

A 'PERSON-IN-CONTEXT RELATIONAL' APPROACH TO
UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' WILLINGNESS TO
COMMUNICATE IN AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN HIGHER
EDUCATION IN GREECE: ONLY THE TIP OF AN ICEBERG

By

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ABSTRACT

Cultivating language learners' willingness to communicate in a second/additional language (L2 WTC) has been seen as the ultimate goal of L2 education and empirical inquiry into students' intention to engage in L2 communication given the opportunity has gained momentum in applied linguistics research over the past decade or so. This strand of inquiry has seen a major shift from treating WTC as a relatively stable and fixed personality trait to taking a more context-sensitive perspective. In line with this shift, the present study set out to investigate the situated and emerging nature of L2 learners' WTC in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in the Greek higher education setting. Adopting a 'person-in-context relational' view of L2 motivation (Ushioda, 2009) as a theoretical and methodological lens for researching WTC, this qualitative multiple case study conducted over the period of one academic semester investigated L2 WTC of a diverse group of five first-year undergraduate students studying at a specific private higher education institution in Greece. Data came from ethnographic classroom observations, stimulated recall interviews, life story narratives, and follow-up interviews with the case study participants and their teachers. While the findings have confirmed L2 WTC as a dynamic and complex construct, they have also added crucial new insights. The key amongst these is the notion that an individual's WTC, which unfolds in the visible moment of an interactional encounter, must be understood as part of people's larger meaning making practices. These unravel across lifespans and lifeworlds, occur in relationships with others, and, while not necessarily visible in the WTC-relevant moment, are always present in it. Thus, the present study has laid bare the consequences of adopting a person-in-context relational view of WTC in terms of what can be learned and what should be done about it in both research and practice.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Communicative Competence
CDST	Complex Dynamic Systems Theory
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for languages
COP	Community of Practice
CPE	Certificate of Proficiency in English
ECCE	Examination for the Certificate of Competency in English
ECPE	Examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in English
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
FCE	First Certificate in English
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
FLCAS	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
HE	Higher Education
ID(s)	Individual Difference(s)
IELTS	International English Language Test
IRF	Initiation Response Feedback
L1	First Language
L2	Second/Foreign Language
PC	Perceived Competence
SDT	Self Determination Theory
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SRI	Stimulated Recall Interview

TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TTT	Teacher Talking Time
UNWTC	Unwillingness To Communicate
WTC	Willingness To Communicate

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Drawing on my experience as both a language learner and an English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher, I have always been interested in language learners' attitudes towards learning a second language (L2) in general, and towards their classroom participation in particular. As a student, although English was always my favourite subject in school and I would typically achieve excellent grades on tests and exams, I remember very vividly, how, when I started my BA (Bachelor) studies, I avoided conversations in English with my teachers, especially if they were native speakers. I felt I just could not express myself in the subject-matter and was usually afraid of making mistakes, fearing the reactions of both classmates and the teachers. I even remember thinking that I would never make a good English teacher because of my poor speaking skills. What I did not know at the time was that the phenomenon I was experiencing was rather unrelated to actual L2 competence but depended instead upon a host of other factors, which had been the subject of growing research into, what has come to be labelled as, willingness to communicate in a second language (L2 WTC).

Another set of memorable experiences that has informed the focus of the present inquiry occurred during my one-year study in the UK. Initially, I remember being terribly disappointed when I realised that a class of 25 people had only four native speakers, most of whom were not really keen to make friends with foreigners like myself. Although initially my communication efforts were marked by the same fear and avoidance that I experienced as an undergraduate student back in Greece, this

'reluctance' began to melt away with my growing exposure to the new environment and with my deepening relationships with the people in my surroundings, wherever they may have come from.

Finally, my interest in the topic of this thesis comes from my professional experience as a language teacher. I have always striven to maintain a close relationship with all my students, discussing their love-hate relationship with an L2 (thankfully, rarely the hate part of it), addressing their concerns and struggles, and constantly trying to help them to reach their potential. However, although I have encountered a fair share of extremely talkative students in my professional practice, there have been many who were hesitant or completely silent whenever I wanted them to participate in an L2 conversation. This always struck me as puzzling, because such behaviours were often in stark contrast with the students' declared strong motivation to learn English (most of them would score highly if asked about their intended effort to learn in a motivation questionnaire and would, no doubt, quote their desire to be part of an international community, and espouse their view of L2 competence as a crucial asset in the increasingly globalised world, especially in the context of unstable and competitive employment market in Greece – something that many of my students routinely mentioned in my daily interactions with them). When it came to speaking in an L2 and using the actual opportunity that the EFL classroom offered, many of them seem to have made a choice not to get involved.

It could be argued that the international outlook in Greek students' motivation to learn English corresponds with what Yashima (2009) has termed *international posture* in her study with Japanese learners of English, which is the students'

“tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group” (p.145) and this tendency has been shown to fuel people’s drive to learn and use an L2 in the classroom and beyond. Research has also shown the importance of the classroom context as the primary site for L2 development. As King (2013) notes, “while it is true that not all classroom talk leads automatically to L2 development, few people would argue with the notion that opportunities for meaningful oral production in the target language do help students to achieve greater levels of spoken fluency” (p. 3). Yet, what I experienced in my practice as a language learner and teacher, and what the rich body of research on L2 WTC has confirmed, is that people do not always embrace the kind of opportunities available to them.

Certainly, I started this project with several pointers as to what the key contributing factors may be. For example, and as alluded to earlier, Sifakis (2009), states that “English has no official status [in Greece] but is considered a key prerequisite for ‘surviving’ in today’s globalised world” (p. 232). Yet, what this commonly held belief has led to is not so much a desire to engage in meaningful L2 communication, but rather a ‘certification fever’, resulting in students striving to obtain a certificate in English offered by various examination bodies (e.g. University of Cambridge; University of Michigan), which would serve as a proof of the level of their spoken and written English, and be recognised by employers. The actual communication, however, seems to play a somewhat marginal role in students’ and, by extension, the Greek society’s imagination of what it means to be a competent L2 user. In fact, ‘I understand everything, I just can’t speak’ would be regularly seen as an acceptable excuse when students’ engagement in speaking would be questioned. What is even more puzzling, however, is the fact that learners who do not engage in

classroom interactions would usually be regarded by others, including the teachers, as ‘demotivated’, which, as I have attempted to show above, does not appear to ring true with what the students tell me on a daily basis.

Thus, what I began to suspect, even if I did not fully understand at the time of formulating my research questions, was that if I wanted to gain insights into students’ L2 WTC in the Greek classroom environment, I needed to account for the actual rather than hypothetical contexts of students’ here-and-now WTC, while at the same time attempt to look beyond the surface of what the students did, whether this represented willingness or the other end of the spectrum, the lack of it. It seemed to me that I needed to get to the bottom of how students’ motivations, identities, relationships, and the micro- as well as macro-contexts in which they live their lives, may contribute to or constrain what they come to treat as an ‘opportunity’ for L2 learning and communication in the L2 classroom and how they become ‘willing’ to engage with it or why they do not. Focusing my research attention on the visible moments of interactional encounters in the classroom, that is, contexts in which students’ WTC may or may not find expression, seemed to be a crucial step towards understanding the puzzles I have described.

In response to these considerations, the present study set out to investigate the situated nature of L2 WTC in the higher education context from the Greek perspective. Recently, MacIntyre (2007) defined willingness to communicate (WTC) “as the probability of initiating communication given free choice and opportunity” (p. 567), a relatively new individual difference (ID) construct in second language acquisition (SLA) which has predominantly been considered and researched as a

cognitive construct, taking a situated view over the past few years. Despite the undoubtedly positive advances of the past research, quantitative approaches remain the most favourable methods of data collection, whose tendency to rely on prior hypotheses and prediction is perhaps less well equipped to deal with the puzzling, unexpected and unknown phenomena that I described in my earlier account. For this reason, it seemed appropriate to frame this in-depth inquiry into a relatively unexamined dimension of L2 WTC, its situated nature, around a broad rather than narrow, and around an open-ended rather than fixed, set of research questions which drove my inquiry from the outset and throughout this project.

To this end, then, the present study asks the following broad research questions:

RQ1: What does ‘willingness to communicate in L2’ look like for the diverse population of students in the Greek university L2 classroom?

RQ2: Under what circumstances are students in the Greek L2 classroom ‘willing to communicate’ and what shapes these circumstances?

The aim of my inquiry guided by these questions is twofold. First, by investigating the complex relationship between individuals’ L2 WTC and the personal and contextual influences, I hope to add to current theorising in this area of applied linguistics research and advance understanding of this important phenomenon in relation to the rapidly changing context of Greek’s socioeconomic and sociocultural reality. The second aim is to examine ways in which the insights gleaned from this

study may inform L2 pedagogy in the Greek higher education context and beyond, in order to create a conducive learning environment to support learners' productive engagement in their L2 classroom and, by extension, their L2 development.

Theoretically, the research project described in this thesis intended to combine two fields of interest, L2 WTC and the psychology of the language learner more broadly: I wanted to find more integrative ways to account for what a person brings into what I will refer to as the 'WTC moment'. In other words, my research was guided by the desire to adopt an approach that would allow me to investigate L2 WTC holistically within its context and in which 'the person' played a central role. This brought me to Ushioda's (2009) theorising, originally applied to L2 motivation, referred to as "a person-in-context relational view", which I have applied as a theoretical and methodological metaphor to address my research questions.

The present study has the potential to make several theoretical, methodological and practical contributions to the field of L2 WTC, as well as classroom-based research more generally. It offers a timely snapshot of the contemporary EFL classroom in the Greek HE context, reflecting its rapidly changing demographics and the shifting economic, political and personal incentives for studying L2 for people who participate in it. Theoretically, the study brings together the psychological as well as social dimensions of these students' WTC and thus illuminates new dynamics of how one's WTC comes into existence and why it may not.

It is widely acknowledged that traditional approaches in applied linguistics and individual differences research have tended to focus predominantly on the

cognitive perspectives in SLA, treating language learners as rather disconnected from their contexts (King, 2015; Mercer, 2015), leading to important gaps in our understanding of one's classroom behaviour and communicative actions. In the same way, WTC has traditionally been viewed as a cognitive construct, with only very few recent efforts to contextualise the study of WTC. The situated nature of WTC has been seen an important departure from the previous dominant approaches to L2 WTC research, and my study builds on these efforts by adopting a specific theoretical and methodological lens – a person-in-context relational view – as a metaphor for researching this construct. Inspired by research on motivation, which has started to acknowledge the importance of looking at the person more holistically, and by research on identity-related perspectives, linked to the social context, I am using a person-in-context relational view as an overarching approach, informing my epistemological stance, research design and interpretation of findings. I hope to add to current L2 WTC theorising and gain an understanding of a relatively unexplored dimension of L2 WTC by bringing the person and the context together in a bi-directional relationship, where context will not be treated outside the individual, but rather will form an integral part of the person. Methodologically and empirically, what makes this study innovative is that its findings are grounded in the detailed descriptions and analyses of specific interactions situated in the classroom context. The study offers rich contextualised accounts and theoretical explanations of individual learners' communicative actions by drawing on two layers of data (the psychological and the social) which situate people's here-and-now action in the larger context of their meaning making across temporal and spatial landscapes that are part of their personal trajectories. By looking at the visible acts in which people's WTC is or is not enacted, the study's major methodological contribution is that it moves

beyond people's self-reported intentions in hypothetical scenarios, mainly used in self-reported questionnaires, and looks at people's action for what they can reveal about their WTC. Furthermore, and using the same context of live classroom action, this study also contributes empirically-informed understandings of what people are 'bringing' into those moments in terms of their personal histories, motivations, goals and visions, and what this may mean for their WTC. The insights grounded in the actual acts of classroom interaction have the capacity to make a significant practical contribution for improving EFL teaching, learning and communication for teachers and L2 users in Greece and elsewhere.

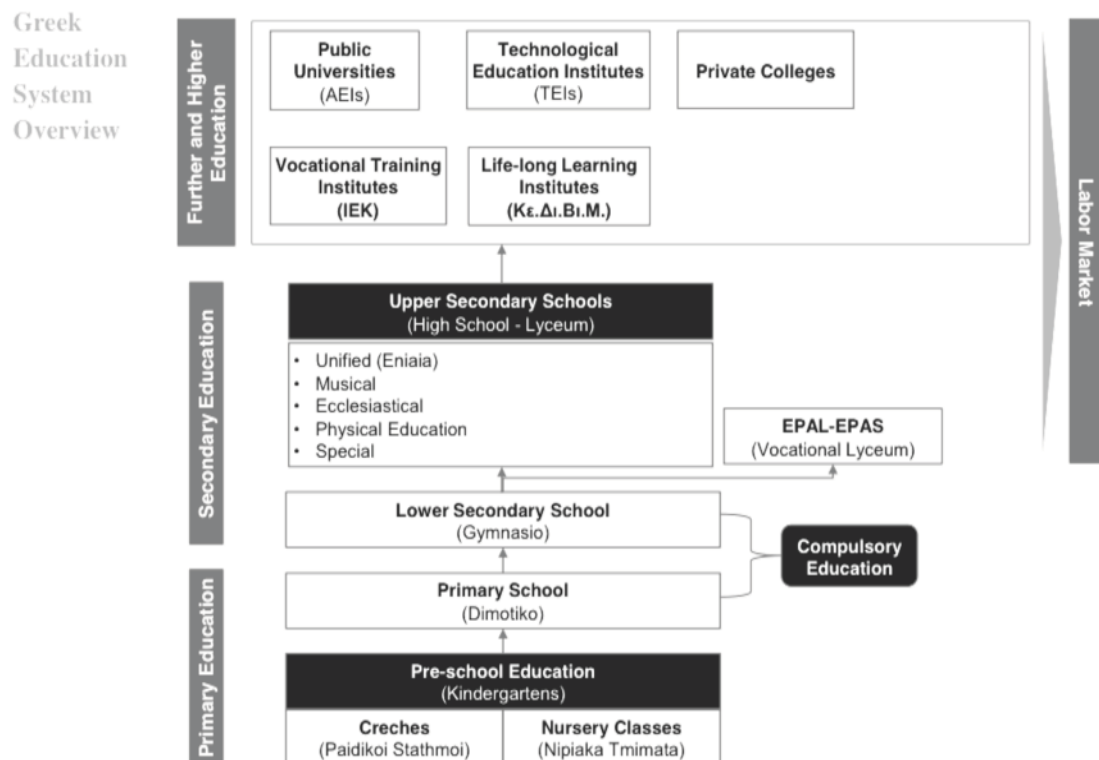
1.2 Situating the study of L2 WTC in the Greek EFL context

I have already introduced my personal motivation for studying WTC in reference to the Greek context and will elaborate on a wider range of reasons in both the Literature Review and Methodology chapters. In this introduction, however, I would like to offer a brief overview of the educational/curricular setting, as an important dimension of the context (Ushioda, 2013), by outlining the specifics of the Greek foreign language education system, with an emphasis on the teaching of EFL in tertiary level. Although, as I will discuss later, my participants come from a range of cultural and educational backgrounds, I believe that a brief contextual background will be useful in orienting the readers to this setting.

The Greek educational system is divided into three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. However, according to the website of the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs (2015) there is an additional post-secondary level offering vocational training. Figure 1.1 illustrates an overview of the Greek education

system. The Greek educational system is under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs (YPEPTH). Education in Greece, including pre-school, primary and lower secondary education, is compulsory for all children from six to 15 years old. Primary Education (Demotiko) lasts six years, low-secondary education (Gymnasio) lasts three years and upper secondary education – including the unified upper secondary school (Eniaio Lykeio) and the technical vocational school (TEE) – lasts three years.

Figure 1.1 An Overview of the Greek Education System



(adapted from <http://www.ellinikakollegia.gr>)

Additional post-secondary education includes public and private vocational training institutes (IEK), which offer formal education in various disciplines (e.g. IT, Tourism, Accounting) and last for 2 years. Tertiary or higher education is divided into

universities (Panepistimio) and technological educational institutions (TEI) both of which last for four years. Students can only secure a position at a university or TEI based on their performance in national level examinations, which take place at the end of the third year of upper secondary education. Furthermore, for the past 30 years there has been in existence another form of further and higher education, namely private colleges/universities (see Section 5.3 for fuller discussion).

1.2.1 EFL in primary, secondary and higher education

Foreign language education is provided in both state and private schools. In state schools, English is the first language young learners are taught at the third grade of primary school (at approximately the age of eight), while in private schools, young learners are introduced to EFL learning at the second grade of primary school (at approximately the age of seven). In line with this, there are also a few private schools, which are English based (students are taught all subjects in English from the first grade until the end of upper-secondary education) and in which, at the end of the upper-secondary school, students obtain an IB (International Baccalaureate) – which is generally highly prestigious in Greece and elsewhere – instead of the national school leaving certificate offered by the Greek education system.

In lower-secondary school (the first three years of secondary education), English is compulsory, whereas in upper-secondary school (the last three years of secondary school), English is optional because a greater emphasis is placed on the core subjects (depending on the orientation group) and the university entrance exams. There are some schools however, which offer intensive courses for potential entrants who opt to gain admission to universities, where English is tested as a core

component, in disciplines such as English language and literature, translation and interpretation studies, international relations, shipping, tourism, journalism and the like (see more in Section 1.2.2).

In further and higher education, English is taught as part of their studies, usually in the form of English for academic purposes (EAP) or English for specific purposes – e.g. Business English (ESP). Students coming from a Greek educational background tend to drop English in order to focus on the exams and then resume while studying at the higher education.

1.2.2 EFL in the private sector

It is generally acknowledged (reported by both parents and students) that English language education in the public sector is far from capable of equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge required to respond to the world change, which has resulted in a thriving private EFL education in the form of private language institutes (Frontistiria). This commonly held belief is based on factors such as a predetermined syllabus, classroom size (n=25), lack of innovative methodological and technological approaches and lastly, lack of listening and speaking during the teaching hours. Even potential entrants who opt to sit examinations to secure a place in a university, where English is required and tested as a core module, seek help in the private sector because the ‘optional route’ or even the intensive courses (see Section 1.2.1) offered by the Greek education system do not appear to prepare them adequately for such demanding examinations, let alone produce competent L2 speakers. In line with this, it is important to mention here that in the English national exams students are assessed only in reading, writing, grammar

and vocabulary and there are no oral examinations. However, this is not the case for all the other exams.

Private language institutes offer intensive language tuition in both general and exam-oriented English education, with the latter being the most favourable route to learning and teaching English, in various levels (A1-C2) in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), as well as English as a core component for the national exams. The most popular certification exams, among the various examination bodies that operate in Greece, are the University of Cambridge (e.g. FCE, CPE, IELTS) and the University of Michigan (e.g. ECCE, ECPE, TOEFL).

As I have alluded to earlier, the world change in which Greece is undoubtedly part of, has led to what I refer to as a ‘certification fever’ or an ‘examocracy’ (McVeigh, 2006, cited in King, 2013) which has been embraced by the thriving EFL private sector, constituting EFL learning and teaching totally exam-oriented. Even though students are tested in all four skill areas, such as reading, writing, listening, speaking, as well as grammar and vocabulary, in all exams (with the exception of the national exams where speaking is not tested at all), it appears that the exam-oriented nature in the EFL private sector is predominantly preoccupied with expending energy and resources in improving students’ grammar (focus on form) and vocabulary rather than preparing competent speakers of English in actual communicative situations (focus on meaning). This is despite the fact that speaking is equally tested in most exams, but generally regarded as ‘the part which can be easily passed’ as long as they ‘say something’ during the oral examination, leading to communicative issues when it

comes to actual speaking, whether inside or outside the walls of the classroom. The lack of communicative tasks in textbooks, teaching materials and methodological approaches, which are all exam-centred, by their very own nature, do very little to facilitate classroom talk and allow room for L2 practice and thus seem to have a major impact on learners' communicative behaviours.

This unquestionably negative impact of the exam-oriented system in the EFL private sector in Greece has been referred to as the 'washback effect', which is the effect of external testing on teaching and learning practices within L2 classrooms (Brown, 2000). The washback effect within an exam-oriented education system has been widely researched, suggesting that in classes where language learning and teaching is exam-driven, this naturally engenders limited pair work, more teacher talking time (TTT) and generally fewer opportunities for learners to exercise speaking (Alderson & Hamp-Lyons, 1996, cited in King, 2013). Obviously, and all the more poignantly, in an education system which lacks in scope and practice, it is not surprising to encounter a fair share of students who deliberately make the choice to not get involved and therefore render L2 WTC a rather unlikely expectation.

1.3 Organisation of the thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters, including the current Introduction chapter. The conceptual part of this thesis (Chapters 2–4) describes the theoretical foundations of the study. The aim is to provide a theoretical basis upon which the empirical data introduced in the subsequent sections can be interpreted. More specifically, *Chapter 2* presents a theoretical backdrop of the study. The chapter starts with an overview of the origins of WTC, aiming to show its evolution from trait-like to situated construct, while focusing on the most determinant factors that have been found to influence WTC. It also reviews MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément and Noels's (1998) model of WTC (1998), before situating L2 WTC research in the classroom, where it focuses on the role of teacher and the role of interlocutors, topics and tasks. Finally, it concludes with a discussion of the current gaps in L2 WTC research.

