum offers 15 compulsory subjects for the first grade, 14 subjects for the second grade and 12 for the third grade. Two years ago, English language teaching was offered in three hours per week in the first form of Greek junior high schools. The Ministry of education decided to reduce the teaching hours from three to two to upgrade other subjects like physics, Ancient and Modern Greek at the expense of English Language Teaching. This put English Language Teachers to a problematic position since they had to move around to two or even three schools in order to reach the compulsory teaching hours limit which varies according to the years of teaching experience. English Language Teaching is offered in two-hour slots in second and third grade of Junior High School. The EFL teachers' year of graduation from universities used to be a criterion of appointment in public sector until 1997. I will discuss this issue in the next chapter.

1.4.3. Criteria for appointing teachers in Greece

The main criterion for appointment in public sector was the year of graduation from University. From 1997 onwards the Civil Servants Selection Supreme Committee (CSSSC) which is an independent organization established by the Greek State decided that Greek teachers should undertake exams in three different areas such as cognitive knowledge of the subject, methodology and lesson planning in order to be appointed in public education. Even if they succeed in the exam teachers should wait for three years to be appointed as the appointment rate in Greece is 10% per year. With the culmination of the economic crisis the appointment of teachers in Greece was totally suspended. Instead substitute teachers are hired with annual contracts to fill in gaps that emerge. Newly-appointed teachers in Greece have to attend a three month training seminar which is delivered from Regional Education Centers (RECs).

1.4.4 English Language Proficiency in Secondary Education

Until 2000 EFL there were mixed abilities classes in Greece. Students with different language proficiency were taught English all together. In 2000 the Greek Ministry of Education decided to insert a placement test the results of which determined the placement of EFL students in two levels. The beginners'

level and the advanced level. This test is delivered in September in the first grade of Junior High Schools and the students continue their studies in the same level until their graduation from Junior High School. This resembles exertion of power from policy makers through tests, which Shohamy (2008) defines as detrimental in nature as they are highly definitive regarding the decisions based on their results which in turn have consequences for people taking the tests (pupils) and also for people that are affected by these results namely parents, teachers and principals. As a consequence parents have strong concerns about English Language Teaching in Junior High Schools which are mainly attributed to limited curricular time and obsolete teaching practices. (Alpha-Vita Educational Organisation, 2015). As a result, parents have to spend a great amount of money for their children to attend private language centers which deliver EFL for six hours a week. The main goal of these centers is to prepare the students for language certification in order for them to achieve better results in tests at schools and thus obtain better marks. These centers are equipped with the latest versions of computers, interactive whiteboards and Advanced Digital Subscriber Lines (ADSL) which permit high speed internet connection. I will elaborate on the issue of school net working when I discuss the availability of ICT facilities in Greek Public Schools in section 1.6.

1.4.5. English Language Material in Public Secondary Education

The curriculum is mainly implemented in the form of text books in the Greek Educational System. Text books are regarded as the primary reference sources in all subjects. Regarding English language teaching there was a paradigm shift which occurred 12 years ago. Until 2006, every English language teacher could choose his/her text book based on the needs of the EFL students, he/she taught, from a list of textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education and Lifelong learning. There was a valuable liaison with different publishers mainly from Greece so as students could purchase these books at affordable prices. With the advent of economic crisis the Greek Pedagogical Institute (GPI) recruited teachers with high qualifications (Masters and Doctoral Degrees) to prepare texts books for all three grades of Junior High Schools which would be common for all Junior High Schools and would directly correspond with national

programs of study. This resembles the concept of curriculum as fact posited by Hardy (2003) who indicates that :

“The conception of “curriculum as fact” with its underlying view of knowledge as external to knower, both teachers and students, and embodied in syllabi and text books, is widely held and has profound implications to teaching and learning. (p. 25)

I do not however fully comply with the assumption embedded in the concept of curriculum as fact which indicates that knowledge is externally imparted to knowers since the curriculum is designed by people related to English language teaching profession. On the contrary, I fully abide with the concept that curriculum as fact can be modified to accommodate both high and low achievers as EFL occurs in two different proficiency levels in Greek Junior High Schools.

1.5. Teachers' Education

1.5.1. Pre-service training

Pre-service training is mainly referred to substitute teachers. Before becoming appointed, permanent EFL teachers work as substitute teachers and during this period there are a lot of opportunities for teacher training under the supervision of EFL advisors and Regional Education Centers.

1.5.2. In-service Training

Compulsory in-service teacher training is provided by regional education centers in four-hour slots per day which lasts for a month. The training encompasses different aspects of EFL like teaching methodology, lesson planning, and educational technology integration into the EFL classroom. Since 2010 there is a paradigm shift from CALL to web 2.0. tools in the EFL classroom. In the area of Karditsa where I teach there are 3-4 seminars throughout the year encompassing issues like digital educational platforms e.g. Edmodo, Moodle, Wikis or using you tube videos to teach writing and speaking skills. These seminars run under the supervision of the regional school advisor and ICT specialists. The attendance in these seminars is compulsory and the

criteria of selection are transparent. In the last five years 300 EFL teachers in Greece in Secondary education have attended these seminars (Alpha-Vita Educational Organisation, 2017).

In this respect, the Greek pedagogical institute that is responsible for the operational policies (plans and actions) of the Greek ministry of education, set up training programs for 20,000 primary and secondary school teachers in the use of computers in 2350 training centers across the country. These training programs cover the basics in information technology like word processing, spreadsheets, power-point, Internet e.t.c. The main aim of these training programs is to afford teachers opportunities to become acquainted with ICT and use it productively to improve their teaching methods, to be able to search new sources of knowledge and participate in educational communities for professional development. In this vein, almost every school in the country is equipped with its own computer lab, interactive whiteboards connected with a laptop in every classroom and wi-fi spots.

This kind of educational policy reflects the premise that effective education requires investment in people and especially EFL teachers who “both anchor the human relationship and mediate the learners’ connection to the world of ideas and learning. It also demands that the learners’ social context, the nature of learning and the aims of education are appropriately anchored in” (Behar and Mishra, 2015, p.30).

1.6. School Networking in Greece

“Since 2000 the majority of schools in major cities have been networked. Computers and internet connections are used to facilitate teaching and learning in all subjects in secondary education in Greece”. Computer labs have been established with ADSL connections to facilitate easy information access” (Alpha-Vita Educational Organisation, 2005, p.70)

The above quote reflects the educational policy in terms of the availability of computers and school networks. Computer labs in secondary education are mainly used for IT teaching which is a subject taught in all junior high schools

in two-hour slots per week. The students are taught computer skills such as how to search the web for information that is necessary for the completion of assignments. IT teachers are in charge of the computer labs and they provide authorization to other teachers who wish to use these computer labs. In 2012 there has been an update in computer equipment in all junior high schools in Greece and most old mainframes were replaced with latest versions. School networking allow Greek junior high school students to participate in collaborative projects with other schools in Greece and with junior high schools within the European union. For example, the e-twinning programs enable students from schools within the European Union to engage in collaborative projects with other European students. In this respect, technology and reliable networks with sufficient speed enable language teachers to deliver group learning experiences, share rich content with many people simultaneously and encourage teachers and students to work more closely together (Behar and Mishra, 2015).

Internationally wise, the use of ICT for programs for international development and for economic, social and educational growth have received prominent attention. Vergine and Hosman (2015) posit that ICT holds the potential for dramatic changes around the globe the most important of which lie in the establishment of public welfare, the strengthening of democracy and the nourishment of cultural diversity. Education wise, researchers comment on the strategic policies that focus on the advancement of educational reforms that support educational management. It is posited that ICT innovations bring forward pedagogical changes as EFL learners are treated as active agents in that their interaction and their organised investigations in the search of solutions to real world problems is boosted. In this respect, ICT innovations build on the generation of new ideas and/or sharing ideas between the learners (Kozma, 2008; Chang, 2012). The Greek educational system is by no means an exception to the rule.

1.7. Teaching experience of the researcher in relation to the chosen topic

The teaching experience of the researcher /author of this thesis, and more specifically the assumptions regarding the teaching philosophy is an integral part of the formation of the teachers' epistemological stances in web-based settings. The author of this thesis holds a teaching position in the secondary education and has taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in all levels of education including tertiary education. During the early nineties the web was still in its infancy and hence there was a little prospect of using it as a teaching/learning tool. In the early 2000, there was a gradual shift of focus on the content/ communication of ideas, language mediation and experimentation aligned with the view that language is indeed a social act. Henceforth, the WWW is more efficiently used when the students are in teams and they actively manipulate the way they construct learning. I was also affected by these assumptions and I started to change the way I teach.

A great ally emerged with the rise of the web and more specifically with web 2.0 tools. The attention was now focused on the relation between the Internet as a source of providing authentic situations and how the teachers could harness these authentic situations and turn them into teaching/learning episodes. Hence teachers could provide the optimal conditions for the creation of a collaborative learning environment. I came to think that web 2.0. is promising in providing the resources for EFL students to get in touch with realistic situations. I felt that it would be a challenge for me to investigate the potential of web 2.0. to enhance the students' collaboration and the nature of the new roles that were embraced by the EFL teachers in web 2.0. settings in secondary education in Greece. In this thesis, the terms, collaborative language construction and co-constructed knowledge will be used interchangeably to identify the teachers' and students' behaviours that signify a degree of transformation of the pedagogical practices that transcend the level of negotiation of language input and the building of skills provided by the teachers. So the above terms refer to the language classroom whereby skills and information are used to address issues that are important to learners.

Consequently, language practices are viewed as dialogical and collaborative and knowledge is developed through dialogue and sharing of opinions.

1.8.Thesis overview

This thesis consists of six chapters:

Chapter 2 provides a review of previous research in 3 main areas: Web 2.0 as facilitators of collaborative constructive of learning, the epistemological stances of EFL secondary education teachers in web 2.0. settings and the impact of these epistemologies in the emergence of collaborative learning on the part of the EFL learners.

Chapter 3 provides the fundamental beliefs regarding the nature of the selected methodology and presents a comprehensive account of the epistemological issues related to the adopted methodology. Having selected the appropriate methodology, I will focus on the data collection methods that were used to provide a thorough account of the procedure followed regarding the delivery of teachers' and students' questionnaires and the negotiation of teachers' and students' entry in interviews and observations Next, I will provide an analytical framework by which the qualitative data were analysed. Embedded also in the discussion will be issues of validity and reliability of data collection instruments. Finally, I will discuss the ethical dimension of the research project.

Chapter 4 reports on the findings from the quantitative and qualitative data. I will argue that the quantitative data provide trends concerning the nature of the role of the EFL teachers in the web 2.0. technologies settings, while the interviews and participants observation, i.e. enquiry on the inside, will provide an in-depth understanding of the participants' experience.

Chapter 5 draws on the discussion of the findings employing a thick description of the classroom procedures which involves classroom-based teaching/learning episodes. The findings from both sets of data will be discussed in relation with previous studies in the field.

Finally, chapter 6 focuses on the implications of these findings to the field, to the ministry of education and the teaching profession. In chapter six, I will also discuss the contribution of the thesis to the current state of knowledge and I will provide suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

A Systematic Review of previous studies in the field

2.1 Introduction

This study investigates the emerging epistemologies of EFL teachers in secondary Education in Greece using web 2.0. tools, and how these epistemologies affect the collaborative emergence of knowledge. It also investigates the impact of these epistemologies on the collective nature of knowledge on the part of the EFL learners. This chapter brings together three main areas:

1. Web 2.0. tools as facilitators of collaborative construction of learning
2. The roles of the EFL teachers as these emerge in web 2.0. environments in relation to the collaborative emergence of knowledge
3. The impact of EFL secondary teachers' epistemologies onto EFL learners

2.2. Theoretical Background

2.2.1. A definition of Web 2.0 tools in language learning environments

The internet has revolutionised the concept of information retrieval regarding its use, access and management. In this respect, a very large proportion of human knowledge can be accessed within seconds by anyone and through a variety of devices. As information grows and becomes more accessible, the concept of knowledge changes too. Unlike Web 1.0, which was akin to a source or a means of communicating information, Web 2.0 tools such as facebook, linked in, you tube and digital platforms like Moodle and Edmodo provide the way to create information, and consequently knowledge. Web 2.0 is the emergent key driver that changes learning paradigms at schools and academic institutions (Obura and Seekitto, 2015). Language wise these tools could enable EFL teachers to broaden their views to encompass new technologies into their teaching practices (Egbert et al, 1997, cited in Egbert and Hanson Smith, 2000).

Most researchers seem to agree on how the emergence of knowledge occurs in web 2.0. settings. For example, Sun and Ying Yang (2015) and Zou et al., (2016) have found that language learners must be involved not only in social but also in purposeful interaction which includes a real audience that actively involves the learners. Web 2.0. tools such as internet applications have grown in popularity as a more socially connected web in which people can contribute their thoughts and perceptions on issues of current affairs having a real audience e.g. a teacher or other learners on national and international level. These applications could provide teachers with various possibilities to engage learners in cooperative and collaborative knowledge (O' Reilly, 2007, cited in Sun and Ying Yang, 2015). This view of language as a purposeful social interaction will be further elaborated in the next section.

2.3. The concept of co-constructed learning

There seems to be a consensus among the researchers who view language learning as an interplay between cognitive and contextual factors. By cognitive factors they refer to the conscious attention to the target language which needs to be enhanced so that learners can make optimal use of target language. Researchers like Carrier (1997), Young (2000), Wang and Zing (2016) place the enhancement of target language in social interaction. They go on to suggest that not only interaction needs to be social but it also needs to be purposeful. They posit that purposeful interaction through the target language may ensure more efficient language learning. In this vein, a number of researchers comment on the social nature of interaction as highly purposeful. For example, Mitchel and Miles (2004) places the purposefulness of language in opportunities provided to language learners to finetune the input they receive. This is best achieved in the company of others and consequently language is best practiced in the company of other people. Socially constructed language learning poses strong implications regarding the emergence of classroom knowledge. For example (Breen, 2008, cited in Candlin and Mercer, 2008) indicates that in the context of socially constructed learning we need to think how the classroom practice reconstructs knowledge. He goes on to comment that classroom constructed knowledge determines the content and the

procedure of learning. The social dynamics of the classroom through explicit or implicit negotiation of meaning will be discussed below.

2.4. Different views of meaning construction

2.4.1. Skill-based meaning

There seems to exist two trends regarding the basic components of co-constructed meaning. On the one hand, the mainstream view of education provides a more localized view of meaning in that meaning lies in the maneuvers involved in the students' interaction. An alternative view-the participatory view of learning- assigns shared meaning construction in the analysis and reflection on social surroundings indicating thus a socially oriented view of learning.

Main stream literature indicates that the negotiation of meaning originates in the actions of the teachers or the more knowledgeable conversation partners who facilitate the participation of less proficient participants by modifying their own input linguistic or other (Egbert, 1997, cited in Hanson-Smith, 2000). These modifications include asking questions to the learners to provide them with the floor in order for them to commence speaking, repeating, rephrasing or extending the learners' utterances to provide language and thinking models. All these maneuvers together with simplified input seem to sustain negotiation (Peyton, 1997).

Main stream studies seem to have produced contradictory findings regarding the support needed for negotiation. For example, (Mackey, 1999, cited in Mitchell and Myles, 2004) investigated whether opportunities for negotiation and interaction would boost the question forms among learners. The participants (lower-intermediate adult learners) were asked to perform an array of information-gap activities such as asking and answering questions, or conduct story completion as they were engaged in meaning negotiation with native speaker interlocutors. On the other hand, (Loschky, 1995, cited in Mitchell and Myles, 2004) found that interaction around meaning aids second language comprehension. It seems that the somewhat contradictory findings

appeal to the ideas of “noticing, “consciousness raising” and “attention” (Mitchell and Myles, 2004, p. 173)

This main stream view of interaction and negotiation seems to view these concepts are imparted to the participants from an external entity namely the native interlocutor. Knowledge in this respect is value free and it seems to exclude the experience of the participants from the process of negotiation and it neglects thus the social dimension of learning.

2.4.2. Learner-centered view of meaning construction

There seems to be a debate among research teams as to what participatory pedagogy entails. Mainstream researchers define participatory pedagogy in terms of pedagogical practices and the degree to which the students are involved in the teaching and learning episodes. For example Nunan (1997) indicates that the responsibility to find materials and exploit them in a variety of ways rests exclusively upon the teachers. He goes on to clarify that learners under teachers' supervision should exploit this material in order to do in class whatever they could do outside. In other words, this material should reflect the outside world. He also defines authenticity in terms of text sources as well as activities and tasks. Teachers in this view of language pedagogy are viewed as experts in their field and knowledge has to be imparted to their learners through the selection of tasks with realistic goals. Although Nunan does not define knowledge purely as linguistic competence i.e. development of forms that have to be internalized into the language system of learners (in the level of forms and functions) he, in a way, excludes learners from manipulating learning in their own terms. Additionally another research team (Gregg and Pienenmann, 1995, cited in Nunan, 1997) place great emphasis on the concept of meaning negotiation as a vital component of language development. They posit that the basic building blocks of knowledge are pedagogical tasks which require the learners to engage in activities that resemble real life behaviours. They clarify that these behaviours include grouping learners during problem solving activities should be included in teachers' methodologies. In this respect meaning negotiation is purely a linguistic matter in that students are required to negotiate teachers' input and teachers should ensure that input has to be modified to the “comprehensibility” of learners (Nunan, 1997, p. 83). In this vein,

(Long and Porter, 1997, cited in Nunan 1997) indicate that group work is the optimal environment for learners to practice teachers' input in purposeful tasks.

2.4.3. The Participatory View of Language Construction

The participatory view of learning emerged mainly as a criticism to learner-centered approach which promotes the collective practice of language use. On the contrary, the participatory approach centers on the social dimension of language learning. For example (Auerbach, 2000, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000, p. 145) posits that "learner-centeredness" is a false construct and argues that these terms should not be equated in any respect. He differentiates participatory approach from learner-centeredness on the premise that it only takes into account the mental processes and skills required by the learners and neglects the social dimension of language teaching. It is worth noting that Auerbach criticizes the ideology of learner centered-ness which is based on the fact that students' skills are self-actualised in the sense that although individual learners' skills are empowered, learner-centeredness contributes "to the stratification and perpetuation of inequalities within classroom" (ibid, p.145) The ideology of participatory view stems from the work of Freire (1970) who proposed that participatory education is not about greater learner participation but participation as the "practice of democracy" (Auerbach, 2000, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000, p.150). The main premise of this approach indicates that content and process of education are highly political acts and as such they can either reinforce or challenge the "powerlessness of marginalized people". (ibid, p. 145). Empowerment as democracy refers to the potential of less privileged people to affect change in their lives through critical reflection and collective action (Toohey, 1998, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000).

Although the foundation of this pedagogy finds its actualization in the rights of marginalized people it also has implications for language teaching. If knowledge is socially informed then the participatory pedagogy could move language teaching away from individualized practice to a more collective level which incorporates concepts like negotiation, reflection and analysis. In this sense, the language classroom can be transformed to a community of learning

which allows collective negotiation, reflection and analysis of the learners' reality. The construction of knowledge in this respect occurs within members of the same community i.e. between the learners and it mainly stems from reflection and collective action. In this respect, the construction of knowledge is not a discrete entity which originates solely from linguistic criteria but it is collectively constructed in communities of learning. Additionally, Johnston (2003) and Tollefson (2002) indicate that an essential constituent of participatory pedagogy is the enhancement of learning experiences by putting them at the center of pedagogical practices.

A more radical view of participatory pedagogy comes from Tollefson (2003) who advocates the political dimension of education. He posits that the knowledge that learners are taught at schools is not neutral but it is politically and socially constructed. He also advocates that commitment to the learners' voice is essential and knowledge should not be simply consumed by the learners but it has to be produced by the learners themselves. In other words, this view of knowledge places the students at the very core of the educational process in that knowledge is constructed by them and is not imparted to them.

2.5. Constructivism, Socio-cultural approach and web 2.0. tools

Dated back at the beginning of 19th century, constructivism as a philosophy of language learning came to challenge the simplistic explanation of learning that was derived from behaviorists like Skinner and it thrived to emphasise the concept of learning as cognitive process. In this vein, Piaget and Vygotsky emphasized the cognitive processes involved in learning with the mile stone being the concept of zone of proximal development according to which one's ability to carry out a task lies in the interdependence of the aid provided by either a teacher or a peer and one's ability to carry out a task independently (Candlin and Mercer, 2004). Expanders of similar views with the most famous being (Bruner, 2004, cited in Discroll, 2005) introduced the concept of cognitive constructivism according to which the construction of new knowledge occurs when existing knowledge and new information related to one's social environment intertwine. In a similar vein, studies by (Pring, 2004; Crotty, 2009; Richards, 2000) stress the importance of interactivity of the individual with the

social surroundings suggesting that in order for people to create meaning they exchange ideas which are, partially or totally, accommodated into their value system and their beliefs and the product of negotiation with other people shapes their reality.

Similar studies into constructivism indicate that language learning is a social event and stress the need for dialogic communication that is likely to occur between the student and the teacher or between team members during group work (Mitchel and Milles, 2004; Daniels, 2002; Candlin and Mercer, 2001). Additionally, Mitchell and Myles (2004) comment on two education related key constructs -collaborated meaning construction and negotiation- indicating that the students are seen as experts in their field in that they exchange experiences through mediating with one another as they investigate and extend their “skills through collaborative talk until they internalize new acquired knowledge into their individual consciousness”. (p.200).

These studies implicitly indicate that the construction of knowledge lies in the level of skill building and view language teachers as the main agents who implement the building of these skills. These studies acknowledge the legitimacy of learners in the creation of knowledge based on the exchange of experiences. They neglect, though, the issue of reflection and the students’ engagement in order to search for different ways to resolve several issues. In this sense, knowledge is socially oriented and it is partially imparted by experienced agents i.e. the teachers, although the learners retain a degree of involvement in knowledge construction. In this sense, knowledge in early studies is a mixture of internalization of appropriate skills and analysis of individual experiences.

With the advent of web tools 2.0., notions bestowed upon the foundations of constructivism like socially constructive meaning and interactivity of the individual with others within the same social group have received prominent attention. More specifically, studies into the interactive nature of web 2.0. tools claim that digital tools like you tube, Edmodo and Moodle transform the notion of collaboration in that they are social, interactive and intensely collaborative and as such, these tools call for new “skills, practices and dispositions” (Ouk

Jeong, 2017, p.150). In the next section I will argue that the use of web 2.0 can transform the view of learning from an individualized activity to a collectively oriented one.

2.6. Web tool 2.0. as establishing agents of EFL communities of learning

There seems to be a consensus between the views embedded in early studies that concern the construction of knowledge and the views in contemporary studies that focus on the construction of knowledge using web 2.0. tools regarding the social influence that seems to affect the construction of knowledge. For example Clarke,(1989), Ramney,(1989), (Ur 1990) and Long and Porter (1985) posit that the negotiation of meaning between peers and the exposure of EFL learners to stretches of authentic language with a series of consecutive steps that include teacher-led support will ultimately lead to the acquisition of learning. In the same vein, studies by Slaouti,(1997),Isbell and Reinhardt, (2000) and Peterson, (1997) align with the assumptions above indicating that since the EFL learners are exposed in naturally occurring language which is complex or puzzling for them, they will seek ways to grasp the meaning of the situation by appreciating the social context, i.e. their peers' input, in order to construct knowledge as this is required by classroom tasks. Another research that is related to group dynamics by Long and Poter,(1985), and Folland and Robertson, (1987) claim that students working in groups in a collective manner in order to converge or reach a consensus within the classroom, will eventually do their best to use the linguistic reservoir at their disposal to overcome the linguistic difficulties in order to reach a desired outcome. In essence, this studies favour the appropriation of input by the students in order to fulfill their linguistic needs.

Web 2.0. tools are seen by many researchers as a source of greater inclusion of people and they also establish equality in the sense that they allow a great number of people to engage in social media and communicate with other people in national or international level. Web 2.0. increases the availability of information within a globalised world that moves away from a monopolistic to a more democratic and inclusive language environment. In this respect, Web 2.0. technologies bring a new dimension to the legitimacy of knowledge which is

decentralized and it is negotiated among a growing number of users. In this respect Tyagi (2012, cited in Obura and Seekito, 2015, p.3) suggest that web 2.0. challenge “intellectual property in that it transforms learners into active users creating and curating knowledge”.

In this respect, knowledge is viewed as an entity which is constructed within a community of users and is not imparted from outside entities. In addition Wesch, (2008, cited in Obura and Seekito, 2015) posits that users have choices regarding the control they exert over the content in that they make conscious choice of what is retained and what is discarded. It is within web 2.0. settings that concepts like “communities of practice, syndicated meaning as a creative activity and peer to peer learning” in that knowledge is socially informed and it is negotiated within a company of users (ibid, p.4)

In this context, contemporary studies on the use of web 2.0 tools in education for example Zou, Wang and Xing, (2016), Chih Sun, Ying Yang, (2015) and Chou Huang (2015) come in alignment with early studies mentioned above, as they acknowledge the fact that the introduction of web 2.0. tools seem to have a positive impact on language learning. Moreover, they suggested that such tools provide a non-restrictive learning environment which promotes mediated language learning. These studies also address the issue of collaboration between the students namely the ways that EFL students respond to their peers. For example, Zou Wang and Zing, (2016) posits that when web-based message posting and editing are employed, the contribution of web-based environments is crucial in the establishment of an affective climate. In the same vein, the aforementioned studies converge to the point that a positive environment should be established into which the key users are encouraged to cooperate and navigate their way to the desired outcome. The introduction of web 2.0. come to provide a networked test field into which the student’s collaboration is likely to occur.

To this extend, studies which address the issue of web 2.0. in the EFL classroom for example Kabilan (2000), Zare-EE, Shekarey, (2010) and Folland and Timucin, (2006), make the claim that through the process of negotiating meaning, the students do not merely negotiate language but they also navigate

their responses going back and forth in their screen. They appreciate the social context by turning to their peers to elicit their contributions and hence the aforementioned researchers posit that the amount of negotiated language stretches is increased and internalized as the learners construct their own propositions to the situation they encounter. Regarding the issue of collaboration studies by Morris (2010) Behroozizad, et al. (2013) and Chang (2012) build on the premise that web 2.0. environments enhance the quality of students' collaboration through the establishment of a collaborative net among peers into which the students develop a deeper understanding in terms of grammar, vocabulary, thinking and reflecting upon an idea. Also in aforementioned studies, a new layout of learning is established through the use of web 2.0. tools, where students direct each other, by sharing ideas, reflecting upon their path of learning and seeking help from each other (Bahroozizad et al, 2013).

2.7. Knowledge as an epistemological stance

2.7.1. The epistemological dimension of knowledge.

Education wise, epistemology is a way of understanding how we know what we know. In order to define how meaning is constructed we have to define the epistemological stance we adopt. The implication for education is that the epistemological stance of language practitioners inform their teaching practices. There are two fundamental paradigms which look at learning through different lenses. The first view of learning lies at the static nature of knowledge. Knowledge is a fixed entity that is inherent in the objects it investigates (Crotty, 2009, Hall and Eddington, 2000; Canagarajah, 2009). Although this concept of learning mainly refers to educational research the analogy for education refers to skill building as a means to create knowledge. Building linguistic refers to the acquisition of consecutive steps which ensure effective language learning. Knowledge in this sense is a pre-fabricated notion that has a specific ownership (language educators) and has to be imparted to less legitimate recipients i.e. learners through a set of value free linguistic steps. In this sense, knowledge is treated as a fact that is fixed and concrete and it only exists in the mind of its

holders. In order to acquire this knowledge, someone should develop scientific awareness (skill building).

The second trend treats knowledge as only having a potential meaning and the actual meaning has to be constructed by human beings as they are actively engaged with the world they assign meaning to. This view of meaning (knowledge) is not an abstract concept that pre-exists outside of the consciousness of human beings (Pring, 2007). Education wise this view of meaning construction embraces the values that are social and cultural. This value laden view of meaning reflects the view of constructionism which indicates that “the idea of society is actively and creatively produced by human beings, social world being interpretive nets woven by individuals and groups” (Marshal, 1994, cited in Crotty, p. 54). According to this view, meaning presupposes sharing of ideas as interpretative efforts to of the world around us. Consequently, the nature of knowledge is collective and it emerges through a process of engagement in dialogic processes which highlight group consciousness. The idea of collective consciousness will be elaborated in the next chapter.

2.7.2. Epistemology as an ideological stance in language learning environments

In 2.4.3., I argued that participatory language learning entails a contextualization of language skills and reflection on social issues that affect learners’ experiences. Since learners’ experiences are socially embedded, they become the unit of analysis, the classroom acquires a collective dimension given that students’ experiences are dialogically and collaboratively tackled upon. There is a tendency in mainstream education to view classrooms as isolated from the world with rules and regulations that operate as ends in themselves. This is reflected in educational policies as well, which to a great extent, impose prescriptive practices which might deviate from teachers and learners’ needs. Such decisions see classrooms as closed boxes that are isolated from the outside world and as test fields in which external agents prescribe their views of education (Pennycook, 2001; Tollefson, 2002; Lazar, 2015). As classrooms are seen as neutral sites of pedagogical transactions

teachers are also seen as exclusive holders of learning which has to be imparted to their students. There has been a tendency in critical pedagogy to identify factors which affect identities as social, cultural or ideological stances that expand or limit professional choices (Morgan,1998; Shohamy,2008; Breen, 2001).

Unlike mainstream pedagogy, which views educational practices as apolitical, ideology free and as a means of reproducing the status quo, participatory pedagogy operates in a two-fold level. It investigates how the individuals operate in relation to their social structure but it also looks at how the social structure may profoundly affect people's choices. (Canagarajah, 1999). In this context, there have been epistemological attempts to investigate the interactivity of consciousness with the objects that inform it. The most prominent of them was posited by (Freire,1972, cited in Crotty, 2009, p. 151) who inserted the concept "authentic-thought language" by which he refers to the product of a "dialectical relationship between the human being and the concrete historical and cultural reality".

Social and cultural reality then are in a continuous dialectical relationship with the creation of the human consciousness. Whether individuals tend to shape their consciousness depends on the nature of the intervention of humans with the society and the degree to which the society shapes our reality. The reality of the individual is constructed through the direct intervention of the society to the individual and the impact of individual action upon the society (Crotty, 2009; Hall and Eddington, 2000).

The common point of departure of different theories about the construction of educational practices lies in their definition of ideology and its impact on language teaching. For example, Johnston (2003) and Pennycook (2000) define ideology as a set of beliefs that are usually entertained among group members. They define classroom as a group of individuals who have their own sets of beliefs (cultural, political, social) which are in a constant interplay between classrooms and the outside world which classroom is an integral part of. In this respect, this interplay between classrooms and the outside world allow a reproduction of social relations and ideologies to permeate language

classrooms. From this point of view language classroom is viewed as “a microcosm of a broader social order so the ideologies of the outside world are also reproduced in the classroom” (Pennycook, 2000, p.93). In this respect, pedagogical choices, classroom processes and language use although seen as apolitical professional considerations, they are highly ideological acts that affect the roles of teachers and power relations between teachers and students. There are certain implications of ideology to epistemology. If epistemology provides the ground for the nature of knowledge to be sought and since knowledge cannot be divorced from the world then epistemology is also influenced by the outside world. This kind of interplay between different epistemological stances and a broader view of the world will be discussed in the following chapter.

2.7.3. The epistemological stances adopted by EFL teachers in web 2.0. contexts

In section 2.5. I argued that internet applications such as social media and the Edmodo platform have revolutionized the concept of information, its creation and its use. Unlike web 1.0. which promote one-way communication of information (e-mails), web 2.0. provides ways to create information and knowledge. In this sense, Web 2.0. challenges the status of knowledge as an external entity to its users. Web 2.0. users themselves can create and curate knowledge on the premise that knowledge is made through a process of negotiation and discussion among web 2.0 users. Inevitably web 2.0. based knowledge is affected by ideologies and social values of web 2.0. users. It is also posited that the creation of knowledge in web 2.0. should be supported by innovative teaching practices which are associated with concepts like “communities of practice, syndicate meaning as a learning activity, peer learning and creation of personal learning environments” (Tyagi, 2014, cited in Obura and Seekito, 2015, p.5).