After setting the scene and identifying the current gaps, *Chapter 3* develops a theoretical argument around what contributes to a person's communicative actions in communicative settings and what, therefore, places the person at the core of L2 WTC research by reviewing other self-related psychological constructs, which are believed to advance our understanding of L2 WTC at the micro-level of the classroom, starting with learner's self-concept. Subsequently, it develops a review of self-determination theory before discussing future self-guides, including L2 Motivational Self-System (Dörnyei, 2005) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1998).

Chapter 4 builds on the previous discussion and reviews all these theoretical frameworks that have already hinted at the need to look beyond the need to focus on 'self' but considered in equal measure one's relationship with the other. I start with

poststructuralist perspectives on identity and investment in L2. After that, I assess the way in which the relationship to the other is implicated in Zimmerman's (1998) three levels of identity in analysing classroom interactions and Gee's (2000) framework of identity as an analytical lens for research in education. The overview culminates in my discussion of Ushioda's (2009) person-in-context relational view, a metaphor that has informed my conceptualising and researching of L2 WTC in this study.

In *Chapter 5*, I describe and discuss the methodological design for my thesis, starting with the rationale and its research questions, before I explain the epistemological stance that has underpinned my empirical inquiry. I also provide an overview of the specific research context and introduce its research participants. This is followed by details of the research design, including the data collection and analysis methods that have enabled me to generate insights into the participants' L2 WTC from the person-in-context relational perspective. I conclude this chapter by discussing the issues of trustworthiness and ethics.

Chapter 6 discusses the main findings of my study, in which I present the life stories and experiences of the five individual participants. This is done with the aim to paint a detailed data-based picture of how the visible manifestations of the persons' L2 WTC interact with what is hidden underneath the surface, such as their biographies, visions, motivations and identities and how all these interplay in the unfolding context of classroom interaction and of the wider institutional and societal ideologies.

Finally, in *Chapter 7*, I conclude with a summary of the five participants' WTC trajectories, before discussing the key insights that have emerged from the findings, and which reaffirm the value of the person-in-context relational view as a productive metaphor for seeing WTC in action, while allowing the researcher to glean insights from below the tip of the iceberg. Lastly, I discuss the implications for L2 pedagogy and language teachers' professional development, followed by suggestions on directions for future L2 WTC research informed by the findings, as well as limitations of the current study.

2 WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE: A KEY CONCEPT FOR INVESTIGATION

In today's globalised world and in the era in which movement of diverse people across geographical borders for a range of educational, socioeconomic or sociopolitical reasons has become a norm, people's ability to live in and with languages other than their mother tongue has become a valued personal, social, political and economic asset. The need for multilingual competence has been widely acknowledged in the Greek reality too, although it is true that this has been mainly linked to knowledge of English as a foreign language (EFL) and has been, until recently, predominantly associated with an individual's economic and career advancement. In a country which has been plagued by the economic crisis for the past eight years and which has recently become a 'lifeboat' for thousands of refugees from around the world, the need to engage in genuine communication with people of other linguistic and cultural backgrounds has become more pressing than ever.

The intention to engage in communication when an opportunity is given has been referred to in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature as Willingness To Communicate (WTC), and its promotion in L2 education has been seen as the ultimate goal for language instruction (e.g. Dörnyei 2005; MacIntyre et al. 1998). Yet, despite several decades of theorising and the rapidly changing context for multilingual communication in Greece, what one sees in a typical L2 (in this case primarily EFL) classroom in Greece offers a mixed picture, ranging from language learners fully engaging in communication at one end of the spectrum, to those completely withdrawing from it at the other.

This study set out to take an in-depth look at the nature of students' L2 WTC in the Greek EFL context to understand what contributes to and shapes students' L2 WTC, or the lack of it, in the classroom context. To achieve this aim, this chapter will provide an overview of what is already known from past research and give an account of how, and in what contexts, these questions have been investigated by SLA researchers. I start with the historical origins of the concept of WTC with the aim to demonstrate its theoretical evolution from being conceived of as an individual trait to its emerging understanding as a more situated individual characteristic. I will pay particular attention to the factors and variables which have been found to affect L2 WTC and will devote space to discussing one of the most influential theories, MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) 'pyramid model' of L2 WTC. I will then preview findings of some of the 'situated', mainly classroom-based, studies, before outlining some of the current gaps and opportunities for future research in this domain.

2.1 Origins of WTC

In a typical language classroom, it is not surprising to encounter learners whose participation patterns display a spectrum of different responses when it comes to speaking. Those who are active and take advantage of the communication opportunities often tend to be labelled as the 'talkative' ones, while those who are more reluctant to speak are usually regarded as 'reticent' or even 'indifferent'. It is not uncommon, however, to see empirical and anecdotal evidence from actual classrooms pointing to the need to problematise such a simplistic characterisation: it is sometimes students, otherwise known as diligent and with excellent test results, who might be completely silent during classroom activities (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2013) or withhold from communicating in an L2 (Peng, 2015), attesting to the

complex circumstances contributing to people's silence (King, 2015) and, by the same logic, to their engagement in L2 communication.

The "volitional process" (cf. Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015), whereby learners are believed to make a conscious decision to speak or to remain silent or, put differently, the "probability of initiating communication given choice and opportunity" (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 567), has been known in the literature as *willingness to communicate* (WTC). Although this is a relatively new individual difference (ID) variable in SLA, the volume of research has grown exponentially over the past two decades or so, with the general aim to illuminate aspects of L2 learning and teaching.

The advent of WTC can be traced back to McCroskey and associates (e.g. McCroskey & Baer 1985; McCroskey & Richmond, 1990; 1991), whose focus was on communication in one's first language (L1). In their research, WTC, as a counterpart to Burgoon's (1975) 'unwillingness to communicate' (UNWTC), was conceptualised as an individual's cognitive/volitional process of choosing to speak, largely determined by his or her personality predispositions (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990). Thus, traditionally, WTC was considered to be a trait-like predisposition that remains stable across time and across different situations (McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). Based on this line of inquiry, researchers investigated various trait-like antecedents which were proposed to exert direct influence on someone's WTC. For instance, in their studies McCroskey and Richmond (1990, 1991) contended that L1 WTC is largely determined by an individual's personality variables, such as introversion, self-esteem, communication

apprehension and perceived communicative competence with the latter two being argued as the strongest predictors (MacIntyre, 1994; McCroskey, 1997).

Just to illustrate further the trait-like orientation to this concept, communication apprehension was defined as “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (McCroskey, 1997, p. 82). Accordingly, those who were found to have a general propensity to high levels of anxiety in communication situations were expected to abandon their efforts to engage and remain silent when an opportunity of such communication arose, regardless of the nature/context of the communicative event itself. Furthermore, perceived communication competence, as a cognitive component of WTC, was believed to reflect a person’s relatively stable and fixed self-beliefs of their communicative ability to communicate in a given situation (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990).

The examination of WTC in L1 communication studies laid the foundation of the development of L2 WTC research. However, because of the more complex and complicated nature of learning and communicating in one’s additional language (L2), the SLA strand of WTC research started with the awareness of the various psychological, linguistic and contextual variables that may interfere with someone’s inherent predisposition (Dörnyei & Ryan 2015). MacIntyre and his colleagues consolidated the concept in relation to L2 settings, labelling it L2 WTC and defining it as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547). In their paper, they argued for a need to treat L2 WTC as a complex and situated construct that includes both state

and trait characteristics (MacIntyre et al., 1998). This theoretical consolidation was a response to previous empirical studies already pointing to such a need. For example, MacIntyre and Charos (1996) in their study (n=92) in a Canadian bilingual context, drawing on Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model of language learning and MacIntyre's (1994) model of willingness to communicate, used path analysis to investigate the relations between affective variables, such as communication apprehension (CA), perceived competence (PC) and motivation, and examined the impact on the frequency of L2 communication. The results supported the eventually proposed model and revealed that WTC in L2 is greatly affected by both CA and PC, which was also supported in subsequent studies (e.g. Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Cetinkaya, 2005; Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2001; MacIntyre et al., 2003).

In relation to motivation, it was revealed that highly motivated speakers use the language more frequently and thus, they were more confident to initiate L2 communication. MacIntyre's (1994) *Self-confidence*, is associated with one's belief that one is able to induce an outcome, achieve goals and carry out the task with competence. It includes both perceived competence and lack of anxiety with the latter being widely researched. This means that learners' investment in L2 communicative practices is largely determined by their self-evaluation of their L2 communicative competence (Peng, 2014). In line with this, Saint Léger and Storch (2009) conducted a mixed method study in an attempt to investigate French L2 learners' perceptions (n=32) of WTC. They focused on the role of learners' L2 speaking abilities and their attitudes towards the speaking activities in two interactional classroom settings, namely whole-class and small-group discussions, and how such perceptions

influenced their WTC in L2. Data were collected through self-assessment questionnaires and focused group interviews over a period of 12 weeks. The results of the study concluded that learners' perceptions of themselves in the L2 classroom affected their WTC in class. As their self-confidence increased over time, their WTC in L2 also increased. This study underscores the role of students' self-evaluation, while also suggesting that students' self-evaluation of what they can or cannot achieve may be unrelated to their actual L2 speaking ability.

Clément, Gardner and Smythe (1977) introduced self-confidence, pointing out its detrimental influence on a person's motivation to learn, in the first place, and subsequently put into practice the language of another speech community. The evidence that has come out from this inquiry suggested that in multilingual and multinational contexts, linguistic self-confidence, which is in fact the outcome of both quality and amount of intercultural communication among speakers, is a strong mediating factor as it rules out learners' motivation and future desire for L2 practice (cf. Clément, 1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985). In line with this, self-confidence has also been found to be motivational in L2 learning situations during which there might be less interaction among speakers of other speech communities, but more informal interaction through L2 media culture (Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994). Consequently, it appears that linguistic self-confidence is largely socially constructed, as opposed to the cognitive nature of self-efficacy. However, it should be noted here that self-confidence does possess a cognitive dimension, the perceived L2 proficiency.

This situated view of L2 WTC has been seen as an important departure from the previous research, which traditionally built on L1 WTC as a trait-like construct. It is important to mention here, however, that this is not a distinction I am making theoretically. Rather, I am reflecting on past general tendencies in L1 WTC research to focus predominantly on WTC's trait-like features. Of course, this is not to say that L1 WTC cannot be examined from a situated perspective; quite the contrary. My point here, however, is to emphasise a line of inquiry which opened up as L2 WTC research departed from the trait-like models predominant in L1 WTC research at the time and started to carve out a more contextualised research agenda.

Since the introduction of MacIntyre's (1994) model, a lot of research has been done, even though this has mainly concerned North American and Asian contexts. The findings which have come out of this inquiry have shown that whether an individual is willing to communicate in L2 depends on a number of situational variables, such as the person that one communicates with, the topic of the conversation, the specific task, and the like (Dörnyei, 2005; Kang, 2005; Peng & Woodrow, 2010), which, in turn, impacts on people's self-evaluations of themselves and their capacity to engage in L2 communication.

2.2 Key influences in WTC: The case of communication anxiety and communicative competence

There is considerable evidence that anxiety has the power to affect L2 performance, leading learners to discomfoting learning situations, forgetting what they know, making mistakes and experiencing negative feelings of worry, embarrassment and self-consciousness (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). As MacIntyre and

Gregersen (2012) put it: “One of the most consistent findings in the SLA literature is that higher levels of language anxiety are associated with lower levels of language achievement” (p. 103). This is not surprising if one considers that anxiety is in fact the affective component of self-confidence and is closely linked to perceived communicative competence (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Therefore, it is generally defined as a feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry, manifested when learning or using another speech community’s language (Spielberger, 1983). Predominantly conceptualised as a trait and situation-specific construct, anxiety can be displayed in different forms of fear, such as fear when speaking, fear of misunderstanding others, or equally misunderstood by others, and fear of being laughed at (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

In their influential paper, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), conceptualised a unique type of anxiety concerning foreign language learning, namely foreign language anxiety (FLA) and defined it as “distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process” (p. 128) thus, acknowledging its repercussions in the language classroom. Aiming to make the construct researchable, the authors developed a 33-item, 5-point Likert-scale instrument, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). This self-report-instrument is capable of measuring anxiety in three distinct dimensions, namely, communication apprehension, fear of failure and fear of negative evaluation.

Following their call, several studies (e.g. MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, 1994; Young, 1999), constructed similar research instruments. The results of these studies recognised the adverse effects of anxiety in students' L2 communicative competence and attainment.

Communicative competence is another major antecedent of WTC. The main reason why some people are not willing to communicate appears to be an absenteeism of adequate communication skills (McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). This important realisation has led researchers to the work in the area of reticence (cf. Philips, 1968). Philips (1968) defined a reticent individual "as a person for whom anxiety about participation in oral communication outweighs his projection of gain from the situation" (p. 40). Thus, learners who are reticent, withdraw any social interaction leading to communication issues. In essence, the outcome of this type of 'interaction', is precisely the opposite of WTC (McCroskey & Richmond, 1991).

In relation to L2 WTC research, as I have alluded to earlier, in several studies, communication anxiety has been found to be one of the key influences on individual learners' L2 WTC (e.g. Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Cetinkaya, 2005; Clément et al., 2003; Denies, Janssen, & Yashima, 2015; McCroskey & Richmond, 1991). For several decades, despite the increasing attention in L2 research in general and L2 WTC in particular, anxiety still posits an ambiguous line of inquiry as to whether it should be considered as a motivation component, a personality characteristic or an emotional reaction (Dörnyei & Ryan 2015). It is, therefore, regarded as the most complex, misunderstood and multifaceted variable (Scovel, 2001).

While this is true, and well-documented, few people would argue with the idea that anxiety does not have a detrimental impact on learners' WTC. It appears, therefore, that in an anxiety-provoking climate (e.g. the classroom) L2 WTC is rather an unlikely expectation leading to avoidant communicative behaviours.

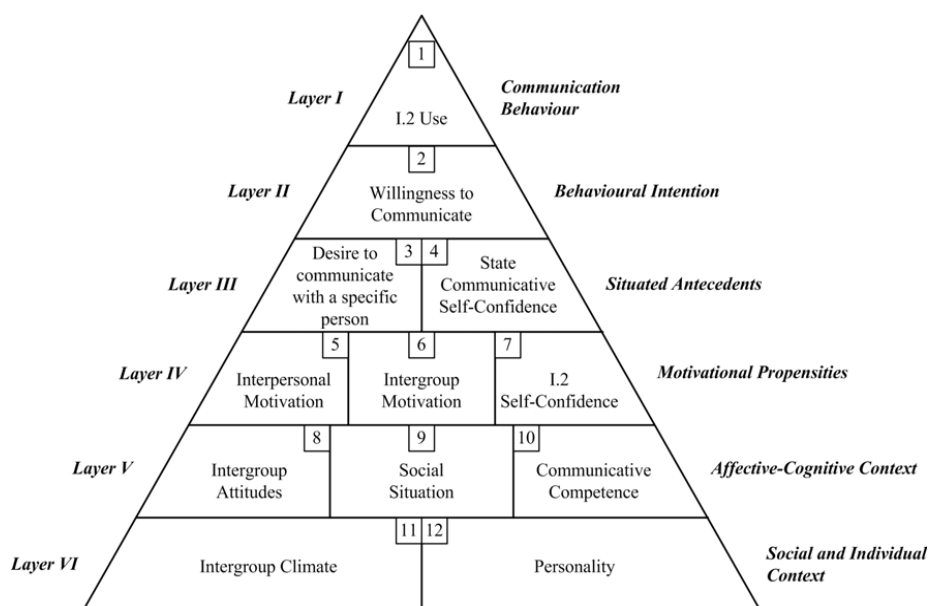
2.3 The 'Pyramid' Model of L2 WTC

As already mentioned in my previous discussion, one of the most influential heuristic models of L2 WTC that has accommodated this situated view, and which has informed most of the subsequent research in this area, was proposed by MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément and Noels (1998) and, in this section, I offer a brief overview of the model itself and the selected studies that were directly influenced by it or set out to validate/test its theoretical assumptions. Numerous studies have been conducted to test the reliability and applicability of this model in various contexts (both ESL and EFL), with the vast majority employing quantitative measures for these purposes.

The 'pyramid' model features a multi-layered framework which outlines interactions among a range of potential factors that have been well established as influences on SLA and L2 use, resulting in a construct in which psychological, linguistic and personality variables are accounted for in an integrative fashion (see Figure 2.1) (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The model distinguishes between *situational factors* (e.g. Layers I-III), such as familiarity with the topic or a desire to speak with a particular person, which are said to be context-sensitive and subject to change depending on the circumstance, and *individual/social factors* (e.g. Layers IV-VI), such as personality, intergroup relations and communicative competence, which are

regarded as more stable and which can be applied more generally across different situations.

Figure 2.1 Heuristic Model of WTC in L2 of MacIntyre et al. (1998)



Although the pyramid model illustrates a clear representation of the multiple layers and variables resulting in the individual's behavioural intention of L2 WTC, it has been argued by others, including the originators of the model itself, that its major drawback lies in not sufficiently accounting for the interrelation and the weighting of the various variables (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan 2003; Dörnyei, 2005). Instead, its components have been widely researched as primarily separate constructs, with the role of context receiving only limited attention within the studies testing the model. The limitations have been identified by MacIntyre et al. (1998) themselves in the original proposal, conceding that the main role of the model was more of a 'starting point' than a 'final product' and they encouraged future researchers to develop the model further.

Taking the pyramid model as the theoretical basis, MacIntyre and associates conducted several research studies in the Canadian bilingual context to identify any correlations between WTC and its various factors. For example, Baker and MacIntyre (2000) conducted a mixed method study, based on questionnaire and interview data (focused essay technique) to examine WTC and various variables such as PC, CA, frequency of communication, and motivation between immersion and non-immersion students in Canada. CA and PC strongly predicted WTC and frequency of communication with immersion students displaying higher WTC and more frequent communication than non-immersion students. Another similar study was conducted by MacIntyre et al. (2003) in a quantitative (questionnaire survey) among university students (n = 59), examining the differences between French immersion and non-immersion students in terms of WTC, communication anxiety, perceived competence, integrative motivation and frequency of communication. The results indicated that WTC correlated significantly with motivation in the immersion group but not in the non-immersion group. In the immersion group, WTC was predicted by communication anxiety but not by perceived competence, while in the non-immersion group, WTC was predicted by perceived competence but not communication anxiety. Thus, the outcomes of these studies supported the pyramid model, confirming that communication anxiety, perceived competence and motivation have a direct influence to someone's L2 WTC, but that this influence differs based on the instructional context.

The pyramid model was constructed (and as the above study shows, tested) in a Canadian bilingual context, which is why questions arose as to its applicability to other non-bilingual contexts because of very different demands for L2 communication

and opportunities for L2 exposure across such settings. In response to this challenge, numerous studies were conducted by researchers across different linguistic settings, such as Yashima (2002) in the Japanese context, Wen and Clément (2003) and Peng (2007) in the Chinese context, Cetinkaya (2005) in the Turkish context, and Kim (2004, 2005) in the Korean context. All of these made an attempt to adapt MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model to other ESL/EFL contexts, which led to a surge in research across other sociocultural contexts.

For example, a series of quantitative studies led by Yashima (2002, Yashima, Zemuk-Nishide & Shimizu, 2004) were important because first, they attempted to apply a L2 WTC model to other monolingual sociocultural contexts and second, because context was more fully taken into account, even though this was treated simply as an independent variable. The study was conducted in a Japanese EFL context with 297 Japanese students, utilising structural equation modelling (SEM). As a result of her previous research, Yashima proposed and included in the investigation a new variable, namely 'international posture' which refers to an "... interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to study or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and, one hopes, openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures, among others" (Yashima, 2002, p. 57). International posture, confidence and motivation were hypothesised to exert influence on L2 WTC. The results supported the direct influence of these variables and yielded similar results as in MacIntyre and Charos's (1996) study, but also highlighted the importance of international posture and motivation in the Japanese EFL context. It appeared that international posture influences motivation, which in turn influences

proficiency in English and, therefore, WTC correlates significantly to international posture.

Hasimoto's study (2002) in Hawaii, of 56 university Japanese ESL students, partially replicated MacIntyre and Charo's (1996) original study by examining affective variables as predictors of reported L2 use in classrooms of students. The SEM analysis showed that motivation and WTC affected self-reported communication frequency in classrooms. However, unlike MacIntyre and Charos (1996), perceived competence to L2 communication frequency was not found to be a significant predictor. This, it was argued, might be ascribed to the different levels of proficiency of the participants in these two studies, with beginners and advanced participants in MacIntyre and Charos (1996) and Hashimoto (2002) respectively.