Studies into the use of Web 2.0. internet applications in EFL seem to share a common point of departure: They converge to the fact that EFL teachers have positive attitudes regarding the use web 2.0. tools (Batsila, 2014; Basoz, 2015).

These studies build on the premise that the use of these tools facilitate the collaboration between students. Being more focused on secondary education Batsila et al. (2014) discuss the positive angle of using Edmodo in EFL teachers' everyday practices. They stress the realistic dimension of these tools as they comment on the link between the EFL classroom and the real world in which web 2.0.tools serve as the main source of content and ideas. Their study also builds on positive views of EFL teachers concerning the use of web 2.0. in the EFL classroom. They posit that the burden free nature of these tools and their ability to provide EFL students with exciting and interesting ways in order to keep their interest in the lesson, eventually makes EFL students active participants to learning. These studies seem to align with the participatory view of knowledge in that the world outside classrooms becomes the unit of investigation. Additionally, the use of web 2.0 seems to enable teachers to exert their classroom authority to empower their students in that content and ideas are suited to match their interests and ease their work load. (Basoz, 2015). It seems that EFL teachers move away from a "know it all stance" and they seem to provide the floor to their students by focusing on their interests allowing thus their expertise to emerge. In this respect, teachers select teaching practices to teach "democracy" in that these teaching practices aim at learners' active involvement to create knowledge (Auerbach, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000, p.170). The role of teachers as information holders seem to become decentralised as information and ideas are discovered by students using web 2.0. These studies highlight the importance of introducing web 2.0. internet applications in education as a means of boosting learners' confidence in order to use the language effectively. More centered around web 2.0. collaborative projects are the studies by Algasab (2016) and Yeh and Yang (2015) that bring forward the issue of teachers' intervention in such projects.

These studies build on the extent to which teachers' involvement affect the students' collaboration in the organizational, socio-cognitive and socio-affective level. They also discuss the relation between the teachers' interventional patterns and the students' interaction indicating that the more structured the teachers' intervention the more collaborative the outcomes obtained by the students . There seems to be a consensus of these studies of how meaning is

emerged through writing skills. A set of collaborative behaviours between students emerge “including adding to and expanding on each-others’ ideas.” (Algasab and Rajab, 2016, p. 5). Teachers seem to hold a constructionist approach according to which knowledge is created through students’ engagement with writing skills which aim to promote the emergence of a collective consciousness. In this vein, meaning is deciphered through dialogic practices which create knowledge based on dialogic processes that make use of the students’ social context.

Embedded in these studies is also the issue of multi-faceted communication in that multi channeled communication is encouraged in web 2.0. settings. Unlike the traditional classroom in which the patterns of communication are headed towards one direction Teacher-Students (Ts-Ss) and Students-Teachers (Ss-Ts), the utilisation of web 2.0. breaks this single pattern of communication and creates the opportunity for multi-directed and dialogic interaction. In these studies the role of EFL teachers in web 2.0. settings is merely tackled upon mainly through attitudes and perceptions of in-service teachers on the use of such tools and only a small slice of the actual teachers’ role is captured in passing. For example, Coll et al (2010) look into the instructional and organisational paradigm of EFL teachers in primary education contexts, positing that teachers act as mediators in that they are responsible for planning and preparing the “techno-pedagogical design” on the one hand while the on the other hand, they are the main source of support in the area of “instructional and pedagogical implementation, (Coll et al., 2010, p.163). Moreover, they indicate that the EFL teachers’ role is reinforced by the use of web 2.0. technologies as such technologies are constructively utilised as repositories of learning content and as aids of searching and selecting content. They also indicate that web 2.0. tools promote authentic tasks namely collaborative projects that bring students in touch with authentic settings.

The dominance of the teacher in web 2.0. settings is also posited by other studies . For example, Jederskog and Nielsen (2010), Wang and Zing (2016), Hwang et al. (2015) and Ouk Jeong (2017) highlight the dominance of EFL teachers over web 2.0. indicating that that there is a partial shift of the responsibility of learning. These studies build on the emergence of

individualised student-derived activities by claiming that teachers should continuously encourage and guide their students to search for new information. In this process a partial shift of teaching/learning paradigm may occur. More specifically, EFL students themselves plan and regulate the pace of learning something that EFL teachers did before. It seems that teachers use their dominant roles to facilitate the emergence of information coming from student input which provides the basis for classroom practices. Teachers' roles then in web 2.0. settings resemble participatory approach in which not only skills are contextualized to promote a process of collective consciousness but students are also holders of knowledge which teachers should extend in interesting tasks (Johnston, 2003; Tollefson, 2000).

2.8. The impact of EFL teachers' epistemological stances on learners

2.8.1 Group work as a means of creating communities of practice

The use of group work configuration to create collective knowledge utilizing web 2.0. is a widely debated issue among research teams. Research on group work in web 2.0. seems to converge to the fact that skill-based practices are not an end in themselves but they are used as a means of reflecting upon mutual practices and analysis of the social context. The degree to which skill-based practices are used to put learners' experiences at the forefront and the degree to which these practices allow a process of collective reflection and analysis is a point of divergence in related literature though. An example of group work used to develop skills that allow some kind of collective consciousness is brought forward by Egbert (2000) who states that the negotiation of meaning is a result of an ideology embraced by language teachers which traces knowledge in "split learning" (my term) in which the students are assigned specific roles during classroom tasks. Egbert also comments that students themselves set the goals. Seen this way, group work and allocation of different roles to students seem to ensure a dialogical interaction between the students as they conduct research on different aspects e.g. 'a musical instrument, a political figure e.t.c.' (Egbert, 2000, p. 32) This epistemological stance traces the origin of knowledge in learners as knowledge is defined as an entity that lies within students' experiences.

Other researchers comment on the dialogical processes between teachers and learners. They highlight that the task of the teacher is to identify reasons which maintain classrooms and tasks' unity i.e. reflection on students' experiences that can be used as a basis for classwork. This view coincides with the participatory view of knowledge in that learners' views become a point of departure and negotiation. Classroom in this respect promotes the students' input which is used as the basis for classwork. The teachers facilitate students' efforts to identify points of similar experiences and reflect upon these common experiences. Within this context, a paradigm shift may occur if teachers facilitate the exploration of knowledge based on their students' experiences (Auerbach, 2000, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000).

2.8.2. Writing skills as challenging authority relations in the EFL classroom

Writing skills in web 2.0. settings deviate from traditional writing practices in that writing skills are not used as an end in themselves i.e. to develop specific skills for the sake of language per se but instead they are contextualised in order to facilitate the development of knowledge. (Zou et al, 2016; Magnenot and Niesen, 2006). Web based 2.0. writing skills enable learners to become researchers and seek information from multiple sources inside net-worked classrooms. They also indicate that learners who are involved in wiki-based projects to identify cultural differences, generate authentic discourse in that learners engage in inquiry based learning and they gauge their contributions in light of exchanged experiences (ibid).

Writing as a process of reflecting upon one's experience highlights the unique nature of on-line environments and redefines conventional teaching and learning paradigms to the benefit of learners. The freedom of learners who engage in synchronous or asynchronous communication constitutes a shift of authority from teachers to learners as learners produce their discourse through a process of communication with their counterparts (Peterson,1997). The reflection of students on each others' experiences is the definitive factor of students' discourse. (Peterson, 1997; Yeh and Yang, 2011; Chauhan et al.,2013). This initial stage of paradigm shift signifies some changes in the nature of knowledge and the roles of EFL teachers as these are determined by the epistemological stance they adopt. Related literature seems to converge to

the fact that web 2.0. environments based knowledge is a “meaningful reality” which acquires its value through the interaction of individuals with the world around them (Vergine and Hosman, 2015, p.3) Therefore, knowledge is not objective but subjective in that it is embedded in the reality of the participants (Crotty, 2009) Different interpretations of the world (exchanges of learners’ reality) may lead to a different interpretation of knowledge.

In this respect, the teachers’ role is partially deconstructed in that although teachers develop tasks and lead their students to develop the necessary skills to discover knowledge, skill building deviates from a narrow linguistic domain. Skills are used in a process of information discovery and their main purpose is to identify points of interactivity between certain behaviours and their social correspondence in the world outside of the classroom e.g. bullying at schools and it’s social implications. In this respect the notion of skills as a pathway of creating linguistic competence is complemented with notions of contextualisation and reflection on learners’ experiences. Teachers’ roles are redefined from merely imparting knowledge to being coordinators, facilitators and moderators of students’ involvement to learning (Pennycook,2001; Johnston, 2001; Morgan, 1998).

2.9. Summary

To sum up research shows that there is a partial divergence between mainstream pedagogy and participatory pedagogy to language learning. On the one hand, mainstream pedagogy views skill building as basic constituents of interaction between the students. These skills are used strictly in linguistic terms in order to repair or reorganize the utterances of interlocutors (Mitchell and Myles, 2004; Candlin and Mercer, 2001). Although both approaches agree that the main constituent of meaning lies in the interaction and negotiation between teachers and learners, they view the nature of interaction under a different prism. Main stream, learner-centered approach traces the negotiation of meaning in the level of appropriating or repairing teachers’ input to match learners’ linguistic competence. This negotiation of input can gradually lead to the development and implementation of skills to manipulate negotiation. According to this view, knowledge lies within experts i.e.language teachers, it

is absolute in nature as it promotes effective implementation of skills in order to reach a designated purpose. Knowledge, in this respect, lies in formulaic expressions and teachers' input, it is value free and it can be found outside of the reality of the participants namely the students. Even though learner-centered approaches promote the development of skills per se, these skills are developed to appropriate knowledge coming from language teachers in order to conform to communicative tasks. For example, Nunan (1997) places a great emphasis on the notion of learning as being learner-centered and that teacher-led input should be appropriated to match the learners' linguistic competence. The participatory view of learning comes mainly as a critique to learner-centred approaches indicating that skills are not to be overemphasized or downgraded but they should be contextualized in order to encompass the interactivity between the classroom and the outside world. Participatory education views teachers as democracy practicing agents, in that the students' experiences come to the forefront and become the unit of analysis and reflection (Auerbach, 2000, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000). Knowledge in this respect is socially embedded and it is affected by the learners' interpretation of their experiences that are informed by their social surroundings. In this vein, web 2.0. settings have changed the "psychology of learning" (Grange, 2011, cited in Obura and Seekito, 2015, p.5) in that a large number of users can access a large proportion of knowledge that can be managed to serve a variety of needs. Web 2.0. seem to favour the cognitive constructivist view of learning as learning occurs when existing knowledge and new information related to one's social environment intertwine (Bruner, 2004, cited in Discroll, 2005). In this respect, web 2.0. can support innovative pedagogies like syndicated meaning, communities of practice e.t.c. Education wise these pedagogies are intertwined with teachers' epistemologies that are social, cultural and professional assumptions of what knowledge is and how it is produced. Ideological in nature i.e. embedded in a set of beliefs that different groups hold, epistemology looks at getting to know what we know (Crotty, 2009). The two dominant epistemologies view knowledge under a different prism. The objectivist view of knowledge views knowledge as a fixed entity inherent in the objects it investigates (Crotty, 2009, Hall and Eddington, 2000, Canagarajah, 2009). The analogy for education is the development of specific skills in order to discover t

knowledge that is hidden in the teachers' input. The constructionist approach to knowledge posits that knowledge is subjective and it is integrated within the social reality of its participants. Therefore, this view of knowledge is socially informed and subjected to individual interpretations. The utilization of Web 2.0 conform to the constructionist view of knowledge since knowledge is mediated among a number of networked users and it is traced in the reflection of their experiences. Web 2.0. also challenges the intellectual property of knowledge and transforms users to active participants of knowledge (Tyagi, 2012, cited in Obura and Seekito, 2015). English language teaching and learning wise the epistemologies of language teachers affect to a great extend the teaching pedagogies adopted by them.

Chapter 3

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I shall discuss a set of fundamental issues that regard the selection of an appropriate methodology which is related to ontological and epistemological assumptions that informed my decision to adopt a mainly qualitative paradigm. I will then go to describe the procedure I adopted in choosing the samples and the rationale behind the design of data collection instruments. I will then present the Edmodo digital platform and the Edmodo based project in which the students engaged and the tasks that were devised. I will conclude with issues of validity and reliability and I will also discuss the ethical dimension of the research project.

3.2. The interpretive paradigm and thesis objectives

Having established the research questions of the study, I engaged myself in a process of identifying the research approach that would best suit my needs. I had to seriously think of the purpose of the study and the methodology that would suit this purpose. The research design I adopted is essentially a qualitative exploratory study which also includes quantitative elements such as standardized measuring instruments i.e. questionnaires. Qualitative exploratory case study design is widely represented in many international journals (Computer Assisted Language Learning, Education and Information Technologies Journal, The Language Learning Journal) e.t.c. and it has become widely acceptable as a means to investigate the impact of new pedagogical practices associated with ICT technologies in the EFL classrooms (Warcshauer and Kern 2009)

I selected the convergence model as both sets of data were collected separately in order to compare and contrast them to find points of convergence and divergence (Cresswell and Clark, 2007; Cresswell, 2007). I decided to follow all these qualities put forward by Cresswell and Clark as I compared the two sets of data and my prolonged contact with the EFL teacher and student participants allowed me to validate and confirm these data through member

checks. As I argued in the beginning of this chapter my research is mainly qualitative so I adopted Perry's description of "qualitative-quantitative continuum" in research in which qualitative evidence being of primary value are validated against standardized measuring instruments to attribute the findings a less "disputable sense" (Perry, 2005, p.80). Also Perry's description of "explanatory-confirmatory" continuum according to which a study aims at finding "evidence to explore some phenomena" was also adopted (ibid, p.81). My main aim was to articulate a theory regarding the epistemological stances of EFL teachers in web 2.0. settings. The qualitative data aimed to develop this theory and the quantitative data supported and confirmed the theory. In this vein, I decided to give priority to the qualitative-driven approach to research which resembles Mason (2006) who posits that the complexities of social experience and the reality experienced by the participants cannot be revealed by numbers and statistics.

3.2.1. Ontology of the interpretive paradigm

The construction of a meaningful reality lies at the heart of the interpretive paradigm. For qualitative researchers the "study of being" (Crotty, 2009, p.9) is affected by the researcher and knowledge is a "construction" that reflects values of the world that is not independent of our deliberations but as something constructed by them (ibid, p. 44). In the interpretive paradigm then, the object of the research should be related to the context to which and through which it is constructed. This fact downgrades the possibility of generalization (Crotty, 2009; Pring, 2007; Perry, 2005; Richards, 2003).

3.2.2. Epistemology of the interpretive paradigm

The interpretive paradigm traces the nature of knowledge in the essential relationship between the human experience and the object of observation. It follows that there cannot be any adequate definition of knowledge in isolation of the conscious being that experiences it (Pring, 2007, Crotty, 2009). Embracing the philosophy of the interpretative paradigm means that the notion of "intentionality" pertains to the interplay between human beings and the world around them (Crotty, 2009, p. 45). In terms of knowledge this means that there is no valid knowledge outside the experience of human beings and the validity

of knowledge includes values, ideologies and perceptions of human beings that actively construct knowledge. (Skutnabb-Kangas, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000; Bell, 2008; Richards, 2003)

3.2.3. Research methods within the context of the thesis

Research within the interpretive paradigm includes ethnography which is used as a methodology to develop an understanding of how culture works in terms of assigning meaning to objects. Within ethnography a variety of methods may be employed such as participant observations, case studies, interviews e.t.c. Case studies and participant observations enable researchers to share the same experiences with the subjects, to understand better why they act the way they do and see things under the same prism as the participants do (Denscombe, 1998, cited in Bell, 2008).

Therefore, exploratory case study is a research strategy which builds on the understanding of a phenomenon within its natural setting. So the aim of the case study is to provide a better understanding of the human behaviour as it is experienced by the participants in their natural context. Educational institutions i.e. schools are communities in which teachers and learners interpret the world in an individual way. Therefore, in a case study attention is paid to a number of contextual conditions which are regarded as highly relevant to the phenomenon being investigated (Iacono et al, 2009). Participant observation embedded in case studies suffers from criticism the most severe of which rests upon the fact that since the participant observer spends a lot of time at the observation site, he/she cannot be truly emotional detached from the participants as he/she conducts inquiry on the inside. In this vein, Evered and Reis Louis (1981,p.31) distinguish between two organizational paradigms in research “inquiry from the inside” and “inquiry from the outside”. Each one of them is connected with specific epistemologies related with different values. Inquiry from the inside presupposes experiential involvement on the part of the researcher and the absence of priori analytical categories by which data are analysed. This approach also requires the researcher to be an ethnographer as he/she is immersed into the situation and depicts the viewpoint of the participants. On the other hand, inquiry from the outside presupposes the detachment of the

researcher from the phenomenon under investigation and therefore the researcher's values do not have a place in the research and it is the case that the analysis of the data abide with priori analytical categories that allow generalization of findings. Table 3.1. represents the properties of the two modes of inquiry as suggested by Evered and Reis Louis (1981). The first column refers to the dimension of difference between the two paradigms, it describes the role of the researcher to the researched setting and it also looks at the validation processes e.t.c. In the second column the two modes of enquiry are compared in terms of the researcher's engagement and the analysis of findings.

Table 3.1.Differences between the two modes of inquiry (Evered and Reis Louis, 1981,p.389)

Dimension of Difference	From the Outside	MODE OF INQUIRY	From the Inside
Researcher's relation ship to setting	Detachment, neutrality	↔	"Being there," immersion
Validation basis	Measurement and logic	↔	Experiential
Researcher's role	Onlooker	↔	Actor
Source of categories	A priori	↔	Interactively emergent
Aim of inquiry	Universality and generalizability	↔	Situational Relevance
Type of knowledge acquired	Universal, Nomothetic: theoria	↔	Particular, idiographic: praxis
Nature of data and meaning	Factual, context free	↔	Interpreted, contextually embedded

Never the less, I argue that it is impossible for a participant observer not to intrude himself/himself in the account of the phenomenon that is depicted. In this respect, I will abide with the view posited by Iacono et al. (2009) who indicates that qualitative research is actually more reflective than quantitative

one in that qualitative research involves the self usually signified by the use of the first person pronoun "I". The immersion of the self in the research (participant observer) enables the researcher to become more reflective and critical by becoming aware of his/her reflection in action and his/her articulation of tacit knowledge (Iacono et al, 2009).

Additionally, the aforementioned researchers propose a series of consecutive steps to minimise subjectivity and lack of rigour. The following steps have been modified from their organizational framework (Iacono et al., 2009,p.45) to match the nature and the objectives of the research:

1. Incorporation of episodes of teaching/learning practices through a process of discourse analysis of classroom observation sessions to let the facts speak for themselves
2. A triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data
3. Alternation between inside (data from participant inquiry, interviews and observations) and outside (quantitative data) inquiry.

I will elaborate on the operationalisation of the above steps when I provide the analytical framework of the qualitative data. The decision for a mainly qualitative study rests upon the purpose and the theoretical framework the researcher decides to follow. The purpose of this study is to unveil the specifics of a certain phenomenon (the emerging epistemologies of secondary education EFL teachers in web 2.0. environments) in relation to the establishment of a collaborative atmosphere.

Also, Bryman (2006, p.105) claims that the decision to include quantitative instruments within a case study rests upon five distinctive reasons:

1. triangulation (convergence, correspondence, corroboration of findings)
2. complementarity (elaboration, enhancement, illustration of the findings)
3. development (using the findings from one method to help develop or inform the other method)
4. initiation (discovering paradoxes and contradictions and new perspectives of frameworks)
5. expansion (extending the breadth and range of enquiry by using different methods with respect to different research components)

During my prolonged engagement with the analysis of findings I will put all of the afore mentioned qualities into practice as I will converge, correspond and corroborate the two sets of data . The issue of complementarity will also receive a prominent attention as the qualitative data will be used to elaborate, enhance and illustrate quantitative findings. In this vein, Mason (2006) posits that that there is a close relation between the nature of the research questions and the research methods employed to answer these research questions. Both research methods suffer from different shortcomings. For example, in quantitative research although numerical data are statistically analysed to provide the sense of objectivity, it fails to capture the specific features of the situation and the reality of the participants.

Qualitative research, on the other hand, permits the experience of the participants to unfold as well as the researcher's assumptions to come into play with the risk of allowing bias to intrude. In this study, I collected the data sequentially. In other words, I collected the quantitative data first to get a general impression of the situation and then I conducted semi-structure interviews and participant observations to get an in-depth understanding of the situation.

3.3. Choosing the population and negotiating entry (teacher and student participants)

Having decided on the research questions and the appropriate approach to research, I had to select the EFL teachers and learners and convince them to participate in the research study. The first reason I chose these EFL teachers was their teaching experience. Sixty one EFL language teachers from the area of Karditsa in central Greece with more than ten years of teaching experience all appointed in the public sector (in six different schools in karditsa area) were selected to be used as the sample. All the teacher participants had a long teaching experience in teaching EFL in secondary education. The reported number of teaching English in secondary education was a minimum of 10-15 years (24 teachers, 45%) and a maximum of 16-20 years (37 teachers,55%), (Table 3.2. summarises the above discussion)

Numbers of years	Frequency	Percent %	Valid percent %
10-15	N=24	39,9	40
16-20	N=37	59,9	60

Table 3.2. Teacher participants' teaching experience

The first reason I chose the region of Karditsa in central Greece is practical. I myself grew up in this area and I had known all my fellow EFL teachers for over a decade. I had established good social relations with the majority of them (this might be a source of bias which I will elaborate in section 6.3.) so it would be fairly easy for me to persuade them to participate in the research project. I explained that during the research project they would have to fill in a questionnaire, participate in interviews and I would also observe some of them in order to find out what they did when they engaged with web 2.0. I sent an introduction letter to their schools introducing myself and explaining the objectives of my research and the way in which these EFL teachers would be involved in the research study (refer to appendix, E).

Because of the small scale of the research, I employed two types of non-probability sampling strategies: convenience and purposive sampling. Generalization in terms of statistical significance was not my purpose so these two types of non-probability sample would match the objectives of the research. Convenience/accidental or opportunity sample (Cohen et al., 2008), involves the selection of participants who happen to be available or accessible at the period of the research. This kind of sampling strategy is appropriate for "captive audiences" for example teachers and students (ibid, p.114). Such samples do not represent any groups apart from themselves, so this fact alone eliminates any attempt of generalizability (Perry, 2005).

Similarly the student participants came from the area of Karditsa which is one of the four prefectures which consists the county of Thessaly in the central part of Greece. It is an agricultural area and the poorest prefecture in the county of Thessaly. One hundred EFL junior high school students constituted the sample of the research project. Sixty of them came from three schools in the complex where I teach and the rest of them (forty respondents) came from six different schools in the area of karditsa. All of them were between 12-15 years old and they all attended compulsory education. I administered the questionnaires myself in the adjacent schools and I contacted my fellow EFL teachers who administered the questionnaires in their schools for me. Thanks to these teachers I received 80 valid questionnaires with an 80% response rate. The student participants' language proficiency ranges from intermediate (30 students,38%) and upper intermediate (50 students 62%), refer to table 3, below.)

Student participants' language proficiency	Frequency	Percent %	valid percent %
Intermediate (B1)	N=30	37,8	38
Upper-Intermediate (B1+)	N=50	61.9	62

Table 3.3. Student participants' language proficiency

3.4. Methods of Data Collection during the Quantitative stage

3.4.1.Rationale

After I had ensured the entry of both the EFL teacher and student participants, I had to devise the measuring instruments for the research study. In section 3.1, I argued that I mainly adopted the case study methodology with standardized measuring instruments and thus I followed the principles of an exploratory case study. Tellis (1997) posits that case studies enable the researcher to go beyond the statistical analysis and get the grasp of the behavioural circumstances through the participants' perspectives. I do not

argue, though, that standardized measuring instruments should be entirely neglected but they may not capture some of the key aspects of the phenomenon under investigation.

3.4.2. The design of the Teachers' questionnaire

After the decision on the form of the questionnaire had been made, I reviewed relevant literature (Cohen, Manyon, Morrison, 2008; Pring and Crotty, 2005, Bell 2005) and I decided on the placement of the questionnaire items. The study by Batsila et al., (2014) provided the basis for the design of the teachers' questionnaire. The reason I chose this study was because it refers to secondary education and the topic was similar to the research focus of my thesis. More specifically, the study by Batsila et al. investigated the perceptions of in-service secondary education EFL teachers regarding the use of Edmodo in the classroom. I decided to follow the same layout but in order to fit the purpose of the study, I modified items 1-15 in part four pertaining to the potential of web 2.0. to ignite collaborative meaning. The questionnaire design proceed as follows:

- In the first section I decided to start with factual questions like gender, years of teaching English, the number of students in the classroom e.t.c. I thought that by doing so I could ease the participants' fears by presenting the information that was easy for them to fill in and make them feel at home. Cohen, Mayon, Morrison (2008, p.337) posit that factual questions that will not threaten the respondents should be placed at the beginning of the questionnaire in order to give the researcher nominal data about the sample.
- After the factual information I decided to include the close-ended questions that aimed to elicit attitudes, opinions and perceptions. For example, in part four of the questionnaire the opinions of the EFL teachers about their role in engaging EFL students in web 2.0. based collaborative activities were sought. (refer to appendix A)
- I decided to place the open-ended questions at the last part of the questionnaire as the respondents would take more time to answer and

they could be off-putting for the respondents as they could discourage them and lead them to avoid answering these questions.

3.4.3. The layout of the Teachers' Questionnaire.

The teachers' questionnaire comprises six parts. In the first part personal information including gender, qualifications, years of in-service in the public sector, the number of classes taught were required from the respondents. In part two there are two sections. Section one deals with the computer environment both at home and at school. In section two issues like the number of computers in each classroom, internet access available in the classroom and hours of using the Internet in the classroom were incorporated. In part three the teacher respondents were required to tick the appropriate item concerning their training skills in ICT. Part four contained issues that were closely associated with the first research question including the teacher's intervention during Internet-based sessions. In part five items associated with mutual construction of learning and mediated L2 based information encountered via web 2.0. tools were inserted. Part six looked into the EFL teachers' perceptions and views regarding the use of web 2.0. tools in the classroom. A Likert-scale form was selected to allow the respondents to express their degree of agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire items.

3.4.4. The layout of the students' questionnaire

The students' questionnaire consists of three sections. In section one personal information like gender, years of studying English e.t.c. were included. Section two deals with computer and internet use at home. Section three deals with the length of the student participants' ICT training. Section four deals with the EFL teachers' epistemologies in web 2.0. settings and the potential of web 2.0. in the emergence of collaborative knowledge and it comprised six items (refer to appendix B).

3.5. Piloting the teachers' questionnaire

I had to pilot the questionnaire with the EFL teachers in order to check the face validity of the instrument to the respondents. Cohen, Manyon and Morrison (2008) posit that piloting the questionnaire is of crucial importance to its success and they go on arguing that through piloting validity ambiguities of constructs to be examined are resolved. I decided to adopt this technique so I contacted my colleagues and I explained that we had to examine the items of the questionnaire together. Twenty teachers finally came to the meeting which took place in the school auditorium. These teachers worked in nearby school complexes so it was easier for them to attend. I argue that member check is the most appropriate way of piloting the questionnaires since the respondents are closely involved in the research project. I had a long discussion with my EFL colleagues and we agreed that a scrutinization of the questionnaire items would take us two to three two hours sessions. We agreed to meet after the end of school hours and do the check in small groups. I realised that in this way we could form a community of practice which Mitchell and Myles (2004, p.241) defines as an "aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour". We decided to conduct member checks and check the questionnaire item by item in order to eliminate ambiguities or difficulties in wording.

For example, in the option "other", the respondents were encouraged to provide comments that, I as the researcher, had failed to incorporate in the questionnaire. Another issue I was warned of was the number of items that were incorporated in the questionnaire as some of them might overlap one another. For example, a number of colleagues indicated that questions five and seven in section one (see appendix A) overlapped one another as they both referred to the process of negotiation and discussion between the EFL learners and consequently might yield similar results. After these alterations which took us two three hours sessions to be resolved, all twenty teachers were able to answer the questionnaire.

3.6. The process of piloting the students' questionnaire

After I had finalized the form of the students' questionnaire I had to pilot the questionnaire with the student respondents. Munn and Drever (2007) argue that piloting is a very important task because the respondents will live with the questionnaire for a few weeks. Therefore, they must be relieved from the anxiety as they have to fill in something which do not know exactly what it means. They continue to posit that a small scale piloting is essential since it involves a close inspection of each item of the questionnaire so that any queries that might emerge can be resolved. They also argue that piloting the questionnaire will resolve issues that might put off the respondents from answering it affecting therefore its response rate. I decided to follow all these recommendations put forward by Munn and Drever (2007). The first thing I did was to choose my pilots. I thought that my pilots had to be respondents with whom I should have established a mutual trust in order to motivate them to answer the questionnaire and not be threatened by it. Although Munn and Drever (2007) indicate that the pilots should be subjects other than the sample, I decided to involve student respondents from the sample as I realised that junior high schools students would feel more relaxed and secure if their teacher which is also the researcher would be present to guide them. We inspected each item together, we discussed what each item meant and we also discussed the answers that the respondents provided meant. We also discussed how each item could be improved in order to decrease bias. This for junior high school students meant that the wording should be made simpler and not much terminology should be included. Twenty-five secondary education students were selected, to whom I had taught English for three years, to pilot the questionnaire for the afore mentioned reasons. One additional reason was that they belonged to the advanced group (upper intermediate or B2+ level of language proficiency) so I could get as a rich feedback as possible. The process of piloting proved to be quite a painstaking process for me. I had to explain the five scales to the students especially the category "neither agree or disagree" which was difficult for them to grasp. Three students posited that since that they neither agree or disagree with a statement why is this statement there? Through a dialogue between me and the students or between the students themselves

we reached the conclusion that this option should be selected only in the case that the students did not agree with the rest of the statements. I had to make sure that I would obtain as many data as possible, so I highlighted to the pilots that they had to fill in the questionnaire and they also had to fill in the option “other- please specify” in case they had anything different to say .I timed the students and I realised that it took us two full teaching sessions to answer the questionnaire. When we finished we went item by item and the students compared their answers in groups to make sure that their answers were consistent.

3.7. Negotiating entry of the EFL teacher interviewees

As I argued in section 3.1.3., I adopted a case study approach to research as I intended to provide an in-depth account of the phenomenon under investigation. Moreover, an exploratory case study would afford me the opportunity to provide a thorough account of the truth as it was experienced by the participants and it would also provide a complete reconstruction of the events within a specific context. After I had obtained the questionnaire from sixty one EFL teachers, I invited them to participate in the interviews sessions I was about to conduct as the researcher of the study. I contacted my fellow teachers (see letter of introduction, appendix E) and we agreed to meet after our teaching schedule and discuss the procedure of the interviews. Due to the heavy teaching schedule twenty-five teachers managed to attend to the first meeting in which we discussed different interview issues. Cohen, Manyon and Morrison (2008) posit that a convenience sampling process occurs when the researcher selects the nearest individuals with an easy access to serve as the respondents. All of the twenty five EFL teachers came from the area of Karditsa, they all taught to secondary education in the public sector, they all had more than ten years of teaching experience and they all used web 2.0. in their classrooms. These teachers taught EFL in ten different junior and senior high schools in the area of karditsa in two hour slots a week. We agreed that after their teaching duties, they would come to the school I worked so I could interview them.