Another attempt to adapt MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model to the Chinese ESL context was made by Wen and Clément (2003). They argued that WTC in L2 in a Chinese classroom is far more problematic than MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model had assumed, arguing that the Chinese cultural values, based on Confucian heritage, were likely to manifest differently in an L2 classroom communication. In line with this, their critique of the model pointed towards a difference between 'desire' and 'willingness to communicate', suggesting that desire to communicate is a deliberate choice or preference, whereas WTC is the actual readiness to act. Under this assumption, they claimed that learners may have the desire to communicate, however, this does not warrant that one will be willing to communicate in a communicative event. In their conceptualisation, they proposed various factors, such as the social context, personality, motivation and affective perceptions, as possible threats, located

distally in MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model, which were likely to influence the relationship between the two suggested variables. Their adapted theoretical framework was suggested as an alternative to the original WTC model in a completely different cultural EFL context and represents an important contribution to understanding WTC in non-Western contexts. Nevertheless, the explanatory power of this alternative model seems to be linked rather tightly to the specific cultural norms, which may restrict the model's relevance to similar socio-cultural settings. Contexts shaped by different sociocultural and ideological structures may call for alternative explanations and constructs. For example, it is not easy to use the model to explain WTC (or lack thereof) in relation to some of the culturally-specific tendencies mentioned earlier, or in the context of Greek students' generally positive international outlook. In addition, it is far from straightforward to discern in practice the 'distinctions' that the model draws on (i.e. desire and WTC). In addition, it appears that WTC by its very nature and by definition encompasses a certain degree of desire. Accounting for this relationship theoretically while still insisting on the distinctiveness of desire and WTC may prove rather problematic.

Overall, the pyramid model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) was at its inception seen as a significant innovation in the field, in that it acknowledged a multi-layered L2 WTC affected by various factors, including those that were context-dependent, especially at the time when little attention was paid to such influences. The model has continued to serve as a theoretical blueprint for subsequent research. However, it is also important to mention that while the model has indeed considered many aspects of the individual, the variable-oriented approach that is central to the model has not succeeded at a more holistic portrayal of the person. As noted earlier, however, this is

understandable in the context of the overwhelmingly quantitative approaches to research from which the pyramid model had sprung. In addition, and assessing the model's applicability from the Greek context perspective, its parameters do not seem to cater sufficiently for learning contexts in which L2 is predominantly learnt as a foreign language with minimal opportunities for L2 use outside of the classroom (e.g. English in Greece).

The aforementioned studies obviously provide substantial evidence for the applicability of the pyramid model in other contexts, though there are several limitations. It must also be said, however, that although the results come from sophisticated, mainly quantitative, approaches to data analysis, such as structural equation modelling, path analysis, and correlation analysis, these draw exclusively on participants' self-reported data, even when a mixed method approach is adopted. The cause-effect relationships, identified as a result of these approaches, between L2 WTC and the various affective variables, such as linguistic self-confidence, personality, motivation and international posture, may be intriguing but leave many question marks in relation to what one experiences in the realities of the actual L2 classroom. For instance, while some of these results may shed light on the phenomena I described in the introduction to this thesis (e.g. my early experience as an undergraduate student reluctant to engage in communication with my lecturers could easily be ascribed to my low perceived self-confidence and high communication apprehension), the puzzles around the others remain (e.g. my students' reluctance despite their declared international posture, high linguistics self-confidence, and generally high motivation).

2.4 Situating WTC research in the language classroom

While, as mentioned in the previous section, most research investigated WTC as a trait variable employing mainly quantitative approaches and, as such, they did not account sufficiently for the situated nature of WTC, there is a growing body of research which, by situating WTC in the classroom context, has contributed to our appreciation of the possible influences of classroom dynamics of students' WTC. The language classroom's social and psychological microcosm features a complex array of interconnected forces, which all shape individual learners' behaviours and actions (King, 2014). Situating WTC research in the context of the classroom is, therefore, an important strand of inquiry.

For example, Kang's (2005) qualitative study was possibly the first exploring L2 WTC as a situational construct. In her study among four Korean ESL students, studying at an English Language Institute, she collected data from interviews, video-recorded discussions and stimulated recall interviews and concluded that the situated nature of L2 WTC was the outcome of an interplay between psychological factors such as excitement, responsibility and security, and situational variables such as topic, interlocutor and the context in which the conversation took place. Grounded on these finding, she proposed a multi-layered WTC construct and a new definition of L2 WTC, according to which, WTC is considered as a dynamic, situational and evolving construct rather than a stable trait-like predisposition. To this end, she argued that WTC should be seen as "an individual's volitional inclination towards activity engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables" (p. 291).

Cao's (2014) qualitative multiple-case study in New Zealand, explored the dynamic and situated dimension of learners' L2 WTC in the classroom context. Informed by a socio-cognitive perspective on L2 learning, which takes into account social, environmental and individual variables, she recruited six ESL learners studying at an EAP course for five months. The data came from a combination of classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews and reflective journals. The results of the study were in coherence with Kang's (2005) study, supporting that classroom WTC is indeed dynamic and situational over the predominantly trait-like predisposition. She further argued that the situated nature of WTC is, in fact, a result of a joint effect of three interrelated factors, namely individual characteristics, classroom environmental situations and linguistic factors, which may either contribute or equally inhibit one's L2 WTC at any time. However, the actual effect of these factors differs between people and thus is quite complex to be forecast.

Recently, L2 WTC research has been pushed forward by approaching WTC through other more novel theoretical perspectives, such as the ecological perspective (e.g. Cao, 2009; Peng, 2007, 2012, 2014) and complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) (e.g. Dörnyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015; Gregersen, MacIntyre, & Meza, 2014; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Pawlak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2015; Yashima, MacIntyre, & Ikeda, 2016). For example, Peng's (2012) qualitative multiple-case study adopted an ecological perspective on classroom dynamics. In her longitudinal study set in a Chinese EFL university, she investigated factors influencing WTC. Four participants were chosen from two classes (Year 1 and Year 2 class) and followed up for over seven months, employing a variety of data collection methods, such as semi-

structured interviews, classroom observations and learning journals. The results indicated that participants' L2 WTC is influenced by an array of individual and environmental factors. More specifically, the study identified six factors underlying WTC in the microsystem: learner beliefs about English learning and motivation, cognitive, linguistic and affective factors, and classroom environment, while also suggested the existence of meso-, exo- and macrosystems that exerted influence on the classroom WTC. This study provided contextualised understanding of the dynamic changes of WTC in the EFL university classroom and demonstrated how WTC is socioculturally constructed as a function of the interaction between the individual and situational contexts, both inside and outside the classroom.

MacIntyre and Legatto's (2011) study is significant because it is the first mixed method classroom-based study, using a novel approach to researching WTC. Informed by a complex dynamic systems framework (CDST), the researchers developed an idiodynamic approach to examine moment-to-moment WTC fluctuations in eight communication tasks. Particularly, six female Anglophone Canadian university students (19–21 years old) took part in their study. The participants were involved in a French immersion programme. The results revealed significant changes in respondents' reactions over the few minutes they participated in the task and a decline in their WTC when they had to engage with specific topics. Searching memory for vocabulary and anxiety were found to be key predictors.

In another recent mixed-method study, Yashima, MacIntyre and Ikeda (2016) investigated both trait and state L2 WTC among 21 Japanese Year 1 university students (15 females and six males) in a classroom setting to gain a fuller understanding of why second language (L2) learners choose (or equally decline) communication at specific moments, based on the assumption that silence is a prevalent phenomenon in the Japanese EFL classrooms that needs to be addressed (although see King's (2013) account on students' deploying silence as a means of communication; similarly, Morita's (2004) findings pointing to silence as resistance and, therefore, as a manifestation of students' engagement rather than passivity). Framed within a complex dynamics systems theory (CDST), their interventional study examined the communication behaviour of individuals in 10-minute whole-group free discussion tasks. During the study, typical patterns of classroom discourse, such as those in which the teacher initiates, the students respond and the teacher evaluates (i.e. Initiation–Response–Feedback (IRF) patterns) were avoided to encourage students to initiate communication (cf. King, 2013). The qualitative data was based on observations, student self-reflections, and interviews and scale-based data on trait anxiety and WTC (i.e. a questionnaire), followed by another questionnaire administered at the end of the semester to elicit students' retrospective accounts. Subsequently, three participants were selected, depending on their participation patterns and frequency, for individual level analysis. The students initially participated in a 20-minute whole-group discussion, followed by a 10-reflection at end of the lesson. While the results revealed how differences in the frequency of self-initiated turns, emerged through the interplay of enduring characteristics, including personality and proficiency, and contextual influences, such as other students' reactions and group-level talk-silence patterns, it should be noted that the data related

to the whole-group ‘free’ discussion and not to the whole of the lesson where the situation might have been more complex due to a range of other contextual factors, such as the teacher-student interaction, students’ familiarity with the topic of conversation or task difficulty.

These empirical studies provided evidence for the rather complex interactions between learners and the multiple influences that occur in communicative situations within the language classroom. In essence, the language classroom is not just an empty ‘space’ where students are located and expected to operate on their own but rather, as these studies suggest, WTC research needs to take into account the many components and influences which are grounded in the classroom context, such as learners’ relationships with others, including the teacher and the peers, and their attitudes towards the topic, or the task. In the next section, I provide an overview of what the current research states about the role of these components. All these studies brought about a new turn providing the applicability of novel approaches in researching L2 WTC in the classroom context. These studies also provide substantial evidence that phenomena, like WTC, which are complex, dynamic and multidimensional, call for new thinking and adoption of socio-dynamic perspectives which define the current understanding of SLA. It appears, therefore, that L2 WTC research has started embracing new theoretical perspectives for researching and understanding this rather dynamic and complex construct.

2.4.1 The role of teacher in students' L2 WTC

Teachers' role is undeniably crucial in shaping students' perceptions (Johnson, 1995) and, thus, shaping the classroom dynamics too. This is also confirmed in Dörnyei's (1994) framework of L2 motivation where he addresses three motivational components, namely course-specific, teacher-specific, and group-specific. The first, the course-specific motivational component, involves the teaching syllabus, materials, teaching methods and learning tasks. The second is the teacher-specific motivational component, which deals with teachers' personality, teaching style, feedback, and relationship with the students. The last motivational component is the group-specific and is concerned with the dynamics of the learning group. In all three components, teachers' role is prominent and important for triggering students' motivation, which in turn depends on how they (teachers) organise the classroom teaching-learning practices. Therefore, teachers are considered key figures because they have the power to influence learners' motivational predisposition of the learning process in positive or negative ways. Traditionally, research on the motivational impact of teachers has been on trying to extract the unique characteristics or traits that differentiate practitioners from 'non-practitioners'. Nevertheless, these 'trait approaches' have been quite inconclusive, because motivational effectiveness seems to be determined by a synthesis of numerous broad factors (e.g. teacher's personality, enthusiasm, attitudes, distance or immediacy, knowledge, skills and classroom management strategies) whose diverse combinations can be equally effective (Eggen & Kauchak, 2007, cited in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Therefore, the teacher's role seems rather complicated. In line with this, Kubanyiova (2006) argued that "the role of the teachers in engaging students in the learning process is clearly complex and multidimensional since it concerns almost all academic and social aspects of classroom environment" (p.2). In

essence, what teachers say or do matters, how they communicate and act in the classroom may also possibly influence students' motivation in contrasting ways (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

Past research on the variables affecting WTC in the classroom context has also demonstrated that teachers' attitude, involvement, and teaching style pose a powerful and determining influence on students' participation patterns and WTC (Cao, 2011; Kang, 2005; MacIntyre, Burns, & Jessome, 2011; Wen & Clément, 2003). For example, in Wen and Clément's (2003) study, teachers' involvement, support and immediacy influenced students' L2 WTC in positive ways. Similarly, Kang's (2005) qualitative study, indicated that when teachers are perceived as 'supportive' by the students, then students feel less anxious and as a result their L2 WTC is influenced positively. The same results were reported in the Myers and Claus (2012) study, where they found that if the teacher is supportive, flexible and knowledgeable, students do make the effort to invest in communication interactions with their teacher. In another study, Cao (2011) reported that students are more eager to ask questions and participate more actively if they like the teacher. In their study, MacIntyre et al. (2011) indicated that the teacher's role is central and that teachers are capable of influencing learners' WTC either through external regulation of rules or by satisfying learners' need for relatedness. Thus, concluded that students are generally willing to talk with their teachers. A more recent study by Peng (2014) also indicated that the teacher's role is crucial in creating moment to moment interaction among other factors, such as classroom environment, activities, etc.

However, as Zarrinabadi (2014) argued, the influence of teachers on learners in regard to WTC has been given little attention and only in few instances where the ‘teacher-factor’ was viewed as one of several factors. Despite empirical evidence from previous studies suggesting that indeed teachers “have the potential at any moment to increase or decrease WTC among the students” (MacIntyre et al., 2011, p. 88), the researcher suggested that a study investigating teachers’ actions, activities, and moment-to-moment interactions that are likely to affect learners’ willingness to communicate, appears to be equally important and requires further examination.

2.4.2 The role of interlocutor, topics and tasks

A number of situated studies have also indicated the role of interlocutor as central in a person’s L2 WTC (e.g. Cao, 2011; Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005). For example, in Cao’s (2011) qualitative study, students (n=6) were found more willing to communicate with more competent interlocutors (than them) who possessed the following characteristics: they were talkative, outgoing and had ideas to share. In fact, it appeared to be more interesting for them to talk to interlocutors who came from different cultural backgrounds because they felt more ‘open’ and ‘free’ to talk to foreigners whom they considered less familiar with their own culture. This was also pointed out in Kang’s (2005) study with Korean participants, who regarded other Koreans as their least preferable group of communication, resulting in lack of interest and motivation to talk.

Cao and Philip (2006) conducted a mixed study where they compared ESL learners’ (n=8) self-report of WTC to their actual WTC behaviour in three interactional classroom settings, namely, whole class, small groups and dyads and

how their WTC behaviour differed in each of these contexts. The results indicated that there was no correlation between learners' self-report WTC and behavioural WTC. Moreover, it was found that situational WTC is influenced by situational variables such as group size familiarity with interlocutors, the familiarity and interest of topic of discussion, and the confidence of the learner in relation to the task and, therefore, it is likely to change in the three interactional contexts. Their study supported the use of classroom observation as an appropriate method in gaining insight into situational L2 WTC in class. In line with this, Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2015) conducted a mixed method study (n=60) in Polish university students to identify the factors which facilitated L2 WTC. The results confirmed that the extent to which L2 WTC fluctuates depends on a range of contextual and individual factors. In fact, it was increased when students were given the opportunity to communicate with familiar receivers in small groups or pairs and on topics related to personal experiences. However, when there were misunderstandings with the interlocutors' output, students felt more discouraged for L2 WTC practices.

In their study, MacIntyre et al. (1998) highlighted the importance of topic in affecting one's L2 WTC. In essence, they pointed out that familiarity with the topic potentially increases learner's linguistic confidence while lack of knowledge inhibits L2 communication, even for a confident L2 speaker. The topic, as a medium for triggering communication has been also established in other studies (e.g. Cao, 2011; Cao & Philip, 2006; Kang, 2005; Liu, 2005). For example, Cao (2011) reported that half of the students appeared to be in a more disadvantageous position when they were unfamiliar with the topic. Moreover, it was found that the research participants were quite hesitant when they perceived the topic as 'not interesting'. In a similar

vein, the findings from Kang's (2005) research revealed that students in her study were more comfortable and confident, as well as excited, when they were familiar with the topics around Korean culture which they had experience of and they found them interesting, which was not the case for conversations involving other less familiar topics. In Nagy and Nikolov's (2007) qualitative study, the researchers asked the participants to write a short essay in English (approximately 150 words), as their homework, in which they had to include a situation when they felt most willing to communicate in English and a situation when they felt least willing. The participants had to also include details such as when, where, with whom they had the conversation, what the topic was and why they felt willing or unwilling to speak in English. The participants reported that they were less willing to communicate when they felt 'disconnected' from the topic or when they felt unfamiliar with the subject. They also emphasised the role of the teacher and stressed the importance of authentic and meaningful communicative situations.

Tasks have also been identified to exert influence on students' L2 WTC in various studies (e.g. Cao, 2011; Cao & Philip, 2006; Peng, 2014). For example, Peng (2014) found that during meaningful tasks, students were more willing to participate and therefore produced higher levels of WTC. The role of tasks also been supported in Eddy-U's (2015) study, where she reported that learners' WTC in tasks was increased when these tasks involved seven motivating themes: interest, perceived effectiveness, good groupmates, good classroom social situation, personal vision, self-confidence, and marks. In another study, Amiryousefi (2016) reported that inclusion of tasks and materials, which involve cultural aspects of native speakers and English literature, and provided learners with authentic real-life situations, increased learners'

L2 WTC and contributed positively to their speaking. Recently, Freiermuth and Huang (2012) proposed a model of task motivation, in which they investigated four distinct factors in relation to task attractiveness, task innovativeness, WTC and need to execute the task in the L2, between 20 Japanese and 19 Chinese students who participated in an online chat discussion. The results from this study suggested that all four factors contributed positively in shaping students' motivation to participate in the L2 task. The above example studies provide some evidence of the decisive role of meaningful tasks in L2 teaching and learning, suggesting that meaningfulness, personal experiences and reasonable challenging activities are key to the quality of students' involvement in L2 tasks (Kubanyiova, 2006). This links well to the concept of flow (cf. Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) in L2 task design, during which, people become so absorbed, intensively interested and focused on performing the task, even a challenging one, that they lose self-consciousness as a result of a very enjoyable experience. As Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011) put it "flow can be seen as a heightened level of motivating task engagement; in many ways, it is the optimal task experience" (p. 94).

2.5 Summary

Despite the increasing amount of research on L2 WTC and the positive advancement there have been a few remaining challenges resulting in gaps in our understanding. L2 WTC is a relatively new ID which has been recently theorised as a situated rather than a trait construct. The latest theorising of the situated nature of L2 WTC is in accordance with the current trends of ID research which acknowledge and address the dynamic and situated nature of IDs over the trait-like. The inquiry into this 'situatedness' emerged from scholars' rejection of the notion that the various

traits are context-independent and stable and led to growing proposals of “new dynamic conceptualizations’ in which ID factors enter into some interaction with the situational parameters, instead of simply cutting across tasks and environments” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 218). This important change has also brought the theme of context in the heart of IDs research (Dörnyei, 2005, 2015).

However, as this brief overview has shown, even though the context has been well recognised and as such became central in an attempt to reflect the situated nature of various IDs, and L2 WTC in particular, it remains to be treated as little more than an independent variable, influencing various ‘individual’ dimensions but being essentially located outside of the individual. Furthermore, as this review so far has made obvious, all these studies on WTC research have provided evidence of WTC being affected by various classroom contextual variables. Arguably, however, most of the data accumulated, while making substantial inroads into a more situated approach, does not necessarily illuminate what it means for individual persons located in specific contexts (geographical, sociocultural, but also contexts involving individuals’ personal histories and sociopolitical circumstances) to be willing to communicate with others.

With a few notable exceptions, the quantitative approach remains the most favoured method of data collection. While this is understandable, given the psychometric tradition in which this research originates, the dangers of “neutralis[ing] by design what is variable and what is individual”, which lead to producing “epiphenomenally uniform accounts” (Atkinson, 2002, p. 536), are still very real even in the more situated tradition of L2 WTC research. Ironically, perhaps, what is

labelled as IDs research has not necessarily shed much light on the actual individuals, that is, real persons in real worlds. Gaining a better understanding of this question, and therefore treating WTC as a genuinely situated and dynamic construct, may require a theoretical reaching beyond the domain of WTC. In the field of applied linguistics more broadly, there are already debates that may prove instructive for the purposes of advancing WTC research more generally and in this thesis particularly, purposes of advancing WTC research more generally and in this thesis particularly, and I turn to an overview of those discussions next.

3 L2 WTC AND SELF: UNDERSTANDING WTC THROUGH THE LENS OF OTHER SELF-RELATED PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTS

Although the literature on L2 WTC research discussed in the previous chapter has offered a better understanding of the learners' communicative actions in various cultural contexts and the various factors that constitute and influence one's L2 WTC, the overview has also made it clear that important gaps remain in our appreciation of both the 'person' and the 'context'. For instance, some of the more recent research on L2 WTC has made it clear that 'self' plays a significant role in contributing to one's L2 WTC (Kang, 2005; Cao & Philip, 2006; MacIntyre, 2007), but the theoretical detailing of what this may mean for WTC research has been done mostly outside of the L2 WTC domain. Furthermore, as Peng (2015) has argued "in the language classroom learners are not just recipients of knowledge but also social members of the class community, in which their learning and communicative behaviour are likely to be related to their perceptions of the selves and others" (p. 85), suggesting that the focus on the learners' 'self' may have to go beyond L2-related considerations. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to review self-related psychological theories which thrive outside the L2 WTC domain, but which may provide potentially fruitful directions in addressing some of the current gaps in L2 WTC research that the previous chapter has identified. It should be noted here that although anxiety is also a psychological construct that is of relevance, a fuller discussion has been included earlier and therefore will not be reproduced at this stage (see Section 2.2). Thus, in

this chapter I specifically consider developments in three areas of research inquiry, namely self-concept, self-determination theory and research on possible selves.