3.8. Negotiating entry of the student interviewees

Due to the complexities of the interviews, I realised that I would have to spend quite a large amount of time with the student interviewees so it would be impossible to visit a number of schools in Karditsa area to interview the EFL students due to my teaching obligations and the limited amount of time that these students had as after school the majority of them attended private language schools. Therefore, I decided to use the EFL students from the three school complexes I teach as my interviewees. I had taught these classes for three years so I hoped that a mutual trust had been established between me as their teacher/researcher and them. I decided to address third form junior high school students because they had a fairly good level of language proficiency (upper intermediate and above or B1-B2 level according to the European Common Framework of language proficiency). There were three class divisions in third class G1, G2 and G3 which consisted of 25 students each. In our next teaching session with G1 I engaged myself into a discussion with the first target group (G1, twenty-five, upper intermediate language proficiency students) and I explained that I was interested in their views about the issue of using web 2.0. We had used the Edmodo digital platform with all these class divisions so I felt that they would be comfortable to engage themselves in a discussion with me. I decided to adopt the approach posited by Drever (2006) who indicates that although the researcher should explain the subject matter of the interview, she/he should not reveal the main questions so that the interview unfolds naturally. I explained that I was only interested in their views and that it was not by any means a test. In order to motivate them, I explained that they would have the opportunity to speak in English. I also informed them that I would record them in order for me to obtain an easy access to the data. We agreed to meet after the teaching sessions every day. I adopted the information rich sampling paradigm in that I was interested in the quality of the information provided not the quantity (Perry, 2005). Their language level and the immersion of students to web 2.0. tools (you tube and Edmodo) prior to interviewing them could ensure that the students would have something to say. This is closely related to the purpose of the case study which is to provide an explanation of a

phenomenon in its natural setting (Iacono et al., 2009). Therefore, these EFL secondary education student interviewees with a fairly good language proficiency would be confident to express themselves in English. On the other hand, this approach ran the risk of including only the enthusiasts and individuals who express what the researcher wants to hear (Munn and Drever, 2007).

3.9. The design of the teachers and students' interview schedule

After I had negotiated the teacher and student participants' entry, I had to focus to the design of the teachers and students' interview schedules. Based again on the objectives of the study (case study method which focused on the understanding of a phenomenon that could not be divorced from its natural setting and the experiences of the participants), I selected semi-structured interviews for both the EFL teacher and student interviewees in order to leave space for them to speak their minds. Semi-structured interviews are likely to have a mixture of closed and open questions. The interviewer can follow specific guidelines as he/she is able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from guidelines when it seems appropriate (Bell, 2008). Conducting a good semi-structured interview requires a thoughtful planning which includes: identifying the respondents, deciding on the number of interviews and preparing the interviews meticulously. After having conducted the interviews, a comprehensive analysis is needed (Bell, 2008; Cohen, Manyon and Morrison, 2008; Richards, 2003).

In semi-structured interviews (both teachers and students') a clear set of questions for the interviewees were designed (see appendix C and D respectively) in order to leave space to the participants to articulate their voices (Bell, 2008). I designed the interview items in such a way so that I could get specific answers for each stage of the teachers' intervention in web 2.0. settings. For example, I started with questions regarding the teachers' role in before-accessing web 2.0 tools phase, then I incorporated questions regarding the while-accessing phase and I concluded with questions that regarded the post-accessing phase. I also included prompts and probes to extract more exhaustive responses from the teacher interviewees. For example, in before-accessing web 2.0. tools phase (questions 4-5), I tried to penetrate deeper in the reality of the

interviewees by requiring responses as to how these teachers prepared the students and I asked them to provide examples. It is the case that the interview could have served as an extension tool which could possibly elaborate on the responses of the interviewees. I followed the same technique for the entire interview. Additionally, I selected some introductory questions (1-3) to attune the interviewees with the subject matter of the interview. In the before-accessing phase I included questions (4-7), in the while-accessing phase I included questions (8-12) and in the post viewing section I included question 13. In the next sessions I included questions about the contribution of web 2.0. in the construction of collaborative learning (questions 14-21) which sought answers to the research questions using probes and prompts.

In the students' interview schedule, I included 12 questions. I selected simpler questions to avoid intimidating these student interviewees. I also included prompts and probes to elicit as detailed responses as possible. In the following section I will present a thorough account of the procedure of both teachers' and students' interviews.

3.10. The interview procedure

After I had identified teacher and student interviewees and I had finalised the schedule of the interview, I had to begin interviewing my fellow teachers. Due to the heavy teaching schedule of both the interviewees and mine as a researcher, the interviews would have to be conducted either in groups or individually determined by the availability of the teacher interviewees. Twenty five EFL teachers were interviewed in seven interview sessions of two-hour slots each and the interviews were conducted either in pairs, one-to-one interview or focus group interviews as this was determined by the availability of the interviewees. These interviewees taught English in six schools which were fairly in a close distance to the school complex I taught so it was fairly easy for them to attend. The interviews took place in a classroom which was the interview location. I realised that in the classroom we would have both the privacy and comfort and this would have a positive influence on the interviewees, they would relax as they would find themselves in a classroom similar to these in which they spent quite a lot of time. Moreover, they would

probably deliver the official line since they would be in an environment where the official EFL teaching took place (Richards, 2003).

Each kind of interview has advantages and disadvantages. For example, focus group interviews are appropriate when the participants are similar and might communicate with each other when there is not sufficient time to collect data. As regards the drawbacks, the researcher should constantly monitor these participants who may dominate the others. On the other hand, one-to-one interviews presuppose participants who are not hesitant and the researcher needs to determine a setting in which these participants would feel relaxed (Cresswell, 2007). Throughout the interview, I encouraged all the participants to share their views, I tried not to intimidate them so I avoided using too much terminology and I frequently appraised them for their contribution in the research. In the first interview session three EFL teachers were interviewed. In the second session two teachers were interviewed and that was case for the third session. The fourth, fifth session and sixth session involved five EFL teachers each, and in the seventh session two language teachers and the school advisor of the western Thessaly area which comprises two municipalities participated in the interviews.

Next I would have to interview the student interviewees. The procedure would be simpler since all twenty-five of them were my students. I delivered them the form of consent issued by the university of Exeter and I told them that it should be signed by their parents . Although the interviewees were also my students I decided to interview them in groups of five as I felt that they would be less inhibited in the presence of an adult and they would also be more secure in the company of their classmates (Drever, 2006). I conducted five focus group interviews each one consisting of five students and I informed them that they could leave the classroom whenever they thought appropriate. This procedure lasted for a month. I tried to use simple wording and I spoke as slowly as I could to avoid intimidating them. I also tried to elicit answers from all members of each interview group by eliminating the domination of some students over the others. I was granted permission by both teacher and student participants to record the interview sessions.

3.11. Preparing the observation schedule (some preliminary concerns)

After I had finished with teachers and students' interviews I had to move on to the next crucial step embedded in qualitative case study method i.e. I had to observe the participants in situ. Drever (2006) posits that during interviews the participants tend to speak about general notions of good practice and what happens in their classroom. By comparison with interviews, Bell (2006) posits that observations can be efficient in providing insights as to how the participants do what they say they do or behave the way they claim they do. Additionally, through observations the researcher obtains information about the actual techniques teachers use in their classrooms (Richards, 2003). In a case study in particular, the observer is also an ethnographer in the sense that he/she observes behaviours from the inside and this enables him/her to live the same experiences as the participants, to understand better why people act the way they do and see things the same way as the people involved (Bell, 2008). Therefore, I had to prepare the interview schedule and pay specific attention on the themes to be observed as these emerged from the research questions and the objectives of the study. I also had to capture specific episodes of participants' behaviours that would provide an in-depth impression of the phenomenon being investigated. For example, in the first part of the observation grid I aimed to record the students' behavioural patterns when they were involved in collaborative web 2.0. based projects (see appendix G). In the second part of the grid (questions 1-11), I aimed to record incidents of teachers' intervention when the Edmodo digital platform was used and the epistemology assumed by these EFL teachers. In the last part of the observation schedule (questions 12-19) I placed questions that aimed to observe aspects of students' behaviours when they engaged themselves in collaborative projects based on the Edmodo digital platform. (I will discuss edmodo-based collaborative projects in the next section).

3.12. Negotiating the teachers' observations

I had to contact the EFL teachers who taught to nearby schools who would possibly be available to teach these classes. Once again, I contacted the teachers from the nearby school complexes and I explained that they had to record their classes. The teachers would also have to tick the students' interactional patterns as those were depicted in the interview schedule. Mainly due to the heavy teaching load and to the number of tests required by the students at that time, only three teachers responded to my request to observe their classes. We agreed to meet in the central amphitheater of the school I teach and resolve any issues that would emerge. In our introductory meeting I explained that they would conduct participant observations to which I would be present as the researcher and I also explained the rationale of the observation sessions. Given the human capacity to express views, attitudes, to agree or disagree with one's perspectives the understanding of a phenomenon is largely enhanced by textual data (Iacono et al., 2009). The teachers expressed their concerns about the use of the Edmodo platform in the classroom. They were accustomed to using web 2.0. applications like you tube and but they raised concerns about the use of Edmodo in the classroom. I explained the rationale of the Edmodo platform and I explained that it favours collaboration as it facilitates the communication between users. We agreed that we should have sessions in which I would explain the use of Edmodo. It took us three sessions to accustom these teachers to Edmodo applications. In the first session the teachers created their accounts. Next we explored other functions like "the calendar" which allows language teachers to upload comments or post assignments for their students. After the teacher participants were acquainted with the Edmodo platform, we had to examine the observation schedule and the tasks they should assign to the EFL students who would participate in the observed classes. I presented the observation schedule to my colleagues and we examined the observation items one by one. I included three parts in the observation schedule. All three parts contained pre-determined themes that arosed from the research questions. The first section regarded the interactional patterns between the teachers and the students or between students within different teams. The first section of the interview schedule was fairly

straightforward to the EFL teachers so I didn't have to explain the interactional patterns. The teachers required further clarification of how these applications might trigger the students' previous experience regarding the first item (eleven items total) of the second part of the observation. We collectively chose a subject on drugs between adolescents. We accessed relevant videos on YouTube and then each one of us chose an aspect of the theme. For example I chose the causes of drugs use during adolescence and the other teachers chose the implications and effects of drug use on the persons themselves and their families. We wrote short reports that covered each issue and then we discussed how this knowledge could be used in tasks. We followed the same procedure for all the problematic issues. The first and the second part of the observation schedule were highly structured and that allowed the teacher observers to either tick or take short field notes in the spaces provided. Bell (2008) warns against the fact that structured participant observations may also be biased in that every observer may present his/her own account of the situation. She goes on indicating that this shortcoming is addressed by the use of a systematic observation and a structured observation schedule. I agree with Bell and I would add that an observation piloting should also occur in order for the researcher to revise or rearrange the issues that would not work. We used the task schedule that was reserved for the students and we agreed that each one of us would act as the observer of every pilot session. After we had completed the sessions, we conducted member checks and we compared each others' accounts. We came to the conclusion that the third part which was the less structured (items 13-19) presented some difficulties for us to contribute our field notes. We agreed that we would stay at the back of the classroom right after the end of the observation sessions while the episodes would still be fresh and provide focused descriptions of these teaching episodes (refer to appendix F). All the field notes provided a similar picture of the events we observed. We decided to spend four weeks to observe the students in three-hour slot sessions per week. As I argued above, I was present in all the observation sessions acting as a participant observer that helped me gather detailed descriptive information (Cohen, Manyon, Morrison, 2008).

An overview of all stages of the methodology adopted can be seen in table 3.12. in the next page. Table 3.12. consists of three columns. In the first column the

research questions are presented. In the second column the methods of data collection are presented. Finally in the third and fourth column the time frame of qualitative data analysis is presented.

Research Questions	Data collection Methods	Time Frame	Data analysis
1.What are the epistemologies of the EFL teacher in web 2.0. learning environments regarding EFL secondary education in Greece?	61 teachers' questionnaires	January 2014	Axial Coding-qualitative analysis(thematization)
	100 student questionnaires		
	25 secondary education EFL teacher interviews	February-March 2014	
	25 EFL Junior High School Student interviews	February- March 2014	
1a.bWhat opportunities do the EFL teachers provide for collaborative language construction?	3 Classroom observations (3 Junior High School Teachers)	April-May 2014	Discourse Analysis (thematization)
	61 teacher questionnaires	January 2014	
	100 student questionnaires		
	25 secondary education EFL secondary education teacher interviews	February-March 2014	Axial Coding, qualitative data analysis
2.What is the impact of teachers' epistemological stances in web 2.0. onto secondary education EFL learners?	25 EFL Junior High School Student interviews	February- March 2014	Qualitative analysis (thematization)
	3 Classroom observations (3 Junior High School Teachers)	April-May 2014	Discourse analysis
	61 teacher questionnaires		
	100 student questionnaires	January 2014	
	25 secondary education EFL secondary education Teacher interviews	February-March 2014	Axial Coding qualitative analysis (thematization)
	25 EFL Junior High School student interviews		

		February- March 2014 April-May 2014	Axial Coding (qualitative analysis, thematisation) Interaction analysis (thematization)
	3 Classroom Interview (3 Junior High School Teachers)		

Table 3.12. An Overview of data collection process (Methodology)

3.13. Integrating the Edmodo digital platform in the observed classes

I argued in 1.2. that EFL junior high school students in Greece are accustomed to using facebook for communication. A form of educational facebook is the Edmodo platform which resembles facebook in the sense that the students can create their user names and passwords to log in. As it is indicated by Edmodo's official page it is the leading platform for social learning. Over the last few years, Edmodo has gained popularity because teachers can sign up, they can create closed groups and they can also invite their students to join these groups. Once teachers and students are connected in a safe social environment they can collaborate. Edmodo does not require personal information from students. Once invited to join Edmodo students can only access groups to which they have been invited by their teachers. Once they are in a group, students can send messages to their group or to their teachers. Additionally, teachers using the same process can incorporate students in their accounts as individuals or groups. Once teachers register the students in their accounts they can upload documents, assignments e.t.c. which students can access. In the beginning of the project the students were asked to form teams of five and decide on a user name by which they could be registered in the platform. The students had to

engage in a collaborative project in which they in groups should decide on a topic, find relevant articles on the internet, select relevant excerpts from accessed articles which matched their purpose of writing, provide proper in-text citations, provide references in the end of their writing texts. Finally, they should prepare a power point presentation with a complete text. Every team had to choose a specific aspect of a designated topic and either write an article or prepare a power point presentation. For example, one team selected the umbrella topic nutrition. Each member of the team had to select different aspects of this topic e.g. eating disorders in adolescence, anorexia nervosa e.t.c. and every member should collaborate with the other members in order to present a full version of the chosen topic through a division of labour. The teachers intervened to present specific ways of accessing articles according to one's purpose, indicate ways for the students to provide in-text citations, suggest ways for the students to provide references e.t.c. An overview of the complete set of tasks carried out by the students can be seen in appendix G. In the next section I will present the design of the tasks and the nature of the interaction between the students.

3.14. Task design and types of interaction

Tasks or activity structures are assigned by language teachers to attain specific learning objectives. Tasks essentially define teachers' methodologies and epistemologies to learning. Tikunoff (1985, cited in Candlin and Mercer, 2001), defines three types of tasks according to the demand they make on learners. The first type of tasks requires response mode demands on the part of the learners like comprehension, synthesis and analysis. The second type has to do with interactional mode demands and focuses on how these tasks are accomplished i.e. individually, in pairs or groups. The third kind of tasks has to do with complexity demands i.e. the degree of difficulty that is required by the learners. Within the context of this thesis the aforementioned kinds of tasks were utilised to augment the collaboration between the learners. The researcher and the observed teachers collectively devised tasks that ensured the inclusion of almost all the learners. Therefore the introductory task required both response mode demands and interactional mode demands as the learners were required to form groups in order to select different articles that matched their purpose of writing. This was a rather complex task as the students had to

apply skills of analysis and evaluation as they accessed different articles and evaluated whether or not they matched their research questions. The students had to synthesise different peer views and decide on the appropriateness of the articles according to their purpose. Although this activity mainly regards the development of the students' writing skills, the teachers asked the students to form groups of five as the students were expected to self-regulate their contributions under the guidance of other more skilled peers. In other words, the students were "inducted into a shared understanding of how to do things through collaborative talk with their peers until they appropriate their contributions to match their purpose of writing" (Mitchel and Miles, 2004, p. 195). The interactional demands were focused on the supportive dialogue which occurred between the students that eventually directed them to take successive steps to compare different articles in order to find these that matched their purpose for writing.

The second step of the task involved response mode demands and this was expected to enhance the participatory nature of the project as the students were about to engage in an evaluation task in which they should exchange messages using the Edmodo platform to evaluate each others' drafts. The design of the task was expected to enhance the ability of the students to exploit their comprehensible input and output and therefore language learning (Garton, 2002). The students were given the space (the Edmodo platform) and plenty of time (three weeks) to collaborate in order to provide their complete drafts. They were mainly responsible for their path of learning as they mainly self-regulated their input among themselves. The teachers stepped in as consultants as they inspected their students' drafts and provided some comments retaining thus the role of an expert. This task was also expected to enhance the participatory view of learning mainly through "the attempt to direct the learners' interaction in such a way that corresponded more closely to their interests" (they took the initiative to choose their own topics) and their needs" (Garton, 2002, p.48).

During the next phase the students were required to select excerpts from three different articles that matched their purpose for writing and provide in-text citations. This task required both response mode demands and interactional mode demands. Therefore, a whole group activity was designed in which the members of the five groups should evaluate which excerpt of the article would

best fit their purpose. During this phase the students were allocated roles which provided the space for both skilled and less skilled students to participate. The more skilled students scanned the text and dictated to less skilled students the gist of each excerpt they selected to include in their writing. The interaction occurred mainly among the students who evaluated whether the meaning of the selected excerpts fit their selected topic. A scaffolding process which encompassed a process of consecutive steps occurred in which more skilled students provided their support and help to less proficient students in order to provide a comprehensible input. Therefore they paraphrased the meaning of the excerpt that should be included in their report. Through this scaffolding support the inclusion of the unskilled students was ensured as they operated within the zone of proximal development of other more skilled counterparts (Candlin and Mercer, 2001). Also this phase aided the participatory approach to learning as learners were involved in a series of dialogical and collaborative episodes as the proficient learners investigated articles, they validated them according to their topics and they also paraphrased them in order to provide comprehensible input for their less proficient counterparts. In this fashion every member in the group taught the other learners but also every member of the group learned from their peers. The teacher's role in this phase was to contribute her/his expertise not to provide the answers but to facilitate the students discover their own answers (Auerbach, 2000).

In the last phase the students had to decide on the form of their writing product whether it would be a report or a power point presentation. Therefore this task made response mode demands on the EFL learners. Every member of the group contributed his/her own writing product and used it to create a coherent report or a power presentation of the topic they selected. The students debated whether they should provide a report or a power point presentation and they also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each text type. The teacher tried to solve any concerns that arose regarding the text type that the students decided to present. Other than that, the students with advanced writing skills took the lead and after they had consulted with their peers they collectively decided what to incorporate in their presentation. Although there was not a specific intervention of the teacher in this phase, the students discussed how they could present their work. In the case of power point presentations the

students collaboratively decided what to incorporate in their presentations that was directly linked to the purpose of writing. The students with advanced computer skills helped the rest of the group to prepare the presentation. When the presentation was ready it was sent to the teacher who made comments and guided the students to resolve different issues. As students were allocated roles the collective knowledge of the group developed through the participation of every member of the group through dialogue and sharing of ideas (Pennycook, 2000).

3.15. An analytical framework of the teachers' and students' interviews

The quantitative data were expected to provide trends about the views of teachers and students on the use of the Edmodo platform. Hopefully they were expected to reveal some general tendencies of the teacher and student respondents. The tendencies under the item "teacher exploits previous experience of the students" revealed that 35 teacher respondents or (70%) agree with the item, 8 teacher respondents (16,67%) strongly agree, 2 respondents (3,33%) neither agree or disagree and 5 respondents (10%) disagree with the above item. What is really important is the additional line of evidence that would depict the very core of the situation under investigation. In the interpretive paradigm the analytical procedure is an inductive one. This suggests that the categories in which data fall under are not pre-determined. This means that themes emerge from "familiarity" with the data (Radnor, 1994, p. 19). Additionally, Richards (2003) identifies three levels in qualitative data analysis. In the first level he suggests that the researcher should listen to the transcripts with a specific focus in mind to make data analysis a relatively straightforward task. He also suggests that at this stage it is essential to use different transcription symbols. These include rising or falling intonation, the use of a period or comma to signify whether the speaker wishes to carry on speaking or not. In the second level he suggests that a more deeper level of analysis should occur during which the researcher should focus on how she/he can exploit the value of talk that might eventually lead him/her to identify pre-determined categories. In the second stage different transcription conventions could be used such as labelling the data with different colours or making notes

that will facilitate the analysis. The third level includes conversation analysis which is a “unique insight into the ways in which the participants jointly construct conversation and what is happening in it” (ibid, 26). In this thesis, I also went through three stages in data analysis. In the first stage, I had to become familiar with the data, so I listened to the data with the research questions in mind. This didn't help me much so I read the data over and over. I realized that a systematic procedure of data analysis was necessary. I had to apply some kind of data selection in order to fit the research questions. I also had to transcribe all the verbal data verbatim in order to review them later and apply some kind of initial coding. The reason I transcribed the data verbatim was to avoid missing essential information as I realised that this would facilitate the categorization of the data. I used simple transcription symbols such as arrows to indicate rising or falling intonation that signified whether the interviewees firmly believed what they said. I used a word processor to write and store the data before conducting axial coding. Twenty-five teachers' interviews and twenty-five students' interviews were coded to be analysed later. Some of these data were used for validation by the participants during member check sessions. The first level also included axial data coding which is a procedure that enables the analyst to break down the data to facilitate categorization. The data may be further categorized into sub-categories and connections between the different categories might be sought (Richards, 2003). In my case, the research questions determined the categorization of data. In other words, they were used as broad axes of categorisation. Following this categorisation the transcribed data fell under these axes:

1. instances of how epistemologies to learning assumed by the EFL teachers during the use of Edmodo digital platform facilitated the emergence of collaborative learning
2. instances of how these epistemologies affected the students' collaborative efforts
3. The impact of the teachers' epistemologies on the EFL learners

During the second stage, I coded the data under these three main axes and I reviewed them data again to highlight the themes and identify phrases or sentences that would facilitate categorization. This process entailed

“clarifications, extensions and making connections between statements” (Papayanni, 2012, p.66)

I used different colours to highlight words and phrases that helped me identify the main themes. Then I made some notes next to the selected phrases that received particular emphasis. For example the teacher interviewees’ responses to the question “*Do you encourage your students to collaborate to meet task objectives*”? were “*web 2.0. settings facilitate the objectives to emerge*” and fell under the first main axis which was coded in red colour. When the teachers were asked for clarifications regarding the degree to which the students’ freedom and autonomy can co-shape the objectives, the responses of eight teacher interviewees were further categorised under the theme “*the students are allowed to search for suitable information regarding their needs*” which was coded in blue colour. Similarly, when the student interviewees were asked “*is group work important when the Edmodo platform is used*”? the students’ responses “*We discuss together during tasks and we combine this information*” fell under the second main axis “instances of students’ collaboration which were coded in green colour. When the researcher further probed into the situation by asking them “*How do you think group work helped you work together in the task*”? the students’ responses “*it gave us opportunities to communicate and help other students*” were further categorized under the theme “learning in web 2.0. settings is based on students’ inclusion and support” and were coded in purple colour. (refer to appendix J) for examples of interview data axial coding and thematization). Level three refers to the discourse analysis which I will discuss in the next section.

3.16. Discourse analysis of the observed teaching sessions

To provide a thick description of the teaching and learning episodes of the observed classes, I selected eight relevant excerpts to fit the aforementioned three main axes. The project contained eleven teaching sessions altogether. Each session lasted approximately one hour and a total of 200 minutes of teacher and students’ interaction data were recorded. Extracts one, two and three are representative of the stances that the EFL teachers adopted in the classroom and therefore fell under research question 1, extracts three, four and five, are representative of the teachers’ stances in relation to the collaboration

opportunities (research question 1a) and extracts seven and eight are representative of the impact of the teachers' epistemologies on the EFL learners (research question two). They were analysed qualitatively based on the content and structure of the dialogical interaction between the EFL teachers and students and between students themselves when the Edmodo platform was used. I adopted a classroom discourse analytical approach for three reasons. First of all, a classroom oriented research sees both teachers and students as active participants in the generation of mutually agreed knowledge (Candlin and Mercer, 2001; Mitchel and Myles, 2004). Secondly, as language learning is perceived as an emergence of meaning during collective activities, the study of the nature of this interaction will provide the researcher with insights about the mechanisms that regard the emergence of meaning (Mitchel and Myles, 2004). Finally as Candlin and Mercer point out "the implications for the joint construction of the content and process of a language class are particularly significant for a researcher who wishes to examine the effects of classroom language learning. This means that lessons are communal behaviours and lessons outcomes are communally moulded" (ibid, p.133).

In this study, I will present and comment on classroom extracts in terms of the roles that the Greek EFL secondary education teachers assume in web 2.0. classrooms in order to facilitate the emergence of syndicated knowledge. Also extracts from students' interaction after having been immersed in the Edmodo digital platform will also be included.

Therefore, the analysis of the observed extracts was organized around the roles that the teachers assumed in the web 2.0. classrooms. The analysis will also include the epistemologies that were applied in the classroom such as teachers facilitating the investigation and validation of students' experiences, teachers modelling the way to this investigation/validation and classroom processes being dialogic and collaborative (Auerbach, 2000).

3.17. Validity and Reliability

"The social world is constantly changing and replication could not take place" (Alawan, 2007, p.14).

The above quote clearly describes the fluidity of the world and since there is a close relation between the human beings and the surrounding world then the human behaviour is in constant change too. So behaviours cannot be replicated. Within the interpretive paradigm in which qualitative research is embedded there are different assumptions as to what makes a good research. Qualitative researchers have their own strategies to ensure good data quality and analysis. They work on “building integrity in the presentation of the social world by explaining everything about the research context, the researcher’s role and they also describe the kind of data collected and how they were analysed” (Patton, 1990, cited in Alwan, 2007, p. 15). Unlike the quantitative paradigm which focuses on concepts like “validity, external validity, reliability, objectivity, and generalizability”(Lincoln and Cuba, cited in Alwan, 2007, p.14), qualitative researchers propose terms such as dependability against reliability, trustworthiness against validity and transferability against generalizability. In terms of trustworthiness rather than accepting or redefining terms such as objectivity, reliability and validity they assign to the discussion regarding objectivity, reliability and validity a more abstract hue (Cuba and Lincoln,1985, cited in Joe, 1998). They posit that a naturalistic dimension of truth lies on a credible version of the events in the level of description and interpretation. The dimension of generalization is abstracted to embrace the concept of understanding one’s situation which one with a knowledge of another situation can make use of. Dependability then is not a matter of replicability but a matter of properly documenting the research design and the qualities of the participants. Similarly confirmability is not a matter of assigning descriptions to objects but of providing evidence of “perspective, standpoint and value system of the researcher” (ibid, p. 345)

Given the complexity of human behaviour the procedure to safeguard “rigour, depth and breadth” of the research entail the following steps:

- 1.obtaining different kind of data using different methods form different participants (credibility)
- 2.the richness of description of interpretation ensures that the perspective of the participants is validated in frequent intervals regarding “data confirmability” (Lincoln and Cuba, 1985, cited in Joe, 1998, p. 346). In the following section I

will describe the two methods that ensure validity and reliability within the context of this thesis.

3.17.1. Triangulation

Triangulation is the building block of thick description which according to Denzin (1989, cited in Creswell, 2007, p.194) is a “rhetorical device” in which writers incorporate details or write lushly and their description creates verisimilitude and produces the feeling that they experience the events described”. He goes on to stress the importance of thick description for qualitative research indicating that “qualitative narrative presents details, context, emotion, and the webs of social relations by ensuring that voices, feelings and actions are heard” (ibid,p.150).

Embedded in thick description is triangulation which entails the use of two or more methods (Cohen et al., 2008) Data triangulation is seen as adding “rigour, breadth and depth” to a study (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, cited in Alwan, 2007, p.16). A common form of triangulation is theoretical triangulation which draws upon “alternatives or competing theories” to ensure rigour (Barton, cited in Alwan, 2007, p. 346) Other forms of triangulation involve the use of more than one observer and several researchers. (ibid). Methodological triangulation involves the use of different methods to reveal different aspects of the phenomena under investigation. (Patton, 1996, cited in Alwan, 2007).

Within the context of this thesis triangulation occurred between methods in the pursuit of a given objective. In other words, I conducted method triangulation by collecting data from questionnaires that fell under quantitative methods and I also collected interviews and observations data which fell under qualitative methods. This cross-method strategy serves as a validity check embracing thus the notion of convergence of findings. (Denzin, 1984, cited in Cohen et al., 2008, p. 143).

Consequently, I conducted data triangulation by collecting information from EFL teachers and students from junior high schools and methodological triangulation by collecting different types of data questionnaires, interviews and participant observations.

3.17.2. Member checks

Qualitative research is all about building trust between the potential participants that researchers set out to observe and practice “ethics in action” by conducting member checks (Cohen, Manyon and Morrison, 2008, p.250). Member checks in qualitative research aim to eliminate the researcher’s bias by ensuring that the participants’ construction of reality is indeed what counts. Member checks is an on-going process in this thesis. It occurred during the piloting study to eliminate questionnaire items that overlapped one another or create confusion to the participants. Especially in the teachers’ and students’ interviews, I used techniques like repeating, paraphrasing, summarizing, clarifying and probing. After the data collection the preliminary findings were reported back to the interviewees who were asked to provide their reflections on these findings adding thus to a more comprehensive depiction of the situation.

3.18. The Ethical Dimension of the Research Project

3.18.1. The researcher’s concerns

The main concern I had was whether the research I had conducted was congruent with values that were important to the researcher. I as a researcher, espoused the assumption that being physically present during the collection of both sets of data (quantitative and qualitative) I thrived to become a participant to the reality of the respondents and I committed myself to providing as an accurate interpretation of their reality as possible. Being part of the respondents’ reality unveiled the distinctiveness of the situation and brought significant details to the forefront.

3.18.2 Informed consent

Conducting research might sometimes intrude the privacy of the respondents so an informed consent protocol was utilised to fully inform the respondents what the procedures to be followed were and what their role in the research entails. Their democratic right to refuse taking part in this research project were fully respected, so was their right to self-determination. Some authors posit that participants have the right to withdraw at any point of the research project and they also indicate that informed consent involves four elements: “voluntarism,

competence, full information and comprehension” (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, p.52). In my case because the EFL participants were minors, I had to ask for their parents’ consent. To ensure their parents’ consent I sent a short description of the research project in L1 to the respondents’ parents explaining the nature of the project, the aims and the roles their children should undertake. Some parents also came to school and required a full account of the project and they also insisted that the students’ privacy and private data would not in any way be intruded. I presented them with the ethical consent form issued by the University of Exeter (see appendix I) and I explained that this research was a requirement for my doctoral degree and that I was officially entitled to conduct the research. I reassured them that in any way the students would be forced to take part in the research or in any way be exploited.

3.18.3 Competence

Competence focuses on the ability of the students to grasp the meaning of either questionnaires or interviews and be capable of either circling an item in the questionnaire or providing answers to the interview. This is ensured during the piloting stage but ethically wise I had to further ensure that the student respondents were capable of circling the item they deem appropriate and therefore I excluded respondents with either low linguistic level or immaturity. Again, as a teacher/researcher I assisted students in case of block or blurred understanding but I absolutely in any case did not lead them towards a desired response.

3.18.4. Full information

Full information deals with providing the respondents –both the EFL teacher and student participants- with as full information as possible. Some authors posit that the respondents should be provided with as many information as possible in order to determine the degree of consent to the research. For example Cohen, Manyon, Morrison (2008) state that “consent should be fully informed, though in practice is often impossible to inform subjects on everything” (p.52) In case of the student respondents, I had to explain in very simple terms about the statistical analysis of the data or how the data should

be tagged for qualitative analysis. In order to do that, I provided them with some simple examples of tables and graphs and I explained that these were graphical representations of the findings.

3.18.5 Comprehension

Comprehension mainly refers to the fact that the respondents fully comprehend the nature of the project and the situation they will put themselves into. Authors also stress the fact that the respondents should also be informed of any potential risk the project entails (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 2008; Bell, 2008). In the case of this thesis, I provided a detailed account of the research project in question and I answered every question raised by the student respondents. I also assured the students that I would not expose them to any unauthorized publishing of their personal data and that I would keep their anonymity and confidentiality. Additionally, the EFL teacher respondents were fully informed of the nature of their role in the research project and I informed them that they should be rest assured that the anonymity and confidentiality would not be put at risk.

3.18.6. Ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents

The issue of anonymity and confidentiality ranks high in the research process. It has been claimed that both issues are associated with one's ability to discover the respondents' identity by special marks, names, addresses to be used later to make associations as to one's identity based on those data (Cohen, Manyon, Morrison, 2008; Miles and Huberman,1993; Bell, 2008, Richards,2003). Regarding the questionnaires, the researcher ensured that no marks that could point to a participant's identity were present or no private data were required from the participants. In the case of the interview it was ensured that no personal details (home address, telephone number) were required and that no participant could be identified by her/his responses. Additionally, during both the quantitative and qualitative arm of the research project the data (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observation schedule, classroom data and tapes) would be safely kept in a locked drawer in the researcher's house. The data would be protected by a well-known anti-virus system and back-up files would also be kept to secure the data against loss. Apart from the

fact that the research should be very sensitive to ethical issues such as informed consent of the students and their parents and the right of the students to withdraw at any stage of the research, the research study in question must not raise any potential ideological conflicts with the participants. It is possible in the course of a research project, however, that political issues may arise mainly when and whether the students question matters of current affairs concerning their reality. It is therefore, the duty of the researcher to lead the students to fruitful discussions concerning these issues without risking any danger of conflicts of any kind. Should these issues arise, I as the researcher would make any effort to raise the students' awareness of these matters and use them as a means of enhancing the students' mediation and collaborated language learning.

Summary

In this chapter a set of fundamental issues of research methodology were discussed. I argued that ontology and epistemology are the two fundamental issues that will determine the nature and the objectives of the research study as they will determine the path to discover knowledge (Crotty, 2009). Within the interpretive paradigm different methods could be used according to the nature of the research. In the context of this thesis, an exploratory case study approach containing both quantitative (questionnaires), and quantitative data (interviews and classroom observations) was utilized on the premise that the two sets of data would run in a complementary fashion and would seek points of convergence and/or divergence (Cohen et al., 2008) I also argued that within the interpretive paradigm concrete concepts such as validity and reliability which correspond to objective knowledge in the scientific paradigm receive a more abstract notion of replicability and confirmability. Although there is no one to one correspondence of these concepts within these two paradigms, there are varied ways by which the validity of data (confirmability in interpretative paradigm) can be ensured (Danzin, 1984, cited in Joe, 1998). These two techniques are triangulation and member checks. I argued that triangulation in this thesis refers to the use of different collection methods in order to ensure converge or divergence of findings. I went on to discuss classroom

observations and I argued that the researcher as a participant observer immerses in the situation as he/she shares the participants' experiences and presents a more comprehensive account of human behaviour. Last but not least, I discussed the analytical framework of data analysis indicating that quantitative data were used as a predecessor to a detailed line of evidence (qualitative data) only to reveal trends. Axial coding was used as a technique to analyzing qualitative data which were crudely categorized to fit the research questions. Additionally, interactional patterns analysis provided insights into the communal effects of social behaviour (Candlin and Mercer, 2004).

I also argued that ethically wise, sensitive to research concerns such as informed consent i.e the participation of the respondents to research on voluntary basis was a process of a conscious decision of the participants. Also I ensured that personal data would not in any case be made public.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the epistemological stances of the EFL secondary education teachers in Greece that were assumed in web 2.0. settings. Additionally, the impact of these epistemologies onto EFL students was also investigated. In this chapter I will report the findings from all three data collection methods (questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations). I will start with the teachers and students' demographic information.

4.2. Teachers' Demographic Information

4.2.1. Gender

All 61 teacher participants were female. There are only three male EFL teachers in the area of Karditsa. Apart from me the other two male teachers taught in Junior High Schools situated in various villages in the area so they were unable to participate in the study. Table 1 illustrates the gender of the participants.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	61	100%

Table 4.1. Gender of the teacher Participants

4.2.2. Teaching Experience

The teacher participants in this study had a long teaching experience. It is worth noting that 24 teachers (39,9%) have teaching experience ranging between 10-15 years and 37 of them (59,9%) have teaching experiences ranging 16-20 years. All of them were permanent teachers and taught in different six junior high schools in Karditsa area in Central Greece. Table 4.2. below illustrates the teaching experience of the teacher participants.

Numbers of years	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
		%	%
10-15	24	39,9	40
16-20	37	59,9	60

4.2. Teaching experience of the teacher respondents

4.2.3. Qualifications

Thirty teachers (49%) have a bachelor's degree. Six teachers (10%) have a diploma degree. Twenty-four teachers (40%) have a masters' degree and one teacher (1%) has got a doctorate degree. Table 4.3. outlines the teacher respondents' qualifications.

Qualifications	frequency	Percent	valid percent %
		%	
Bachelor's degree (B.A)	30	48,9	49
Diploma	6	9,9	10
Master's Degree (MA)	24	39,9	40
P.h.D	1	0,8	1

Table 4.3. Qualifications of the Teacher Respondents

4.3. Teaching Context

4.3.1. Availability of a computer laboratory at schools

All 61 participants indicated that there is a computer laboratory in their schools. Table 4.4. outlines the availability of a computer lab in teacher respondents' schools.

Availability of computer classroom at school	Frequency	percent	valid percent
Yes	61	99,9	100
No	0	0	0

Table 4.4. Availability of computer lab at school

4.3.2. Freedom of using the computer laboratory

In table 4.5 it is worth noticing that out of 61 participants, 25 participants (40%) indicated that they were not allowed by their colleagues of informatics to use the computer laboratory while 36 teachers (60%) indicated that they were allowed to use the computer laboratory. Table 4.5. outlines the freedom of the teacher respondents to use the computer lab in their schools.

Freedom of using the computer lab	Frequency	percent %	valid percent %
Yes	35	59,9	60
No	25	39,9	40

Table 4.5. Freedom of using the computer lab.

4.3.3. Length of the teacher respondents' ICT training

Secondary education teachers in Greece received ICT training which lasted either 6 weeks (A level ICT skills) or 8 weeks (B Level ICT skills) and it is available for teachers across all disciplines. 49 teachers (60%) indicated that

they received six weeks (A level ICT training), while 11 teachers (40%) indicated that they received eight weeks (B level ICT training). Table 4.6. provides the findings of ICT teacher training

ICT training	Frequency	percent	Valid percent
6 weeks	49	59,9	60
8 weeks	11	39,9	40

Table 4.6. Length of the teacher participants' ICT training

4.4. The student Respondents' Demographic Information

4.4.1. Years of studying English

Out of 100 student respondents, 70 students (70%) belong to the upper intermediate level in terms of language proficiency and 30 students (30%) belong to the lower intermediate level. It is worth noting that proficiency level was validated in the first form of junior high schools after a placement test assessment. Table 4.7. reveals the findings.

EFL student language proficiency	frequency	percent %	valid percent
Lower intermediate	30	30	30
Upper intermediate	70	70	70

Table 4.7. Language proficiency of the EFL student respondents

4.4.2. The student respondents' ICT training

Out of 100 students, all of them had received ICT training since the third form of elementary school which went on in all the three forms of junior high school as a compulsory course. The students were also taught informatics for 2 hours a week in all three forms of Junior High School. Table 4.8. below reveals the findings of the EFL students ICT training.

EFL student training in ICT	frequency	Percent %	Valid percent %
	100	100	100

Table 4.8. The EFL students' training in ICT

4.5. Research question one

4.5.1. Quantitative data regarding the students' preparation and the teachers' stances

The quantitative data reveal positive trends regarding the epistemological stances of language teachers to attune their learners with web tasks by providing opportunities to frame an initial picture of the situation they will engage themselves into. The teacher participants' general trends in questions 3-5 regard the preparation stage before they use web 2.0. They seem to prepare the students by leading a discussion or by accessing sites for content. They also used dialog and sharing of ideas to set the floor. Regarding question three, (teachers leading a discussion as a means of preparing the students), most of the participants (thirty nine either strongly agree or agree) reveal positive attitudes by preparing the students to tackle the tasks they set. More specifically, six participants (10%) strongly agree, thirty-three participants (53,3%) agree, sixteen teachers neither agree or disagree (26,7%) and 4 participants disagree with item 3 and two participants ticked the option "other" without specifying what they mean.

The same positive stance was revealed in item 4 four (drawing out knowledge from accessing internet sites to use this knowledge later in tasks). The majority of the participants revealed positive attitudes as fifty seven participants agree with the item i.e. eight participants (13,3%) strongly agree with this item, forty nine participants (80%) agree with item 4 and ten participants (6,7%) neither agree or disagree.

In item five, the positive stances take the nod (teacher participants seem to prepare students by dialogue and sharing of ideas), as eleven teachers (16,67%) strongly agree, forty two participants (70%) agree, six teachers disagree with this item (10%) and 2 teachers (3,3%) strongly disagree. Table 4.9. reveals the findings.

Item	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree	Other
3. I lead a discussion and then I create scenarios using web 2.0.	N=6 (10%)	N=33 (53%)	N=16 (26,7%)	N=4 (6.7%)		N=2 (3,3%) N/S
4. I draw out knowledge from one site and extend this knowledge to tasks	N=8 (13,3,%)	N=49 (80%)	N=4 (6.7%)	_____	_____	_____
5.I prepare the students to exploit information through dialogue and sharing of ideas	N=11 (16,67%)	N= 42 (70%)	_____	N=6 (10%)	N=2 (3.3%)	_____

Table 4.9 Quantitative findings of the teacher respondents regarding their stances in the pre-Edmodo phase

4.5.2. Qualitative data from teacher participants' interviews

Further line of evidence come from the interview and observation data. Data from the teachers' interviews seem to partially confirm the positive trends that were revealed in the quantitative data. They highlight the importance of the students' preparation before they engage in tasks that promote student-directed learning. Teachers replied to the questions: "What do you do before you use the internet"? "Do you try attune the students with the information?" There were contradictory views to these questions. Seven teachers indicated that they used paper and pencil methods to attune the students to the information they were going to access. Their responses were partially in line with the quantitative data above (table 4.9.) and seem to highlight the fact that teachers placed great emphasis on mainstream methods such as using pencil and paper. In other words, a highly structured instructional scheme was used in order to guide the students to a pre-designated starting point that of creating expectations on the issue they discussed before they use web 2.0. Although the respondents seem to agree that they led the discussions in pre-web 2.0. phase (item three, thirty three students agree), they drew out knowledge to extend it to tasks (item four, forty nine teachers agree), and they prepared the students through dialogue and discussions (item five, 42 teachers agree) these findings did not come in direct alignment with teacher interviews in which the teacher respondents provided answers like *"I use exercises to keep them focused"* (Maria), *I usually prepare leaflets and exercises to keep them focused"* (Antigone), *"They need work beforehand"*(Marina), *"I try to connect discussions with their concerns"*(Photini). Maybe the neutral teachers' stance to item 3 (sixteen participants neither agree or disagree) and item four (ten participants neither agree or disagree) originated in the teacher responses to the interview question "What do you do before you use the internet"? What seems to be of great importance is that the EFL teachers in question tried to keep their students on track and prevented them from preoccupying themselves with redundant information. Teachers seem to exert a rigid control over their students *"We find something that we've had a discussion about"*(Lilia) *"I can be very instructive as a teacher over the students' actions"* (Evageline). As Georgia commented she framed her students' maneuvers in the way that she thought

appropriate. She placed a great emphasis in traditional paper and pencil methods. The following quote, came from Georgia a teacher who was interviewed but not observed, reflects the above thoughts.

“I usually prepare leaflets, exercises, so they will be focused and do something. If they are left completely free they do not know what they are doing” They need some work beforehand. You hand out some photocopies, about what you want the lesson to lead to, and all the key points you like your groups to search”. (Georgia).

Out of twenty teachers interviewees, the eighteen of them indicated that they used the internet to guide their EFL students to a specific course of action so that the learners were kept on track. *“I ask them about their favourite at the beginning of the lesson and I ask them why they like it” (Sophia), “I pay attention not to get carried away and discuss what they think about what we access on the internet” (Catherine).* In this respect, they used the internet to connect the students' experience with the accessed content and contextualize it with the topic they investigated. Moreover, the EFL teachers adopted a participatory stance since they ensured a greater number of their students' participation. *“I team up the students as proficient students could help the weak ones” (Olga), “I choose the teams so mixed ability students co-exist” (Marianthi).* The aforementioned responses provide an explanation for the number of the participants that strongly agree with items (3-5, six participants for item 3 and eight and eleven participants for items 4 and 5 respectively). As another interviewee, Efi, commented that the students must be motivated to discuss topics of their immediate concern and relate them to internet-based content.

“Well, we try so probably we find something we've had a discussion about, a certain topic so the students are motivated to begin with and we connect this issue to something on the Internet you have a task for the students to try to find more information about that. (Efi).

Teachers' thoughts regarding the stances they adopt to prepare the students to align with the information are summarized in the following table 4.10. As

revealed in table (4.10.) five teachers were under the impression that they implicitly adopt either a learner centered approach or even a participatory approach (six interviewees) in which the learners' experience framed, to a certain extend, language teaching. The teacher participants placed a great deal of emphasis on motivating the students by using a teacher-directed talk to guarantee participation (seven interviewees), and six interviewees were even more radical in their teaching strategies in that they took the importance of personal experience of their students as a definitive factor to ensure participation in the pre-Edmodo phase.

<i>How do you prepare the students for the information you are going to watch?</i>	Interviews: N=25
Strict organizational scheme	
Without technology being used	
-I use photocopies and exercise	2
-I try to focus their attention	2
-They need work beforehand	2
-I give them the key point to search	1
Learner-centred approach	
I begin a discussion to motivate them	7
-I use the internet as a starting point to start reflecting on the topic	5
Participatory approach	
-I use the internet in order to connect their experiences with corresponding experiences	6

Table 4.10. Instances of the teacher interviewees' stances in pre-Edmodo phase

4.5.3. Qualitative data from classroom observation and discourse analysis

More concrete evidence come from the classroom observations in which I was present. On a deeper level of classroom discourse, the observation data seem to reverse the positive trends of the participants regarding their stance during the students' preparation that were revealed in table 4.9. More specifically, the observation data provided contradictory findings to the positive trends revealed in items (3-5) and to the interviews that revealed a learner centered approach i.e. the use of internet to motivate the students which corresponded to seven teachers' views, and the use of the internet to reflect on the topic which corresponded to five teachers' views respectively. Also, the observation revealed only a superficial attempt on the part of the teachers to establish a participatory view of learning. The following except presents the teacher's action in the pre-web 2.0. phase and reflects the neutrality of 16 teachers and the disagreement of four of the to the issue of the (teacher leading discussions ad creating scenarios using web 2.0). It also reflects the neutrality of 10 teachers in the issue of the teacher drawing out knowledge from web sites and the disagreement of 6 participants with the issue of teachers preparing their students by providing dialogic space and sharing of opinions (items 3,4 and 5 respectively). In the observed class (extract 1), the teacher engaged her students in a warm up activity and she also provided some context for the upcoming task which involves a search for restaurants with different cuisines. At this stage the students were not actively involved and the teacher set the tone as to what the students should do to approach the task.

Extract 1. The teacher set the tone to prepare the students to conduct a search regarding restaurants with different cuisines in the computer lab using the Edmodo platform.

1Teacher: (turning to the students): How many of you go to restaurants?

2This is real life task! Although we are in the classroom we will do a

3task that also happens in real life! Imagine now you are in a

4restaurant! There are three choices! There is a link here:

5restaurant.com, all of you have two bars! Have you found it?

6Nina: they are looking for the bars!

7 Teacher: If you press the “restaurant row” bar press it! All of you! Did you find it?

8 Nina: teacher? Do we enlarge the picture?

9Teacher: either way!

10 (Comment) the students go through the site: they read “GPS”, “Definition”!

This extract, can be classified as highly geared to the teacher’s directive talk which revealed the teacher’s domination in her attempt to abide the students with the initial requirements of the task. In line 1, the teacher seems to have the authority in the classroom, but this authority is used to facilitate an initial reflection on the students’ experience. However, this stance does not go deep to ignite the emergence of the students’ experience as shown later in line, 2. In line 2, there was a conscious effort of the teacher to inform her students that it is real world task. Based on this premise, the teacher appears to attempt to relate a classroom task with real life. Although the teacher’s stance seems to reveal that she invested in socially informed learning there weren’t any signs in the language adopted by her that her stance will be fruitful in making the students’ experience the focus of reflection (line 4). It would have been useful to establish a culture in the classroom in which the students could have started to reflect on their experience by starting a simple discussion that would be centered on students’ thoughts about going to restaurants and placing orders. Although such a directive talk might be necessary in order to anchor the students’ attention to task parameters as the students could be allowed to self pace their steps of reflecting and sharing experiences.

4.6. Instances of collaborative meaning

4.6.1. Students' interaction opportunities. (Quantitative data)

The quantitative data are grouped under the umbrella issue of (the teachers provide opportunities for collaborative meaning) and revealed positive teacher participants' trends in the while Edmodo phase regarding the emergence of collaborative meaning. Data revealed the convergence of secondary EFL teachers to this issue as thirty-eight participants either strongly agree or agree with item six, fifty seven participants strongly agree or agree with item seven and forty five participants either strongly agree or agree with item eight. (refer to appendix A). Regarding item six, (the teachers ensured an internet-based discussion as a way of collaborative meaning), six participants (10%) strongly agree, thirty two participants (53,3%) agree, sixteen participants (26,6%) neither agree or disagree, four participants (6,67%) disagree with the item and two participants (3,33%) indicated "other" without specifying what that is. Regarding item seven (I primarily focus on providing opportunities for internet-based communication), eight participants strongly agree, (13,3%), forty nine participants (80%) agree and four participants (6,67%) neither agree or disagree. Regarding item 8 eight ,(the quality of interaction is subsequently examined), eleven participants (16,67%) strongly agree with this item, thirty four participants (56,6%) agree, fourteen participants (23,3%) neither agree or disagree and two participants (3,3%) strongly disagree. The qualitative data regarding items 6-8 are summarized in table 4.11.

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other
6.Students negotiate meaning in small groups	N=6 (10%)	N=32 (53,3%)	N=16 (26,6%)	N=4 (6,67%)	_____	N=2 (3,33%)

7. I provide learners with opportunities for interaction	N=8 (13,3%)	N=49 (80%)	N=4 (6,67%)	_____	_____	_____
8.The quality of interaction is later examined	N=11 (16,67%)	N=34 (56,6%)	N=14 (23,3%)	_____	N=2 (3,3%)	_____

Table 4.11. Qualitative data regarding collaborative meaning

4.6..2. Qualitative data from the teachers' interviews

Further line of evidence come from the interviews and observation data. The teacher interviewees responded to questions 1-3, regarding their roles during the use of web 2.0. (Do you ensure that the students work together to complete a task?), (Do you assign specific roles?), (Do you think that web 2.0. might enhance students' interaction?).The teacher interviewees provided similar responses that lead to a certain epistemology to knowledge that the EFL teachers assumed. All the 25 interviewees, indicated that using the Edmodo platform ensured a degree of students' autonomy. They indicated that they controlled the degree of their students' autonomy, and they did not let students get carried away in any irrelevant routes to learning. (*“they do things without knowing, but I try to keep them on track”*, Myrsine). The teacher interviewees placed the origin of the students' autonomy to the fact that their students received ICT training in fourth, fifth and sixth grade of primary school and also to the fact that they were taught informatics in Junior High School. English language teachers implicitly appear to adopt an inquiry based approach in that they focused on teaching the learners how they could find meaning by themselves instead of being fed answers by their teachers (*“they ought to be left alone”*, Eleni) *“I try not to be forceful (Giota)*. Maybe these statements reflect the reason why 49 participants agree with item 7 in table 4.11.) An interviewee who was interviewed but not observed indicated that skill building is not an end in itself but it is used as a vehicle for the students to discover information which ultimately leads to collaboration (*“I try to combine their language skills to*

process the information they encounter and explain what they will have to do to their peers”(Marianthi). Marianthi indicated that at this point the collaboration occurred in the level of making decisions regarding the action that the students would have to undertake. The interviewees appeared to raise concerns regarding the extent of learners’ autonomy. As Roxanne indicated, when using the Edmodo platform, teachers stated that students can work pretty well with each other but in the level of collaboration they raised concerns whether their students could function without the teachers’ interference. The following quote encapsulated her view:

“Because if they are used to that kind of working together, a kind of collaborative group work using the Internet occurs if they start this in primary school, at the end of high school you have people they get the information from the Internet like a game. They are used to it. But if they haven’t used the Internet before you probably have to help them more in order to collaborate easily. I think it’s very important to help them understand how they do the work themselves instead of feeding them the right answers. You give them the skills and let them do the work by themselves. They can do everything without your help”. (Roxanne)

Another two of interviewees indicated that collaboration also occurred in the level of exchanging knowledge between the teachers and learners. They also indicated that the teachers who engaged themselves in a two-fold learning transaction facilitated learning but they also learned from their students. Maybe this two-fold transaction indicated by teacher interviewees, justifies the fact that 49 participants agree with item 7 in table 4.11. Additionally, they indicated that a reflection on their part occurred through a discussion with the students (*“Sometimes I don’t have to be the teacher in the class”,Sophia*) As Catherine indicated teachers thought that their students are experts in internet applications and they tried to keep an open-minded spirit. The following quote by another interviewee, Catherine, encapsulates the above discussion.

“I learned a lot from my students, they are very familiar with handling the Internet, they know so many things about computers and they can provide me with a lot of information I never heard before. I try to be very open to their

suggestions. So it's a kind of two-fold task. I try to construct knowledge with them and from them". (Catherine) .

The findings from the teacher interviewees seem to branch up in instances of learner -centered collaboration as eight interviewees pointed to the direction of their discrete intervention in the classroom when things got out of hand. Table 4.12 summarizes interviewees' responses regarding collaborative meaning.

Questions:	N=25	
1,Do you ensure that the students work together to complete a task"? 2."Do you assign specific roles"? 3. Do you think that web 2.0. might enhance interaction"?		
A learner-centred collaboration -We build skills together	6	
-Students develop a certain autonomy being in teams -Teachers direct students in a discrete way Students' collaborative experience determine the extend of teachers' engagement	5 8 4	
A kind of participatory approach	2	

<p>-Reciprocity of learning: Teachers contribute but they also learn a lot by students' contribution</p>		
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Table 4.12. Qualitative data regarding instances of teacher-led student collaboration

4.6.3. Qualitative data form classroom observation and discourse analysis

Further instances of students' collaborative meaning are embedded in the following participant classroom observation. The teacher I observed was in the computer lab with her class. The teacher prepared the students to search for different kinds of restaurants.

Extract 2.

1Teacher: we need to find out about the Eiffel tower first! When it was

2built! If you scroll down and it says "go to two" Now find any university

3Teacher: In this lesson today we will find out menus in real restaurants

4 Teacher:where people eat! We will learn how to find a restaurant to eat and chose a restaurant 5 that fits your needs! Chose a restaurant you like where there is food you like to eat! 6OK? Then we will learn to read the menu and order to eat! (Turning to the screen) 7You've got the menu so we will now make the order! This is a real world task! 8(Students are looking for the bars!)

9Teacher: If you press the "restaurant row" bar press it! All of you! Did you find it?

10Sophia: teacher? Do we enlarge the picture?

11Teacher: either way!

12Stella: we go through the site: they read "GPS", "Definition"!

13Teacher: you can now search for your favourite restaurants! You can search by the 14quick search, if you can all look at me now! It says quick search enter the name 15(interrupted by a student)!

16Sophia: This?

The students belong to lower intermediate level (see table 4.7.) In this extract, the teacher prepared the students to search for different kinds of restaurants. While the teacher was providing explanations as to how the students could search for different restaurant menus on the internet, the students were

looking at their computer screens. The second teacher I observed appeared to assume a very authoritative stance in the classroom. The teacher seems to adopt the Initiation-Response-Feedback mode which is the most common mode of teacher student interaction (lines 1,3,4-7). The picture in the observation came in direct contradiction with quantitative and qualitative data from the teacher interviewees which indicated that collaboration occurred naturally as a kind of game in web 2.0. settings as this was contained in Roxanne's quote. The findings from the observation also seem to contradict the perception that there was a degree of reciprocity in web 2.0. environments in which both parties gauged their contributions based on a set of interconnected ideas (refer to table 4.12.). In the observation session, the teacher initiated the task and gave a complete picture of the requirements. The teacher strived to build basic computer skills in order to engage the students to the task (lines 4-8). Maybe this happened because of the teacher's commitment to the unity of the classroom as she strived to make the task comprehensible to her students. There seems to be a rigid control of the teacher in the classroom. The pedagogical purpose of the teacher was to check the students' comprehension to her instructions. (line 9). It appears that a process of dialogic action is absent in this classroom. The teacher retained her authoritative stance (lines 5-9) to direct the students to find a restaurant that would match their needs. The teacher seems to be the main source of coordination in the classroom. It is worth noting that the teacher chose to exert rigid control on classroom strategies that were required to attune her students with the activity. Although this kind of teacher's talk may be appropriate to coordinate the learners at the early stage of collaboration, the teacher could have employed a more participatory stance in that the students could be let to self-regulate their contributions to the task. What the teacher did was to frame the structure of the learners' contribution to the task. This is probably derived from the teacher's assumptions of what teaching entails and how learning should be constructed. It follows that a learner centred approach in terms of learners' autonomy was not observed in this teaching session. The learners' contributions were closely structured by the teacher as she framed the students' contributions to meet the task parameters (lines 9,13,14).

4.7. Team-based meaning (interaction opportunities)

4.7.1. Quantitative Data

The quantitative data were grouped under the umbrella issue of “interaction opportunities within team-based collaboration” and they mainly reveal positive trends regarding the issue of the interaction opportunities in web 2.0. settings. Quantitative data also revealed the convergence of the respondents to this issue (see appendix A). Fifty-two participants either strongly agree (fifteen participants) or agree (thirty seven participants) with item 1, fifty one participants either strongly agree (eighteen participants) and 33 participants agree with item 2 and 51 participants who either strongly agree (five participants) and thirty participants who agree with item 3.

More specifically, regarding item 1 “when web 2.0. is used the students construct meaning through a perception and interpretation of information” fifteen teacher participants strongly agree with this item (24%). Thirty seven participants indicated that they agree (61%), eight participants indicated that they neither agree or disagree (13%) and 1 participant (2%) disagreed with this item. Regarding item 2 “Web 2.0. emphasizes meaning in a collective way” eighteen participants (28%) strongly agree with this item, thirty three participants (55%) indicated that they agree, nine participants (15%) indicated that they neither agree or disagree with the item and 1 participant (1%) disagreed with the collective meaning construction in web 2.0. As far as item 3 is concerned “up-to-date language stretches promote collaboration” five participants (6,67%) strongly agree with the item, forty six participants (76,67%) agree, eight participants (13,33%) neither agree or disagree, and two participants (3,33%) disagree with the above item. Table 4.13. below summarises quantitative findings of items 1-3.

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other
1. Web 2.0. favour collective meaning through perception and interpretation	15 (24%)	37 (61%)	8 (13%)	1 (2%)	_____	_____
2. Web 2.0 emphasizes collective construction of meaning	18 (28%)	33 (55%)	9 (15%)	1 (1%)	_____	_____
3. Up-to date stretches of language promotes collective meaning	4 (6,67%)	46 (76,6%)	8 (13,3%)	2 (3,3%)	_____	_____

Table 4.13. Qualitative findings regarding the potential of web 2.0. to enhance collaborative meaning

4.7.2. Qualitative Data

4.7.2.1. Teachers' Interviews

Further line of evidence come from the teachers' interview and observation data. The teachers replied to the question: "What working mode do you choose to encourage the students to handle the information"? Fifteen teacher interviewees indicated that they preferred their students to work in groups when they used web 2.0. They also indicated that it depends on the nature of the task whether or not lends itself to team work. *"they are not terrified when they meet something difficult when they are teamed up"*(Nafsika). The teachers indicated that writing skills are particularly favoured by web 2.0. Also the interviewees indicated that collaboration seem to occur when the students wrote essays based on internet information. Eight interviewees traced collaboration in writing

skills in that teachers collaborated with their students when they had to correct, enhance or complement internet-based information with some ideas of their own. Maybe that is why thirty seven participants agree with item 1 in table 4,13. As Paraskevi indicated the teachers favoured a kind of *fragmented* (italics, mine) meaning between the students when they engaged them in grammar tasks. They seem to collaborate with each other in order to find the right grammatical form. Paraskevi also indicated that the same happened with vocabulary tasks i.e. when the students tried to find the correct vocabulary to write reports. The following quote reflects the above thoughts.

“Last week I set a sort of task that involved writing and you have this composition I suppose, the essay and you have a lot of students being in the same essay in the same time and you have to correct, enhance or give more ideas so I suppose writing is enhanced by the Internet. The collaboration works among the students during writing tasks and of course grammar too because the Internet can help you when you have grammar tasks you can understand whether the vocabulary you use is right or wrong.” (Paraskevi).

Ten teacher participants stressed that knowledge is socially embedded in that it occurred within the boundaries of the learning community. They commented on the use of group work as an approach that helped the students focus on the purpose of the task (*“when in groups they get in touch with the main idea”*, Maria) as another interviewee indicated (Maria) who was interviewed but was not observed. As opposed to having the students seeking knowledge alone, the interviewees indicated that collaborated meaning through group work was a conscious attempt of theirs to draw the students’ attention to the main ideas and retain their attention. This explains why thirty seven participants agree with statement one in table 4.13. Maria also indicated that group work ensured a great deal of inclusion for the students in that support is provided within the community and this process keeps on and on as the students proceed with their tasks based on the help of their peers. This comes in line with the fact that forty-six participants agree with item 2, in table 4.13. regarding the fact that web 2.0. emphasize collective meaning construction. When Maria was interviewed she indicated that:

“Individually when the students use the Internet, that may lead to seeking irrelevant information as opposed to group work get in touch with the main idea and not let members of the group get away from the main focus. I also believe that one member can give help to another and suggest something that the rest don’t know. So they can keep moving by getting support from each other” (Maria).

The qualitative findings are summarized in table 4.15. The findings revealed the interviewees’ assumptions that team work guarantees negotiation of ideas and collaboration.

Question: “What working mode do you choose to ensure student collaboration?”	Interviews=25
Group work ensure collaboration	7
-team writing skills ensure negotiation of ideas	8
-negotiation in terms of finding the correct grammatical form and vocabulary	5
-group work as means of focusing the students in the main idea	3
-group work as providing support among students	2

Table 4.14. Qualitative data regarding group work and student collaboration

4.7.2.2. Data from classroom observation and analysis of the interactional patterns

Further line of evidence as to the establishment of the students’ collaboration came from the classroom observation. Observation data came to contradict the

positive trends in the quantitative data (see table, 4.15. above) and the teachers' perceptions expressed by the teacher interviewees that group work enhanced collaboration. During the observation this group of student focused on their teacher's instructions as she demonstrated how to use the computer to search for different cuisines to focus on cultural differences. The expected outcome was the selection of a restaurant that had different kind of cuisines. Meaning is exclusively derived from the teacher who is seen as the expert.

Extract 3.

1Teacher: type in "Chicago"! Go to the option "cuisine" !

2 Meropi: (one group) Teacher ours is a bit! (meaning that their screen is blur)!

3Teacher: We will deal with it! Go to the other team to watch! Go to Japanese
4cuisine! she moves around to help the students find the option "Japanese"!