3.1 Learners' self-concept

It is widely acknowledged that what learners think and feel about themselves has the power to influence their behaviours, motivations and attitudes towards learning a foreign language. Indeed, each individual learner holds their own unique complex set of self-beliefs which not only influence the way learners act and the kind of decisions they make in a particular setting, but also how they interpret their past experiences and the goals they set for the future. These beliefs provide learners with a sense of continuity and help them make sense of their position in the world and their relationship to it. In this sense, when learners enter the classroom they also carry what they believe is true about themselves (Mercer, 2011b). Self-beliefs have gained momentum with Bandura's social cognitive theory (cf. Bandura, 1986). His concepts have been quite influential and followed by many SLA researchers (e.g. Dörnyei & Otto; White, 1999; Young, 1999). For Bandura, these beliefs are, in fact, a self-system, which interacts with an array of extrinsic factors and thus rules out one's actions. Those beliefs that learners construct, attach to and generally consider to be true for themselves can be a strong mediating factor for both their successes or failures (Pajares & Schunk, 2002) influencing their behaviours as well as their experiences (Horwitz, 1999).

Among the various sets of self-beliefs, the current section deals with self-concept firstly, because it is widely acknowledged that self-concept plays a central role in all learning situations (Mercer, 2011b) offering insights into learner

psychology and behaviour, most importantly, because self-concept is multidimensional. This means that learners do not only have one self-concept, but multiple interrelated self- concepts in a range of contexts. In fact, self-concept has been recognised as interrelated with sociocultural contexts and interpersonal interactions (Mercer, 2012). In her recent work, Mercer (2015) conceptualised self within a complexity-informed perspective and argues that self is both socially and mentally situated, and context is not an external variable but forms an integral part of one's self system, thus putting explicit emphasis on the role of contexts in language learning. This includes subjective accounts of past experiences and present interactions which together shape a person's here and now self and in the future. In essence, her recent conceptualisation views self as a network of relationships in which context (both temporal and spatial) is inherently integrated and cannot be separated. This important recognition of the situated nature of self-concept brings about a new turn in our thinking and understanding of the relationship between self and context, which does not only resemble the latest theorising in L2 WTC research but also views the person's self as dependent to the context, which shows important links to Ushioda's (2009) person-in-context relational view (discussed in Chapter 4) and, therefore, will be discussed as it is believed that gaining an understanding of the person's self and what brings about himself/herself in the language classroom could be vital clues in advancing our understanding of the person's communicative actions. It is beyond the scope of this study to review in detail all the self-related constructs that exist in the literature but rather to provide a brief discussion of those which potentially advance our understanding of L2 WTC. However, in order to avoid conflicting understanding of the terms, self-esteem and self-efficacy will also be discussed briefly.

According to Pajares and Schunk (2002), a self-concept is “a self-description judgement that includes an evaluation of competence and the feelings of self-worth associated with the judgement in question” (p. 20). It concerns a set of beliefs or perceptions one holds about oneself. Given its self-related nature, it entails both a cognitive and an affective aspect. Self-concept captures, more widely and holistically, beliefs and feelings associated with a foreign language on the far side of simple tasks or skills. It portrays what lies under a person’s domain-specific set of self-beliefs in various contexts, without being linked to one particular context, as opposed to the notion of identity (Mercer, 2011b). It would be wrong, therefore, to assume that self-concept is independent from the context. In fact, it focuses on the sets of beliefs that learners hold about themselves and subsequently bring to any situation and encounter, not necessarily in relation to one particular context (Mercer, 2011a). Thus, it appears that self is very much linked to the context.

Two constructs regularly confused with self-concept are self-efficacy and self-esteem, which, although they share a common ground, diverge on focus and boundaries in ways that are meaningful for their understanding. Self-efficacy is the most cognitive self-belief and domain-specific (Mercer, 2012). It refers to personal beliefs (judgements) about one's capabilities to engage in an activity or perform a task at a given level (Bandura, 1986). “Self-efficacy beliefs revolve around the question of ‘can’” (Pajares & Schunk, 2002, p. 20). Self-esteem or self-worth is the most evaluative. It is a global construct which refers to the opinion the individual has about himself/herself. It is assumed to be influenced by society, culture, school achievement and opinion of others (Mercer, 2011b).

Self-concept has been also investigated in relation to other constructs. For example, in motivation research the importance of self has been underscored in Dörnyei's (2005) L2 motivational self-system model (discussed in the next section). However, while self-concept refers to individuals' perception in the present, possible selves refer to individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become and what they are afraid of becoming (Mercer, 2014). Research on identity (e.g. Norton, 2000, 2013) has also dealt extensively with individuals' self (detailed discussion in Chapter 3). Both constructs are used interchangeably, though they differ in focus. Identity is an individual's self in relation to a particular social context or community of practice, whereas self-concept is more concerned with inner psychological sense of self in a particular domain. Concerning L2 WTC research, self-concept has not been given much attention, even though other self-related constructs have (e.g. self-esteem and self-confidence) and found to exert some kind of influence on learners' L2 WTC. The most recent contribution to date is by Peng (2015), who investigated the dynamic interplay of an individual learners' self-concept, L2 WTC and the context in a Chinese EFL university, highlighting how important contextual factors appeared to be in constructing one's self-concept as well as its pivotal role in influencing learners' L2 WTC and communicative behaviour.

In line with this, self-concept has also featured in a number of theories, which studied learners' avoidance of specific learning behaviours, which is aligned with learners' reluctance or silence in L2 WTC communicative situations. Although 'avoidance' has not been dealt with in its own right in L2 WTC research, it is nevertheless a 'threat' to successful L2 communication and learning and does feature

in learners' communicative intentions for a wealth of reasons. This suggests that students' lack of WTC may be a result of self-defensive mechanisms, such as self-worth protection, which more broadly indicates a strategy in which, in the fear of failure, learners suppress any effort in the belief of that 'not making the effort' is in fact the 'wrongdoer', rather than lack of competence (Mayerson & Rhodewalt, 1988; Rhodelwalt, Morf, Hazlett, & Fairfield, 1991; Thomson, Davidson, & Barber, 1995). In this way, 'the effort' becomes twofold. On the one hand, appreciated by the students in the light of being rewarded by their teachers, but at the same time causes them feelings of fear, because an 'unsuccessful failure' is likely to threaten their self-worth (Covington, 1998). Another self-defensive mechanism is self-handicapping behaviour. This involves a real or imagined obstacle to a person's conduct. With this strategy, one has a ready excuse for any possible failure and also uses particular methods, such as procrastination (McCown & Johnson, 1991) or sets relatively unrealistic goals. (Covington, 1992). In essence, if a learner studies only at the last minute, his or her potential failures will not be ascribed to inability. On the contrary should they do well, they will consider themselves as enormously able, because they will have succeeded without making a great effort, if not at all. Additionally, learners may hamper themselves by setting unachievable goals and, thus, in case of a possible failure, the result would not mirror notably on their ability, given that hypothetically under these circumstances, it will be hard for anyone else to succeed as well. There are occasions, however, where students may try to preserve their self-worth by simply expressing a worthy goal, (e.g. stating that they will succeed in the next exam, if that may be still be unlikely), in their effort to be compensated for the potential failure through imaginative accomplishments. Thus, such unreasonable goals become logical, despite knowing the possibility of achieving the goal is relatively low and the

resulting failure irritating. The last strategy is called defensive pessimism. Here, learners set unrealistic goals and anticipate low results by downgrading how important an assignment might be and, therefore, lessen any feelings of anxiety that might otherwise oppress their studies if they have taken that assignment with seriousness (Cantor & Harlow, 1994; Cantor & Norem, 1989; Norem & Illingworth, 1993; Martin, 1998). It appears that all these avoidance strategies have within themselves important links with learners' silent behaviour, which undoubtedly leads to communicative issues. Silence itself has been a relatively unexamined area in relation to L2 WTC. A further engagement with 'silence' as a defensive strategy might be proven particularly useful for our understanding of learners' 'absent' communicative behaviour in the classroom context and beyond, given that 'silence' itself can be employed as means of communication because it can be seen "as a defensive strategy particularly for the socially anxious seems to be the preferred choice" (King, 2013, p. 50).

3.2 Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a theory of motivation which concerns how human beings pursue three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness and competence (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2002). It appears that those who are self-determined perform particular behaviour, especially when they are supported by the social environment. Autonomy refers to the feeling of being in control of one's own behaviour; relatedness is the need for belonging or being connected to others; and competence concerns the feeling that one is capable or accomplished. Two principal theoretical concepts derived from SDT are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Noels, 2001, 2003, 2009; Noels, Pelletier, Clément, &

Vallerand, 2000). The former deals with behaviour performed for pleasure and satisfaction, and the latter involves behaviour in order to receive an extrinsic reward. SDT also highlights the importance of social processes and influences in shaping motivation, which brings the role of context at the heart of successful language learning and, therefore, it can be argued that when learning takes place in conducive environments, motivated learners will perform the maximum potential.

In relation to WTC, MacIntyre, Burns and Jessome's (2011) study among immersion students employed self-determination theory along with the pyramid model. The results revealed substantial similarities between situations in which students were most or least willing to communicate, which differentiated by subtle changes in context that affected the authenticity of communication and needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. For the current study, the significance of STD lies in its power to guide and influence students' self-regulated learning behaviour, which in relation to the context, likely offer a better understanding of what guided a particular communicative behaviour in the L2 classroom WTC and the hidden goals of doing so.

3.3 Future self-guides and vision

Over the last two decades or so, there has been an increasing interest from self-theorists in the active and dynamic nature of self-system. As an outcome, a number of self-related mechanisms were introduced that link the self with action, in an attempt to bridge personality psychology with motivational psychology (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). In this section, I will deal with two theories which feature a future dimension of 'self' and which bear relevance to my discussion of WTC. The first is

possible selves theory, which represents visions about one's future self, and the second is self-discrepancy theory, which is a more general theory introduced in social/personality psychology and describes a specific mechanism in people's psychological appraisal that leads to action. That action could be extended to mean action associated with one's WTC, which is why an understanding of this theory may be useful in the context of this thesis.

L2 motivation research has made it clear that a foreign language is not just a simple communication means that can be learnt in the same way as other academic subjects and, thus, researchers have adopted paradigms in an attempt to connect the L2 to the person's 'core', forming a vital part of an individual's identity (Dörnyei, 2009). One of the most dominant self-mechanisms is *possible selves*, which concern visions of one's self in a future state, introduced by Markus and Nurius (1986). They represent the individuals' ideas of what they *might* become, what they *would like* to become, and what they are *afraid of* becoming. While self-concept has been a synopsis of how a person sees him/herself in the present, deriving from past experiences, possible selves concern how people conceptualise their as-yet-unrealised potential, drawing on hopes, wishes and fantasies in the future. In this vein, possible selves act as 'future self-guides' reflecting a dynamic and forward-pointing conception that explains the way in which an individual moves from the present to the future (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), even though not all types have this guiding function (Dörnyei, 2009). For example, the 'might become' refers to a default situation and, as such, it does not guide as predict the future state. Drawing on two aspects of self-theory from psychology, possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987), Dörnyei (2005) proposed the *L2*

Motivational Self System, comprising of the *ideal L2 self*, which is an L2-related perspective of a person's ideal self; the *ought-to L2 self*, which refers to the properties a person ought to hold for themselves, so as to elude a potential negative backwash (both draw directly on possible selves theory); while adding a third component, the *L2 learning experience*, to reflect the immediate impact of the students' learning context and experience. It should be noted here, that while the first two components have a future orientation, the L2 learning experience differs as it represents the here and now experience. The L2 Motivational Self System, is a direct application of self-discrepancy theory to the study of L2 motivation and draws on some of the key concepts that were already introduced in that theory, such as 'ideal' and 'ought to' selves, but reconceptualises them to fit in the specific situation of L2 learning. In addition, the theory also introduces a dimension of the learning situation, something that has already been discussed in relation to WTC previously (see Section 2.4) and which offers interesting links among self-discrepancy, learning situation and WTC.

However, while L2 learning experience is an important dimension of this model, it has not really been taken up in research on L2 motivation that embraces the possible selves framework. This may be because of the complexity that such an endeavour would pose to researchers. At the same time, however, and just as has been claimed earlier when discussing WTC, a deeper look at the actual learning situation in which visions (whether ideal or ought-to) are salient may prove to be invaluable in advancing our understanding of the role of future self-guides in the actual engagement of learners. In other words, the limitations of WTC research on which this thesis is predicated have been at the heart of recent L2 motivation research in an equal measure.

3.3.1 Self-discrepancy theory

Although Markus and Nurius (1986) introduced the concept of possible selves, Higgins work precedes them, yet it is acknowledged by the former authors (Dörnyei, 2009). Higgins (1987, 1998) states one type of possible selves, the ideal self, as particularly important because it concerns the attributes that one would ideally like to possess (i.e. representation of hopes, aspirations or wishes). In Higgins's self-theory however, an additional self-guide is added, namely 'ought self', which represents attributes one believes one ought to possess. Therefore, the ideal self portrays the individual's self-visions, while the ought self involves another person's vision for the individual; the latter does not resemble someone's desires or wishes or the possibility to ever attain them.

There are differences however, among Markus and Nurius's and Higgins's conceptualisation of self-theory. More specifically, the former authors introduce more than one self, whereas Higgins discusses an individual ideal and an individual ought self. This possible confusion in the distinction between ideal and ought selves lies in the ought self's level of internalisation. More specifically, as individuals belong to several reference groups, they are influenced in terms of both socialisation and induction, and therefore it is not always clear to decide, especially when subject to social pressure, if an ideal self state is a genuine representation of someone's dreams or is the outcome of one's desire for conformity (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006). In this sense, an internalised ought self entails some extent of pressure resulting in different degrees of integration.

Deci and Ryan (1985) have attempted to describe the graded internalisation of external motives with their *self-determination theory*, which offers an internalisation continuum of extrinsic regulation, comprised of four stages: (1) external regulation, the least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation, which is the outcome of external sources (e.g. a praise from the teacher); (2) introjected regulation, which entails externally imposed rules that one accepts and follows so as not to feel guilty of something (e.g. laws of a country); (3) identified regulation, which happens when people value and therefore participate in an activity (e.g. learning a foreign language because it is necessary for career advancement; and (4) integrated regulation, the most advanced form of extrinsic motivation, in which an individual's behaviour is entirely integrated into his/her other values, needs and identity (e.g. learning English because it is highly prestigious in today's globalised world). It appears, therefore, that (1) and (2) are linked to the ought self, whereas (3) and (4) to the ideal self (Dörnyei, 2009).

The motivational impact of future self-states (Markus & Nurius, 1987) was made explicit with Higgins's (1987, 1998) *self-discrepancy theory*, which posits that someone has the motivation to reach a condition where their self-concept corresponds with their personal self-guides. In this sense, motivation involves the potent source to reduce the discrepancy between one's actual self and the projected standards of ideal/ought selves. Even though ideal self and ought self are alike, as both involve the accomplishment of a desired end-state, the predilections differ. In fact, ideal self is associated with one's hopes, wishes, ambitions and attainment, and focuses on 'promotion', while ought self controls the absence or presence of negative results and thus has a prevention focus (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

Even though a great body of research studies has found that future self guides can act as motivators and therefore activate self-regulatory mechanisms, this does not happen automatically, but rather it depends on various conditions that can increase or impede the motivational impact of the ideal and ought selves. These include: (1) an existent future self-image; (2) perceived it as possible; (3) coherence between ideal and ought selves; (4) required activation in the working memory; (5) procedural plans or methods to go for it; and (6) a balanced feared self (Dörnyei, 2009).

An important dimension of future self-guides is that they involve tangible images and senses (Dörnyei, 2014). The imagery component is a powerful tool which dates back to the Ancient Greeks. For instance, Aristotle defined imagination as “sensation without matter” and claimed that “there’s no desiring without imagination” (Modell, 2003, p. 108). According to Markus and Nurius (1986), possible selves are represented in the same imaginary and semantic way as the present self and thus they become ‘real’ for the person. In fact, people can ‘see’ and ‘hear’ their possible self; that is their visions and dreams. However, their proposal seems to have been ignored. Similarly, Markus and Ruvolo (1989) pointed out that framing future goals in this way is an important advantage because this representation captures some elements of people’s experiences when they engage in goal-specific behaviour. They add that by focusing on possible selves we are “phenomenologically very close to the actual thoughts and feelings that individuals experience as they are in the process of motivated behaviour and instrumental action” (Markus & Ruvolo, 1989, p. 217).

However, it is important to distinguish the difference between vision and goal. A goal is associated with one's "directional intentions to reach future states", while vision has a powerful "sensory element", it involves "tangible images related to achieving the goal" (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 10). With respect to WTC, a vision of becoming a fluent L2 speaker may not necessarily include passing an exam or getting a certificate, but rather the individual visualises him or herself participating in situations where they speak English fluently. Therefore, a vision involves both a desired goal and how the individual approaches or realises the goal. According to the Oxford dictionary a vision is a vivid mental image, especially a fanciful one for the future. The technical term is mental imagery. The significant role of vision in social sciences has been well recognised because it is believed that "vision is one of the single most important factors within the domain of language learning: where there is a vision there is a way" (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 2). Indeed, it can very powerful. The stimulatory dimension of mental imagery is at the heart of its potency. Students with a vivid and detailed ideal self-image that has a substantial L2 component are more likely to be motivated to study a foreign language. Thus, it can be argued that when students' self-image involves speaking in L2 they are more likely to be willing to communicate and they will invest more effort to accomplish a speaking task because of that image. Recent theorising in L2 motivation research has started embracing the role of vision as a motivating factor in stimulating goal-specific behaviour (Dörnyei, 2014). In order to understand the motivational component of vision, motivation needs to be approached from a whole-person-perspective. This brings psychological theories of human identity and self at the centre (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014).

While all these theories have certainly provided us with a better understanding of the motivational impact of the future self in guiding and predicting behaviours, it appears that the context, in which these future selves are materialised and manifested, was treated as rather disconnected from the person, leading to important gaps in our appreciation of individual learner's behaviour from a whole-person perspective. In addition, a learner's future self is likely to be shaped by both past and here now learning experiences, which seem to have been overlooked. A further engagement with both might afford invaluable insights into the person's future self.

3.4 Summary

Although L2 WTC research has not traditionally been grounded in any of these theoretical frameworks, it seems that how people see themselves can offer invaluable links in our understanding of learners' communicative actions. There is no doubt that the richness that all these theories and constructs have offered do, in fact, illuminate crucial aspects and detailed understanding of the person, but they overlook the context and how the person acts in the context; though they have always referred to it as an independent variable. Moreover, all these theoretical frameworks have already within themselves hints that it is not only the relationship to self, but also the relationship to the other. Therefore, Chapter 4 will be devoted to reviewing all these domains that have looked at the context (e.g. identity has been another self-related construct that is currently receiving attention in applied linguistics). However, all these frameworks focused much more on the context where these individuals are placed and operate, and dealt more broadly with the person, perhaps to the detriment of the person.

4 TRACING THE RELATIONSHIP OF WTC TO THE 'OTHER'

Thus far, I have reviewed theoretical developments and empirical research of L2 WTC situated in the classroom context and, therefore, suggested that in order to gain a more holistic and comprehensible understanding of the construct, it requires to reach beyond the WTC domain. Although the research on self (discussed in the previous chapter) has brought us a better understanding of the person, the context was treated as rather disconnected from the person. Therefore, in this chapter, I will be looking at various frameworks, which have primarily focused on identity but which show very specific links to engagement/ investment (an equivalent to WTC), but which also highlight much more specifically the role of context, especially with regards to a person's relationship with the 'other'. In this spirit and in tandem with the research focus of this thesis, I wish to expand L2 WTC theorising by bringing together WTC, self and other. Based on this, I will argue for a more socially and contextually grounded theoretical framework that encompasses the person and the context in an integrated manner and, therefore, propose 'person-in-context relational view' as a conceptual metaphor in regards to understanding and researching L2 WTC.

4.1 Poststructuralist perspectives on identity and investment in L2 practice

Two decades ago, Bonny Norton, began publishing her work on identity, investment and imagined communities (1995, 2000, 2013), which is now considered fundamental in applied linguistics research. Norton's (2000) research involved a

longitudinal study among five immigrant women, who were learning English in Canada. She frequently emphasised her participants' struggles and hardships in order to construct and negotiate their identities, partly because of power relations her participants encountered in the real world, and also due to other factors, such as motivation, ethnicity, gender and class. Norton defines identity as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2013, p. 45). In this sense, at any moment learners speak, they are negotiating and renegotiating a sense of self in relation to the greater social world, and reorganising that relationship in multiple dimensions of their lives (Norton & McKinney, 2011). She was among the first to establish the powerful relationship between language and identity, a central concern to many scholars in the field of language education and SLA; criticising that SLA theorists have not developed a comprehensible theory of identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context. However, over the past 15 years her call was heeded and there has been a wealth of research that explores the relationship between identity and language learning (e.g. Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Block, 2007a; Heller, 2007) which now features prominently in many encyclopaedias and handbooks of language learning and teaching (Norton, 2014). According to Block (2007b) "a poststructuralist approach to identity has become the approach of choice among those who seek to explore links between identity and second language (L2) learning" (p. 864).