5Bessie: Japanese, Japanese! Oh yes! We found it!

6Teacher: If you found Japanese we can now choose between ten Japanese
7restaurants! We can see menus, options, maps! Which of these do you like?

8 Bessie: Do you mean that we choose one of them?

9Teacher: Yes, Choose one of them! Each team will chose one restaurant and
tell me why!

10(the team of students negotiate how to chose the restaurant): the students
11talk to each other in order to choose a restaurant! (Fofi) :We want to read the
12menus 1and the reviews in order to choose!

Extract three starts with the teacher structuring and framing the learners' contributions to the task (lines 6-7). Although this kind of teacher's talk drew the students' attention to the activity it diminished the value of the group as a means to enhance negotiation. This view of the teacher as the source of absolute authority was reflected in the students' actions. It is worth noticing that the students turned to the teacher to seek basic computer skills even though the teacher taught EFL (Line 2-3). The teacher is the main source of providing structured support and she moved around the class to assist the learners construct an initial point of reference (line 4). Discourse wise the teacher established and maintained the focal point of the task. This is related to the

epistemology that the teacher held about how knowledge is constructed and provided it to the learners in manageable chunks. Maybe this explains that eight participants neither agree or disagree in item 1, in table 4.13 who indicated that meaning is constructed through perception and interpretation of content. The learners are the recipients of the teacher's knowledge and as such they are entitled to brief and limited turns. Note that Bessie only intervened in the classroom to either confirm that the teachers' input was understood or to ask for clarifications (lines 5 and 8 respectively). This teacher's stance was led by her pedagogical aims of what should be done in order to address the task and how the students' contributions should be shaped (lines 6-7). In lines (9-12) the teacher established an Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) framework to check understanding. Clarifications were sought by the learners as to whether they should search the web to choose a Japanese restaurant. This contradicts findings from interviews indicating that group work guarantees collaboration and negotiation of ideas depicting the views of fifteen interviewees (eight in favour of collaboration and seven in favour of negotiation of ideas). In lines (11-12) the teacher appears to allow the learners a certain degree of autonomy in that the learners were allowed to conduct a search for restaurants and collaboratively discuss the reason why they chose a particular restaurant. It is worth noting that the teacher implicitly made an effort to decentralize teaching as she provided the floor to the students in order for them to express their reasons for their option. This decentralization of the teacher's authority continues in lines (10-12) where the students assumed action and explained their line of thought which led them to the selection of a particular restaurant. It seems that although initially the teacher exerted a tight control in the collaboration of meaning (3-4, 9-10) she gradually loosened her control over the teaching process as the students appear to assume action reflected in their decisions to meet the expectations of their teacher and the task. Full learner autonomy and learner responsibility of learning were not observed in this session though.

4.7.2.3. Qualitative data from Edmodo Digital platform. (one-way communication)

This point of observation concerns the use of Edmodo in terms of collaborated meaning between the teacher and the learners. Whilst at home, the learners communicated with their teacher through Edmodo to seek clarifications for their assignments. (The names of the students were wiped off for ethical reasons). The name of their team was retained though. The students informed their teacher that they selected the topic of their team and they provided their reason for that (line 1-4). This signifies that the students developed a certain degree of autonomy in that the research questions were presumably the product of their negotiation. The students' post on the Edmodo platform might partially confirm the teacher interviewees' thoughts that group work ensures collaboration and negotiation. However, these two concepts occurred only at a superficial level in the students' post. Also, learners seem to adopt the responsibility of learning (to a certain extent) as they decided which aspects of the topic they would like to research as a team (lines 5-9, their spelling errors were retained). The discussion about how the students decided to research these questions was not posted by the students. Extract 4 is from the Edmodo platform.

Extract 4.

Hello Mrs. (The name of the teacher has been deleted for ethical reasons),
1we are the techfreaks and we write to you because we want to inform you
about our 2subject. Well, the subject that we decided to find informations is
bullying and cyber 3bullying. We think that this subject can be very helpful
for [teenagers.Here](#) we write 4the questions that we will work
5 What is bullying and why these people use these wapons?
6Which are the feelings of the victims?
7What is cyber bullying why and which people do these things?
8What kind of violence can find in our community?
9 How we can solve this problem?

The response from their teacher seems to have directed the students to a specific action in order to produce a collaborative meaning as this was revealed in the following excerpt.

Dear Marisa,
1The topic really seems promising. Do some research and identify the
2research questions that will help you investigate a specific angle of
this topic. 3Do not hesitate to contact me in case you need further
assistance.
4Kind regards,
5Your teacher. [Λιγότερα...](#)

Although the teacher seems to hold the knowledge as an expert she did not impart it directly to the learners but she provided guidelines as to how this knowledge could emerge. Discourse wise, the language used by the teacher in this exchange looks highly prescriptive as it revealed the teacher's epistemology to direct students to a specific kind of action (do research, and identify a specific angle of the topic, lines 1-3). The teacher proposed the identification of the research questions (lines 1-2) which might have ignited further collaboration between the students. Maybe the teacher assumed this prescriptive language in order to resolve the students' queries to the task. Also meaning is not viewed as an abstract concept but it is contextualized within the teacher's movements to provide answers to her students' questions (lines 1-3).

4.8. The Teachers' Epistemologies

4.8.1. Teachers as facilitators of knowledge

4.8.1.1. Quantitative Data (Positive trends)

The quantitative data regarding the adoption of an epistemology which led to the facilitation of meaning construction were grouped under the umbrella issue "teachers as facilitators of learning" and they were grounded in general positive trends as the teachers positively converged to item 5 (seventeen strongly agree and thirty three agree), EFL teachers facilitated the blending of ideas between students (item 5, part 5, appendix A), they motivated the learners to exploit

language they encountered in collaborative tasks (item 6, part 5, sixteen participants strongly agree and twenty seven agree), the teachers facilitated the negotiation of language the students came across in different sites in collaborative activities (item 7, part 5, twenty participants strongly agree and twenty two participants agree). More specifically, regarding item 5, seventeen participants (28%) strongly agree with the item, 33 participants (55%) agree, 10 participants (15%) neither agree or disagree and 1 participant (2%) disagrees with the item. Regarding item 6, seventeen participants (27%) strongly agree with the statement, 27 participants (44%) agree, 13 participants (22%) neither agree or disagree, 2 participants (4%) disagree and 2 participants (3,0%) strongly disagree. Regarding item 7, nineteen participants (33%) strongly agree, 23 participants (37%) agree, 13 participants (22%) neither agree or disagree, 2 participants (3%) disagree and 3 participants (5%) strongly disagree. The following table 4.15. provides a summary of the quantitative data.

Item	strongly agree	agree	neither agree or disagree	disagree	strongly disagree	other
5. Teachers facilitate blending of ideas	17 (28%)	33 (55%)	10 (15%)	1 (2%)	_____	_____
6. Teachers motivate the students to exploit language in collaborative activities	17 (27%)	27 (44%)	13 (22%)	2 (3%)	2 (5%)	_____
7. Teachers facilitate the negotiation of language	20 (33%)	23 (37%)	13 (22%)	2 (3%)	3 (5%)	_____

Table 4.15. Quantitative data of teachers as facilitators of knowledge

4.8.1.2. Qualitative Data (Teachers' interviews)

More detailed line of evidence as to how the EFL teachers facilitated the emergence of knowledge came from the teachers' interviews. The interviewees responded to the question "Do you take any steps to extend and exploit internet-based information with your students"?

Out of twenty five teacher participants, fifteen of the teacher participants indicated that they used the internet to augment the comprehension of task requirements they assigned to their students. These teachers commented on the way that the internet enhanced speaking skills. They used the internet to cross check the information between text books and the internet (*"I asked them questions while watching and they answered, Nina*), (*" I tried to show them another film and then I asked them to discuss, make comments, analyse the situation depicted on the film", Kalliopi*). As another interviewee Sophia commented, she used the internet as a spring board to facilitate comprehension to a reading extract they had reflected upon before the used the internet. When she was asked for clarifications about how exactly she checked comprehension, she responded that she used the internet to enhance comprehension by exploiting the audio and visual features embedded in the internet . She also invested in the construction of knowledge that is socially informed in that she employed team work to ensure that the more proficient students supported the weaker ones. She clarified that the weaker students were more timid to participate and when the internet was used they relied on their more proficient counterparts to resolve their difficulties. The previous thought confirms item 5 to which seventeen participants strongly agree and thirty three agree and item six to which sixteen participants strongly agree and twenty seven participants agree as can be seen in table 4.16. So the fact that the teachers employed team work to ensure that the more proficient students support the weak ones was presumably a means of blending ideas and it motivated the students to exploit language in collaborative activities. Thus she ensured a greater inclusion of her students in the task by allowing the assimilation of the weak students in the task through the support of their peers.

In this respect, she adopted the egalitarian view in language teaching in that all students have the same rights in learning. She commented that:

“I had taught them a story, I gave them an extract of a story by Edgar Allan Poe’s short story and after doing comprehension work we watched the same extract on the Internet. I asked them questions and they answered they also were engaged in group work so all students can participate provided they have the necessary language competence. The weak students were supported by more competent students. However, the weak students were timid and hesitant to participate unless more competent students supported them. Otherwise, they avoided speaking in English”
(Sophia)

Ten teacher interviewees indicated that they employed a process of discussion and exploration to enhance speaking skills and extend thus internet-based information. As Eleni commented when she was asked what she did in order to extend internet-based information to tasks, she stressed the potential of discussion and exploration to contextualise the piece of information accessed on the internet. Her view was also shared by another five interviewees (*“I would rather have them search sites that are interesting to them”*Alexandra). It is worth noticing that she exploited socially informed learning by drawing the students’ reflection on issues that might affect their lives. So, she attempted to connect information they watched with real life when she asked her students to provide solutions to a potential pregnancy concerning a classmate of theirs. She partially employed a participatory approach in that individual experiences were contextualized and linked with discussion and reflection as the students were required to provide solutions. In this way, speaking skills were not used as an end in themselves, but as a means of reflection and exploration (Auerbach, 2000, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000). The following interview quote from Eleni encapsulates the above discussion.

“Yes, of course it is because such activities are really fun and I think that the students learn more easily when they find activities interesting and fun otherwise will abandon it. So, problem solving activities may provide a lot of entertainment for the students for example we used the Internet to enhance it or If they have to provide solutions to problems we watched on the Internet for

example How would the students react if they found out that a classmate of theirs was pregnant an issue we watched on the Internet. They found that providing solutions was a reason for them to participate. That facilitated the learning process” (Eleni).

Table 4.16..summarises the teachers’ thoughts on the way they trigger knowledge aided by the of internet.

Question	Interviews=25
Learner-centred approach to learning	
-use of internet to enhance comprehension	8
-comprehension check is ensured through team to enhance support to weaker students	7
Participatory approach to learning	
-individual experience are tackled through discussion and exploration	5
-socially informed knowledge is enhanced	5

Table 4.16. Qualitative data regarding teacher interviewees’ epistemologies regarding learning

4.8.1.3. Classroom observation data and interactional patterns analysis

The evidence from classroom observation contradicted the positive trends depicted in table 4.16. and positive teachers’ interviewees perceptions on collaborative meaning. The teacher’s epistemology to knowledge as this was expressed in extract five, challenged the views expressed by ten teachers (table 4.16.) who employed a participatory approach by exploring individual experiences and investing on the effects that social experience had

on the development of speaking skills. During the observation, the teacher was helping the students to find different restaurants on the map in order to write a report about their favourite restaurant.

Extract 5.

1Maria: Teacher, where am I going? (meaning where to look for the information)!

2Teacher: Have you looked at the map? If you take a look at the 4map you can tell me what the view
3is like!

4Maria: You can see the sea from the restaurant!

5Teacher: what else can you see?

6Maria: roads, parks!

7Teacher: How old is this restaurant? Find this also!

8Maria: Twelve years old!

9Teacher: Go back to the instructions! What is the name of the street where the restaurant is!

10(all students search the page to find the information) the students in team go back and forth to find
11the name of the street! Chamter street.

12T: Have you looked at the map? If you take a look at the map you can tell me what the view is like!

13Lilia: You can see the sea from the restaurant!

14Teacher: what else can you see?

15Maria: roads, parks!

16Teacher: How old is this restaurant? Find this also!

17Celia: Twelve years old!

18Teacher: Go back to the instructions! What is the name of the street where the restaurant is!

19Maria! the students in team go back and forth to find the name of the street! Chamter street!

20Teacher: go back to the instruction again! Click on "view map". How many block is the ocean from
21the mandarin restaurant!

22Celia: the ocean?

23Teacher: yes, the ocean!

This extract starts with the students asking where to go on their computer screen to find restaurants. The teacher provided support by directing the students where to look to find information (lines 2-3). The teacher checked comprehension and compliance of the students to task parameters. By modelling language the teacher checked comprehension but at the same time she provided the stimulus for the students to produce situated learning (2,5,7,9). In this extract, the students had to explore different internet sites to find tools like maps that could enhance their understanding and help them resolve difficulties that arose. The teacher kept the key role in the classroom by confirming that the objectives of the task were understood by the students and she also ensured that the objectives would be realised (lines 2-3). However, as this extract could also be classified as teacher-directed the dialog with the teacher did not impart knowledge as a product but she led the students to discover knowledge in consecutive steps.

Maybe this teacher-directed talk was necessary because finding information on a map was a new activity for her learners. The teacher was led by her pedagogical goals to ensure a successful completion of the task and therefore she kept a tight control over the learner's actions. Probably the teacher was driven by grounded assumptions about how learning is achieved and thus she did not leave any space for dialogic talk between the students nor did she make any attempts to establish a culture in which her students could practice collaborative work by gradually discovering how to find the location of the restaurant that matched their needs. She seems to place a little value on the potential of her students to discover the path of learning through collaboration. From a dialogic point of view she eliminated every opportunity for student directed initiatives. It is worth noting the impact of her teaching options on the learners. Maria's contributions in lines 6, 8 and 15 were limited and brief and they were structured in such a way as to align the students with the teacher's instructions. Therefore, the teacher's discourse from extract 5 revealed contradictory findings to items 5 and 6 in table 4.16. It also reversed the participatory view of education as this was revealed in the views of eight interviewees who commented on the potential of group work to augment collaborative work by enhancing the weak students' speaking skills. Lines (4,6,8,10,11) also contradicted teacher interviewees' views of participatory

approach. Although the students provided short stretches of language, the negotiation between the students was not observed. In this sense the egalitarian view of knowledge as expressed by the teachers' interviews was totally reversed in the observed classroom. Classroom thus is a space of reproduction of authority relations where the teachers have complete control.

4.8.1.4. Qualitative data from the learners' contributions in the Edmodo platform

At a later stage the students contacted their teacher to send in their team's research questions about the topic they investigated. At this stage, the research questions are essential in that they determined the nature of the articles the students accessed. The teacher was considered an expert so the students sent their questions to be evaluated by their teacher. In extract 4, it is worth noting that syndicated meaning that emerged from the students was split into research questions (lines 5-9) which the teacher had asked them to identify. The students reflected their concerns about the topic they chose to research (line 10). It seems that the teacher through assigning research questions tried to establish a socio-cultural context into which the students would probably develop an understanding of how to construct knowledge within the Edmodo digital platform. The teacher also invested in knowledge which would be presumably constructed within the students' Zone of Proximal Development. Although the actual negotiation between the students was not sent to the teacher, the teacher prompted the students to identify the research questions by stimulating team-based knowledge that was appropriated to different issues of students' immediate concerns.

Students' responses in the Edmodo platform (Extract 6.)

1Dear Teacher,

2We have successfully completed the topic of our subject and the research questions you have asked us
3to [doHere](#) they are.

4TOPIC:How video games affect teenagers

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

5GEORGE: Why are teenagers so attracted to video games?

6CHRIS: How video games affect the teenagers' performance at school?

7EUTHIMIS:What are the bad habits that teenagers take from playing video games?

8APOSTOLIS:Are there any benefits from playing video games?

9SOTIRIS:How can we face the impact of video games on teenagers?

10We think they are pretty good. We hope you like them and see what we can add to them.

From,

Chris [Λιγότερα...](#)

The teacher responded to the students' research questions and she ensured that the students were on track. She also regulated the students' future actions.

Teacher's response on the Edmodo space

1Dear Chris,

2Thank you for your e-mail. I can see you are doing a fine job with your assignment. Well done!

3Regarding your research question I am still skeptical about your third research question.

4However, give it a try and see how researchable this question can [be](#). As I said in my previous e-mail,

5find three relevant articles that best answer your research question(s). I am not sure whether you are

6doing the report or the power point presentation, in either case follow the instructions from the leaflet I

7gave you. Keep up the good work.

The teacher started her contribution by appraising the students for their work. (line, 2). The teacher went on by raising points of concerns. She perceived one of the students' research question to be problematic and she expressed her concerns on the Edmodo space. She urged the students to experiment with the potential of the third research question to find out the extend to which it could reveal useful information (lines 3-4). Although teacher directed talk is still

authoritative she seems to lead the students to a path towards knowledge by indicating that the students should find the articles they were told to and try to find a solution to their problem.

4.9.The EFL teachers' expertise is used to establish a learning community aided by web 2.0.

4.9.1. Quantitative Data (In favour of)

The quantitative data that were obtained from the teachers' questionnaires were once again geared to teachers' positive trends in the issue of their expertise being used to establish a learning community. The findings were grouped under the teachers' roles in web 2.0. as key agents of communities of learning. More specifically, item one revealed the quantitative findings regarding web 2.0. efficiency only when the teacher ensures that it could be tailored to meet the linguistic or methodological goals the teachers set, item six revealed findings concerning authentic information found on web 2.0. that could enhance the learners' autonomy and item seven revealed findings regarding the compatibility of web 2.0. with different learning styles found in part six of the teachers' questionnaire (see appendix A). Regarding item one, sixteen participants (26,67%) strongly agree with this item, forty one participants (66,6%) agree and four participants (6,67%) neither agree or disagree. Regarding item six, ten participants (16,67%) strongly agree with the item, thirty six participants (60%) agree, nine participants (13,3%) neither agree or disagree and six participants (10%) disagree. Concerning item seven, six participants (10%) strongly agree, thirty-six participants (60%) agree, seventeen participants neither agree or disagree (26,67%) and two participants (3,33%) disagree. The quantitative findings to items 1,6,7, are summarized in table 4.17.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other
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1. Web 2.0 is efficient only when teacher tailor them to meet methodological or linguistic goals	16 (26.67%)	41 (66,6%)	4 (6,66%)	_____	_____	_____
6. Teachers use web 2.0 to enhance the learners' autonomy	10 (16,67%)	36 (60%)	9 (13,33%)	6 (8,74)	_____	_____
7. The teachers use web 2.0. to address learning styles	6 (10%)	36 (60%)	17 (26,67)%	2 (3,33%)	_____	_____

Table 4.17. Quantitative data regarding EFL teachers as establishers of communities of learning

4.9.2. Qualitative Data (Teachers' Interviews)

During the teachers' interviews, the interviewees responded to the questions "Do you encourage the students to collaborate to meet task objectives" and "Does web 2.0 helped you to accommodate different learning styles"? (see appendix B). Greek EFL teachers indicated that a learning community indeed took place when web 2.0 was used in the sense that their students were mentored how to construct knowledge that was originated inside the strategies employed in order for them to regulate that knowledge. Also the construction of knowledge was also aided by the inclusion of different learning styles (*"the good student might be the one that talks and keeps notes", Despina*).

In this respect, the interviews confirmed the quantitative findings in item 1 with which sixteen participants strongly agree and forty agree. The qualitative data from the interviews revealed that the teachers involved in web 2.0 settings did not set rigid objectives and allowed the students' behaviour to affect pre-determined objectives. Fifteen interviewees indicated that establishing a learning community was actually enhanced by web 2.0. in that knowledge became a journey in which the learners embarked by wandering in the information provided by the internet. (*"I suppose you have to leave them some space or search for wandering", Anna*), (*"You have to leave some room to tailor the information themselves", Vassiliki*). This was facilitated by the fact that the teachers had the freedom to use the computer lab in their schools, so by having the students in front of a computer screen made the search for information a feasible procedure (refer to table 4.5). That might explain why thirty six participants in item 6 (table 4.17.) agree that web 2.0. enhance the learners' autonomy. This according to the teacher interviewees was achieved to a certain extent by letting them search for information and by allowing them to abide to their learning styles (some students talk, some take notes.) This might also explain why sixteen participants strongly agree and thirty six agree with item 6 (table 4.17.). It also explains findings in item 7 to which six participants strongly agree and thirty-six agree that web 2.0. allow a diversity of learning styles. In their interviews, the teachers clarified the issue of enhancing their students' autonomy as they indicated that they urged the students to abide with tasks or access information by capitalizing on their individual learning styles. As Irene commented, a web 2.0 class is different from a text book. The stillness of information may terrify the students. On the contrary, web 2.0. inspired the students to do their best to handle the situation.

"On the other hand, even if they encounter something difficult on the Internet, they are not really scared, when you do that in the classroom with the book they will not respond, they will be terrified, but using the Internet to provide information they are not really scared. They try to do their best".(Irene).

Fifteen language teachers indicated that they exerted loose control on the objectives they set in web 2.0. settings. More specifically, they traced the issue of strict objectives in the level of their students searching the net to find

information that was interesting to them. (*“I would lead them towards searching things suitable for them, Marianthi*). It follows that the objectives are not pre-determined but were appropriated during the teaching session. As Angeliki commented setting objectives in the web 2.0. is a wider issue. Even with setting linguistic issues as vocabulary use this was used to reflect on issues of current affairs *“we can listen to actually English is spoken in the world in relation to how I speak it”*, Angeliki). She further commented that the teachers allowed their students a degree of autonomy. She commented that:

“The objective would be a rather big one but I would be strict when they would like to search other pages or sites but I would lead them towards searching things suitable for them. I am not that strict on the other hand I wouldn’t leave them move freely where they wanted to. I would suggest to look for something else they would be interested in”.

Table 4.18. below summarises the qualitative findings of teacher interviewees.

<p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you encourage the students to collaborate to meet task objectives” 2. “Does web 2.0 help you to accommodate different learning styles”? 	Interviews: N=25
<p>Web 2.0. facilitates objectives to emerge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -searching for suitable information related to learners’ needs -leave students discover knowledge dictates objectives to a certain extend 	<p>8</p> <p>7</p>
<p>Web accommodating different learning styles</p> <p>Construction of knowledge is embedded in the learning strategies e.g speaking or note-taking</p>	10

4.18. Qualitative data indicating that EFL teachers enhance community learning.

4.9.3. Qualitative Data from classroom observation and interactional patterns

In this teaching session the students were in front of their computers and they were looking for different masks from different plays. They chose masks from mid-night summer dream and they were searching wikipedia to find information about the heroes who wore these masks. The outcome for the students was a summary of the play which the students narrated to the rest of the class. Extract seven below, captured the process of collaboration between the teacher and the students. The third teacher I observed seem to hold a different view of knowledge in that she partially allowed her students to assume a degree of control in their action to accomplish the task.

Extract 7.

1Lena: we go to Google, after we clicked to the pictures, (another student
2intervening) we wrote in Google the masks for Midnight's summer dream
3(another student pick up where the previous left it off) we tried very masks!

4Teacher: So, you found a lot of interesting masks! What are you going to do
5with these masks?

6Lena: The site is very difficult to understand. We will search for another sites
7to understand. Then we will print the information of the masks to have it.

8Teacher: you are going to print them!

9Matilda: We can save them with our name at house we can print them!

10Teacher: So did you send me this e-mail with the masks?

11(Whole team): Yes! We want to.....

12Teacher: You want to copy these masks to your e-mails and then send
13them to me?

14SS: Yes!

15Teacher: addressing another team: What have you done so far?

16Christina: we copied the sentences from the Internet, Wikipedia we chose
17the characters and write what they do!

18Tecaer: What are you going to do next? Are you going to present your
19work in the class?

20Matilda: Yes!

21Teacher: are you going to print it?

22Roxanne: We will try to find some photos to go with it!

23Teacher: This team here found the characters of the play in the Wikipedia,
24they copy their words and now they will find the pictures for each character!

Extract seven can be classified as student-dominated talk in the sense that the students established a kind of culture in which they constructed knowledge within a specific setting in front of their computer screens. From a sociocultural perspective, the students appeared to develop a kind of collaborative work by searching for information to execute task parameters (match a mask with a hero of a play) and they seem to rely on their peers' safety to search for information. (lines 1-3). It is worth noting here that all the students suggested different sites to look for information. Thus, as Lena's contribution suggested, the students were allowed by the teacher to self-pace the construction of meaning (in this case the option to seek information in sites that are more suitable in terms of linguistic complexity, lines, 6-7). Note that Lena decided to search for information in another site that was within her language proficiency. These students seem to begin to realise how to look for information to resolve the task that was assigned to them by their teacher. The teacher's pedagogical goal appeared to aim the successful completion of the task but she also aimed to leave the students decide on the way they would best resolve the task. From a dialogical point of view she seems to facilitate the students' contributions. The teacher realised that her students had mastered computer skills so she allowed them to seek knowledge and she also decided to let them reason out their thoughts (lines 16-17). Also the students acquired a kind of autonomy in that they reflected on the strategies they employed. Note that in lines 6-7 Lena subvocalized the procedure she followed to acquire the information she needed. The teacher in this session did not impose strict objectives but she rather decided to leave the students decide how they would resolve the task (lines 16,17,20,22). In this sense this extract confirms the views of eight interviewees that the EFL teachers encourage their students to search for information that suits their needs. It also confirms the views of seven interviewees who encouraged their students to discover meaning.

4.10. The impact of the teachers' Epistemologies on their learners' meaning construction

4.10.1. Quantitative Data (The students' questionnaire)

The quantitative data were grouped under the umbrella issue "Teachers function as catalysts of collaborative meaning" and revealed the student participants' views as to the extent to which their teachers in web 2.0 (refer to appendix B) facilitated and mentored the emergence of meaning. The data were grounded in positive views of the students regarding team work. More specifically in item one, "When we use the Edmodo platform I would like the teacher to have us work in small groups" the data were rooted in positive trends of 100 student participants. More specifically twenty student participants (24%) strongly agree with the item, sixty one participants (61%) agree, thirteen participants neither agree or disagree (13%) one participant disagrees (1%) and one participant strongly disagrees (1%). In item two "The teacher functions as a catalyst in the interpretation of internet-based information", twenty nine participants (29%) strongly agree, fifty five participants (55%) agree, fifteen participants (15%) neither agree or disagree and one participant (1%) disagrees with the statement. In item three "when we find information on the internet we like to control the information in the team rather than the teacher", twenty seven participants (27%) indicated that they strongly agree with the item, forty four participants (44%) agree, twenty two participants (22%) neither agree or disagree with the item, four participants disagree (4%) and 3 participants (3%) strongly disagree. In item four, "I would like my teacher to help us focus on the topic we talk about" thirty three participants (33%) strongly agree, thirty seven participants agree (37%), twenty two participants neither agree or disagree (22%), three participants disagree (3%) and five participants (5%) strongly disagree with the item. In item 5, "I want my teacher to use the information we access on the internet in different activities", seven participants strongly agree with the statement (7%), seventy seven participants agree (77%), thirteen participants neither agree or disagree (13%) and three participants disagree (3,33%) with the item. Finally. in item six "The role of the teacher is central in providing opportunities for common action", seventeen participants (16,67%) strongly agree with the item, sixty participants (60%) agree, thirteen participants

(13,33%) neither agree or disagree and ten participants (10%) disagree with the statement. Table 4.19. summarizes quantitative data regarding the impact of teacher epistemologies on learners.

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other
1. When we use the Edmodo platform I would like the teacher to have us work in teams	N=24 (24%)	N=61 (61%)	N=13 (13%)	N=1 (1%)	N=1 (1%)	_____
2. The teacher functions as a catalyst in the interpretation of internet-based information	N= 29 (29%)	N=55 (55%)	N=15 (15%)	N=1 (1%)	_____	_____
3. When we find information we as a team control it rather than the teacher	N=27 (27%)	N=44 (44%)	N=22 (22%)	N=4 (4%)	N=3 (3%)	_____
4. "I would like the teacher to help us focus on the topic we discuss	N=33 (33%)	N=37 (37%)	N=22 (22%)	N=3 (3%)	N=5 (5%)	_____
5. I would like the teacher to use the material we find on the internet in different activities	N=7 (7%)	N=77 (77%)	N=13 (13%)	N=3 (3,33)	_____	_____

6.The role of the teacher is central in providing opportunities for common action	N=17 (16.67%)	N=60 (60%)	N=13 (13,33%)	N=10 (10%)		
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Table 4.19. Quantitative data regarding the impact of the teachers' epistemologies on the EFL learners

4.10.2 Qualitative Data from the students' Interviews

4.10.2.1. Group work and peer informed learning

Data from the students' interviews provided an in-depth line of evidence as to the impact of the teachers' epistemologies on their student-based meaning construction. Twenty-five student interviewees responded to the questions: "When you use the internet in the classroom do you think is it important to work in groups?" and "When do you access information on the internet do you exchange thoughts and views on the subject with your teacher or your classmates?" (refer to appendix, D). All of the twenty five student interviewees indicated that they would like to control the content of the information they encountered and they thought highly of group work as it gave them the opportunity to coexist with their peers and initiate an interaction. Eight student interviewees seem to invest a great deal in socially embedded learning and they highlighted the participatory approach to language learning. Eight students viewed learning as student participation and as providing support to each other. *"I think it gives opportunities for the students to communicate" (Fotis), "team work gives opportunities to socialize and it is a useful experience for us" (Kostas)*. The students seem to stress the importance of support and the students' inclusion during group work and that might explain why twenty four participants strongly agree and sixty one agree with the statement that they would like their teacher to have them work in teams (refer to table 4.19, item,1).

Three students also highlighted the effects of working within the company of others. As another interviewee (Peter) indicated team based learning might

have a positive effect later in his life as students learn to work and accomplish things together. He indicated that:

“I think the students are privileged because in the future they will be asked to do something with other people in their work and they have to make things with other children and to improve their skills “, (Peter).

Six learners highlighted that they sought learning in collaborative work amongst them. They indicated that when the students worked in teams they shared their views and they combined information to abide with tasks. Dialogically wise the students invested on the value of communication within groups. They thought that team based communication might be the initial step to construct consensual meaning *“We discuss together, we will take over tasks and we will combine all the information children will find and it is very interesting” (Vaggelis).* Thinking highly of team work might explain why twenty seven student participants strongly agree with item three (they like to control the information in groups rather than the teacher and why forty four participants agree with this item (table 4.20, item 3). Table 4.20 summarises student interviewees’ opinions of team work in relation to collaborative learning.

Question:	Student Interviewees, N=25
<p>1. When using web 2.0. is it important to work in groups.</p> <p>2. When you access information on the internet do you exchange thoughts and views on the subject with your teacher or your classmates?</p>	
<p>Learning as socially embedded and as favouring student participation</p>	<p>8</p>

Learning is based on inclusion and support	8
Team based learning have positive effects in later stages of students' life	3
There is space for a dialogic procedure of sharing views and ideas amongst students	6

Table 4.20. Student interviewees data concerning team work and peer informed learning.

4.10.2.2. The EFL teachers' input and web 2.0. as tools for thought.

The student interviewees believe that EFL the content coming from the internet and the EFL teachers' input mobilised them to start reflecting on how they could appropriate the input coming from these two sources to tackle the task. Interviewees were asked whether the exchange of information between their teachers and themselves increased their understanding of the topic they investigated and whether the content of the internet-based information triggered a discussion (refer to appendix, D). Eight interviewees hold positive thoughts about the input coming from the EFL teacher and the web. They indicated that their teachers' language input in the form of support was absolutely necessary at the initial stage of the interaction to set the tone and provide an understanding of the content of the accessed information. This provides explanation as to why twenty five participants strongly agree and fifty five participants agree with the statement that "teacher acts as a catalyst in the interpretation of internet-based information, (table 4.19, item 2). Note how another interviewee Gregory thought that the teacher's input was vital. It is worth noticing that he challenged the status of the teacher as a holder of knowledge but he placed a great emphasis on the ability of the teacher to appropriate the content for the students to grasp which might result in greater understanding of the information. Thus he placed emphasis on the

interconnection of information from web 2.0. and the teacher's appropriation of this information that could trigger collaborative work.

"It isn't the teacher's knowledge that can help the students but the skills of the teacher, like he can give an example or comment on a video we watch to help students understand" (Gregory)

Seventeen student interviewees indicated that the teacher's intervention happened when teachers provided examples in order to make internet content more accessible to their students. As Manos and Marios indicated, they thought highly of the teachers' intervention to simplify internet content or provide the necessary vocabulary. *"I think the help of the teacher is of vital importance because there might be some unknown vocabulary to the students so in order to understand"* (Manos),

"the teacher has to explain the meanings of the words so we can grasp the full meaning of the text" (Marios)

Although these interviewees placed a great deal of emphasis on the teachers' intervention to exemplify the content or provide support in terms of vocabulary items, they tended to downgrade the teachers' intervention during group work. The students tended to view teams as communities in which the students interact, listen to one another and exchange thoughts. As Melina and Maria indicated they relied on their fellow students' opinions and used them as stimuli for interaction. *"Whatever you learn is good for you and I think to communicate with other children is what you need"* Melina, *"It can help you understand more things, learn more things when you exchange opinions"* (Maria). Appropriation of content through team-based interaction maybe explain why twenty seven participants strongly agree and forty four participants agree with item 3 (table 4.19, item,3). Table 4.21. summarises the responses of interviewees to the issue of EFL teachers' input.

Questions:	Student Interviewees: N=25
1.Would you like your teacher to start a discussion with the students by providing examples and giving explanation? 2.In what way can the teacher use the content form the internet to start discussions?	
-Teachers' input as absolutely essential to exemplify content and provide vocabulary support	N=8
Teachers' role is downgraded during team work	N=17

Table 4.21.. Qualitative Data related to the vital importance of teachers' input at the initial stages of interaction.

4.10.2.3. The egalitarian view of knowledge in web 2.0. based community of learning.

The student interviewees' thoughts about learning in web 2.0. communities of learning were deeply grounded in the egalitarian view of knowledge in that web 2.0. environments like Edmodo platform provide equal opportunities for the members of the community. The interviewees responded to the question: "Is it important for the teacher to create opportunities for interaction in the team when you use the Edmodo platform?". As an interviewee indicated the community of learning provides equal opportunities for the inclusion of students. The learners indicated that they thought of themselves as a part of the community and their main role was to contribute ideas and learn how to operate within a team. As Thanasis indicated:

“Maybe using the information provided by the Internet the students can have equal opportunities to work together and be a team and learn what being in means”(Thanansis).

Fifteen students highlighted the egalitarian nature of knowledge within the community in that they waited their turn to exchange views and this was done in a positive climate where all the students of the community were expected to forge strong relationships with each other. As another interviewee commented (Apostolis), the students in the community were open minded to other students' contributions and they did not try to restrict or even frame their fellow students' contributions in a way that they thought appropriate.

“By listening carefully to what other students have to say and not constantly interrupting them and also you have to express your opinion freely with no restrictions.” (Apostolis).

Although ten interviewees held the same view of egalitarian knowledge in the community in terms of equality of students' contributions, they placed a great deal of emphasis on the teacher's stance to provide input as an impetus to the collaboration between the students. When they were asked to elaborate on the stance that the teachers should adopt, they responded that their teachers should mentor them and they should not restrict them in any way. They also indicated that their teacher's intervention should perpetuate the collaboration amongst them and not disrupt it. As another interviewee, Anastacia put it:

“The coordination of the teacher is important but as far as the students are concerned there has to be some freedom as they can work together and express their own opinions without the teacher destructing them so that is the actual role of the teacher. Just to guide.”(Anastacia)

These interviewees implicitly indicated that web 2.0. favours the egalitarian view of knowledge in terms of the inclusion of the students and their collaboration provided that the teachers ensure that this collaboration is maintained. This was accomplished according to the interviewees when their teachers thrive to facilitate the collaboration and not restrict it with prescriptive behaviours. These views on learning might explain the fact that seventeen

participants strongly agree and sixty participants agree with item 6 (see table 4.19). Table 4.22. below summarises student interviewees' responses

Question:	Student interviewees: N=25
Is it important for the teacher to provide opportunities for interaction in the team?	
-Egalitarian view of knowledge in terms of student inclusion and contribution	N=15
-Teacher expertise perpetuates collaboration in learning by mentoring the student actions	N=10

Table 4.22. The student interviewees responses as to the importance of teachers' initiatives to provide opportunities for interaction

4.10.2.4. Qualitative Data from Edmodo platform

4.10.2.4.1 The issue of peer-based learning and the decentralization of the teachers' authority.

In extract 8, the students were engaged in the Edmodo platform and they researched the issue of safety in amusement parks. The students found relevant sites and they collaborated in order to find answers in the above issue that could help them write a report about safety in amusement parks.

Extract 8.

1Teacher: How are we doing class? Do you need any help?

2 Sophia: We are looking for the answer!

3Teacher: O.K! Good! Maybe you could read the articles quickly and find out the main idea.

4 George: are the games only for kids or for older people also?

5 Nick. I think all people amuse themselves in amusement parks.

6 George: Is there a trained personnel?

7 Nick: what do you mean by that? Tell them in simple words!

8 George: If someone gets hurt can anyone else help?

9. George (browsing the net) It doesn't say.....

10. Zoe: She means if there are any people on the park trained that can help you in case of emergency!

11 (Stamatina, intervened): I remember two years ago when my brother had
12 an accident we couldn't find trained personnel and we took him to the hospital.

13Teacher: Could you tell us what happened?

14Stamatina: He was badly hurt and we had to take him to the hospital

15Maria: Maybe we could research the issue of accidents in amusement

16parks and write it about it in the report.

Extract 8. continued.

17 Teacher: So E..... they will answer your questions and you could make any
18 corrections that you think are necessary!

19. Konstantinos: It says here that there are trained men who could help in case of
20 accidents?

21. Jim: Can you find this in all amusement parks?

22. Marios: We are now searching in other sites. I have found some amusement parks
23 and it says here that there are people who can help you.

24. Dinos: Go up! (meaning at the top of the screen)!

25 Stamatis. E..... can show you! One team shows the other teams where to
26 find the answers! Did you finish?

27. Teacher: How is it going? Do you need any help?

28. Stamatis: I showed them the questions and they found the answers!

29. Teacher.: can we please hear the answer?

30 Gregory: O.K. Are the games in allou fan park very dangerous. But as in most
amusement parks there is trained personnel who can give you first aid.

31 (John, another student less proficient replies)! Yes, there are! Gregory showed me
too!

32. Zoe (showing the answer she found to another pupil) are you happy with the
33 answer or did y need something else?

34. Marianna: I haven't got a problem!

In extract eight, one can notice that there was a partial shift of roles as the students assumed the responsibility to discover learning that mainly came from the collaborative incidents between them. As students above indicated, when in groups they liked to control the content of the interaction as they exchanged thoughts and views. As seen in extract 8, the teacher decided to fall back and let the students discover the information they needed for their report. The teacher's contribution was limited and was used to provide a continuity to the students' strategies. It is worth noting that the teacher intervened only when she found out that her students might be block. Thus she merely tried to mentor her students to perform skimming to find the main idea and she avoided imposing her own prescription of how her students should find useful information (lines 1,3,13,17, 27, 29). Students seem to coexist and initiate an interaction within the zone of proximal development of their peers. It is worth noting that these students used language as a tool for thought and they also used it to articulate the steps taken to resolve a problem. It is worth noting that in lines 10-11, Zoe intervened to provide a piece of information to fill in the gap that was caused by George's question in line 6. Socio-culturally wise in this extract knowledge was socially mediated in that it depended on face-face interaction. It is also worth noting that in lines (19-20), Konstantinos tried to find whether there was a trained personnel in amusement parks that could help in case of an accident. In lines 22-23, Marios used the language as a tool for thought to subvocalize his mental activity i.e. he was searching whether there was a trained personnel in amusement parks. In the same time, he implicitly complemented Konstantinos' thoughts on the issue that was being researched. In this extract, it seems that a decentralization of the teacher's authoritative behaviour stemmed from the epistemology to learning this teacher assumed. She perceived learning as an entity that was embedded in shared learners' interaction and she gave the students the dialogic space to discover it. As seen in line 1, the teacher stayed back monitoring the students and she merely stepped in to ask if they needed her help. Further down in line 13, the teacher attempted to capitalise on Stamatina's personal experience in lines 11-12. It is worth noting again that the reflection on personal experience provided a stimulus to Maria who suggested that they should research the issue of safety and use the information to write a report (lines15-16).

4.10.2.4.2. The egalitarian view of knowledge as observed in the interactional patterns in the Edmodo classroom.

Extract eight revealed the students' contributions in their attempt to find articles regarding the issue of safety in amusement parks. This extract from the Edmodo platform favours the inclusion of the students in the construction of knowledge. As observed from the beginning of the extract students were seen as experts in the quest for knowledge. It is interesting that George and Nick's collaborative efforts (lines 4,6,8,9) and (lines 5,7) respectively became interdependent as they browsed for information. It is worth noting that Nick's intervention was rather authoritative (line 7) by signaling George to appropriate his language so to make it easier for the rest of the team to engage. This feature signified that Nick controlled the process of learning and attempted to make it simpler for his team. The extract seems to confirm the views of fifteen learners who indicated that it important for the teacher to create interaction opportunities in the community of learning (see table 4.22.). The conscious effort of the teacher to step back and let the students take the floor, will end up in the learners appropriating their collaborative efforts to make it easier for the rest of the students to engage.

In the observed extract, the students seem to implicitly attempt to mentor their fellow students how to resolve the task by performing scanning and they also appear to inform their fellow students of their findings. Note for example that Marios (in lines 22-23) directed his search so that to abide with the task requirements. As can be also seen in lines 25 and 26, Stamatis informed the students that different teams showed their answers to one another so they could compare their findings. Implicitly he seems to coordinate the teams and keep them on track. Further down in line 28 he assumed an active role and he decided to show his questions to the students so he implicitly provided an assistance to his peers. It is worth noting that in line 32, John who was a less proficient student was very happy to inform the class of the positive impact that Gregory's assistance had on him. The students' distinctive effort to discover knowledge was also noticed in Zoe's conscious decision (lines 33-34) to help Marianna who was a less proficient student. The extract from classroom observation confirms the views of seventeen students who downgraded the

intervention of the teacher during group work and they preferred to appropriate the content of the information to make it accessible to their peers (refer to table 4.22)

Summary

The overall impression that one gets from the quantitative data, the teachers' interviews and classroom observations is that the EFL teachers in the secondary education in Greece retained their authority in the classroom to a certain extent and they also allowed the students to cooperate in order to discover learning by allowing them to search the net to find information that is appealing to them and discuss how they can collaborate to resolve tasks that were set by their teachers. In this attempt of theirs, the EFL teachers seem to welcome the Edmodo platform as a means of facilitating the collaboration of their students. They welcomed the use of web 2.0. as they associated it with efforts of their own to increase the opportunities for interaction. This ultimately lead the EFL teachers to allow their students a certain degree of autonomy in web 2.0. settings in that they urged them to discover meaning but they intervened and set specific objectives so that they regulate the students' collaborative efforts within specific task requirements. The teachers appeared to define autonomy within the context of skill building that allowed the students to collaborate. Although they acknowledged the potential of Edmodo platform to provide the floor for a collaborative behaviour, they indicated that they felt obliged to intervene with structured support led by their rooted assumptions regarding the nature of learning and the nature of authority relations in the classroom. There seems to be a strong desire among the teachers to invest in peer embedded learning but they are not willing to step back and allow the students to regulate the pace of learning. As seen mainly in extracts (1-8) that corresponds to the classroom interactional patterns, the EFL teachers seem to adopt a rather structured and framing behaviour by eliminating every kind of collaborative efforts and they seem to hold assumptions that they are the ultimate experts in the classroom and their role is to instruct the students to do things the way they think appropriate. Although the integration of Edmodo platform is gaining popularity among the EFL teachers, the two out of the three teachers that were observed seem to obstruct the potential of the tool for a

greater student inclusion, participatory and egalitarian knowledge. Their instructional behaviour in the classroom seems to be dictated by their epistemologies to learning which is viewed as an entity that is mostly embedded in their expertise. The third teacher, though, seems to hold a different epistemology to learning and she allowed the learners to discover it within the collaborative efforts of their peers. Concerning the impact of these epistemologies on the students, EFL learners seem to invest a great deal of faith to peer embedded learning and they also express their willingness to appropriate the content of their knowledge within their community. Although they placed a great emphasis on the teachers' expertise to make their knowledge accessible to them, they expressed their strong desire to step in and gain authority in web 2.0. settings. This study suggested that there is a long way to go until the teachers in the state education in Greece exploit the full potential of web 2.0. to facilitate the construction of knowledge which may have serious implications for the language education policy and teacher themselves.

Chapter 5- Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the epistemologies assumed by the EFL teachers in the secondary education in Greece and their effects on collaborative language learning in web 2.0. settings and the impact of these epistemologies to learning concerning EFL junior high school learners. To achieve this purpose mainly qualitative methods were used.

The findings of this study reflect the findings of other studies on teachers' stances as these were determined by a set of assumptions that EFL teachers have about collaborative learning while contradicting some others. The same occurs with the impact of the teachers' epistemologies on learners where the findings converge with some previous studies in the field while contradicting others. In this chapter a discussion of these findings will occur and it will be divided in three main sections:

1. The teachers' epistemologies regarding collaborative learning construction in web 2.0. settings
2. Opportunities for collaborative learning
3. Impact of the teachers' epistemologies on the students' collaborative efforts.

5.2. The teachers' epistemologies to knowledge in web 2.0 settings

5.2.1 Pre-Edmodo phase-Discussion

This study highlighted that the teachers in junior high schools in Greece did not seem to enhance the integration of web 2.0. to attune their students with the piece of information they need in order to tackle tasks. Mainly led by an epistemology to learning which views teachers as holders of knowledge, they mainly led a discussion in order to align their students with task requirements. The teachers in the pre-Edmodo phase seem to adopt a teacher-led approach to learning in that they exerted their authority to make their learners exploit the learning opportunities that their teachers offered. In this stage, the EFL teachers integrated internet technologies peripherally by exploiting their visual elements (video watching) to activate their students' experiences. This seems to be in

line with previous research, which indicates that learners in web 2.0. settings must be mindful i.e. they must be motivated to take the opportunities presented to them and they must be cognitively engaged to make the most out of these opportunities (Hanson-Smith, 2000). The findings indicate that a major consideration is the pedagogical aims of the EFL teachers in the pre-Edmodo phase which reflect their views about learning. Secondary education teachers in the pre-Edmodo phase adopt a teacher directed talk to attract their learners' attention to the parameters of the tasks they assign. Their observed behaviour revealed their intentions to downgrade the students' initiatives to self-paced task parameters. Teachers in the pre-Edmodo phase fully controlled the content of the information they presented to the learners. This seems to contradict previous studies that highlight that learning is mediated with interaction with others (Wang and Zing, 2016).

The EFL teachers' stances did not provide any space for dialogic communication between the students and therefore they eliminated every opportunity for learners' contributions. Being the absolute authority in the classroom, teachers regulated the use of computers and they even directed their students where to look for information. Although such behaviour might be useful at early stages of using web 2.0, EFL teachers seem to adopt an authoritative stance and they seem to ignore the potential of web 2.0, to establish the optimal conditions of learning by choosing not to mediate the content accessed on the internet to their learners. Therefore, the findings contradict previous studies which stress the essential business of EFL teachers to create the optimal conditions of learning by ensuring a more active role for learners (Hall and Eddington, 2000).

5.3. While-Edmodo phase

5.3.1. Socially Embedded Learning-Discussion

The findings showed that the EFL teachers ensured a limited degree of autonomy for their students by having them work in groups in web 2.0. settings. This study provided evidence that the EFL teachers exerted their control in the classroom whenever their students deviated from the instructional objectives they set. In this sense, the study confirms earlier studies regarding the control

that the teachers exert in web 2.0. settings as they set strict task objectives (Coll et al., 2010; Lazar 2015; Chang 2012). The EFL teachers indicated that they built on their students' training on computer skills they receive in primary school which continues to the first, second and third form of junior high school to establish a culture in which their students were urged to discover meaning by themselves rather than being imparted meaning. The findings revealed that the EFL teachers viewed language skills not as an end in themselves but as a means of discovering meaning. In this respect this study comes in alignment with studies by other researchers (Candlin and Mercer, 2001; Mitchel and Miles, 2004) who highlight that learning is socially mediated and it is highly dependent on interaction and sharing of ideas. This is especially true for the secondary education teachers who indicated that mediation was especially traced in the level of decision making among their students which shaped the action they followed in order to resolve tasks.

The findings also revealed insights about the teachers' epistemologies to learning. EFL teachers appeared to view knowledge as being constructed by human beings in their interaction with the world they attempt to interpret. This is especially true for the teachers who established a climate in which the learners exchanged views how to tackle different tasks but they also explained the details of the action they followed to their peers. In this respect, the teachers' epistemologies resemble the constructionist view of learning according to which learning is born in and out of the interplay between human beings and the world they interpret (Crotty, 2009, Pring, 2000). The findings also revealed insights as to the power relations in Greek junior high schools. As the EFL teachers embraced the constructionist view of meaning, they were determined to allow their students take the lead as they are the experts in internet applications. In this respect, the EFL teachers tried to be open minded and learned from their students' expertise. They seem to put their trust on the strengths of their students as they contributed their expertise to facilitate learning. This resembles the participatory approach to learning especially the line of thought which indicates that teachers do not act as experts imposing their students what to do (Auerbach, 2000, cited in Hall and Eddington, 2000).

The interaction analysis of the observed teaching sessions revealed that the EFL teachers in the early stages of web 2.0. use were rather reluctant to loosen their control in the stage of explaining the task parameters to their students. The findings showed that when the EFL teachers explained the tasks they set in web 2.0. settings they eliminated the reciprocity with the students by taking full control. The findings provided evidence of the teachers' attempts to retain the unity of the classroom by providing basic computer skills to ensure the inclusion of their learners. In their attempt to ensure comprehension of their instructions, secondary education EFL teachers tended to adopt a rather authoritative stance as they exerted a rigid control on the strategies being employed by their students. Their main concern was how to best ensure collaboration and in so doing they implicitly eliminated the space for a dialogic action. The EFL teachers' assumptions related to the nature of learning revealed that learning should be imparted to the learners from experts through a set of organized and consecutive steps. In this respect, the findings contradicted conclusions of earlier studies which indicated that web 2.0. settings allow user-generated content to emerge in that students have control over the choices they make in relation to what is preserved or discarded (Jordan 2012, cited in Obura and Ssekitto, 2015).

5.3.2. Opportunities for collaborative learning-Discussion

The study highlighted the fact that the students' autonomy in the EFL secondary education language classroom was restricted due to the pedagogical goals set by the teachers which reflected their epistemologies regarding language learning. The teachers' assumptions appeared to favour the collaboration of their students when they performed grammar tasks and wrote essays. This revealed that the EFL teachers favoured the building of certain skills in order to enable their students to perform tasks successfully. This comes in line with other researchers in the field for example Eastment, (1997) and Mitchel and Miles (2004). The findings also reflect the Vygotskian concept of mediated learning within the Zone of Proximal Development. The findings suggest that language teachers implicitly invested a lot in mediated learning. Even though they engaged their students in grammar tasks or essay writing in teams, this enabled their students to use the language as a tool to mediate their mental

activity. It is within the domain of their peers that the EFL learners might practice knowledge based on skills that will be gradually acquired through an interdependent interaction with their peers. The findings indicated that the EFL teachers in secondary education welcomed the integration of the internet as a source of content. They exerted their control on this content by suggesting that learning within the community occurred when the students mediated the essence of the content based on their peers' efforts to retain their attention to the main idea of the content that was transmitted by the internet. This conscious attempt of the EFL teachers in web 2.0. settings to build their students' cooperative skills and concentrate their attention on common goals is in line with previous research (Carrier 1997; Ouk Jeong, 2017; Batsila 2014) which indicates that peers' mediation efforts using an international and real-world resource will gradually enhance learners' confidence in themselves not to mention their autonomy.

On the other hand, this study showed that the teachers' agendas about learning might hinder the students' active involvement in the construction of meaning. The EFL teachers in junior high schools in Greece seem to have the absolute authority in the classroom as this was reflected in their students' perceptions. The Greek EFL learners seem to place a great emphasis on the authoritative role of their teachers and they seem to resort to them even when they needed basic computer skills. The teachers' ideologies about power relations in the classroom seem to downgrade the autonomy and confidence of their EFL learners. In this respect, this study contradicts findings of previous studies which posit that in web 2.0. settings students work in a heady atmosphere in which authority is shared and teachers stay out of things leaving their students to control their contributions and even compete among themselves to exert their influence in the group (Peyton, 1997, cited in Egbert and Hanson Smith, 2000; Kubanyiova, 2015; Sun and Ying Yang, 2015).

The EFL teachers in Greece seem to hold the assumption that learning is better distributed to the students when mediation of internet based content shapes, to a certain extent, the task objectives. Therefore, they partly lost their authority as they allowed their learners to integrate a number of internet sites in the

classroom in their attempt to pursue the necessary knowledge to resolve tasks. They seem to assume a pseudo participatory approach to learning as they allowed their learners to actively engage in interactions between themselves and justify the choices they made. The findings showed that the teachers permitted a decentralization of their authority to occur only when their students employed strategies that ensured a successful resolution of the task at hand. The findings from the classroom interaction analysis revealed that a distinctive teachers' intervention might actually spark students' negotiation and collaboration when they use web 2.0. to carefully plan assignments in which the contribution of each student is necessary to address the goals of the community. In this respect, this study is in line with conclusions from various researchers including Egbert (1997), Coll et al. (2011), Hyland (1993) indicating that in net-worked environments teachers ensure a high quality interaction by continually shaping and examining opportunities and their outcomes.

5.3.3. Teachers as facilitators of learning-Discussion

The findings indicated that secondary education EFL teachers in Greece used web 2.0. to facilitate comprehension that was required by reading tasks such as skimming, scanning, writing reports and speaking tasks i.e when their students engaged in peer interaction. They mainly used the audio and visual elements embedded in stretches of information accessed on the internet as a carrier content to ensure the actual comprehension that was needed to facilitate task objectives. The findings revealed that the EFL teachers in secondary education favoured the emergence of knowledge within the boundaries of the learning community. This is especially true for the EFL teachers who invested in socially embedded learning by placing their learners at the very core of learning. They mainly did that by ensuring a greater learners' inclusion in which the more proficient students supported the weaker ones while all learners engaged in group work. The present study is line with conclusions from previous studies including Johnston (1997), Wang and Zing (2016), Vergine and Hosman (2015), Warschauer (2000) which indicate that in net-worked learning environments the amount of the students' participation is dramatically higher when interaction between more proficient language learners and weaker ones occurred through asking and answering peer questions, repeating and

expanding on what students discussed in order for them to write essays and reports.

The findings of this study indicated that EFL teachers, to a certain extent, facilitated the emergence of learning by contextualizing and reflecting upon their students' personal experiences. The Greek EFL teachers seem to adopt a participatory approach of learning as they connected this content to the reality of their learners. In other words, the teachers seem to build on their learners' consciousness in order for them to interpret the world they experience. As web 2.0 settings facilitate access to a variety of sites the EFL teachers enabled their learners to build interaction skills not as an end in themselves but as a means to boost their learners' confidence as they were invited to discover their own answers. This was especially true for the teachers who connected the experiences that were portrayed on internet-based content and related them with their students' experiences through a process of exploration and interaction. In this respect, this study comes in alignment with previous studies which posit that the freedom inherent in web 2.0 redefines conventional teaching and learning paradigms to the benefit of the learners in that the teacher only plays a supportive coaching role acknowledging the value of students' experiences, contributions and initiatives (Johnston, 2003; Peterson, 1997; Behar and Mishra, 2016).

On the other hand, the present study seems to confirm that EFL teachers kept an authoritative stance when they set specific objectives and when they used web 2.0 in order to extend the accessed content to writing skills. In other words, the present study seems to confirm that the EFL teachers in question, adopted a structured instructional scheme in order to ensure that their learners would engage themselves in a collaboration process and they would successfully resolve writing tasks based on information they previously accessed on the internet. This is particularly true for the EFL teacher who appeared to adopt a highly structured and framing discourse to direct her students' attention to the information she deemed appropriate to the objectives of the task. The EFL secondary education teachers' assumptions regarding their role in the classroom might lead them to prevent their students from being

engaged in any dialogic opportunity to construct meaning. Thus their students were led to produce short and framed contributions in order to confirm understanding of their teachers' instructions. Setting strict objectives might put language teachers in the center of the teaching and learning procedure and challenge the egalitarian view of knowledge which views students as equal participants of learning communities. In this respect, the study contradicts previous studies which indicate that web 2.0. settings are actually learner-centered environments in which learners' confidence and skills are developed autonomously and learners are given ownership by developing solutions to learning tasks. (Batsila, 2014, Hong and Samimi, 2010).

5.3.4. Teachers as establishers of communities of learning-Discussion

The findings showed that when the EFL teachers in Greek junior high schools used web 2.0. to accommodate different learning styles they avoided focusing on specific outcomes. The EFL teachers in question seem, to a certain extent, to allow the objectives they set to emerge naturally as they consciously attempted to contextualise the accessed content and relate it to their students' interests. In this respect, the findings confirm earlier studies (Algasab, 2016; Magnenot and Nissen, 2006; Ouk Jeong, 2017). The study also provided evidence that the epistemologies of EFL teachers favoured the establishment of a community of learning in web 2.0. settings. It appeared that the teachers to a certain extent favoured the students' autonomy as the accessed content was processed from different aspects according to the strengths of their learners. In so doing, the teachers extended the learner-centered culture that was established with the inclusion of learners with different learning styles (keeping notes, explaining content and supporting others) and they also appeared to extend this approach by allowing their learners to concentrate on what is the best way for them to construct learning. This especially applies to the teachers who allowed space for their learners to tailor and self-regulate the way they approached learning. The teachers had a secondary role in this stage as they coached and mentored the students in case of difficulty. In this respect, the study confirms findings from other studies e.g. Peterson (1997) who indicates that the unique nature of net-worked settings may redefine the teaching/learning paradigm to the benefit of EFL learners.

The study also indicated that the EFL teachers exploited the availability of the computer labs of their schools and immersed their students to virtual environments. Their aim was to relate the classroom's processes to their students' reality, as the students searched and manipulated information according to their dispositions and interests. This seems to support claims by Auerbach (2000) who highlights the paradox that occurs in the learning community. The teachers embrace the power of their learners as this emerges from their active involvement in discovering learning. This study, thus, provided evidence that when teachers acknowledged the power of their learners to discover learning this did not come in opposition with their role. On the contrary, it appears that the Greek EFL teachers explicitly articulated an ideological stance that goes hand in hand with one's authority to foster a collective learning and sharing of thoughts and ideas supporting thus claims positing by Johnston (2003) and Pennycook (2001) concerning the shift of power relations in communities of learning.

The findings of this study also revealed that the EFL teachers in Greece, favoured the establishment of a culture in which the learners are free to chose the way they resolve tasks. This especially corresponds to the EFL teacher who allowed her learners to search for information in sites that they thought appropriate to their linguistic capacity. This study provided evidence that secondary education teachers in Greece established an affective climate in the community in which their students were urged to self-pace their strategies to resolve different tasks. Moreover, an important consideration is that the teachers in question hold the assumption that learning is an entity that has to be discovered by the students themselves. Therefore, they stimulated a reflection on how meaning is best discovered by letting their students experiment on ways that best allowed them to discover meaning. This study justified earlier studies which highlighted the potential of web 2.0. to promote learners' autonomy, in that they provided a learning environment that is considered less restrictive. This free space in which the learners experiment ways to discover learning was perceived as more compatible with different

learning styles and encouraged learners to take control of the learning process (Chou-Huang, 2016; Fang -Ying Yang, 2015; Kozma, 2008).

5.4. The impact of the EFL teachers' epistemologies onto EFL learners

5.4.1. Group work and socially embedded learning-Discussion

The study clarified that the epistemologies adopted by EFL teachers in Greece, appeared to view learning as an entity that has to be constructed within the boundaries of the community and it is based on the collaborative exchanges among community members. The findings indicated that a very important consideration which the EFL learners highlighted was the support that was provided within the learning community by more proficient learners that resulted in the inclusion of less knowledgeable students. Being in the company of their peers, the EFL learners in question had the opportunity to communicate and socialize with other members of the community. This fact reflects the social dimension of the EFL classroom which according to Auerbach (2000) is a vital component of collective knowledge construction. The findings also indicated that learners were afforded the opportunity for collaborative learning that was embedded in interconnected contributions among members of the community. The learners were encouraged to communicate with their partners and regulate their contributions in the light of their partners' comprehensible input. This comprehensible input made learners to adjust their contributions so that they become more intelligible to their peers. The findings come in alignment with previous research indicating that peer interaction provided opportunities for comprehensibility checks of students' utterances. Learners developed mutual comprehensibility by repeating or modifying utterances to fit the message transmitted by their peers or by suggesting repairs for each others' utterances (Holliday, 1997, cited in Hanson-Smith, 2000).

Another important consideration within socially embedded learning is that the learners, to a certain extend, control the pace of meaning construction. Although the teachers' authority is a given in the learning community this was practiced so that the learners assume responsibility for their learning. This study provided evidence that the teachers provided a dialogic space for the students to share ideas as to how their knowledge could fit into tasks' objectives. The teachers' conscious decision to step back and allow their learners to take

control may lead to a shift of roles for learners and teachers to a certain extent. This equalization of roles was manifested in a number of ways in web 2.0. settings. Firstly, the peers' contributions encouraged the increase of interaction among the learners. Secondly, the capacity of the teachers to control the content of interaction was diminished which according to Peterson (1997) may redefine conventional teaching and learning paradigms to the benefit of the learners.

The present study also showed that the extent to which the teachers stepped back and allow their learners to take control of the content of their contribution might determine the extent to which their teaching objectives will alter. In this respect, the findings confirm the findings of other researchers including Hong and Samimy (2010) and Eastment (1996) who argue that the extent of teachers' intervention will downgrade or increase the students' contributions and their regulations to adjust their interlanguage system to be more target like.

5.4.2. The EFL teachers' input and web 2.0. as tools for thought-Discussion

The findings of this study provided evidence that the teachers' input at the initial stage of the collaborative efforts among the students in order for them to adjust their contributions to task objectives is an integral part of the learning community. The study revealed that there was a paradox here in that although the students thought that they could retrieve the information they needed on the internet, they heavily relied on the intervention of their teachers to appropriate this information as their teachers were expected to simplify the content of accessed information to match the linguistic proficiency of learners. Although as Obura and Ssekitto (2015), Lazar (2015) and Hwang (2015) argue that web 2.0. challenges intellectual property and transforms consumers into active users of language, this study indicated that the degree to which EFL learners gradually become active participants in the construction of knowledge depends on the intervention of their teachers which seems to have a catalytic effect on the mediation between the accessed content and the mental activities of the learners to articulate their steps of how to resolve a given task.