Drawing on poststructuralist theory, she contends that in the field of language education, 'identity' is not a fixed construct but rather it must be understood with respect to a learner's relationship to the larger social, political and economic world.

To this end, identities, which are quite often sites of struggle, shift over time and space, and are reconstructed in situated social interactions (Early & Norton, 2012). This suggests that identity as multiple is then particularly powerful because learners who struggle to speak from one identity position can reframe their relationship with their significant other and reclaim different and maybe more powerful identities from which they can exercise their right to speak (Norton & McKinney, 2011).

In line with this, for example, Morita's (2004) conducted a qualitative multiple case study to investigate the discourse of social experiences among university L2 learners in Canada, exploring the way in which L2 learners negotiated their membership and participation in their new L2 context during open-ended class conversations. The findings illustrated that her participants had to deal with significant challenges when they tried to negotiate competence, identities, and relations of power, which were necessary tools for their participation and recognition as legitimate and competent members of their classroom. Furthermore, the students tried to shape their own learning as well as participation by exercising their agency and negotiating their position, which were locally constructed in the particular classroom setting.

Both studies (Morita, 2004; Norton, 2000), as well as a wealth of SLA research which have adopted a poststructuralist perspective, have been largely influenced by the work of Lave and Wenger (1991). The authors introduced the notion of *communities of practice* (COP), which involves a process, called legitimate peripheral participation (LPP), under which newcomers gradually gain fuller participation through their interaction with more experienced members of a particular

context. Wenger (1998) highlights that peripherality and legitimacy are essential in making newcomers' participation feasible. Peripherality is "an opening, a way of gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 37). Accordingly, individuals can be members of a COP in an array of ways though their positions within a COP can change across time. With regards to legitimacy, Wegner (1998) pointed out that: "In order to be on an inbound trajectory, newcomers must be granted enough legitimacy to be treated as potential members. ... Only with legitimacy can all their inevitable stumblings and violations become opportunities for learning rather than cause for dismissal, neglect, or exclusion" (p. 101).

Extending the discussion around identity seems quite important in advancing our understanding of learners' L2 WTC in the classroom 'microcosm'. Norton's participants struggled to negotiate their identities in various contexts and situations with various 'others' making clear that 'learning communities' do not necessarily warrant access to opportunities to learn, let alone use the target language. Her participants' stories and experiences unfold that it is not only what learners think of themselves or the community of practice to which they are embedded, but it is also how the community of practice or 'others' see 'them' which could equally exercise or, sadly, deny their right to speak. In short, quite often people assign and are assigned identities, which may have nothing to do with who they really are and who they really want to be, yet, they can be so powerful and in a way, determine whether a person will speak or remain silent. The situation described above is quite relevant to the world of classroom where the situation is more complex, given all the contextual

factors that interplay (e.g. teacher, classmates) and influence learner's behaviours and actions thus, their L2 WTC intentions (see Section 4.2).

4.1.1 Investment, ideology, capital and identity

Norton (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000) extended poststructuralist theories of identity with the development of the sociological construct of 'investment' – as opposed to the psychological construct of motivation – (cf. Dörnyei, 2001), to account for the relationship between language-learner identity and language-learning commitment and the language practices of the classroom context. She argued that instrumental and integrative motivation in SLA are far from capable of capturing the complex relationship among power, identity, and language learning, whereas the notion of investment attempts to capture the relationship of the language learner to the changing social world (Norton, 2000). Investment presupposes that:

When language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organising and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space (Norton, 2000, p. 11).

Drawing on the work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977, 1991) on the notion of cultural capital, she argues that when learners 'invest' in the target language, they also expect to acquire an array of symbolic and material resources, which will enhance the options of identities they can claim in a given context. While motivation often

perceives the L2 learner as having a fixed, and ahistorical personality, investment conceives the language learner as having a complex identity, subject to temporal and spatial change, and reconstructed in frequently inequitable relations of power (Norton, 2014). Investment attempts to meaningfully connect a learner's desire and commitment to learn another language with his/her changing identity (Norton & Morgan, 2013).

Interest in identity and investment has gained momentum and continued to grow over the past decade or so, given the importance of the construct of investment in identity research and applied linguistics. In addition, globalisation has undoubtedly brought a world change, and the social and economic changes have created new relations of power on macro and micro spheres, reshaping ideologies and social interactions (Blommaert, 2013; Heller, 2011). In response to the world change, Darwin and Norton (2015) proposed a comprehensive model of investment (see Figure 4.1) which recognises that the spaces in which language acquisition and socialisation take place have become increasingly deterritorialised and unbounded, and the systemic patterns of control more invisible. The purpose of this model was to go a step forward. The key constructs that help to achieve that, along with identity, are ideology and capital, all of which appear to be very powerful sources of inclusion and exclusion in educational settings. On the one hand, inquiring ideology helps to examine more closely how power manifests in a language classroom in particular, or community in general; how interlocutors are positioned and the structure of habitus. On the other hand, by viewing capital as a fluid conception in which value changes across spaces offers a better understanding of how learners gain or lose power in a given context (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

Figure 4.1 Darvin and Norton’s 2015 Model of Investment.



There is no doubt that globalisation has taken over and brought about changes in human society which have made the lived realities of learners more complex. This is a reality, which does not only reflect the world order but more than ever reflects the current EFL language classroom. Ideology as a construct is very powerful. By examining how ideology works, an understanding of the powers that prohibit communicative practices in educational settings is gained, which in turn have the power to convert a particular set of ideas into the dominant way of thinking. Precisely because of dominant ideologies, learners are positioned in ways, which are not beneficial at all, based on their gender, race, ethnicity and social class, before they even speak and thus not only may be denied their right to speak but also the right of access. However, ideology “should not be understood as a static, monolithic worldview, but as a complex, layered space where ideational, behavioural, and institutional aspects interact and sometimes contradict one another” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, pp. 43-44). In line with this, De Costa (2010) highlights how important it is to develop a comprehensive ideology-based theoretical framework to better

account for the sociopolitical context of educational institutions, to which every individual belongs, and how language learners perform and develop their linguistic capital.

The integration of ideology in this model of investment aids the analysis of the relation between communicative practices and systemic patterns of control at both micro and macro spheres. Treating ideology as a site of struggle and a set of dominant and marginalised ideas provides an understanding of the construct of identity and agencies' tendencies to behave and think in a particular way and restructure contexts. Ideologies are prominent ways of thinking which are shaped and imposed on individuals through relations of power and subsequently reproduced through practices and consent that organise and stabilise societies, while at the same time rule on conditions of inclusion and exclusion, and the privileging and marginalisation of notions, people and relations (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

Capital is another important construct, which can be examined through the understanding of ideology. For Bourdieu (1986), capital is 'power' and involves the material or economic, the cultural and the social capital. More specifically, economic capital is concerned with wealth, property and income; cultural capital involves knowledge and appreciation of a particular culture; and finally, social capital is associated with connections to relations of power. Their value is very much determined by ideological structures, but capital is constantly negotiated in various contexts or sites of struggle. In this way, agents (e.g. language learners) are positioned in the social sphere with respect to the volume, composition and trajectory of their capital, controlled by different rules and different contexts (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

However, according to Bourdieu (1987) once the capital is perceived it is then called *symbolic capital* and is important for the understanding of investment within the new social change. It is through this conceptualisation that we can understand how capital can be dynamic and fluid subject to change due to dominant ideologies of specific people or contexts. In the case of language learners, for example, when they enter a new environment, they are not empty vessels but rather they are equipped with a certain capital (e.g. their linguistic skills or social networks). In addition, when occupying new contexts, they not only acquire new resources (e.g. material and symbolic resources) but also use their own capital that they already possess and transform it into what is considered to be valuable in the new contexts. However, this transformation is always a site of struggle because it does not necessarily guarantee that a valued capital in one context will be automatically valued in another. When people lead mobile lives across borders, for example, the linguistic capital they carry with them is subject to what Blommaert (2010) calls different *orders of indexicality*, according to which one's styles and registers are measured against a value system of a larger sociocultural context. Thus, discourses gain value only when 'others' value them. These points force teachers to think differently, question and treat learners' linguistic and cultural capital as qualities rather than as limitations.

Returning to the concept of identity, in the model of investment it is evident that identity still holds the theoretical underpinnings of Norton's work, in which identity is seen a site of struggle subject to temporal and spatial change. However, the model attempts to enlighten further that identity is a struggle of habitus and desire of competing ideologies and imagined communities. While an internalised system is constructed by ideology, habitus is the system by which a person makes sense of his

or her world. It is the different ideologies, along with the various capitals, that guide how learners position themselves, and are positioned by others, in various contexts. Habitus provides a conceptual understanding of what is rational and possible and a tendency to think and behave in ways that are in accordance with a dominant ideology. Precisely because of dominant ideologies, learners are positioned in certain ways, depending on their gender, age, nationality, social class or sexual orientation. In turn, how others perceive them is shaped by prevailing ideas, such as what it means to be a man or a woman, black or white, middle class or working class, in a particular context. Likewise, because of habitus, learners subsequently position others and grant or deny them power (Norton, 2013). Habitus also shapes learners' desire, which has the power to compel people to act and exercise their agency. Further, however, it is through imagination or imagined identities (Norton, 2013; Kanno & Norton, 2003) that learners are capable of expressing this desire because it allows them to re-envision things as how they want them to be.

4.1.2 Imagined communities and imagined identities

The theoretical constructs, imagined communities and imagined identities, contribute usefully to understanding SLA, because a learner's concerns for the future are integral to language learner identity. For many learners, the target language community is not only a reconstruction of past communities and historically constituted relationships, but also a community of the imagination, a desired community that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future (Norton, 2014). To understand language learners and their imagined identities, scholars have drawn extensively on the work of Norton and her colleagues (e.g. Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Pavlenko & Norton,

2007). This work has foregrounded the language learner as a participating social agent, and, as noted above, it is this agentic sense of self that is linked, in narratives, to larger sociocultural and historical social practice (Early & Norton, 2012).

Imagined communities refer to groups of people, not directly tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through imagination. Daily, we interact with many communities some of which include our neighbourhood communities, our workplaces, and our educational institutions (Kanno & Norton 2003). Nevertheless, these examples of communities are not the only ones with which we associate, nor is engagement the only way in which we connect to one community because there is also imagination – another important source (Wegner, 1988). For example, when a female Greek learner studies law, she may envision herself working for the White House in Washington, and English may be the means of gaining access to that community. Imagined communities expand our range of possible selves. As Norton (2001) argues, “A learner’s imagined community invite[s] an imagined identity, and a learner’s investment in the target language must be understood within this context” (p. 166). Thus, the imagined identity deriving from the context of imagined community, can affect learners’ engagement. This suggests that imagined identity has the power to determine the extent to which learners will invest in educational opportunities or communicative practices. While both possible selves and imagined identity are obviously related to one another in terms of one’s future sense of self, their differences lie in that the latter is very much dependent on the context. This study suggests bringing them together, because it appears that how an individual imagines himself/herself in the community of practice really depends on how this community of practice sees ‘you’ (i.e. that person). According to Lave and Wenger (1991; Wenger, 1998) learning is not only a cognitive process of acquiring skills and

knowledge, but is part of changing participation patterns in various communities with shared practices. As learners become more skilled at community practices, they increase their responsibility in the community and, as an outcome, they become more actively engaged participants, especially if they feel welcomed and supported by the immediate surrounding environment (e.g. the classroom setting).

4.2 Relationship with the ‘other’ in interaction

The notion of identity with respect to discourse can be variously specified. For instance, as a linguistic or discourse device, as a medium of referring to and making inferences about ‘self’ and ‘other’, or as a mode of displaying membership to a specific group (e.g. the classroom). Based on these, identity can therefore be also treated as an element for talk-in interaction (Zimmerman, 1998) or particularly classroom interaction. In line with this, for example, Richards (2006) conducted a study in which he proposed an approach to analysis which takes account of the dynamic nature of identity construction and its relationship to the development of ongoing talk, challenging the view that the concept of classroom conversation is inherently contradictory and drawing on Zimmerman’s (1998) useful distinction between three levels of identity in analysing social interactions, he demonstrated how changes in the orientation to different aspects of identity produce distinctively different interactional patterns in teacher-fronted talk. In a more recent study, King (2013) used the same framework to better understand the silent behaviour of an advanced EFL learner during a group-discussion task. Despite being actively engaged and supportive to her classmates’ discussion, the participant’s discourse identity did not change, but rather remained static. Even though she was a proficient language learner and had the desire to speak and, therefore, was expected to be an active

participant during the oral task, her constructed self-concept was so powerful that it resulted in denying the identity of the initiator and embracing the identity of the passive listener (which obviously had nothing to do with who she is or who she might want to be), most likely because the 'others', in this particular context, had assigned her this particular identity and, with that, deprived her of her right to speak.

Zimmerman's three levels of identity comprise: *discourse (or interactional) identity*, which relates to the person's communicative role (e.g. lecturer); *situated (or institutional) identity*, which relates to person's social position/role (e.g. teacher, student) and *transportable identity*, which refers to a person's core or master identity that subsumes such fundamental features as one's sex, age and race as key components, as well as other personal characteristics that the individual transports from one situation to another (e.g. history lover). Discourse identities are integral to the moment-by-moment organization of the interaction. Participants assume discourse identities as they engage in the various sequentially organised activities: current speaker, questioner or answerer. In commencing an action, one assumes a particular identity and projects a reciprocal identity for co-participants, such projections are subject to validation or revision. In the world of the classroom, for example, a listener may become a storyteller depending on how the interaction evolves. Situated identities come into play within the area of particular types of situation and refer to the effort learners make "engaging in activities and respecting agendas that display an orientation to, and an alignment of, particular identity sets" (Zimmerman, 1998, p. 90). In the classroom context, relevant situated identities would include teacher and student. Finally, "transportable identities travel with individuals across situations and are potentially relevant in and for any space of interaction. They are latent identities

that ‘tag along’ with individuals as they move through their daily routines” (Zimmerman, 1998, p. 90). In this case, for example, a student might be a mother, a wife, an employee or a geography lover.

With regards to this study, the importance of incorporating Zimmerman’s (1998) three levels of identity in the analysis of classroom interaction, lies in its potential contribution to paint a more holistic picture and advance my understanding of what the learner ‘brings’ in the classroom situation and from which identities s/he will exercise their right to speak and, therefore, which identities are likely to give rise to their L2 WTC.

4.3 Identity and one’s relationship with different social worlds

Although Zimmerman’s proposal of different levels of identity (1998) establishes a useful foundation for micro-interactional analyses (Richards, 2006), particularly in the world of the classroom, painting a fuller picture about the ‘person’ requires reaching beyond the four walls of the teaching room, and treating the person as an integral part of different social worlds in which people act. This is because people are subject to different kinds of relationships with the ‘other’ that may play a role in shaping one’s action, including communicative action to which WTC is central. To advance this bigger-picture understanding of the ‘person doing the talk’ a further engagement with Gee’s (2000) identity as an analytical lens for research in education appears to be particularly useful.

In his paper, Gee (2000) highlights the importance of identity as an analytic tool for understanding important issues of theory and practice in educational research.

What he calls identity reflects a person's actions and interactions in a given context, which characterise someone as a particular 'type of person'; a characterization which in itself is subject to temporal and spatial change. Consequently, people (which, of course, includes students located in the classroom context) do not have only one identity but rather multiple identities connected to and depending on their performances in the world. Therefore, identity is not static but rather ambiguous. Gee has argued that defining someone as a certain kind of person can be approached from at least four perspectives which are not separate from each other but which seem to be interrelated in quite complex and important ways. I will provide an explanation for each because this will be important in focusing my theoretical lens when analysing findings of this research study.

The first perspective, called *nature identity* or N-Identity, is a part of who someone is by 'nature', that is, by circumstances over which one does not have control. This means, for example, that being of Greek, British or Albanian ancestry is a *state* people are in and not something they have accomplished. What determines this identity, that is, its *force*, comes from one's genes, their physical place of birth, their family circumstances, the established geo-political arrangements, and the like; in other words, the 'given' circumstances. Yet, natural circumstances translate into people's claimed identities only when they embrace them as an integral component of the 'kind of person' they are. In other words, someone with an Albanian ancestry may not necessarily identify with these 'natural' circumstances into which they were born for various reasons.

What Gee calls a 'nature identity' is a somewhat similar concept to Zimmerman's (1998) idea of people's 'transportable identities', whose key defining feature is that they tag along with people as they move from context to context and from situation to situation. For instance, 'being of Greek ancestry' can be both a nature identity, because it is indeed a matter of nature, and a transportable identity, because an individual can carry it with them across different contexts or situations. However, an important distinction made by Gee is that in order for an identity to come into being, it should be embraced by the person in the first place, thus, taking into account one's feelings about themselves as an important part of one's identification.

The second perspective is called *institution identity* or I-Identity. For instance, being a teacher at an institution or a student in a specific class. Being a teacher is a position which has been bestowed on someone by a set of authorities (e.g. the administration of the institution). In this type of identity, the source of its power is the institution. The process through which this power works is *authorisation*, such as laws or principles, which allow the authorities to 'author' the position of a teacher and to 'author' the occupant of this position with all the rights, duties or responsibilities attached to it.

I-Identities are continuous, depending on how actively or inactively the occupant of a position fulfils his/her role or duties. For example, teachers may very well consider their institutional position as a calling, attempting to the best of their abilities to fulfil their duties. On the other hand, students may feel that the position that they are in (e.g. a FL learner studying an L2) is imposed on them, forcing them to

perform particular behaviours (e.g. participating in a group activity) that they might otherwise choose not to do on their own. Therefore, I-Identity can be viewed as something one strongly identifies with (e.g. a calling) or as an imposition, depending on the occupants' point of view. A similar idea has been pursued in Zimmerman's (1998) 'situated identity'. Both Gee (2000) and Zimmerman (1998) associated these identities with one's position or role in a given context. However, while for Zimmerman, a situated identity is related to the classroom context and therefore involves a particular set of identities (e.g. teacher, student), Gee's distinction can be understood more broadly in relation to the multiple social worlds that individuals occupy and are invested in to various degrees.

The third is *discursive identity* or D-Identity, which is associated with *individual traits* (e.g. a student who is diligent or an individual being kind to others) that define one's individuality. In contrast with trait-like approaches to individual differences research discussed earlier, however, Gee's notion of discursive identity highlights the dialogic processes which contribute to the construction of one's identity as diligent, kind or indeed willing to communicate. In other words, the 'power' that determines this type of identity is the *discourse* or *dialogue* of other 'rational individuals'. This means, in essence, that individuals assign various identities for others on the basis of their interactions with them and their personal judgement of the meaning of those interactions. The process through which this dialogic identification works is *recognition*; that is, one becomes identified as diligent, kind, or willing to communicate by being recognised as such through dialogue with others. Similar to I-Identities, D-Identities are also continuous, depending on how one 'recruits' them through interactions with others. They can be ascribed to someone through discourse

as an attribute regardless of the individual's actual achievements, or are something assigned in discourse because of what that person has accomplished. Therefore, a D-Identity can be seen either as an *ascription* or an *achievement*, depending on the circumstances under which it has been assigned.

The fourth and last perspective is *the affinity perspective* (or A-Identities). These identities are formulated by distinctive *experiences* individuals may have in common (e.g. studying abroad or love for English language), *determined by a set of distinctive practices*. An 'affinity group', is made up of people who may come from all walks of life (e.g. from different countries), who have voluntarily chosen to join in. While these people may share little besides their common experiences or interests, what they do and must share to form the affinity group is a set of common endeavours, that is access to and participation in particular practices that provide each member of the group with the required experiences. The affinity identification unfolds through the practices of *participation* or *sharing*. However, other people's discourse and dialogue is still needed for these practices to exist in the first place.

As has been illustrated above, Gee's (2000) four perspectives of viewing identity have a number of parallels with Zimmerman's (1998) three levels of identity in analysing social interactions. Nevertheless, it is also clear that each highlights slightly different dimensions, depending on the analytical perspectives, ranging from micro-interaction analysis to macro analysis of different social worlds. Therefore, the two frameworks complement each other in important and useful ways for the purposes of understanding a person's communicative actions in the classroom and beyond.

4.4 A person-in-context relational view

As evident throughout my overview so far, the remaining gap in previous L2 WTC research is that, despite some of the useful efforts described earlier, the language learner has typically been researched as rather disconnected from the context, learner and context being treated as two distinct entities. With a few notable exceptions (e.g. MacIntyre & Legatto; Peng, 2014; Yashima et. al., 2016; see Section 2.4), direct application of more innovative theoretical perspectives (e.g. ecological approach, complex dynamic systems theory) in L2 WTC research, capable of bridging the gap and bringing these two together, are still in their infancy. What the current overview and L2 WTC research has made clear is that phenomena like WTC, which are complex, dynamic and multidimensional, call for new thinking and an adoption of more socio-dynamic and context-sensitive perspectives.

To address this need, research within the field of SLA has moved towards this direction and the most prominent efforts, certainly in L2 motivation research, are seen in the theoretical transition to dynamic systems approaches (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). For example, over the past few years, complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) has seen a surge of empirical and theoretical activity, suggesting that this may be just the beginning of a very active area of inquiry. Complexity theory has been used to study complex, dynamic, open, adaptive, self-organising, nonlinear systems (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). From this perspective, context is not seen as a static backdrop but rather “as a complex system itself, connected to other systems, and variability in system behaviour takes on increased importance” (p. 200). Therefore, complex dynamic systems theory provides an alternative way of thinking, recognising that a complex system (e.g. the learner) does not operate in the vacuum,

but rather it is interconnected to other systems (e.g. the context) (Larsen-Freeman, 2015). Larsen-Freeman further argues that “while the interaction of humans and the context may or may not display themselves in such a dramatic fashion, it is certainly the case that when it comes to understanding humans, ignoring context has given us a spurious, or, at least incomplete, understanding” (p. xi-xii).

Following the ‘social turn’ (cf. Block, 2003), researchers have started acknowledging, both theoretically and methodologically, that in order to meaningfully understand and investigate language learning and individual learners’ characteristics, it is imperative to gain a deeper understanding of the situatedness of notions and processes, and the role of context as temporal and spatial trajectory (Mercer, 2015). Ironically, however, context is still regarded as an independent variable outside the individual (Ushioda, 2009). In line with this, Mercer (2015) contends that context is not an external variable but rather an integral part of one’s self-system.

Another response to the need to bring individuals and contexts together and to address the limitations of linear cause-effect approaches to studying such a relationship is Ushioda (2009) call for ‘a person-in-context relational view’, triggered by her qualitative study among 20 Irish learners of French in relation to motivation, as a new way of thinking that takes into account the evolving organic interactions between individual and contextual processes. According to Ushioda (2009):

I mean a focus on real persons rather than on learners as theoretical abstractions; A focus on the agency of the individual person as a thinking feeling human being, with identity, a personality, a unique history and

background, a person with goals, motives and intentions; A focus on the interaction between this self-reflective intentional agent, and the fluid and complex system of social relations, activities, experiences and multiple micro- and macro –contexts in which the person is embedded, moves and is inherently part of. My argument is that we need to take a relational (rather than linear) view of these multiple contextual elements, and view motivation as an organic process that emerges through this complex system of interrelations (p. 220).

Ushioda's (2009) relational perspective accounts for the organically evolving interactions among motivation, self and context. Her person-in-context relational view of motivation puts an explicit emphasis on the complex individuality of real persons, in contrast to the traditional focus on abstract language learners or language learner characteristics. As she says engaging in language learning and being a language learner is likely to be just one aspect of people's social identities and their sense of self. Other identities may be relevant at various times to the motivational process and experience of L2 learning and use may include, for example, being Greek, British or being a mother, a wife, a teacher or being a member of desired imagined community with particular cultural capital or professional status (Kanno & Norton, 2003). Ushioda (2009) argues that, where L2 motivation is concerned, we need to understand second language learners as real people who are necessarily located in particular cultural contexts, and whose motivation and identities shape and are shaped by these contexts.

A person-in-context relational view, is potentially relevant to L2 WTC research, following its relatively new shift as a situational construct, as such an approach encompasses the role of the context and the dynamic interaction between the individual (the person) and his/her environment (e.g. the classroom). This perspective highlights the dynamic and complex feature of motivation which is interrelated to the context.

In the view of these developments in SLA and especially in the context of the relatively recent turn towards the situated nature of WTC, L2 WTC must be considered as the result of various individual and contextual factors, not as part of cause-effect relationships, but rather as a way of real people occupying a variety of social worlds. To account adequately for this kind of situatedness, it is essential to conceptualise WTC as an emergent inclination towards communication, deriving from a *combination* of the person's motivations, histories, identities and the social contexts in which they are invested at different points in their lifetimes. In other words, understanding a particular behaviour in a given context, can only be achieved by making visible this *combination* rather than singling out its individual components. It seems that explaining classroom behaviours without looking at what may have shaped those behaviours (historically, socially, etc.), is unlikely to generate a truly situated picture of WTC.

Thus, a relational approach, as Ushioda (2009) has argued, is not associated with identifying variables and tracing cause-effect relationships (e.g. how task performance has an impact on self-efficacy or the opposite) but rather it focuses “on the evolving network or dynamic system of relations among relevant features,

phenomenon and processes – relations which are complex, unpredictable, non-linear and always unique, since every person and context are unique” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 77).

I present these two perspectives, that is, CDST and ‘person-in-context-relational approach’, as distinctive even though their origins can be clearly traced to the same awareness for the need to contextualise the study of individuals. However, while CDST certainly complements a person-in-context relational view in productive ways for researching and understanding complex and dynamic phenomena, Ushioda (2015) has argued that there is no need “to venture into the realm of CDST to realise that the relationship between context and learner is far from one-directional” (p. 47). To support this view, she illustrates an example of learners’ multiple social identities, stating that while learners’ identities are located internally, it is through social interaction with other people’s identities in a given context that various identities will be assigned, negotiated or contested. In essence, there is a co-adaptive/bi-directional relationship between the learner and the surrounding context. Similarly, King (2015) contends that “it would be wrong to assume that CDST has the monopoly on the idea that there exists a dynamic interaction between learners and their environment, that the social and psychological are linked” (p. 2).

In line with this, Ushioda (2009) has pointed out that what also makes a person-in-context relational view particularly useful and flexible is that it can build on different theoretical perspectives in an integrative manner, without privileging any particular theoretical framework over another. To this end, the theoretical perspectives that encompass a person-in-context relational view are the following:

Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective of learning (e.g. Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), language socialisation (e.g. Watson-Gegeo, 2004), complex and ecological perspectives (e.g. Van Lier, 2004), and poststructuralist and critical perspectives (e.g. Norton, 2000; Toohey, 2000). Although they have similarities, they differ in focus and can be deployed to highlight different aspects of the person-context relationship.

The key distinction, however, and the reason why an overarching person-in-context relational perspective is in this study seen as the more appropriate of the two options outlined above, is the extent to which each theory can do justice to the 'real' persons in the multiple social worlds. By this I mean the experiences of thinking, feeling human beings, with all the joys, desires, hopes, vulnerabilities and struggles for recognition that people go through as they invest (or not) their efforts in communication with one another, find (or not) the courage to build relationships, and are (or not) welcomed and recognised by others in and through a language that is not their mother tongue. The theorising that relies in its explanatory arsenal on the concept of 'systems', as CDST does, does not allow sufficient space for an examination of the emotions and ethics involved in such human encounters. The more broadly conceived and theoretically more encompassing 'person-in-context' umbrella has therefore served as an important heuristics to address the aims of this study: to seek an understanding of people's L2 WTC in the L2 classroom.

4.5 Summary: Adopting a person-in-context relational view as a conceptual metaphor for L2 WTC research

Thus far, I have reviewed past WTC empirical research, concluding that although this body of work has shifted its focus on the construct's situational nature, it has not yet come up with a comprehensive theoretical treatment of the relationship between a person and the context in an organic manner. Instead, the focus has remained predominantly on WTC as an individual characteristic. Thus, I suggested that in order to gain an understanding of the person in various communicative events in the classroom 'microcosm' it is important to reach beyond the domain of WTC and, therefore, I discussed the notion of self in Chapter 3 and the 'other' in Chapter 4. Literature on self has brought us a better understanding of the person, albeit with an insufficient appreciation of the context. On the other hand, research into identity has dealt with the different social worlds in which one's identity is performed, but the focus of this strand of inquiry has been more on the communities rather than individuals. I have attempted to bridge these perspectives by adopting a person-in-context relational view for researching and understanding L2 WTC in the world of the classroom.

As has been argued in this chapter, a person-in-context relational perspective was originally introduced in relation to L2 motivation. The theoretical overview of WTC research provided in this chapter has signalled a clear relevance of this conceptual metaphor for the investigation of WTC. In particular, it has become clear that despite the continuing methodological and theoretical innovations, WTC research to date has not been able to capture people's L2 WTC in the context of their actual

interactions with others as they perform specific social identities in the unfolding moments of communicative action, whether this happens in the classroom or outside of it. Following the general trend of research into individual differences, WTC inquiry has tended to foreground statistical averages rather than individual experiences. Adopting a person-in-context approach, taking into account the methodological implications that such an endeavour entails, is a way of redressing that balance. The next chapter, therefore, outlines in more detail those methodological implications.

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literature discussed in the previous chapters has shown a theoretical and methodological expansion of L2 WTC research of recent years, with some promising directions for future inquiry. It is also the case, however, that the contextually embedded nature of individuals' meaning making in relationships with others, which in this thesis, I take to be an essential part of an investigation of peoples' willingness to communicate with others in an additional language, has not seen the same level of innovation and expansion as other approaches to L2 WTC. This study intends to fill this methodological gap. I will start by briefly revisiting the rationale for this study and its research questions before explaining the epistemological stance that has underpinned my empirical inquiry. I argue in this chapter that this stance has critical implications for how WTC needs to be examined empirically, and the remainder of this chapter elaborates on these methodological implications in relation to the present inquiry. I first provide an overview of the research context, in which my project is situated and introduce its research participants, before detailing the research design, including the data collection and analysis methods that have enabled me to generate insights into the participants' L2 WTC from the person-in-context relational perspective. I conclude this chapter by discussing the issues of trustworthiness and ethics.

5.1 The Rationale and the Research Questions

As I indicated in the previous chapters, this study aims to offer an in-depth insight into individual language learners' L2 WTC in the Greek EFL context. Based on the gaps identified in existing research, I adopted Ushioda's (2009) person-in-

context relational view – an overarching approach – which affords a fuller integration of the person’s interconnectedness with others in context, allowing me study the willingness to communicate of specific students within the concrete events of their communicative encounters in the L2 classroom. More specifically, this study aimed to place the learners in their sociocultural and life history settings to understand how their WTC may or may not unfold in actual communicative events of their language classrooms. To this end, this study intended to get deeper insights not only into what happens during the communicative events themselves, but also how what specific learners ‘bring’ into those events, and how this transforms them (or not) into WTC-relevant moments. In other words, my aim was both to understand the visible acts of WTC and unearth the potential influences hidden beneath them. To pursue this rationale and expand the L2 WTC theorising, the broad research questions are as follows:

RQ1: What does ‘willingness to communicate in L2’ look like for the diverse population of students in the Greek university L2 classroom?

RQ2: Under what circumstances are students in the Greek L2 classroom ‘willing to communicate’ and what shapes these circumstances?

With the first question (RQ1), I intended to identify WTC-relevant episodes that demonstrated WTC in this specific context to understand the visible manifestations of my participants’ WTC. In particular, I wanted to understand whether these manifestations would differ across the diverse participants, and to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of this construct amongst specific language

learners. The second question (RQ2), refers to all those factors that might trigger a person's L2 WTC, the moments when learners find it meaningful to communicate and what shapes learners' participation in communicative events in the language classroom. I wanted to understand how the invisible (including persons' life stories, social identities and prevalent ideologies) interact with the visible manifestation of L2 WTC and in what way this matters to the quality of the students' experience in the classroom and beyond.

In accordance with the person-in-context relational view, I was not interested in identifying variables and tracing cause-effect relationships but instead wanted to focus on the evolving network of dynamic relations among relevant characteristics, phenomena and processes; relations which are complex, unpredictable, non-linear and always unique. From this perspective, instead of treating WTC as a static individual characteristic, I approached WTC as people's "emergent sense making in action" (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015, p. 436), which, by definition, can only be understood in reference to specific communication relationships. Before I discuss the methodology for this research project, I will outline more fully this epistemological position that is at the heart of my inquiry.

5.2 The Interpretivist Epistemological Position

I have already alluded to my departure from the commonly used approaches to researching WTC as a quantifiable variable, which research participants are typically asked to self-report in relation to a set of *hypothetical* scenarios in a *one-off* methodological event of completing a questionnaire. Instead, I approach WTC in *actual* communicative events as "emergent from relations between human

intentionality and the social world” (Sealey & Carter, 2004, p. 206) or, as discussed more recently in relation to human cognition, as “dynamic and evolving outcomes of individual and communal acts of meaning making” (Skott, 2015, cited in Kubanyiova and Feryok, 2015, p. 438). Inspired by the person-in-context approach, I did not wish to become a detached observer of a static world, but rather, in order to understand the subjective world of people’s experiences, I was committed to immerse myself in my participants’ natural setting, the classroom, and get a sense of their meaning making inside their relationships with others and, therefore, become a participant in the research situation and understand it from an emic perspective (Thomas, 2009).

Conceiving of the phenomena in this way requires the adoption of an interpretivist stance, which challenges the idea that researchers can aim at detached objectivity without risking partial, at best, and irrelevant, at worst, portrayals of human experience. The interpretivist perspective aims at making sense of human thoughts, experiences and actions, while acknowledging that the researcher’s analytical thinking is shaped by their own experiences and identities as members of the social world in which their work takes place (Denscombe, 2014, p. 2). Thus, the researchers’ interpretation will inevitably be a product of their own ways of seeing the world, that is, their own epistemological positions (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015).

In this vein, it is important to note that my motivation for pursuing the research questions from the interpretivist paradigm is primarily driven by my experience as a language learner, which had been marked by fear and avoidance when I had the chance to start or participate in conversations in English, as well as a language teacher, who has long been aware of the inadequacy of the predominant approaches to

researching WTC in providing explanations for the WTC-relevant phenomena that I encountered on an everyday basis in my professional practice (see Section 1.1). Thus, a more exploratory study, which involves a close investigation of what people do or think and how their world is constructed, was deemed appropriate. An interpretivist framework, whose primary approach tends to be qualitative (Starman, 2013), provided the most suitable lens to inform my analytical gaze. However, although I made a conscious effort to retain the integrity of the phenomena under investigation by bringing together different, often contrasting, perspectives on the same phenomena from multiple sources, my interpretation of the data that I gathered is clearly an outcome of my own biography, experiences, prejudices, and identities as a language learner, an international student, a language teacher and an education researcher across different sociocultural and educational settings (as I described in the introductory part of this thesis), including the one in which my study is located. It is my hope, however, that by making my stance, as well as the analytical train of thought that contributed to identifying my findings transparent (as I endeavour to demonstrate in the findings part of this thesis), this study offers an opportunity for readers from a wide range of theoretical, analytical and personal backgrounds to add their own interpretative readings to the descriptive narratives that form an essential part of my analysis.

5.3 The Research Context

As described in Chapter 1, the current study was conducted in an EFL/ESL learning context in Greece, in which all participants were Year 1 undergraduate students who were learning English as a foreign language as part of their studies and not as a major. The university-college setting is located in Athens and it is one of the

best private university-colleges in Greece, offering a wide selection of Bachelors, Masters and PhDs in a variety of disciplines through academic collaborations with acclaimed European and American universities. The majority of modules are taught in English, whereas modules in Greek are rare, if they are offered at all. Therefore, a minimum IELTS score of 6 is required, unless applicants hold the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) or the Michigan Examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in English (ECPE). Based on initial assessment results students are allocated to the six preparatory academic English modules offered by the institution structured by level (i.e. A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) in accordance with the CEFR.

Private colleges, more recently abbreviated as KEME (in Greek), have been in existence in Greece for the past 30 years or so and belong to further and higher education, according to the Greek educational system. More specifically, at the end of the third year of senior high school, students who do not pass to study their chosen field now have the opportunity to pursue their dreams following a career in various disciplines offered by private colleges-universities. This is also applicable to more 'mature' students who, for various reasons, may have dropped out before and have decided to resume their studies. Moreover, despite of being quite expensive (given that in Greece education is free), studying at a private college in Greece has been seen as a safe 'alternative' or even a 'buoy'.

This is because, although education in Greece is generally declared to be free, parents tend to spend large amounts of money for their children's education. Greek public schools are far from capable of equipping students with the knowledge and

skills that will help them to secure a place at a university. Therefore, parents either send their children to private schools or invest considerable financial resources in private tutoring, usually until the end of high school, reasoning that this would give their children a better chance to make it into tertiary education. Yet, if their children indeed ‘make’ it, there is no guarantee that they will be in their home towns, which imposes a further and continuing financial burden for the parents, especially in the era of the ‘Greek crisis’, which, in addition, has exacerbated the need for private tutoring in the face of frequent cancellations of classes or university closures (e.g. general strikes led to a temporary closure of universities for a whole semester).

Thus, the so called ‘free’ state sector education is, in fact, far from free and studying at a fee-paying college-university, as a better alternative, has gained momentum in Greece. In addition to the advantages already mentioned, college-university students are exposed to an English-speaking setting, since private colleges are well known for their multicultural orientation and focus on developing students’ English language skills, which are generally valued in the Greek employment sector. Another perceived advantage contributing to their popularity is the fact that, after the completion of their chosen programme, students obtain degrees by the partner university and not by the college. This means that the college works as a ‘host’ educational institution, leading to degrees from more prestigious universities.

However, despite (and perhaps because of) this, private colleges do not get the same recognition in the educational system/employment market in Greece as state universities. In fact, this remains a widely debated and controversial issue, though recent reforms under the auspices of the European Union's regulations for mobility and employability have forced the Greek Ministry of Education to recognise the status of these colleges.

It was in this context of private college education that I decided to pursue my empirical research. My choice of this context was based on two factors: the first concerns the fact that the instruction was entirely in English (L2). Since L2 communication was compulsory, the language instruction itself was likely to be different from other EFL contexts in Greece and would, therefore, have added a communicative imperative for teachers and the students, which promised an interesting contextual dimension to my investigation of WTC. The second factor concerns the multicultural orientation of this type of institution, meaning that participants for this study would be likely to come from diverse backgrounds, increasing the opportunity to investigate the role of diverse personal and educational histories on what happens in the same language classroom for its different members. With the increasingly diverse, multilingual and mobile contexts of language classrooms around the world (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016), the choice of my context promised to offer insights that would be of particular relevance to the changing context of the current EFL classroom in Greece, as well as more widely.

All of my participants were undergraduate students who were learners and users of English as their additional language. They majored in a range of disciplinary subjects at a specific college-university in Athens, and were learning English as the target language for the reasons I have outlined above. I will return to a full description of the profiles of my research participants and to discussing the data I gathered for each of them after providing an overview of the research design has informed my inquiry.

5.4 The Research Design

5.4.1 Qualitative multiple case study

Based on the previously discussed justification of both the rationale for this inquiry and the epistemological stance adopted, a qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate to provide a ‘thick’ description and explanation of individual learners’ L2 WTC in actual communicative situations. In line with the methodological gap that I have identified earlier in this thesis, a qualitative study was deemed to be able to contribute to the research questions what quantitative measures simply could not achieve (cf. Punch, 2005). With my aim to research people’s involvement in language learning-related practices, I opted for a qualitative multiple case study design, which lent itself particularly well to my objective of capturing the complexity of the invisible elements a person brings into the specific classroom event, and how these interact with the layered educational, personal, and ideological contexts in which that event is embedded. According to Simons (2009) “a case study is an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a ‘real life’” (p. 21),

usually by utilising multiple sources of data collection (Creswell, 2009) and, in a similar fashion, my study foregrounds a ‘person’.

The rationale for adopting a case study approach is twofold and has a number of advantages, especially in the context of WTC in L2 research. First, a case study is important for developing different perspectives of reality, including the awareness that human behaviour cannot be understood merely as an act that is driven by a rule or a theory. The second reason is the capacity of case study research to offer concrete, practical and context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006, 2011). My commitment to treat each participant as an individual person and, therefore, as an ‘individual case’ goes back to the conceptual metaphor that informed the current project; a person-in-context relational view. This means that I was not interested in looking at people collectively as some sort of an abstract entity, but rather in focusing on each “individual person as a thinking feeling human being, with identity, a personality, a unique history and background, a person with goals, motives and intentions” (Ushioda, 2009, p. 220). Pursuing this view by framing my research as a case study has enabled me to foreground the person, without dismissing the person’s social world as a mere variable. That is, while the individual participants remain the principal unit of analysis, understanding each case requires a full appreciation of those contexts, narratives, ideologies, and histories that shape the person’s participation (or otherwise) in the particular moment of the classroom communication. Adopting a case study, therefore, has facilitated a broader and situated exploration of people in their contexts and has allowed a theoretical elaboration of constructs and relationships. This approach, as Eisenhardt (2007) has claimed, can result not only in obtaining a more varied empirical evidence but also yields more robust results (p. 27).

An additional benefit of adopting a multiple case study approach is linked to the current era of globalisation and the ever-expanding trans-national movement – voluntary or forced – of people from all walks of life, the need to understand and facilitate language learning and adapt language teaching accordingly has become more important than before (Gallagher, 2012; The Douglas Fir Group, 2016). Therefore, focusing on diverse individuals’ stories and actions would enable me to understand what ‘diversity’ looks like when viewed from the lens of a particular person in a particular setting, and what implications this has for what happens in the contemporary language classroom. All of the above considerations have informed my choice of an overarching multiple case study design and have fed into the sampling strategies which I discuss in more detail in Section 5.4.3.