In this respect, EFL junior high school teachers explicitly expressed their epistemological stance to learning by exerting their authority and their expertise

to address the students' weakness to mediate content found in web 2.0. This is particularly true for EFL teachers who may even have employed a teacher directed talk in order to enable their learners to process the content at their own pace refine and rework their contributions in the light of their peers' intervention. This seems to be line with previous research which indicated that the degree to which net-worked environments can transform students into active users of language depends on the degree to which EFL teachers practice their roles to draw out the knowledge gained from the internet and extend it to engage learners in an exploration process (Peyton, 1997, cited in Hanson-Smith, 2000; Hyland, 1993; Ouk Jeong, 2017). In the present study the exploration process was triggered by the EFL teachers' intervention and it was manifested in a number of ways on collaborative behaviours of the students. First and foremost, more knowledgeable students simplified their input to accomodate less proficient students by repeating teachers' language in an over simplified fashion. Secondly, teachers reflected on students' experiences to contextualise their interventions and they repeated, rephrased or asked questions in order to support community-based negotiation. Although at the initial stage of the interaction it might seem that teacher direct talk eliminated the dialogic space for language learners, findings suggested that in the long run learners in the community experimented comprehensible output which they continuously shaped under the guidance of their peers. In this respect, this study coincides with previous research which highlighted the central role of mediation among teachers and learners or between learners within communities of learning to appropriate their knowledge under the light of comprehensive input coming from EFL teachers and technology (Jones, 1997; Carrier, 1997; Batsila, 2014).

5.4.3. Egalitarian view of knowledge in web 2.0. settings-Discussion

The findings of this study indicated that EFL teachers seem to use web 2.0. tools like the Edmodo platform to provide interaction opportunities to EFL students. This seems to be rooted within the boundaries of the community in that the student interviewees explicitly expressed that their main role was to contribute ideas so to keep things moving. An important consideration was the positive climate that was established in web 2.0. settings in that EFL learners practiced turn talking and they forged strong relationships in that they highly

depend on their peers to contribute and exchange ideas. As findings revealed this was done in an open- minded fashion in that the learners did not frame or restricted each others' contributions. This seems to be line with previous research which indicated that the purpose of educators in web 2.0. contexts must be to assist in the development of an environment with a minimum stress level by creating a learner-centred classroom in which the learners have some degree of control over their learning (Wang and Zing, 2016; Behar and Mishra, 2015; Garton, 2002; Allwright, 2006).

The present study also showed that critical in the development of an affective climate is the establishment of a culture in which the learners are free to contribute and modify their ideas with the help of their peers in a non-restrictive way based on their teachers' epistemologies to learning adopted in web 2.0. learning communities. This is especially true for the teachers who used the Edmodo digital platform as a basis in which EFL students wrote their reviews which were their response to an internet-based enquiry they had previously conducted. As classroom discourse findings revealed, the teachers at this stage allowed a partial shift of learning authority to the learners in that they urged their learners to discover knowledge that was necessary for their reviews through a direct reflection on the content they accessed. In other words, the teachers seem to discreetly direct the interaction in a way that corresponded more closely to the interests and needs of their learners as this was evidenced by the students' collaborative efforts. Teachers thus stimulated meaning that emerged from students' reflection on the world they tried to assign meaning to.

Findings also highlighted the emergence of a participatory learning approach as the teachers appeared to assume a secondary role when their learners formulated and modified their contributions in the Edmodo platform under the guidance of their peers. Unlike the initial stages of learners' engagement with web 2.0. in which the teachers were in full control of learning by providing basic computer skills and adopting an authoritative talk to attune the students with task requirements, at later stages of classroom interaction the EFL teachers monitored the learning process and they stepped in only in case their learners were in block when they provided their contributions in the Edmodo platform.

EFL teachers seem to invite the learners to believe in themselves by highlighting the students' expertise to appropriate and modify content in order to address their linguistic needs and resolve tasks. In this respect, the findings of this study come in alignment with previous studies highlighting that a main principle of participatory learning lies on the conscious attempts of teachers to embrace their learners' authority. This entails the fostering of a collective dialogue, mutual learning and democratic decision making (Aurebach,2000; Akbari, 2008; Clifton, 2006) .

Another critical issue concerning the egalitarian nature of learning in web 2.0. learning communities is the explicit attempt of more proficient students to appropriate their input so to make it comprehensible to their less proficient counterparts. This study showed that when the learners contributed their reflections on the Edmodo platform they tended to exert a strict authority to keep the continuity of learning in the community. This is especially true for these learners who tended to adopt an authoritative talk to signal their peers to modify their language input to accommodate less proficient members of the community. The findings revealed that the learners implicitly facilitated the reflective efforts of their peers by changing their conversational patterns to empower less knowledgeable counterparts. The findings seem to confirm previous studies highlighting that facilitator talk lies in the changing pattern of interaction that signify a shift towards responsibility of learning (Clifton, 2006; Philip and Tognini, 2009; Nakamura, 2010). This study thus highlighted the fact that the teachers favoured a freer classroom by promoting a less restrictive pattern of interaction in which who said what to whom was less restricted.

Summary

Overall the findings of this study come in alignment with findings from previous research in the field while contradicting some others. They suggest that English Language Teachers in secondary education in Greece appeared to retain a strict control of the classroom by adopting an authoritative talk that restrained the collaborative endeavours of their students. The findings indicated that in the initial stage of students' engagement with web 2.0. the EFL teachers in question

committed themselves to providing their learners with necessary computer and linguistic skills to ensure their students' attunement with tasks. As revealed by the findings, they seem to welcome the use of web 2.0. tools in their classrooms and they have the desire to incorporate them in their teaching and learning practices to reinforce collaborative efforts on the part of their students.

The findings indicated that these EFL teachers gradually moved away from exerting absolute control in their classrooms. They seem to adopt a socially embedded epistemology to learning in that they seem to trust their learners' expertise on internet applications and as such they allowed them to take the lead in constructing learning within the safety of their peers. The study also indicated that learning seems to take place between the students' zone of proximal development in that the students formulated and modified their collaborative efforts under the approval or disapproval of their peers. Although EFL teachers are the key players in fostering meaningful interaction within the community they gradually loosen their authority and urge their students to participate in the appropriation of accessed content which took place within the boundaries of their community.

The study argues that the EFL teachers in secondary education, to a certain extent, allowed task objectives to emerge naturally as they contextualised the content which they accessed in conjunction with their students' interests. These EFL teachers tended to embrace the power of their learners to become active participants in the emergence of meaning. Thus they exerted their authority to foster a collective sharing of ideas. The study also argued that these EFL teachers established a culture within which an affective climate was created in the EFL classrooms which allowed their learners to self-regulate and experiment on ways by which they could discover learning.

EFL teachers in Greece viewed knowledge, to a certain extent, as an entity which was best constructed among peers through a series of interconnected collaborative interaction. This in turn may have a positive effect on their learners. They were urged to communicate with their peers and modify their contributions under the light of the input provided by their teachers and their peers. These EFL teachers' linguistic authority was a given in the learning

community but this was practiced in such a way as to provide a dialogic space in which the learners exchanged ideas as to how their knowledge can best fit into task objectives. This study also made the claim that if students were about to become active participants in the construction of learning, their EFL teachers should practice their role to draw out the knowledge coming from web 2.0. content and extend it to engage the learners in an exploration process. Greek EFL teachers should be encouraged to actively involve their students in this exploration by encouraging the inclusion of less proficient learners. This can be achieved if more proficient members simplify their teachers' input in order to facilitate the engagement of their less knowledgeable counterparts.

Chapter 6- Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter I will present the implications of this study, I will also discuss its strengths and its limitations as well as its contribution to the field and I will provide suggestions for further research. As this study showed, web 2.0. settings favoured the establishment of a culture in which a collaborative construction of learning took place within the boundaries of communities of learning. In these communities, the students' interdependent collaborative efforts were modified in the light of comprehensible input that was provided by their EFL teachers. This input was further simplified by community members to include less proficient peers. The degree to which that happened depends on the EFL secondary education teachers in Greece who, as the findings revealed, gradually stepped back and allowed their learners to regulate the pace of learning in order to discover an array of solutions to different tasks. This might have serious implications for EFL education policy, teaching profession in general and the Greek EFL secondary Education teachers in particular.

6.2. Implications

6.2.1. Implications for Foreign Language Education Policy

“While Language Policy is connected with decisions people make about languages and their uses in society, Language Education Policy refers to affecting these decisions in the specific contexts of education i.e. schools.” (Shohamy, 2006, p. 77)

It is often the case that language education policies are explicitly stated through official documents like curricula or mission statements. Although curriculum development is beyond the scope of this thesis it is through such official documents that teaching practices are imparted to the involved agents i.e language teachers and students. It is thus the foreign language curriculum which is the main carrier of language policy. It was argued in section 1.1. that the TESOL curriculum was geared to the needs of Greek students; these learners are actually an integral part of a global society with specific communicative/linguistic needs to be addressed. One could suggest that when

the curriculum was thought out, the needs of secondary education EFL students were taken into account in relation to the needs of a globalised Greek society. The question still remains: Whose needs were truly served? These needs should be connected with the experiences that these students are likely to face inside and outside the classroom. More active involvement of both agents (EFL teachers and learners) and the empowerment of both parties should be encouraged through a dialectical investigation of socially embedded knowledge which should receive prominent importance in language policy since it is the participants' knowledge which can be interpreted through a constant negotiation and dialogue.

EFL secondary education teachers in Greece should be afforded training and support in order to fully exploit the potential of web 2.0 in their teaching/learning practices. If curriculum development appreciates the role of the social context, then it is this particular context in which the knowledge will be constructed based on the participants' experiences and values that should receive prominent attention. This suggests that a more humanistic view in educational language policy should be espoused in that teachers' epistemologies which affect the emergence of socially embedded knowledge should become the unit of analysis. In terms of educational policy this should aim at learners' needs to formulate their social identities and enhance their learning experiences inside language classrooms. Learners should be also encouraged to pursue their quest for social awareness, their need to express their feelings and ideas in order to form their identities in relation to their peers (McKenzie and Knipe, 2006). Moreover, a more active EFL teachers' involvement in educational policy will allow a more efficient realization of the afore mentioned goals. The implications of this thesis to EFL teachers' practices will be the topic of the next section.

6.2.2. Implications for EFL teachers and teaching practices

Throughout this study it was suggested that one of the merits of web 2.0. based learning communities was the action assumed by EFL learners that should be linked to their lived experiences. Since the use of web 2.0. internet applications

in the classroom enhanced peers' informed knowledge then this knowledge should become a social act and it has to be constructed among community members and consequently will be legitimised by the agents involved i.e. teachers and learners.

This study proposed a view of education in which EFL teachers placed emphasis on the process of creating student-based knowledge. As these EFL teachers were led by the constructionist epistemology to learning they sparked a reflection on issues of current affairs by raising their students' awareness and by giving them voice. This reflection on students' actions put the students in the position of critical investigators. These EFL teachers in secondary education in Greece, seem to establish a culture beyond learner-centredness in that the action undertaken by their learners was vested in their peers' input. Consequently, web 2.0. based classrooms became communities of learning based on the epistemologies of EFL teachers who chose to establish a participatory approach to learning as their learners were urged to construct knowledge mainly through the appropriation of their utterances to accommodate their less proficient counterparts. Through this path of learning, EFL teachers seem to put their learners' needs to the forefront in that learners were allowed to manipulate the content of classroom discourse. EFL teachers catalysed co-decided outcomes utilising their linguistic expertise. English language teaching and learning then is not considered as an end in itself but as a means for the students to produce collectively derived knowledge. Web 2.0. Edmodo platform in which the students in question negotiated different proposals with their peers and their teachers' stances which aimed at a collaborative knowledge construction were the two key factors who produced knowledge that was based on their students' collaborative efforts. The EFL teachers in question also extended this knowledge to language tasks through which their students assumed a collective action. It follows that through this pedagogical process a shift of roles occurred. It is really a paradox that teachers' authority was not limited to simply imparting knowledge but it seems that EFL teachers were committed to exercising their authority to ensure that their students indeed exercised their power to foster a collective dialogue, a mutual learning and a democratic decision-making.

6.3. Strengths and Limitations of the Study

As with all kinds of research in general and qualitative research in particular it is important to recognize its strengths and limitations of this research methodology. Included in the strengths of the study are the multiple methods of data collections used. Using and combining information obtained from questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations this study provided a more in-depth depiction of the situation under investigation. The fact that the researcher himself is a secondary education EFL teacher had positive effects in the interpretation of findings as he can provide a comprehensive account of the participants' experiences.

The first limitation of the study is the origin of the participants. The participants came from an urban area of central Greece whereby most schools are equipped with computer facilities. This may have produced positive views about the use web 2.0. in junior high schools. I was the only researcher involved so I was only able to address one area in central Greece that posed another limitation of the study. Regarding the teachers' interviews the issue of using hyperlinks to increase students' negotiation did not receive prominent attention. Had attention been given to this issue, more comprehensive data on the significance of the hyperlinks to the construction of collaborative construction of meaning could have been collected. The fact that I had established good relationships with the teacher participants might have allowed bias to intrude as they may have ticked the strongly agree or the agree option in the questionnaires. They might also have tried to provide answers that they thought they would please the researcher who is also their colleague.

Another major limitation regards the student interviewees and the fact that the researcher was also their teacher. This aroused issues of bias as the interviewees may have provided answers that the researcher wanted to hear being afraid of any penalties should they provided responses that were outside the researcher's point of view. Another limitation has to do with the fact that due to increased teaching obligations, I did not have the opportunity to contact the group of people that may have some degree of relevance with curriculum

development. It was argued that a main shortcoming in the curriculum development in Greece is that it does not allow a more active involvement of the most important agent of the EFL classroom i.e the EFL teacher. Curriculum developers state the broad guidelines of the curriculum so this group of people could have been interviewed as to how they envisaged a more active involvement of EFL teachers in order to enhance the collective strategies of EFL students.

6.4 Contribution of the study and suggestions for further research

This research study investigated the epistemologies assumed by Greek EFL secondary education teachers in the emergence of collaborative meaning in web 2.0. settings and the impact of these epistemologies on EFL secondary education learners. Although this study is exploratory and case-based, it highlighted the relationship between the epistemologies that were assumed by the EFL teachers and the impact on the nature of learning that was emerged from EFL students. It also contributed to the raising of awareness that regard the benefits of web 2.0. and the potential of web 2.0 applications to enhance learners' based collaborative meaning. It also reflected the teachers' practices which ensured the creation of a community based knowledge in which meaning was created in equal terms between the interdependence of knowledgeable and less knowledgeable learners.

Additionally, this study can provide the ministry of education and life-long learning a comprehensive picture of how EFL teachers may exploit the unique nature of web 2.0. applications as they present unique and complex challenges regarding learning cultures, instructional frames and teachers-students relations as far as classroom authority is concerned. The findings of this study may be used by the ministry of education to design teacher education programs which ensure more efficient integration of web 2.0. technologies in secondary education through teacher training and support. Additionally the findings may provide insights to the ministry of education to design syllabi that will enhance constructionist-based epistemologies to learning and provide the necessary guidance to Greek EFL teachers how to incorporate such teaching practices into their classrooms.

Therefore, a future team-based research study should take place in which a number of researchers with allocated roles could be involved. Researchers working in teams can be a challenge as that according to Cresswell and Clark (2007, p.181) a team-based research “can bring together individuals with diverse methodological and content expertise as well as simply providing more personnel for conducting research”. A future research of this type could rectify the following shortcomings.

1. Different researchers could be allocated to different parts of Greece in order to incorporate more participants and ensure thus a wider sample representativeness .
2. Conducting research in teams could ensure contact with more interviewees. The researchers could contact curriculum designers and investigate the ways they envisage the establishment of participatory web 2.0 based communities of learning and how the curriculum could allow a more active involvement of EFL teachers over content selection.

Team-based research studies could further eliminate bias that could occur in instances where the EFL researcher is also the teacher. Different team members could interview and observe different focus groups. Additionally, different researchers could be allocated to different groups to ensure elimination of one occurrence events i.e. whether one event could occur twice regardless of the researchers.

6.5. Concluding remarks

It seems that a redefinition of teaching/learning paradigm which will allow the EFL teachers to incorporate web 2.0. more efficiently into their teaching practices to further facilitate the emergence of team meaning is necessary. This research study suggested that web 2.0 efficient integration in the classroom requires a rethinking of teaching and learning paradigm in that web 2.0. can provide interesting and complex opportunities of team-based meaning. From this perspective teachers' stances and pedagogies should be aligned with the true nature of web 2.0 collaborative potential: the affordance to students to exert

their authority to participate in collaborative projects in which their teachers will enhance a decision making process.

There are many issues that the EFL teachers need to be aware of when guiding their students into web 2.0 tools in general and the Edmodo platform in particular. These include the nature of collaborative tasks, complexity of tasks, pedagogical goals and re-defined roles of both teachers and learners. Web 2.0. settings do not provide a ready made collaborative environment as the teachers need to rethink their stances to learning in order to afford their students the opportunity to understand and invest on the potential of web 2.0. settings. This will also establish a culture which will favour the students' interaction and the forging of solid relationships between the community members. In this study the potential of web 2.0. to enhance team-based meaning was depicted. If the ministry of education and lifelong learning decides to support such a kind of educational schemes by designing student-centered syllabi, enhance teachers' participation in the design of such syllabi and continues to guide and support teacher training in web 2.0, then the full potential of such tools might be fully deployed.

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Appendix A.

Teacher's questionnaire

PART 1: Personal Information , Teaching Experience, Teaching Situation

Please tick the appropriate item

1. Gender:

Male Female

2. What educational qualifications do you hold?

Bachelor's Degree Diploma Master's Degree

PhD Education Doctorate EdD Other (please specify) _____

3. Years of in- service in public sector (including substitute service)

1-5 6-10 11 and above

4. Years of working in private Language School

1-5 6-10 11-15 More than 15 years

5. How many classes do you teach? _____

6. What is the average number of students in your class?

Less than 10 10-15 16-20 21-25 26-30 More than 30

7. How many English teachers are there in your school?

1-3 4-6 7-10 More than ten

8. What is the location of your current school?

Rural Town City

9. How do you identify your school?

Morning school Evening school Ordinary Experimental

PART 2: Computer/Internet Environment

Section A: In your house

1. Do you have a computer? Yes No

2. Do you have an Internet access? Yes No

3. Do you use the Internet for teaching purposes? Yes No

4. If yes, how often? (Tick the appropriate item)

Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-2 times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>

Twice a month	
1-2 times per year	
Never	

Section B: In your classroom

1. Are there any computers in your classroom? Yes No
2. Is there a computer classroom in your school? Yes No
3. If yes, are you free to use the computer classroom in your school?
Yes No
4. If yes, How often do you use the computer classroom in your school?
(Please tick the appropriate item)

Daily	
Weekly	
1-2 times a week	
Monthly	
Twice a month	
1-2 times per year	
Never	

5. Which of the following applies to your situation? (Please tick the appropriate item)

Each student has his/her own computer	
One computer for two students	
One computer for four students	
One computer for six students	

6. Are all the computers in the computers classroom are connected to the Internet?

Yes No

7. If No, how many of them are connected to the Internet?(tick one item only)

Two Five Eight Ten Fifteen Other (please specify _____)

Part 3: Your Training and Skills In ICT

1. Have you received any ICT training ? Yes
No

2. If yes, how long did it last? (please tick the appropriate item)

Two weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Four week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six months	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
A year	
More than a year and a half	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Did you receive any training regarding the use of the Internet for teaching purposes? Yes No

4. If yes, How long did it last?

Two weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Four week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three monts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six months	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
A year	
More than a year and a half	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How would you describe your general level of using web 2.0. tools for teaching practice? (Please tick the appropriate item)

Very Good Good Moderate Poor

Part 4: If you currently use web 2.0. tools (like Edmodo, moodle or you tube) for teaching purposes tick the item that applies to your situation. If however, do not use such tools for teaching purposes which of the following might appeal to your situation?

Note: the term mediation here refers to the language assistance provided by the Teacher (guidelines, lexical items, vocabulary, structures) to the learners in order for them to undertake a given task as well as the interaction between the T and SS or between the SS in their attempt to reach designated goals)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other (please specify)
1.I use web 2.0. tools mainly to engage EFL learners in collaborative activities						
2.When I use web 2.0. tools I choose information that put the learners' experience to the forefront						
3.I draw out the knowledge gain from a given site and I use activities to extend this knowledge to the students						
4.I lead a discussion and then I create scenarios and problems for the students to solve using web 2.0. tools						
5.I prepare the students to exploit and negotiate the information through dialogue and sharing of opinions						
6.I ensure that the students working in small teams they negotiate the topic under discussion and I intervene in case of block						

7.I primarily focus on providing the learners with opportunities for interaction when web 2.0. tools are used						
8.The quality of the Interaction is subsequently examined						
9.I continually shape and examine the opportunities offered and their outcomes						

Part 5: How do you think web 2.0. can help you in the establishment of student collaboration? Please tick the item that best applies to your situation

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other (please specify)
1. When I use web 2.0. tools in the language classroom the students co-construct meaning through perception and interpretation of the information they encounter						
2.Web 2.0. tools help me emphasise construction of meaning collectively						
3.Up-to-date stretches of language promotes mediation between the EFL students						
4.The information that the students encounter in front of their screens can be used as a spark						

to trigger exchange of thoughts and views on the topic under discussion						
5.The construction of knowledge is built through a blend of one's own ideas and others' ideas and the information the students encounter on the screen on the one hand and mediated discussions on the other						
6.Web 2.0. tools motivate language learners to exploit the knowledge they encounter in collaborated projects.						
7.The authenticity of information encountered facilitates the reaction of the learners and the practice of this information through collaborated activities						
8.The information encountered on web 2.0. tools enriches the negotiation between learners						
9.In the uncontrolled universe of web 2.0. tools the interaction between the learners takes unpredictable paths						

10.The real-world sites with content-rich information increases the negotiation between the students as to what the appropriate course of action will be!						
11.Through web 2.0 tools -based collaborative projects new language is practised collectively						

Part 6: Your perceptions and views regarding web 2.0. tools as a Teaching/Learning tool. Please tick the item that best describes your situation

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other (Please specify)
1.As a source of information web 2.0. tools are efficient only when the teacher ensures that it can be tailored to meet the linguistic or methodological goals the he/she sets						
3.There is no evidence that the mere locating and gathering of information from web 2.0. tools improves language competence						

<p>4. Web 2.0. tools cannot teach students to speak English but as a resource in the hands of a skilled teacher it can provide a wealth of materials with which the skilled teacher can build motivating and productive activities.</p>						
<p>6. With an International and real-world resources found in web 2.0. tools EFL learners will eventually become more confident and autonomous</p>						
<p>7. Web 2.0 tools are compatible with different learning styles and encourages the learner to take control of the learning process</p>						
<p>9. Computers in general and web 2.0. tools in</p>						

particular are not replacing EFL teachers but rather they are changing the nature of their work						
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Part 7: In your Teaching Environment: (The Interview section) Spend some time to provide answers to the following questions as elaborately as you can

Note: The term collaborated learning refers to the stretches of language produced by the SS as they negotiate with one another, agree or disagree, listen to each other’s opinion as well the negotiation between T and SS

1. How exactly do you perceive your role as a teacher during web 2.0. tools language Learning?

Follow up question: What is the exact nature of your intervention during the process?

2. In your opinion could web 2.0. tools EFL classroom lead to collaborative (mutually constructed) Language Learning? If yes, in what way?

Follow up question: What exactly do you do to enhance the collaboration between the students?

3. Is it possible for the language teacher to harness the information found on web 2.0. tools and turn it into learning opportunities for co-constructed knowledge? If yes, in what way?

4. When you use web 2.0. tools (like moodle or Edmodo) do you, in any way, orchestrate the interaction and mediation among the students? If yes, in what way?

Follow up question: What particular steps do you incorporate to aid the interaction and negotiation between the EFL students?

5. Do you think that web 2.0. tools enhance collaborated language learning? If yes, under what circumstances?

Follow up question: In what way do you ensure that the information found on the Internet will successfully be negotiated among the students enhancing thus interaction?

6. In your opinion does the nature of the information found on web 2.0. tools have any impact on EFL learners in terms of mediation and interaction among them?

Follow up question: What additional measures do you take to turn the information encountered on web 2.0. tools into a learning experience?

7. What do you think of the role the EFL student assumes when working with classmates when they exploit the information found on web 2.0. tools?

Follow up question: What do you do when the students in block? What steps do you follow in order to assist them to get by i.e. successfully undertake the situation in question?

8. Do you think that the information found on web 2.0. tools can facilitate the learning of new knowledge among the students? If yes, in what way?

Follow up question: What is your role in the process?

9. Do you think there is a relation between web 2.0. tools as a source of Information on the one hand and the tasks the teacher sets on the other in terms of collaborated language learning? If yes, how do you perceive the nature of this relation?

10. How do you place yourself against web 2.0. tools as sources of information on the one hand and the potential of the tool to enhance mediated and collaborated language Learning on the other?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION!

Contact details:

Name: Georgios Antoniou

Cell phone: 6972033405

e-mail: gantoniou4@gmail.com

Appendix B.

Student's questionnaire

Section One: Personal information

1.Years of studying English at school

1-2 3-4 5-6

2.Years of studying English at a private English Language school

1-2 3-4 5-6

3.Gender: Male Female

Section Two: In your house

1. Do you have a computer? Yes No

2. Do you have an Internet access? Yes No

3. Do you use the Internet for educational purposes? Yes No

4. If yes, How often? (Tick the appropriate item)

Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-2 times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Twice a month	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-2 times per year	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section Three: Your Training and Skills In ICT

1. Have you received any ICT training ? Yes No
2. If yes, how long did it last? (please tick the appropriate item)

Two weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Four week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six months	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
A year	
More than a year and a half	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Did you receive any training regarding the use of the Internet for educational purposes? Yes No

4. If yes, How long did it last?

Two weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Four weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six months	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
A year	
More than a year and a half	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section Four: The teacher's role when web 2.0. tools like (you tube, moodle or Edmodo digital platforms are used in the English Language classroom.
Please tick the appropriate item

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Other (Please specify_____)
1.When we find information on web 2.0. tools I would like to use this information together with my classmates						
2.When we find information on web 2.0. tools I would like to talk about it with the Teacher						
3.I think that when we find information on web 2.0. tools in teams with my classmates we control the way we learn rather than the teacher						
4.When we use web 2.0. tools I would like the teacher						

to help us focus on the topic						
5.I would like the teacher to use the information of the internet in different activities						
6.When we use web 2.0. I would like the teacher to provide opportunities for common action						

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION!

Appendix C. Teachers' Interview working protocol

Interview working protocol regarding the use of the Internet in the ELT classroom, teacher's role and the potential of tool to foster interaction, negotiation of information and peer construction of learning.

Main question	Prompts	Probes
Introductory Qs		
1. Do you use web 2.0. tools in the classroom?	Computer room available?	How many students use each computer? Ratio?
2. How often?	Do you always go to the computer room?	Problems with it? Practicality?
3. What is the main reason for using it?	Vivid pictures, moving, updated information?	
Teacher's role: Before watching		
4. What do you do before you use web 2.0. tools?	Do you prepare the students?	How? Examples?
5. Before you watch something on you tube do you try to attune the students with the information?	Do you elicit information, Do you give a preparatory task to work on? What do you know about the weather changes today?	Do you use a relevant video on the Internet?
6. Do you lead the discussion yourself by oiling the wheel?	Do you try to elicit relevant experiences on the part of the students to make them generate ideas? Do you provide any computer skills?	Make a contract with them/strict control over what they can/can't do? Why?
7. Before embarking on web 2.0. tools do you take any steps in order to team them up?	Do you think teaming them together is likely to tackle the information more efficiently?	Examples?

Do you strictly control what you are going to watch ?	Do students have a say in this? Do you negotiate with them?	Do you let them decide based on criteria they might set?
Teacher's role: While watching		
8.Do you exert a rigid control on the Internet information?	Do you pause? Stress things? Provide clarifications?	
9.Do you let them decide on a course of action they might take or so you set specific guidelines?	Do you stick on the objectives set or let them emerge in relation to the information viewed?	Students' freedom and autonomy?
10.Do you in any way ensure that the flow of information is grasped by the students?	Do you limit it in any way? Simplify information. Choose graded information?	Do you in any way guide them to discover information by themselves? Do you provide search clues, key words, suggest sites?
11.Do you think that web 2.0. help students to collaborate in order to meet task objectives?	In what way?	
12. Do you think that web 2.0 can ensure accommodation of different learning styles?	Assigning roles to students help?	
Teacher's role: Post-viewing		
13,Do you take any steps to ensure the students extend and exploit the web 2.0. tools based information? (requirements based on discussion)?	Do you set a problem to be tackled based on the information watched?	Do you allocate the roles or let students decide how to do it? Do you set criteria?

<p>What working mode do you chose to encourage the students to handle the information?</p>	<p>Why?</p> <p>Group work? Discussion Leader? Coordinator? You ? Student? Keep track?</p>	<p>Do you update feedback?</p>
<p>Potential of web2.0. to foster negotiation and co-construction of learning</p>		
<p>14.Do you try to encourage the students to collaborate with one another to meet task objectives?</p>	<p>Do you think that the Internet might enhance this collaboration? (search for information together) Discussion emerges</p>	<p>In what way?</p>
<p>15.Do you think that web 2.0. tools provide opportunities in terms of constructing knowledge on the students' part?</p>	<p>In what way? Hyperlinks for more information?</p> <p>Use it to make a school paper or prepare a talk.</p>	<p>Do you intervene in that?</p>
<p>16.Do you in any way ensure that the information encountered on web 2.0. tools is turned into a learning opportunity?</p> <p>17.Do you think that web 2.0. tools might enhance negotiation of information when student work in teams?</p> <p>18.Do you take any steps to foster negotiation of information?</p> <p>19.Do you use any criteria to include all students in the team work?</p> <p>20.Do you feel that web 2.0. tools might replace you as a source of input?</p> <p>21.Do you think that it provides a sense of success to the students?</p>	<p>Do you set a specific task? or you set a collaborative project?</p> <p>By searching for more relevant information.</p> <p>Set specific roles for every team member and specific outcomes?</p>	<p>Do you ensure that the students work together with specific roles in mind could lead to negotiation of information?</p> <p>Do you think that while students searching for relevant information might lead them to discussions as to what they use or discard to meet the objectives set?</p> <p>How do web 2.0. tools help?</p>

	<p>How does the Internet conduce to that?</p> <p>All learning styles are accommodated</p>	<p>Can it provide extra motivation? Information? More links access based on certain requirements?</p>
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Appendix D. Students' interview questions regarding the use of the Internet in the classroom in relation to teacher's role and establishment of a collaborative settings

Working plan

Main question	Prompts	Probes
1. When you use web 2.0. tools in the classroom for LT is it important to work in groups Why?	How do you think group work helps to work together the task?	Example? Explain
2. Do you think that it is important to work out the information obtained from these tools with your classmates?	Is it because you exchange ideas and views on the subject?	How is it done? Do you talk about similar experiences? Explain
3. While log in do you think it is important to exchange information with the teacher on the subject and then with your classmates?	How does the teacher help? What does she/he do?	Would you like to prepare in any way? Results? clarify
4. Would you like your teacher to start a dialogue between himself/herself and the students during web 2.0.-based session?	Would that help with interaction and communication?	L2 used to mediate information? How? Examples?
5. Would the information encountered on either you tube or Edmodo help you in any way start a conversation between group members based on the information encountered?	Would the Internet help you start a discussion? What can the teacher do?	When does the intervention take place? How? Clarify. Examples

6. Is it important for the teacher to provide opportunities for interaction in the team?	Would the communication between the students increase in this way?	How do you see the role of the teacher in this process? Elaborate. Examples?
7. Do you think that using web 2.0. tools in the classroom creates opportunities for interaction between the students?	Students working together to address specific aims work?	Do you rely on the teacher to help you with that? Explain how heavy.
Discussing the information you meet on web 2.0. tools help to better understand it?	Does working together in group motivate you to express your view on a subject?	It is easy to use English solve out a problem when working in groups? Role of the Internet in that?
8. Do you think that web 2.0. tools can be used to help you find solutions to a problem	Does it help communication?	How is L2 used? Express opinion, suggest solution, present similar experiences? Clarify.
9. Can the information provided web 2.0. tools be used as a basis for activities that require students working together?	When a task require to suggest the better restaurant to a friend of yours how would you work this out?	How would you work exactly? Could the teacher help?
10. Is there a relation at all between the use of tweb 2.0. and the students working together?	Does it provide help? Better than teacher?	Examples?
11. Is there a relation between web 2.0. and communication of information in the team?	Do you feel O.K. with exchanging information and using English in the team?	Is it easy? Internet help? Teacher help? How? Examples?