5.4.2 An overview of the fieldwork

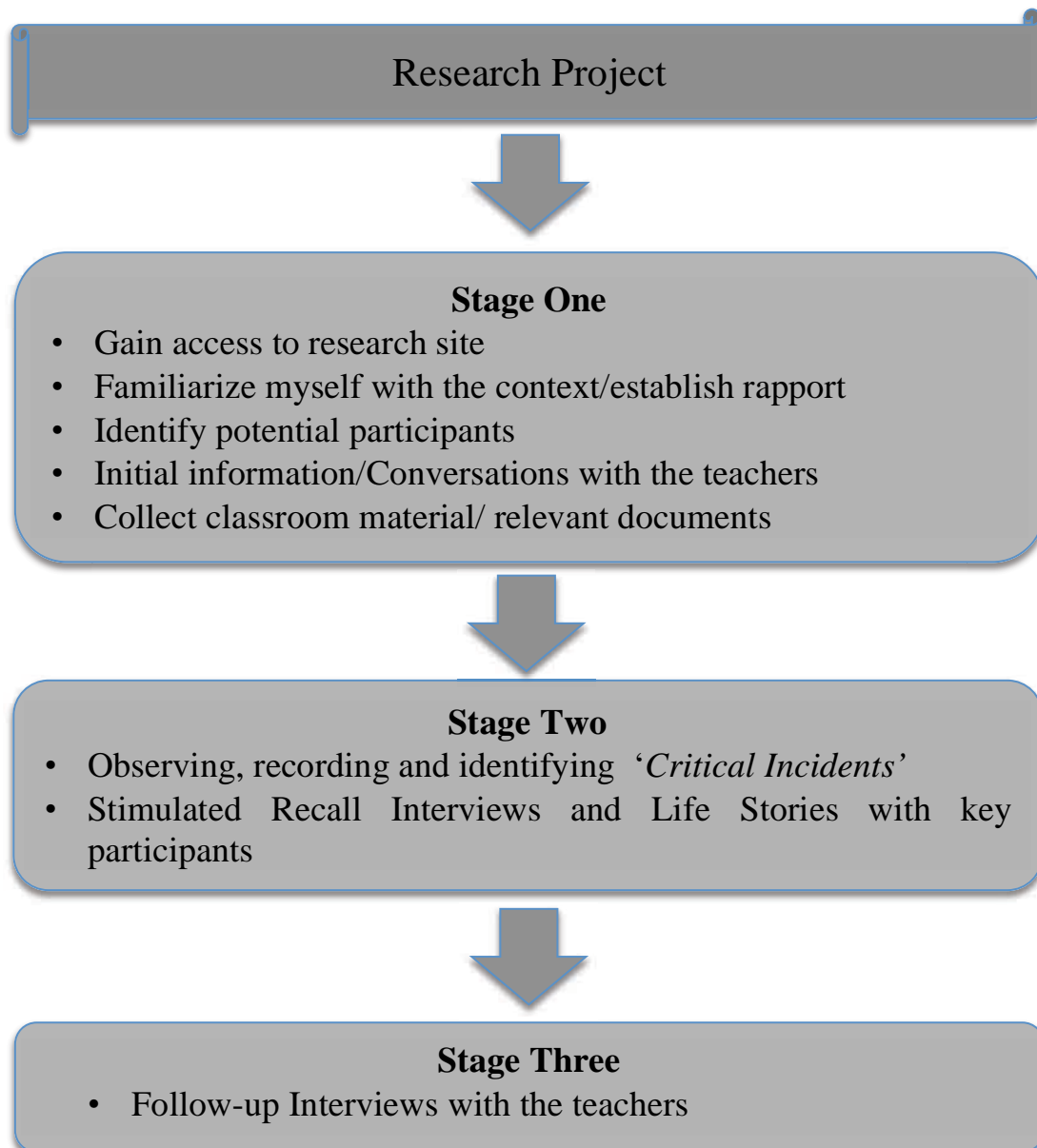
The empirical research was located in a private college-university in Athens. The research site was accessed with the intention to pay attention to all research participants in the first place in order to identify potential participants that would form the case studies and deepen my understanding of L2 WTC in the classroom context, by examining multiple sources of data. The research projected was originally designed for 15 weeks, which is the amount of time for a typical semester at this type of institution. Although factors, many of which were unforeseeable, such as changes to specific course objectives or syllabus, revision schedules, examinations, and the like resulted in a slightly shorter period of fieldwork, the data gathered still offer a good snapshot of one semester in the life of selected research participants at this institution.

After gaining permission to conduct my research in this particular setting, I conducted the first set of classroom observations. I spent the first two weeks in frequent contact with the students and the teachers in order to familiarise myself with the context, establish rapport and identify potential research participants for my study. I also found it particularly important to have conversations with the teachers, after the first set of observations, to gain initial information about their classes such as classroom size, level, ages, nationalities, fields of studies, course specifications, objectives and the like. I collected relevant documents from these observed classes, such as the course syllabus, specific lesson plans and teaching materials (see Appendix A and B for sample material from Class A and Class B respectively). By week three, I had already identified the research participants and I focused on them in my weekly or twice weekly visits for the duration of my fieldwork in the subsequent 12 weeks (with the exception of examination weeks).

The general structure of the fieldwork involved observing, recording and identifying *critical incidents*; that is, moments in the classroom action which made WTC (either its obvious presence or absence) particularly salient in relation to the case study participants. I used these critical incidents as an anchor for subsequent *stimulated recall interviews* with each participant, with the intention to provide them with the opportunity to reflect on those events and offer their own voices and interpretations with regards to their L2 WTC behaviours. In the meantime, I also arranged *life story interviews* with each individual participant in order to gain a picture of their personal biographies and the histories of their language learning and use. To minimise the impact of my perceived authority, I gave the participants the option to choose the language in which the interviews would be conducted. It is

important to acknowledge, however, that this option was only available to some participants, as not all spoke fluent Greek and apart from English, I did not share any other languages with them. Lastly, although not planned in the initial design, my progressive data analysis throughout the fieldwork made it necessary to gather additional or more detailed data to my overall dataset. As a result of this process, I added formal interviews with the teachers. The whole structure of the design for the current study is presented in Figure 5.1 below. A full summary of the data gathered is provided at the end of Section 5.6, after I have discussed each method of data collection in more detail.

Figure 5.1 The overall design of the research study



5.4.3 Sampling strategies and access

All of the participants in my research were undergraduate students who were learners and users of English as their additional language. They majored in a range of disciplines at the chosen college-university in Athens, and were enrolled in a compulsory English class because they needed to improve their currently intermediate

level of English to meet the requirements of an English-medium curriculum adopted at this institution.

The selection of the participants for this study was based on a combination of convenient and purposive sampling. It was important for the study to include participants who were willing to participate in the study and who were accessible in the first place, hence the convenience. At the same time, the sample had to respond to the theoretical and methodological requirements of my research. This corresponds with one of the principles of selection in purposive sampling, which is the researcher's judgement as to typicality or interest, on the basis of which a sample is built up (Robson, 2011). The following criteria guided my purposive sampling:

a) *Students who generally engaged with the classroom activities/materials.*

That is, I was primarily interested in examining those students who showed some level of participation in the classroom events, even if not necessarily at the communicative behaviour level (see the next criterion).

b) *Students who displayed distinct classroom behaviour.* I was keen to include

in my sample students from both ends of the WTC spectrum, such as particularly active or noticeably reluctant students, that is, those who either talked too much or too little or not at all.

c) *Students who were involved in what I later termed as critical incidents.* That

is, I wanted to invite those students as case study participants who were implicated in some critical way in particularly important WTC moments in the classroom action identified in the early stages of my observations.

- d) *Students whose interactions and relationships with others in the same class seemed to affect their WTC behaviours.* If I noticed interesting patterns of interactions between two students in the same class (e.g. they either always/frequently talked to each other, or, in contrast, typically avoided communication with each other), I was keen to include both such participants.
- e) *Students who came from diverse educational, linguistic or cultural backgrounds.* The multicultural nature of these classes gave me an opportunity to study the effect of diverse contexts of people's past and present and I endeavoured to capture this diversity in my sampling.

Coupled with the convenience criteria (i.e. participants' willingness, availability and accessibility), the above purposive principles were used as a guiding framework for identifying my case study participants. The next step was to make an important decision concerning the number of participants in my study and, as will be shown, it was here that the convenience criteria played the most important role in determining the final number of case study participants.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005) a large sample might become unwieldy and a too small sample might be unrepresentative. In addition, the sample size depends on the style of the research. For instance, a survey usually requires a large sample size whereas an ethnography or in a qualitative study the size is usually small. The aim of this study is to offer in-depth insight into individual learners' L2 WTC in the Greek EFL context. To achieve this, it was important to obtain rich contextualised data and aim for closer scrutiny of each individual

participant, rather than involve an extensive number of key participants. To the same end, therefore, I employed and drew upon multiple data sources, such as ethnographic classroom observations, stimulated recall interviews, life stories and follow-up interviews (see Section 5.6) in order to provide rich data and to paint a more holistic picture of the person's communicative actions and, thus, advance my understanding of L2 WTC in the EFL classroom.

Yin (2003), for instance, contended that in qualitative research, studying and observing a single participant “can represent a significant contribution to knowledge and theory building” (p. 40). This suggests, therefore, that even a small sample of participants, such as in the case of this study (n=5), can generate original and meaningful results and, thus, contribute significantly to our understanding of a particular phenomenon. Similarly, Duff (2007) suggests that it is more ‘feasible’ to provide a ‘thorough analysis’ by focusing on one participant or a small number of participants, rather than dealing with large numbers of individuals, especially when the research focus is concerned with thick descriptions of individuals’ histories, backgrounds and experiences.

With all these in mind, I decided to start with a target of seven participants, while keeping the option of adding or reducing at later stages. Indeed, after a couple observations, the number of participants was immediately reduced to six after one of them decided that they did not wish to participate in the study as a key participant.

Another important factor to consider was access to the sample. Access might be problematic for a variety of reasons and the research design has to be sufficiently

flexible to overcome any potential difficulties at the very early stages of data collection. For instance, once I had identified and secured consent of the six participants, and started conducting the first stimulated recall interviews, another of the participants dropped out because of ill health. The number, although now reduced to five, still offered ample opportunities to explore my research questions while honouring the purposive criteria discussed above.

Taking all of this into consideration, I needed to access the whole classes first for observation purposes before identifying the final case study sample. After all, my observations concerned the class as a whole to start with, which is what led to narrowing down the list of key participants. I started the actual recruitment process by obtaining permission from teachers to access their classes. I then visited each class and explained my research project and its purpose to potential participants (i.e. at this stage, all the attending students). I was given the first teaching hour in order to elicit questions, address concerns, and provide clarifications or more detailed explanations. Subsequently, written consent forms to both teachers and students were distributed. Furthermore, participants were informed about ethical issues, anonymity confidentiality and their right to withdraw from the current project at any time. At this point, I handed in the participant information sheet which I went through with the whole class in detail (see Appendix I) and they were asked to sign the consent forms (see Appendix J) if they wished to participate in the study. The same procedure was followed for both Class A and Class B. In Class A, all of the 22 students who were present, except one (and whose data are therefore not included in any of my data records), were willing to participate. During the break one of the volunteers showed great interest and sat with me and asked more questions (that person ended up to be

one of my key participants for the reasons discussed previously). By week two of my classroom observations, I had chosen and invited the key participants from the two classes, following the purposive criteria outlined above. In combination with the convenience considerations, the final sample consisted of two students from Class A and three from Class B. I describe their profiles next.

5.5 The Research participants

Having described the principles and considerations that have informed my sampling strategies, I can now proceed with introducing the specific people that took part in this project. A brief demographic summary of student participants is presented in Table 5.1, followed by more detailed summaries in a vignette-like form, which is followed by a brief summary of the two teacher participants. However, before I proceed, I wish to comment on two important issues, the first concerning the anonymity of the research participants and the chosen pseudonyms, and the second relating to my personal ties within the research context and, particularly, one teacher participant.

Despite implementing and taking into consideration high standards of ethical care (see Section 5.9), the limited number of research participants in this study, as well as the nature of the study, were both challenging in terms of guaranteeing anonymity. In order to account sufficiently for the person's communicative actions in this particular context and to paint a fuller picture of the person doing the talk, it was imperative to afford rich contextualised descriptions of the participants' life histories, relationships, identities and motivations. It is precisely this type of information that fuels easy identification (especially for a single male participant amongst a group of

females) by those still working in the context and the use of pseudonyms might not resolve the problem. This is why I resorted to a strategy of referring to all participants and females. The choice of pseudonyms, however, was not based on any particular preferences or characteristics that would risk revealing the true identity of my participants, but rather, it was a random choice of distinct female names.

As far as the second issue is concerned, it should be noted here, that I had known one of the teacher participants, personally, for a long time, in various roles. I had also studied at the same institution at some point and she was briefly my teacher, and much later we were in a collegial relationship when I started teaching there part-time. However, it should be mentioned here that her participation in this project was entirely voluntary and I had never discussed the nature of my project prior to gaining permission from the head of the department to conduct my research in this particular setting. Having made my personal ties transparent for my readers, which may present potential bias, I can now proceed and present all my research participants.

Table 5.1 A brief summary of research participants

Name (Pseudonym)	Nationality	Age	Gender¹	Major	Class A/B
Regina	Albanian	30	Female	Psychology	A
Stacey	Greek	19	Female	International Relations	B B
Serena	Estonian	21	Female	Business	B
Aria	Libyan	22	Female	Business	A
Darcy	Greek- Albanian	20	Female	Business	

¹To avoid easy identification and thus secure anonymity, although one of the participants in this study was male, I decided to refer to all participants by female pseudonyms.

The courses: Class A and Class B

Regina and Darcy shared the same class, namely Class A, which is an upper-intermediate English language course open to students who have successfully completed the previous academic English course, or new incoming or transfer students who have received a score ranging between 460 and 499 on their paper-based TOEFL Placement Test. This course, the last in the ESL series, is intended to lay the foundation for attending academic courses in various fields of study, as is evident by its subtitle, academic ESL. The overall aim of this course is to advance students' language skills, especially writing and speaking, to the level of a competent non-native language user. To this end, Class A's students receive intensive instruction in all skill areas, with a greater emphasis on the development of conversational and writing skills.

Aria, Serena and Stacey shared the other class, namely Class B. A non-credit basic writing course that is required of both incoming and currently enrolled students who need additional preparation prior to enrolling in Composition I. Incoming students whose TOEFL score ranges between 500 and 524 are placed in Class B. Existing students who have passed Class A subsequently advance to Class B. Class B prepares students for academic success by introducing them to the most basic principles of academic writing and serves as a stepping-stone to the next level of academic English. It is a skills-building course for students who started learning English through the ESL program, and a remedial course for students whose mastery of academic writing skills is still incomplete or for those who have given up their

study of English and need to brush up on their writing skills (although this course emphasised writing skills mostly).

Regina is an Albanian immigrant who has been living in Greece for the past 23 years or so. Thirty years old at the time of my data collection, she had just resumed her studies at this institution and she was assigned to Class A, based on her entry results. She was the oldest student from Class A and the only who was married and a mother of three children. After presenting my research project, she approached me and asked me various questions and she was very keen to participate. In fact, she was the only participant who asked what she could possibly gain from this experience (i.e. participating in this project). I must admit that her action had already given me hints as an interesting case, which was later confirmed during the first classroom observation. Not only did I admire Regina's courage and determination and the fact that she had future aspirations, but what captured my attention in Regina was that she had succeeded very well in distinguishing herself from the rest of the class (from day one) because of her constant efforts to use English, despite of her frequent mistakes, and she was the most actively engaged student.

Darcy is a 20-year-old student, half Greek half Albanian and shared the same class with Regina. She was in her first year too, but displayed exactly the opposite classroom behaviour to Regina. Darcy insisted on speaking Greek, despite the teacher's constant efforts to remind her that she must not. At the same time, she kept challenging the teacher in any possible way, sometimes to the detriment of the other students, not to mention her own learning. She seemed indifferent, unwilling and rather arrogant at times. All these characteristics in her classroom behaviour that

Darcy displayed during the data collection process triggered a lot of questions as to her WTC (or, rather, its absence) and made her an interesting case to focus on. As the data collection progressed, it became clear that even her interviews showed her unwillingness to communicate in L2 (even though she obviously volunteered to participate as a case study participant). In fact, when she decided to participate in the study, the first thing that she asked was if the interviews would be conducted in English which had already given me important analytical hints, along with her challenging classroom behaviour.

Aria is a 22-year-old Libyan student in Class B. She had not begun her first year of study as yet. Although she had been studying at this higher education institution for the past two and a half years, her results did not indicate any substantial improvement, as she had been attending only a series of English courses and general modules with somewhat limited success, evidenced by the fact that she had failed her English courses twice. Her academic performance and her lack of improvement did not allow her to proceed with the core modules in her chosen field, which was Business Administration. *Aria*, it has to be said, was not at this university by choice but rather because of her family circumstances. Her father worked for a foreign embassy in Greece and, at this time, her family happened to be in Greece for these purposes. This was not the first time that she had lived abroad temporarily and this seems to have had an impact on her learning experiences. *Aria* captured my attention because of her general avoidance of communication and a very evident struggle to use English, despite the fact that she was assigned to a high level English course. It was obvious that her proficiency level was not the one required to cope with the demands of the programme.

Serena is 21-years-old and shares the same classroom with *Aria*, based on her initial assessment. She was there by choice and she had a very good command of both spoken and written English. She captured my attention because, although she was a fluent and confident speaker, she was, nevertheless, willing to communicate only on certain occasions. It struck me that, contrary to expectations, her lack of involvement was not a mark of her indifference. She was in fact hard-working, diligent and punctual and among the best students in her class, according to her English teacher.

Stacey is 19-years-old and shares the same class with *Aria* and *Serena*, based on initial assessments. Although she could have attended the next series of English courses, she chose to be assigned to this class to familiarise herself with the context at first. Being at the university was like a gift for her, after a double failure in the Greek national exams. She mainly captured my attention because she was talkative, at times excessively so, and keen to participate in class, sometimes at the expense of her fellow students. She was Greek and my general observations and experience have shown that many Greek students tend to rely on speaking Greek in the English class, especially if the teacher is also Greek. However, I was impressed by *Stacey's* persistence to use English in the language classroom, which was rather untypical of the students with her linguistic background studying in this type of setting. For instance, *Stacey* took for granted that our interviews would be conducted in English and she seemed excited about this. In fact, along with *Regina* she was the only who asked me to conduct our conversations solely in English.

The teachers' profiles

Finally, I would like to introduce the teachers who took part in this study. There were two teacher participants in this study. The table below (Table 5.2) summarises key demographic details from their CVs, which are publicly accessible on the college-university's website. Both teachers had a mix of educational backgrounds and experiences, having studied both in Greece and abroad (especially in the UK). This means that both had some first-hand multicultural experience. It should be noted here, that the reason why there are only two teacher participants in this study lies in the small number of English teachers in this particular institution and the limited access to sample classes. As I mentioned elsewhere in the thesis (see Section 5.3) the college-university consisted of six academic English preparatory courses, in accordance with CEFR, taught by four English teachers. More specifically, the same teacher was teaching the first and the second course in the series, A1-A2 and A2-B1 levels respectively. The former consisted of five students who firmly did not want to participate in my research and the latter consisted of 15 students who were participating in an action research project at the time I started my research. The last two courses, the most advanced in the series (C1/ C2 levels), were also taught by the same teacher. After discussing the course objectives with the teacher and my supervisor, it was concluded that these classes would not be any use to my research interest and, therefore, were excluded from the beginning. Consequently, I was granted access to the third and fourth courses in the series (B1-B2/ B2-C1 levels), which consisted of and 22 and 17 students respectively and were taught by two different teachers. Even though I was left with only two classes, the number of participants (n=39 in total) could still afford ample opportunities for my research project to be materialised.

Table 5.2 A brief summary of the teachers in this study

	Age	Gender²	Years of teaching experience	Nationality	Class A/B
Teacher A	40-45	Female	25	Greek	A
Teacher B	30-35	Female	10	Greek	B

Teacher A is a 44-year-old, highly experienced teacher, who has been working for this institution for the past 15 years. In this context, she has been teaching a wide variety of modules, such as Academic English, Linguistics, etc. She has studied and worked abroad for many years. Teacher A was generally highly evaluated by her students for her support and guidance and she was very much liked. For example, I was about to leave and I was in front of the corridor when a student representative asked to speak with the president of the institution. When the secretary asked what is the reason for such a meeting, the student replied that they wish to continue their English courses with the same teacher and the president needs to be aware of their wish and preference.

Teacher B is a 35-year-old teacher, who was quite new in this context. Similar to Teacher A, she has also studied and worked abroad for some years and had substantial teaching experience in multicultural settings. In this context, she has been teaching both Academic English and English Literature modules. She was very much appreciated by her students because of her support and approachability.

² Both teachers are referred to as females to avoid identification for the same reasons and with the same caveats as in the case of student participants.