12.What do you feel like you want to do when web 2.0. tools are used in the classroom?	What is your role during communication?	Do you feel confident using English in the process? Internet? Teacher? Examples
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APPENDIX E. Letter of Introduction

Dear Colleague,

My name is George Antoniou and I am an English Language Teacher appointed at 2nd Junior High School of Karditsa. I am currently conducting a research study within my doctoral degree studies at the university of Exeter in the U.K. under the title: "The role of EFL teachers in the construction of collaborative meaning construction in web 2.0. settings in secondary education in Greece"

This research study uses different methods of data collection e.g. questionnaires, teachers' interviews and teachers' observations. Your participation is optional and it entails filling a questionnaire, participating in teachers' interviews and classroom observations. The collected data will be used for no purposes other than this research.

Sincerely yours,

George Antoniou

APPENDIX F. Observation schedule

Observation Sheet

Part 1. (Interactional patterns)

Interaction	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Every 3 minutes
S-S	Usually occurred	Usually occurred	Very often	
S-SS	Usually occurred	Usually occurred	All the time	
S-T	Usually occurred	Usually occurred	Seldom occurred	
SS-T	Usually occurred	Usually occurred	Seldom occurred	
T-S	<i>Always occurred</i>	<i>Always occurred</i>	Sometimes only to support students	
T-SS	<i>Always occurred</i>	<i>Always occurred</i>	Sometimes only to support students	
S to other teams	Sometimes when students in block or share ideas	Sometimes when students in block or share ideas	Quite regularly when students in block	

Part 2. Organisational and cognitive level

Feature	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Comments
Students' experience triggered through web 2.0. tools	Through internet accessed content and	Through internet accessed content and	Through internet accessed content and	The third teacher further contextualises internet-based content by relating students' experience

	related videos	related videos	related videos	with the information on the videos. This contextualization continues through report writing
Teacher leading discussion and directs ss to resolving issues	Teacher -led talk using videos to abide students with tasks	Teacher -led talk using videos to abide students with tasks	Teacher -led talk using videos to abide students with tasks	The third teacher loosens authority and allow the objectives emerge through negotiation with the students
Teacher preparing students to deal and exploit information	Teacher-led talk. Teacher explains task parameters to students. She provides help with vocabulary	Teacher-led talk. Teacher explains task parameters to students. She provides help with vocabulary	The third teacher seems to step in only in case of difficulty	The third teacher seems to promote students' initiative to exploit the content within the community
Teacher providing the students with interaction opportunities	She provides instruction as how students should approach the task	She provides instruction as how students should approach the task	After she provided instructions she gradually steps back and leave students to negotiate	The third teacher seems to leave space for students to self-regulate and appropriate utterances aided by their peers
Focus on quality of interaction at a later stage	The teacher continually intervenes and corrects the students	The teacher continually intervenes and corrects the students	The teacher leaves the teams do preparatory work	The third teacher allows space for students to fix their utterances by seeking help from proficient peers
Collective formation of meaning in the Edmodo platform	The teacher provides guidelines as to how the students	The teacher provides guidelines as to how the students	The teacher provides guidelines as to how the students	

	resolve task requirements	resolve task requirements	resolve task requirements	
Edmodo providing opportunities for negotiated L2	The students sent their teachers drafts of their reports. Negotiation is not observed	The students sent their teachers drafts of their reports. Negotiation is not observed	The students sent their teachers drafts of their reports. Negotiation is not observed	The third teacher provides suggestions as to how students identify their research questions. She is not prescriptive.
Interaction of encountered information with sharing of thoughts	Teacher dominates and she only leaves space for short and framed students' contributions	Teacher dominates and she only leaves space for short and framed students' contributions	The third teacher allows space for students' knowledge as the regulate and reorder contribution in the light of their peers' input	

Part 3. Socio-behavioural level

1. Who is in the group activity? (teacher, group leader)?

Mainly the teacher has the dominant role and she continually shapes students' contributions as to resolve tasks

2. How are teams formed? (characteristics)?

Mainly students form teams according to friendships

3. How patterned and repetitive are the behaviours observed?

The most observed behaviour is that teacher dominating, she always provides instructions, even basic computer skills and directs the students to the meet the objectives of the tasks she sets

4. What kind of equipment are there in the scene? (Computers, interactive whiteboards)?

The teacher and the students are in the computer lab the students are in teams of four and every team has a computer in front of them. There are twenty students in the classroom

5. What are the statuses and roles of the participants?

The main authority of the classroom is the teacher. He coordinates the teaching procedure and she hardly leaves dialogic space for students as she shapes their contributions to successfully resolve a report writing.

6. What appear to be significant issues that are being discussed?

Mainly the students ask the teacher to provide either support on vocabulary and on providing some phrases in order to write their reports

7. How are change and stability managed?

Stability is maintained mainly the teacher providing instructions how to resolve difficulties. Change is managed gradually as the third teacher steps back and provides dialogic space to students.

Appendix G. Overview of tasks carried out using the Edmodo digital platform

Task	Focus Group	Title	Description	Aim
Choosing a focus of writing (response mode demands and interactional mode demands).	G1 (third form)	Finding appropriate short articles	students in groups discuss relevance of different articles	Comparing content of articles and purpose of writing
Planning the first draft (response, interactional and complexity mode demands).	G1 group	Finding an appropriate introduction	Students discuss in groups what they should prepare the reader either during school sessions or they exchange messages through the edmodo platform	To discuss view on how to prepare the reader by comparing different versions of introductions and evaluate what to involve in their introductory remarks
Providing in text citations (response mode demands)	G2 group (third form)	students are taught how to provide in text citations	Teachers present different styles of in-text citations. Then the students are assigned tasks in which collaboratively incorporate text citations in their drafts under the teachers' supervision	To discuss different ways of providing in-text citations under the teacher's guidance and put their insights into practice
Choosing three relevant articles to as secondary sources (response mode demands).	G3 group (third form)	Selecting three relevant articles according to their purpose of writing and provide in-text citations	Different teams select three articles as secondary sources according to the aspect of the topic they are presenting and discuss which excerpts of the articles they should include in their report and provide in-text	To evaluate the relevance of different articles and collaboratively decide the inclusion of relevant excerpts according to the purpose of writing

			citations. Students use the edmodo platform to exchange views	
Providing references at the end of their report (response mode demands).	G3 group	Students are taught how to provide references in their writings	The students are taught how to provide references. The teachers present different ways of providing references and then the students in teams discuss are presented with tasks in which they should provide appropriate references in their writings. The students use the Edmodo platform to exchange views	To negotiate ways of providing references and provide intra-student feedback through the edmodo platform
Deciding on an appropriate power point presentation (response mode demands)	All three groups	Discussing and negotiating appropriate power point presentations	The students discuss how they should prepare their power point presentations, what to include in their presentations and why.	To evaluate different ways of power point presentations according to the purpose of writing and appreciate peers feedback sent through the Edmodo platform

STUDENT HIGHER-LEVEL RESEARCH



Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS

You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of **higher-level research** (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/category/publications/guidelines/> and view the School's statement on the 'Student Documents' web site.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). **DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Your name: George Antoniou

Your student no: 590019694

Return address for this certificate: 8 Aristotelous Street, 43100, Karditsa, Greece

Degree/Programme of Study: EdD(TESOL) Doctorate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

Project Supervisor(s): Dr Li, Li,

Your email address: ggga201@exeter.ac.uk and gantoniu4@gmail.com

Tel: 00306972033405

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my dissertation / thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: ...George Antoniou.....date: ...17/01/2012.....

NB For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must **not be included** in your work. It can be kept for your records.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009

Certificate of ethical research approval

Your student no: 590019694

Title of your project: The potential of the Internet in enhancing collaboration between the students and the teacher's role in facilitating Internet-based Language Learning

Brief description of your research project:

The potential of the Internet as a means of enhancing mediation and collaboration between the students and the teacher's role in the process is the main aim of the research project. More specifically, the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning during Internet-based language learning will be scrutinized and the potential/importance of the Internet in enhancing mediated language learning and students' collaboration will be discussed and analysed. Also the perceptions, views and beliefs of both teachers and learners concerning the Internet as a means of enhancing mediated Language Learning and student collaboration will be also discussed and analysed. More specifically, this research project in the form of a case study will seek answers to the following questions:

- 1) What is the teacher's role in terms of enhancing students' mediated language learning during Internet-based Instruction?
- 2) What is the potential of the Internet as a tool of maximizing the collaboration between Language Learners?
- 3) What are the perceptions and views of EFL students and Teachers on using the Internet as a medium of EFL instruction?

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

The research study in question involves two essential stages. In fact these stages are not two distinct ones. They are complementary with one another as one bridges the gaps and the weaknesses of the other. During stage I the quantitative data will be collected. During this stage questionnaires are used. They contain questions to answer all three research questions. Each section of the questionnaire will deal with one research question. Fifteen EFL teachers who teach English in different schools in my town will be offered the opportunity to take part in this research study by answering a questionnaire regarding their role during Internet-based Language Learning. The questionnaires will be administered to both Teachers and Students by mid-February 2012.

Also included in stage I of the research project will be twenty sixth form students as the intervention group, who are coming from the primary school I teach. This group will be taught using the Internet as a tool for finding information. This group will be closely observed by the teacher/researcher in order for the researcher to investigate the role(s) of the teacher during Internet-based language Learning. The teacher/researcher will create tasks which EFL learners will respond to using the Internet. They will also be invited to answer questionnaires regarding the role(s) of the teacher during the Internet-based sessions, the amount of collaboration and mediation aided by the use of the Internet. In a nutshell, in this stage all the quantitative data will be collected and analysed and will be compared with the qualitative data in the subsequent stage of the study. Again the questionnaires will be administered to the students by mid-February.

The purpose of stage II, however, is for the qualitative data i.e. the interviews, the observation sheet (that will be prepared by the teacher/researcher) and the Internet-based Language Learning Sessions recorded on tape to be collected, compared and cross-examined with the quantitative data in stage I. In the second stage subsequent to stage I eight EFL colleagues from another Greek city will be invited to answer semi-structure interviews regarding their views on Internet-based Language Teaching and Learning and the importance of the tool in maximising the mediation and collaboration

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among EFL students. Qualitative Data will provide answers to all three research questions. Again each section of the semi-structure interviews will deal with one research question. The same twenty primary school students will provide answers to semi-structured interviews regarding the issues included in the three research questions namely the role of the teacher, the potential of the Internet to maximise collaboration between them and their views and perceptions regarding the use of the Internet in EFL. The Interviews will be administered to both Teachers and Students at the end of February 2012. During this stage the teacher/researcher will employ another method of data collection namely classroom protocols and an observation sheet. More specifically, the teaching sessions with the students and the teacher/researcher will be recorded on tape so the researcher will have a solid picture of her/his role during his/her intervention. The researcher will create a check list of items to be checked during the sessions. The purpose of the first stage of the research project is to provide an adequate amount of evidence in order for the three research questions to be answered. The purpose of the second stage of the project, however, which will commence when stage 1 is completed is to allow the researcher to provide the specifics of the setting in question by analysing the reality of the participants (both teachers and students). The reason why the researcher chose to use a mixed method approach is to triangulate the data, compare and contradict them, and thus bridge the gaps and the weaknesses of each method. While with the questionnaire the researcher will collect a sufficient amount of evidence with the interviews the observation list and the classroom protocols on the other hand will go deeper into the specifics of the setting in question and locate these features which will make the findings applicable to similar settings.

Participants (including parents) who will take part in this research project will be provided with a clear rationale of the project, and at the end of the research they will be informed about the findings of the project.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents:

During the design stage of the research study certain ethical considerations as dictated by BERA Ethical Guidelines will be taken under consideration such as voluntary informed consent, openness and Disclosure, Right to withdraw at any stage of the research, incentives, detriment or harm, arising from participation in research and privacy and anonymity of the participants. More specifically:

1. Privacy: The researcher will ensure that the information obtained is always available to the participants and protects the people involved in the research from "unwarranted interference in their affairs" (Cohen, Manyon, Morrison, 2008). Additionally, the researcher will explain how the data will be collected and how they will be used.
2. Informed consent: This involves a kind of contract on the participants' part that they are willing to participate in the research study in question. This is closely related to the freedom of the participants and the choice whether to participate or not. On the other hand, the researcher will ensure that all the participants will have the necessary competence linguistic or other to provide the required information. The head master of the school was informed about the purpose of the research and provided his consent to the research project. Also the participants (both teachers and parents of the children) were given a consent form, the guidelines were explained in L1 and all the participants (including parents of the children) were asked to sign the form and return it to the researcher. Also the researcher invited the participants' parents at school, explained the situation, ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and therefore the parents' permission was granted.
3. Comprehension: This relates to the fact that the participants are fully aware of their role, the purpose, and the situation they will be exposed to. The researcher will fully explain the situation, the purpose of the research study and the requirements from the students. The researcher informed the participants that the findings will be known them. On the other hand, the researcher chose not to provide too much information in the beginning in order not to bias the findings.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

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Data Collection in Stage I (the quantitative part of the research design)

During stage I of the research project a questionnaire will be used to gather data regarding the collaboration between the students achieved during Internet-based sessions (research question II) and the role of the teacher in the process (research question I) and the participants' perceptions and views regarding the Internet as Language Learning tool (research question III). The questionnaire will include questions with Likert-scale items and some items will allow for more elaborate answers if required. Some demographic information will also be included (age, sex, years of study, place of setting). In all cases strict anonymity will be kept. A similar questionnaire will be delivered to EFL teachers either in my town or in another city of Greece in order to explore whether the setting plays any role. Again each section of the questionnaire will focus on one research question.

Data Analysis in Stage I

SPSS will be used to allow for statistical analysis of the data. The analysis of the data will provide an overview of the descriptive statistics regarding mean scores, standard deviation and distribution of scores.

Once the data are analysed they will be compared against the data obtained from interviews, observation and classroom protocols recorded on tape. The data will be categorised in order to provide answers to each research question separately.

Data collection in Stage II(qualitative part of the research design)

In my attempt to "construct" meaning out of the specific situation and relate this meaning to similar contexts I will resort to the interpretative research design. As a novice researcher I became aware of the complexity of knowledge in that it is constructed within the premise of a specific context and it is open to reinterpretation of the researcher (double hermeneutics) through the researcher's system of values and beliefs. Therefore, I will attempt to "give rise" to the construction of meaning regarding the specific situation by becoming personally involved in the community of students and I will attempt to "interpret" their reality and actually become a participant. I will therefore seek to provide answers to three research questions as they apply to a specific setting and how the findings find their realizations to similar settings as opposed to generalization of findings. In conjunction with the above research paradigm I will attempt to unravel mainly the students' reality in relation to the collaboration occurred between them during internet-based Language Learning by providing semi-structured interviews to the students reflecting thus their phenomenological perceptions on the above matter. Semi-structured interviews will also be administered to EFL teachers regarding their perception on teacher's role in terms of enhancing students' collaborative learning during Internet-based instruction. Within the framework of unraveling the teacher's role during Internet-based sessions I will also exploit classroom protocols (tape recordings), I will transcribe the recording and I will subsequently focus on frequently occurring patterns and themes through open coding for purposes of categorizing and comparing the data in order to provide answers to the research questions.

Data Analysis in Stage II

The semi-structured interviews from both students and teachers will be transcribed and then categorization and coding will take place. Hopefully, and if the researcher will decide that the NVivo package will ensure a more efficient analysis of the data this will also be employed. The researcher will look for frequently occurring patterns and themes that will emerge from the semi-structure interviews and the classroom protocols. The data will be categorized to fit each researcher question allowing thus the researcher to go deep into the situation. In both cases the questionnaires and interviews will go through the stage of piloting in order for any difficult or unclear items to be altered or removed in order to avoid putting unreasonable stress mainly on students and teachers as well. Additionally, the privacy of the students will be strictly ensured by keeping the confidentiality of the data and the freedom of the students to refuse participating in the research or withdraw from the process at any time will be fully respected.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

During Stage I and Stage II of the research project the data (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observation list, classroom protocols and tapes) will be safely kept in a locked drawer in the researcher's house. The electronic information (data in the SPSS and NVivo packages) will be accessible only by password and Username only known to the researcher. The data will be protected by a well-known ant-virus system and back-up files will also be kept to secure the data against loss.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

Apart from the fact that the research should be very sensitive to ethical issues such as informed consent of the students and their parents and the right of the students to withdraw at any stage of the research the research study in question do not raise any potential or ideological conflicts with the participants. It is possible, in the course of the research project that political issues may arise mainly when and whether the students question matters of current affairs concerning their reality. It is therefore, the duty of the researcher to lead the students to fruitful discussions concerning these issues without posing any danger or conflicts of any kind. On the other hand, should these issues arise the researcher will make any effort to raise students' awareness of these matters and use them as a means of enhancing students' mediation and collaborated Language Learning.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

***N.B.** You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor*

This project has been approved for the period: Jan 2012 **until:** July 2015

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): *[Signature]* **date:** 18/01/2012

***N.B. To Supervisor:** Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.*

School unique approval reference:..... *2/11/12/24*

Signed:..... *[Signature]* **date:** 22/01/2012
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

This form is available from <http://education.exeter.ac.uk/students/>

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: August 2009

Appendix I. Consent form



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

(Signature of participant)

13/03/2014

(Date)

(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): 6942033405

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

OR gantonial4@gmail.com

OR

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation


I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

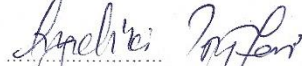
If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity


.....
(Signature of participant)

25/02/2014
.....
(Date)


.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): 6972033405

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

gantonian4@gmail.com

OR

.....


Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.


Appendix J. Examples of Thematisation


1. Axial Coding of Qualitative Data (Teachers' interviews)



(The statements in parentheses are my notes on teachers' comments)

First Axis: Teachers' epistemologies adopted in Web 2.0. classroom (Coinciding with research question one)


I have to present them with some material of course,  to create some tasks but they start doing them (Fotini) (teacher-led objectives)


Sometimes I don't have to be a teacher in the class.  They start doing things on their own (Zoe) (teacher loosens her authority)

I have to present them with some material of course,  to create some tasks but they start doing them (Catherine) (teacher as the main authority in the classroom)

They are so to change the lesson  and the information according to their taste.  (Crysoula) (objectives formed according to students' interests)

I also believe that one member can give help to another and suggest something that the rest don't know (Angeliki) (participatory proficient students helping the weaker ones)

I can be very instructive as a teacher and I consciously try not to do that  (Apostolia) (teacher indicating she is willing to loosen her authority)

the Internet-based lesson is the one that the students ought to be left alone  and so I try not to be very forceful (Theodosia) (teacher allowing students' autonomy)

It's like Zoe said before you let them be more autonomous. (Evagelia) (Teacher favouring students' autonomy)

It's more like a facilitator as discrete support as possible (Eleni)
(Teacher adopting the role of mentoring and facilitating learning)

they have to understand what they read so they need to be able to solve problems beforehand (Theodora) (Teacher focusing on comprehension and preparatory work of her behalf)

I usually prepare leaflets, exercises, so they will be focused and do something. (Vasso) (Teacher focusing on form)

If they are left completely free they do not know what they are doing.

(Maria) (Teacher exerting control on students' actions)

You hand out some photocopies, about what you want the lesson to lead to, and all the key points you like your groups to search. (Antigone)
(Teacher setting teacher-led objectives)

Sometimes they ask other students for help, sometimes I use my ideas
(Sophia) (Teacher combines students' and teacher's input)

Question: Do you take any steps to extend and exploit internet-based content with your students?

I asked them questions while watching and they answered, (Nina) (Teacher performing Comprehension Check)

I tried to show them another film and then I asked them to discuss, make comments, analyse the situation depicted on the film", (Kalliopi) (Teacher focuses on interaction, commenting and reflecting)

I had taught them a story, I gave them an extract of a story by Edgar Allan Poe's short story and [after doing comprehension work we watched the same extract on the Internet](#) (Sophia) (Cross checking comprehension)

I asked them questions and they answered [they also were engaged in group work so all students can participate provided they have the necessary language competence](#) (Loukia) (Group-work comprehension, students' inclusion)

So, problem solving activities may provide a lot of entertainment for the students for example we used the [Internet to enhance it or If they have to provide solutions to problems we watched on the Internet](#) (Eleni) (Providing solutions through enhancing comprehension through watching)

They can see something different with [a critical look so they start approaching the information without being terrified.](#) (Elena) (critical reflection)

I think this is a very good way of introducing them [to enquiry based learning and this is a way to lure them into that.](#) They learn to do something without [even consciously know that they actually learn to do something](#) (Tasoula) (enquiry based learning)

Further categorisation through clarification: “Could you clarify on the way you ensure that students are engaged in the task?”

[The collaboration works among the students during writing tasks](#) and of course grammar too because the Internet can help you when you have grammar tasks (Ioanna) (Teacher ensures collaboration through skill based and learner-centered approach)

[The vocabulary of course about current affairs, modern staff slang](#) a lot of things about that we can listen to actually English is spoken (Roula) (Teacher ensures inclusion through vocabulary building)

Sometimes it is the Internet that becomes very excited. Because it is the students' world and you feel that you are not in their world. So I set tasks and I try to urge them reflect on issues we access reflecting on their point of view (Konstantina) (Teacher ensures some kind of reflection on students' experience, might be participatory learning)

Well, the first objective was to try find things for themselves something that they had in mind they asked if they can spend some time doing what they like but after some time, they actually liked working in groups on a certain task (Anastacia) (Teacher favouring peer-based learning, and places emphasis on students' needs, a learner-centered approach)

The objective would be a rather big one↓ but I would be strict when they would like to search other pages or sites but I would lead them towards searching things suitable for them (Martha) (Teacher exerting control to keep students on track, but objectives set as to direct students to successfully handling tasks)

Second Axis: (Coinciding with research question 1a.) What kind of interaction opportunities are offered by EFL teachers in web 2.0 settings?

I asked them questions and they answered they also were engaged in group work so all students can participate provided they have the necessary language competence. (Olga) (Teacher adopting a teacher-led approach but she also favours peer-embedded learning)

The weak students were supported by more competent students.↑ However, the weak students were timid and hesitant to participate unless more competent students supported them. (Sophia) (Teacher placing emphasis on

peer embedded interaction/ she allows more proficient students to support weaker ones, learners kind of assume responsibilities of learning, she decentralizes her role)

There are other topics you can discuss for example **hooliganism in football matches or teenage pregnancy** which **they found very interesting and they were really willing to participate in that**. So of course I used personal experience but within limits (Meropi) (Teacher allows students to reflect on topics related to their experiences and she regulates the extend to which this experience will be incorporated in students' interaction. Maybe she ensures that students do not get carried away)

If they have to provide solutions to problems we watched on the Internet for example How would the students react if they found **out that a classmate of theirs was pregnant an issue we watched on the Internet**. They found that providing solutions was a reason for them to participate within group discussions and provide their decisions in short reports. That facilitated the learning process. (Evanthia) (Teacher uses the internet as a means of exploiting students' experience. Also writing tasks are used as a means of reflection upon students' experiences, students provide solutions through discussions and report writing)

Further categorization of data through probing “How tight control you exert on students when working in groups”?

the teacher needs **to support the students** by giving **them a hint or making suggestions or correcting things**, by setting **limitations** on the use of the Internet in the classroom otherwise they will get destructed of what they have to do (Dimitra) (Teacher exerts control to ensure students abide by task objectives, teachers supports and mentors students)

They **need support** but on the other hand they **need some space to work alone** on the path **of becoming autonomous**. (Mary) (Teacher provides teacher-led support but to a certain extent. She leaves place for students' autonomy)

The role of the teacher **is to monitor and guide students** but to **some extent they should be allowed to become autonomous**. (Elisavet) (Teacher views her role as supporting and monitor students and allow a degree of students' autonomy)

You need **to set limits from the very beginning** and **you control the things** they do. (Daphne) (Teacher exerts her authority in the classroom and does not leave space for students' autonomy).

We do a **lot of group work** and we separate. One group does this, the other group does that. So there are **different groups doing different things**, like **finding information for their favourite football player and we write essays** using the Internet. **When they finish they tell me about it** If they **have a problem they ask**. **I monitor while they work with each other**. (Stavroula) (This teacher places great emphasis on group work. She builds on writing skills as contextualizing students' interests. Students acknowledge her expertise and they turn to her for support. She decentralizes her role and allow students to become autonomous by monitoring their progress).

. **At the beginning of the year** I have to **explain how they do things with the Internet**. There is a lot they were accustomed to. At the first year at the state vocational school they don't have a clue about how things work. So I explain. I **explain rules and I also explain procedures**. **How we do reading, how we do listening, how we do everything, how we use the computer, how we work in groups**. Once we do this once, twice, I would say the first month is difficult

then they know how it's gonna be. **Another thing I do that is something more complicated especially when we use the computer lab, you go there, you do that and I give them instructions.** If they have a problem **again I do the monitoring.** (Xenia) (Teacher exerting control and explains rules and regulations and sets strict control in the emergence of objectives. She considers herself the main authority in the classroom. She also rigidly directs learning by providing instructions. Once she establishes her authority in the classroom she is willing to step back and provide a discreet monitoring to students).

It really depends on the task. It might be a combination **of task selection and group work.** If they need to find for an activity that has been set to them, **information they have to look that up I just let them work on their own.** Do you what you can do. But during **the first month again I do some explaining.** For example, **the basics, Google is not Internet which they don't know. I explain a lot of things, what a website is, what Google is what www is that stuff,** for example I ask them "do you have an e-mail address, they have facebook and the like (Fotini) (Teacher favours students' autonomy once she realizes that her intervention in form of providing computer skills and explain things about the internet is enough to direct students to learning. At the initial stages she exerts strict control which she loosens as students get to know how they will look for knowledge).

Axis Three: (coinciding with the second research question): What is the impact of teachers' epistemologies to EFL learners?

I think the teacher must be in the classroom and help us because we can learn more information (Student interviewees, Fotis) (The student indicates that the teachers' intervention is crucial in providing understanding of content)

It isn't the teacher's knowledge that can help the students but the skills of the teacher, like he can give an example or comment on a video we watch to help students understand (Manolis) (The student indicates that he trusts the

internet rather than the teacher as a source of content. He acknowledges. However, that the teachers' linguistic skills and clarifications ensure comprehension of accessed content. Therefore, students place emphasis of the role of the teacher as facilitator of understanding).

On the one hand, the students prefer to use the Internet and the social media and on the other hand the teacher should help by showing pictures the students find interesting to watch e.g. information and pictures on football boy teams in England. And in my opinion the students attend better the lesson this way (Dimitris, student interviewee) (The students indicates that he prefers the integration of the internet as a source of content but he states that EFL teachers should ensure that they contextualise accessed content with their interests)

The children like to watch things on the Internet and then participate in a team .They suggest solutions, they provide ideas, they exchange ideas, they can learn even more things. (Antonis) (The student places great emphasis in peer based learning as he suggests that students might contribute ideas and solutions effectively between the company of their fellow students)

Then the teacher tells the children to find information for discussion for the topic they discuss, work more like a team and work together and they help each other to work together. (Alexandra) (The students indicate that she likes to be assumed the responsibility of discovering knowledge within their peers. She also implies that all students have the right to be engaged in the discovery of knowledge though the help of peers.)

Whatever you learn is good for you and I think to communicate with other children is what you need. It can help you understand more things, learn more things when you exchange opinions (Myrsine, student interviewee) (She

places great emphasis on socially embedded learning, understanding is enhanced within the community of their peers by learning from her peers' opinions.

Further categorization through clarification: What is the teachers' help when you use accessed content in tasks?

I think the help of the teacher is of **vital importance** because there might be some unknown vocabulary to the students so in order to understand what the text refers to the teacher has to explain the meanings of the words so we can grasp the full meaning of the text. (Kostas, student interviewee) (The student places great emphasis on teacher's linguistic expertise to negotiate internet content in order for students to grasp its meaning)

Maybe like explaining the meaning of the words in a simpler way so that the students easily understand it and **he should guide the students** (Panagiotis, student interviewee) (The student places great emphasis on the guiding role of EFL teachers, teachers as guiding students into the internet-based content).

The help of the teacher is absolutely necessary because otherwise the whole **task can't go on** so maybe when some students are stuck providing information maybe the teacher should step in and help them continue the dialogue. (Nikos, student interviewee) (The student places emphasis on the supportive role of the teacher to ensure the continuity of tasks)

Well **the teacher must transfer properly the information from the Internet** so it will be pure information **without misunderstandings** and then **he has to organize the team so that the students can work together according to their relationships** with their close friends and continue with their tasks. (Apostolis, student interviewee) (The student places emphasis in peer -embedded learning which has to be establishes through teacher's intervention and he/she should establish the parameters of a learning community by forging strong relationships between the students)

The coordination of the teacher is important but as far as the students are concerned there has to be some freedom as they can work together and **express their own opinions** without the teacher destructing them so that is the actual role of the teacher. Just to guide. (Marios, student interviewee) (The

student places great emphasis on the coordinating role of the teacher in ensuring students' freedom and autonomy to equally contribute in the community-egalitarian view of learning)

I suspect that the teacher shouldn't step in and destroy the whole situation in the way that the student can create knowledge on their own. They should be let free to produce this knowledge and get themselves going. (Gregoris, student interviewee) (The student placed great emphasis in the continuity of the community and suggest that students should be provided with autonomy and not obstructed by teachers' intervention- peer embedded knowledge is sought)

The students should be as a team and be friendly in order to work together, to help each other, to succeed and also the teacher should help with his/her opinion. With this way they could better. Cooperation, teacher's help and information should help the students. (Konstantina, student interviewee) (The student indicates that the teacher should step in only to ensure that peer-embedded learning continues in the community- learning authority is in a way challenged as teachers' role is supportive and not prescriptive)

Appendix K. The profiles of Teacher and Student Interviewees

Name	Teaching Experience	ICT training	Type of School
Argiro	15+	A Level (3 months, internet, Edmodo, Moodle)	Junior High School
Theodora	16+	A Level (3 months, Moodle, Edmodo, introducing videos from you tube)	Junior High School
Vasso	20	B level (setting teaching scenarios with digital platforms like Edmodo and Moodle)	Junior High School
Angeliki	18	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Dimitra	15	B Level (setting teaching scenarios using digital platforms)	Junior High School
Elena		B Level (setting teaching scenarios using digital platforms)	Junior High School
Martha	17	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Antonia	13+	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Afrodite	11+	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Maria	12+	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Christina	20	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Chrysoula	18+	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Sophia	19	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School

Antigone	12+	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Georgia	15	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Konstantina	13+	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Myrsine	12	B Level	Junior High School
Marilena	19+	B Level	Junior High School
Catherine	18	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Maria	19	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Charitine	19	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Chloe	20	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Sophia	15+	A Level (Internet, you tube, Edmodo)	Junior High School
Georgia	16	B Level	Junior High School
Alexandra	17	B Level	Junior High School

Profiles of student interviewees

Name	Language Proficiency Level	Years of studying English	Type of School
Nikos	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Manos	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School

Giorgos	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	6	Junior High School
Alexandra	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	8	Junior High School
Marios	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Kostas	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Panagiotis	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Lambros	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	6	Junior High School
Chrysanthi	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Vaggelis	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Savvas	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Maria	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Fotini	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Eirine	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Alexandros	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School

Vassilis	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Thomas	Upper-Intermediate (B2)	7	Junior High School
Lambrini	Lower Intermediate (B1)	6	Junior High School
Samantha	Lower Intermediate (B1)	6	Junior High School
Marilena	Lower Intermediate (B1)	6	Junior High School
Stavroula	Lower Intermediate (B1)	6	Junior High School
Magdalene	Lower Intermediate (B1)	6	Junior High School
Stavros	Lower Intermediate (B1)	5	Junior High School
Christos	Lower Intermediate (B1)	5	Junior High School