5.6 Data collection methods

The rationale and the research questions, along with the epistemological stance taken in this study, have informed my choice of data collection methods. To reiterate, this study centres around persons acting in their worlds, and the specific aim is to understand these persons' willingness to communicate in an additional language (WTC in L2) within the layered personal and institutional contexts of their participation. To understand both the nature of the communicative action in which these persons engage and make sense of in the specific L2 classroom and what these persons bring into those communicative events, this study has employed a range of data collection methods, including ethnographic observations and different types of interviews with key participants (see Table 5.3 and Table 5.4). My intention to rely on multiple methods was motivated by the nature of this project and the questions it is asking. It is also important to note that the multiplicity of perspectives from a range of data sources acted as a way of triangulation, because even if one takes, as I do, an interpretivist stance which defies the objectivity requirement, relying exclusively on one method could easily bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular part of reality s/he is exploring (Cohen et al., 2005). The triangulation in this sense has served the purposes of strengthening and, thus, making more credible and robust the interpretations that I offer in the discussion of findings. I now turn to discussing the rationale, theoretical foundations and practical implications of each method of data collection.

5.6.1 Ethnographic classroom observations

Observing and understanding participants' lived L2 learning experience, daily interactions, and communicative behaviours in the L2 classroom was at the heart of

this study, and ethnographic classroom observations promised to offer ample opportunities to accomplish this task. To this end, ethnographic classroom observations were crucial for this study and, therefore, constituted the core of my data collection methods (i.e. 23 sessions, 18hrs 05min). Ethnography has generally been seen as suitable in research projects whose aim is to generate thick descriptions about participants' daily lives, interactions and contextual settings. For example, Heller (2008, p. 250) suggests that doing ethnographic research allows research to tell the story of someone else's experience which "illuminates social processes and generates explanations for why people do and think the things they do." Moreover, ethnographic research has been largely applied in studies examining phenomena in which context plays a key role (Blommaert & Dong, 2010, p. 4).

In line with the same rationale, ethnographic classroom observation offers a methodological opportunity to seek an understanding of participants' daily life in their natural environment, in this case the classroom, and entails the researcher's involvement with the people and the context being studied in order to document and record what is happening from the point of view of the insiders, that is, members of that environment. Observational data is attractive because it offers access to 'live' data from 'live' situations. This empowers the researcher to understand the contexts of the classes or programmes, to be open-minded and inductive and, thus, alert to unexpected yet critical findings, to witness events that might otherwise be missed, and to discover things that participants might not freely talk about when prompted out of context in interview situations. In essence, observed incidents are less predictable and, therefore, there is some sort of 'freshness' to this form of data collection that is usually untraceable in other forms (e.g. a questionnaire) (Cohen et al., 2005). The

aims of the present study – to capture the complexity and social embeddedness of L2 WTC of particular persons – made it essential to situate the research in the context in which L2 communication frequently took place. The classroom was, therefore, by default, the primary research site for this project and ethnographic observation as a primary method of data collection from which the other methods sprang.

The practical implementation of this method was as follows. After obtaining permission, first from the head of the department and then from both teachers and students, I started observations in both classes from October 2013 until January 2014. It should be noted here, that before I commenced the formal observations, I conducted a series of pilot observations in both classes in order to gain habituation, check recording effectiveness and ensure that I was sitting in a good standpoint from which I could see all students. Subsequently, I observed Class A every Monday and Tuesday, and Class B every Thursday. The only reason why I observed Class A more frequently than Class B lies in the different levels and objectives of the classes themselves and the different frequency of meetings for each class. In fact, Class A was meeting three times a week. The third session in the week involved lectures on various topics and students' communicative interactions in these sessions were limited (if they occurred at all). After discussing this issue with the teacher of Class A, we agreed that a third visit, having the particular educational objectives for that session in mind, would be no use to my research interest.

The observational fieldwork lasted for four months (an academic term), though, as mentioned previously, there were occasions when I could not observe for various reasons, such as exams, revisions or holidays. As a result, I ended up with 15

observations for Class A and eight for Class B. I also engaged in more informal observations outside of the classroom, to appreciate the fuller context of what I saw in the lessons. Although these were less formal, for example, during the breaks with both teachers and students, they were indeed fertile in providing background information about the participants and their behaviours in the classroom. By staying in a chosen setting over a prolonged period of time I was able to see how events evolved over time, capturing the dynamics of situations, people, personalities, contexts and resources. It is widely acknowledged in the literature, that this kind of immersion facilitates the generation of 'thick descriptions' which lend themselves to more robust explanations and interpretations of events than relying on the researcher's own inferences affords (Cohen et al., 2005).

To some extent, I became a member of both observed groups, as the extended time with the students and teachers meant that I had developed good rapport and was, in a way, seen as part of the class. However, this does not mean that they talked to me during observations (apart from the breaks), nor that I was participating in the lesson in any way and I never attempted to be actively involved in what was going on in the classroom and was not, therefore, a participant observer in the sense in which this is conceptualised in the methodological literature (e.g. Dörnyei, 2007). I felt that it was best to situate myself in a non-intrusive position, usually at the back desk of the classroom for two main reasons. Firstly, I wanted to avoid drawing unnecessary attention to my presence in the classroom and secondly, I wished to have an overview of the whole class during my observations. Despite sitting at the back corner, I was still able to see the faces of the key participants because I chose the corners in the rows in which no key participant was seated. Furthermore, depending on the task (e.g.

role play/ topic about neighbours) sometimes I changed seating position, usually moving to the front corner. There were occasions though where students also changed their seating arrangements to execute a task (e.g. in the Merkel/Obama episode, the teacher asked students to stand up and act [seated] in front of the whiteboard) so as to be seen by the whole class. Both classes consisted of three rows of desks and students' seating arrangements were usually fixed, though on rare occasions students changed seats (e.g. when they arrived late).

The observed data were documented and recorded in a combination of fieldnotes, audio recordings and documents, such as the course description, course objectives, syllabus and materials used in the class by the instructor (handouts, reading materials, writing assignments, etc.) (see Appendices A and B). In my fieldnotes, for example, I recorded interactions between the teacher and students or between students described classroom events as they transpired, and jotted down my interpretations of what I believed could be significant in relation to my research focus, which is also how I came to identify those WTC-relevant critical incidents. Since my main aim in employing ethnographic classroom observations was to capture the live moments in which learners' L2 WTC becomes relevant, I was particularly interested in, and, therefore, directed my ethnographic gaze towards, communicative activities, interactional events and spontaneous happenings signalling members' WTC. In this sense, therefore, the type of ethnographic observation that I conducted was on a continuum between unstructured and semi-structured, guided by a loose agenda of the above concerns and issues, but aiming to illuminate these in a far less pre-determined way than a more structured version of observation requires.

Another feature of this type of guided ethnographic observation is its hypothesis-generating, rather than hypothesis-testing, focus. Researchers conducting both semi-structured and unstructured observations are usually recommended to review observational data before suggesting an explanation for the phenomena being observed (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). In the same manner, I typically identified *critical incidents* which are particular events or occurrences that might either typify or illuminate very starkly a particular feature, in this case research participants' behaviours in which WTC appears to be salient. According to Wragg (1994) cited in Cohen et al., (2005) "these are events that appear to the observer to have more interest than others, and, therefore, warrant greater detail in recording than other events; they have an important insight to offer" (p. 64). In essence, these events are critical because they stand out; they may be non-routine and usually very revealing as they offer insights that would not be available by routine observation.

Observation whose intent is to generate data from participants' perspectives is often combined with other forms of data collection that, together, elicit the participants' definitions of the situation and their organising constructs in accounting for those situations and their behaviours. To this end, after a critical incident, the observations were followed by stimulated recall interviews, which I will discuss in the following section.

5.6.2 Stimulated recall interviews (SRI)

Interviewing is the most prominent data collection tool in qualitative research and another important method used in my study, because they allowed me to gather in-depth information about my participants' personalities, beliefs, preferences and

background, which could not be gathered from observations directly. Interviewing is a typical approach to exploring people's perceptions, definitions, meanings and constructions of reality (Punch & Oancea, 2014). Gaining an understanding of the moments in which learners invest their L2 WTC was central to this study. To achieve this aim, the ethnographic observations were followed by stimulated recall interviews with relevant case study participants whenever a particular communicative episode had been identified through my reflection on the observational data as a *critical incident*. Even though this introspective method is predominantly designed to capture students' simultaneous thinking before, during and after a critical incident, in this study I used them more broadly, as a way of obtaining data on a particular episode in the classroom.

The benefit of stimulated recall interviews lies in extracting learners' interpretations of specifically selected events, as well as their thoughts when all these are still fresh in their memories. The difference between a typical interview and a stimulated recall interview rests on the focused nature of the latter. Participants' recall of the event is stimulated, for instance by playing back an audio-/video-recording and sharing fieldnotes, images and the like, as part of the interview and the participants are invited to comment on the episode (cf. Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Piloting the stimulated recall interviews could certainly be helpful, however, in accordance with my epistemological stance, I approach WTC as "emergent sense making in action" (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015, p. 436). Because it was not my aim to standardise the stimulated recall protocol to obtain objective data but rather facilitate participants' sense making around past classroom episodes, the present study

did not go through a phase of piloting the process, typically used in self-reported questionnaires in hypothetical scenarios. Thus instead of ‘minimally training’ the key participants and thus risking to cue them in any particular aspect of the incidents, I used an ‘alternative’ to piloting, by providing detailed instructions to the participants prior to the interviews, which can be equally sufficient for carrying out the procedure (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Consequently, after reviewing the relevant recordings containing the critical incident, I generated specific questions to ask in the subsequent stimulated interview. Taking into consideration the fact that retrieving an event after a long time-delay might cause recall interference, it was imperative to invite the relevant participants as soon as possible, typically a day or two after the class took place (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Thus, to remind each participant of the particular incident, I played the part of the audio recording to them to facilitate their recall of the event and then I used the prepared questions as a guide to elicit participants’ thoughts and feelings in relation to that particular event. For example, I asked them why they did what they did, how they felt before or afterwards or what they wanted to achieve there and then (see Appendix F, for an example stimulated recall interview).

The stimulated recall interviews were semi-structured in nature. Although the questions were prepared in advance, so as to guide me through the interview, I was open to a flexible and changeable order depending on the development of the conversation as further questions emerged during the interview. Most of the questions were open-ended because I wanted to provide my participants with the best opportunity to express themselves as much as they wanted. During the interviews,

participants were given enough time to think and recall. To secure and confirm that I got an accurate interpretation of the incidents from their perspectives, I always repeated the intended meaning and asked clarification questions. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and stored in files under a participant's name. Most of them were conducted in English, while some others in Greek, depending on the participants' preference, to minimise misunderstanding between the researcher and the participant and to respect the personal preferences of the participants. The majority of these interviews yielded important insights into the observed events, which would have been difficult to access through other means of data collection.

5.6.3 Life stories

Life story narratives or autobiographical interviews have become a popular means of data collection in applied linguistics. 'Life story' as an approach to understanding people's present engagement has also been used more widely, for example, in leadership studies (Bisschoff & Watts, 2013; Bisschoff & Mackenzie-Batterbury, 2013). Across the various domains of inquiry, and in second language acquisition and applied linguistics research in particular, 'life story' approach has been acknowledged as offering at least three major contributions to research. First, it affords insights into people's private worlds, inaccessible to experimental methodologies and, therefore, provides the insider's view of the processes of language learning, attrition and use. Secondly, it highlights new connections between various learning processes and phenomena, and, in doing so, points to new directions for future research. Thirdly, autobiographic narratives constitute a valuable information source for historic and diachronic sociolinguistic research in contexts where other sources are scarce (Nekvapil, 2003, cited in Pavlenko, 2007).

Guided by the person-in-context metaphor, generating background information about the participants was of paramount importance for this study. As discussed earlier, in order to understand learners' communicative behaviours and paint a fuller picture of the person doing the talk, I needed to access their private worlds and gain insight into the learners' life journeys to understand how they have come to be where they were, how their sense of self, their understandings of their relationships, socio-economic and linguistic circumstances, beliefs, motivations, goals and experiences have evolved and potentially shaped their communicative behaviours in the classroom. In the words of McAdams (2008), I wanted to gain a sense of my participants' "internalised, evolving, and integrative stor[ies] of the sel[ves]" (p. 242).

This approach implies the possibility of bringing together at least two dimensions of human experience: the self and the context, which both feature prominently in Ushioda's (2009) person-in context relational view of language learning. From a more poststructuralist perspective, life story narratives have also been seen as a fertile ground in which language learners – particularly those who have or are experiencing asymmetrical relations of power and legacies of discrimination – can link to the past and yet explore new identity formations and possible worlds through their imagination. Affording language learners' opportunities through narrative constructions, to explore possible worlds in which new identity formations, practices, and activities may be rehearsed and shaped in safe spaces is, according to Early and Norton (2012), an important benefit of ethically-engaged research and twenty-first century language education in general. Similarly, Pavlenko (2001) makes a strong case narratives contribution to research, arguing that "L2 learning stories are

unique and rich sources of information about the relationship between language and identity in second language learning and socialisation” (p. 167). It is possible that only personal narratives provide a glimpse into areas so private, personal and intimate that they are rarely – if ever – breached in the study of SLA, and at the same time, are at the heart and soul of the second language socialisation process.

Certainly, there are limitations, or rather caveats, as to how the life story data may need to be approached. As Atkinson (2002) warns, “a life story is the story a person chooses to tell about the life he or she has lived, told as completely and honestly as possible, what the person remembers of it and what he or she wants others to know of it, usually as a result of a guided interview by another” (p. 125). As long as these are not treated as accounts of life facts, but instead as windows into the participants’ meaning making, what participants choose to share and how they choose to narrate their lives can still be considered as a major contribution to research on WTC from an interpretivist stance.

The life story interviews, with all case study participants, were conducted after approximately four teaching sessions to allow sufficient time for trust and rapport to develop between myself and my research participants. Some of these interviews took place after class, while others were arranged outside of the institutional setting. The content of the interviews was inspired by McAdams’s (2008) *The Life Story Interview*’ and adapted for the purposes of this study, maintaining the chapter-related structure of the interview timeline (for a full Life Story Interview guide used in this project, see Appendix D and Appendix E for sample Life Story Interviews) The use of life stories in this study was considered especially valuable as my analysis progressed,

and the life events that the participants shared in these narrative accounts illuminated quite considerably some of the key events in the data and made a major contribution to my emerging identification of key findings.

5.6.4 Interviews with the teachers

Interviewing teachers was, in fact, not planned in the initial methodology outline, but the need to conduct interviews with the teachers emerged as the empirical study, and particularly my emerging analytical sense making, progressed. I had several discussions with the teachers during the data collection process (before and after the teaching hours and during the breaks). However, as I was progressing with the data collection and the concurrent analysis, a lot of inquiries emerged in relation to my participants' classroom behaviours and the teacher's role in shaping them. Therefore, I conducted two formal follow-up interviews with the two participant teachers. Both were semi-structured and open-ended, because I wanted to gather as much information as possible. The interviews with the teachers served different purposes. For example, with Teacher B, based on some initial themes, I wanted to understand the teacher's perception of the good language learner and the students' academic achievement. With Teacher A, the interview had a different focus. I wanted to explore in more detail her relationship with two of my participants, as well as her opinion about these particular students. I also needed to gain background information about her in order to understand her teaching behaviour. Fuller details, including the interview guides and extracts, can be found in Appendix G and Appendix H respectively.

Table 5.3 Overview of data sources

Types of data sources	Sessions	Total length
Classroom Observations	23	18h 05mins
Stimulated Recall Interviews	12	2h 66mins
Life Stories	5	4h 33mins
Follow-up Interviews	2	1h 15mins

Table 5.4 Overview of data sources for each participant

Participants' name	Number of Classroom Observations	Number of Stimulated Recall Interviews	Life Stories
Regina	15	3	1
Darcy	15	2	1
Aria	8	3	1
Serena	8	2	1
Stacey	8	2	1

5.7 Data Analysis

As indicated above, the empirical data of this study was collected through multiple qualitative data sources, such as classroom observations, stimulated recall interviews, life stories and follow-up interviews, which were hoped to provide a more holistic and theoretical comprehension of the 'person doing the talk'. In this case, the

data tended to be narrative accounts in which participants attached their own meanings, voices and interpretations to every aspect of the data and formed the individual case studies. My ultimate goal, however, was not the thick description in its own right, but rather a theoretical consolidation stemming from it. This is why I opted for an analytical approach, referred to as grounded theory.

5.7.1 Grounded theory based approach and analytical guidelines

Although the current thesis did not set out to build a theory as such, I drew heavily from grounded theory principles and guidelines for data analysis. More specifically, I adopted a bottom-up inductive approach. In essence, I started my research without any preconceived ideas, but instead allowed them to emerge through my interaction with the data.

Grounded theory is a systematic but flexible approach to gathering and analysing qualitative data and involves concurrent data collection and analysis, the use of comparative methods, and aims to generate theories (Charmaz, 2011). More specifically, it begins inductively from the gathered data and treats the analytical process in an iterative fashion, requiring the researcher to go back and forth between data collection and interpretation. Coding and memo writing are key strategies for grounded theory. Codes are derived from the researcher's engagement with the data, which is a strategy common to a range of qualitative approaches to data analysis. In grounded theory, codes are not predetermined, however, but drawn from the empirical data and used as conceptual tools to make sense of what goes on, to specify processes, concepts, ideas and to make comparisons across different sources of data.

Along with the coding, researchers typically record their analytical thoughts in extended interpretative notes, referred to as memos. These are used to aid the analysis and discussion of codes by asking analytical questions of the emerged codes in the memos. Memos explore and record as much analytic detail about the category as can be provided in the light of the researcher's emerging understanding of the empirical evidence, and are written throughout the research process. In this way, the analysis progressively becomes less descriptive and more analytic, abstract and theoretical (Charmaz, 2011).

The general logic of grounded theory provides a major contribution to emergent methods because this approach to data involves creative problem solving and imaginative interpretation, as argued by Charmaz (2008) and reinforced by Flick (2006) who stated that "Interpretation is the anchoring point for making decisions about which data or cases to integrate next in the analysis and how or with which methods they should be collected" (p. 296). Grounded theory strategies prompt the researcher to reach beyond pure induction. The method builds a series of checks and refinements into qualitative inquiry, through an iterative process of successive analytic and data collection phases of research, each informed by the other and rendered more theoretical. In short, the grounded theory method emphasises the process of analysis and the development of theoretical categories, rather than focusing solely on the results of inquiry. What makes grounded theory distinctive is the comparative and interactive nature at every stage of analysis, and this, therefore, distinguishes grounded theory from other approaches and makes it an explicitly emergent method (Charmaz, 2008).

As mentioned above, coding is a fundamental analytical process in grounded theory and here, I would like to discuss three types of coding, well known in the literature on qualitative analysis, which have informed my own coding strategy. *Open coding* is typically the first stage in which data is broken down into smaller parts. This may include a sentence or a paragraph and involves interaction, interrogation, comparison and conceptualising. Each segment is assigned a code or label, which may be considered to fall into one or more conceptual categories. Labels can be either descriptive or inferential. In general, however, open coding is more about interpreting and less about summarising (Robson, 2011).

The next type (usually the next stage, though not necessarily, as the coding ‘stages’ do not always have clear-cut boundaries due to the concurrent nature of coding and interpretation) is *axial or theoretical coding*. This way of approaching the data through coding is about linking together the ideas developed in open coding (cf. Robson, 2011). Once again, in the spirit of this overall approach, the axial codes should be allowed to emerge from the data and not be forced in any preconceived way (Glasser, 1992). According to Mertens (2005), at this stage of analysis, interrogation is still happening but the focus lies on the relationships between categories.

The last stage of analysis is the, so called, *selective coding*, during which the researcher decides which codes raise the theoretical categories and offer “analytic momentum” (Charmaz, 2006) and these major focused codes are then treated as tentative categories subject to further analytic treatment (Charmaz, 2008). The core category identified through this process therefore represents the centrepiece of the study (Robson, 2011). Corbin and Strauss (2008) approached this task as a “story

line”, which starts as a description of what axial coding has generated and, subsequently, the researcher progresses from the descriptive account to the conceptualisation of the story line, which advances his or her understanding of the story line. The three broad types of coding are indeed ones that I have informed my own approach to data analysis, even though, as I have noted above, the progression through the analytical stages was not as neat as linear, as some of the literature may suggest. Nevertheless, the story line idea certainly resonated with both my analytical approach and the overall aims of my project and I will return to this in the Findings part of this thesis.

Translated into the current thesis, the study employed a grounded theory-informed approach to data analysis, rather than using it as an overarching approach for interpreting the findings of this study. The overall benefits of grounded theory seemed appropriate for an exploratory study such as this, because analysing the data in a grounded rather than preconceived way allowed the analysis to remain true to the general hypothesis-generating purposes of this research project, while retaining the contextualised meaning of the learners’ own voices, rather than imposing a predetermined coding structure on the data. It is generally believed that this approach allows fresh imaginative interpretations to emerge from which theories can be developed that remain grounded in the particular data sets (Mercer, 2011b, 2011c) and this was indeed the main reason I opted for this approach for my data analysis.

5.7.2 Data storage, organisation and transcription

The data analysis for this project started at the very beginning. After, I gained access to the research site and research participants, I immediately started a reflective

journal in which I regularly wrote my ongoing reflections and recorded a full account of my research activities throughout the project. I adopted the strategies of coding and memoing in the same manner as I have described above, and the following paragraphs are aimed at shedding further light on this process.

All interviews and observations were digitally recorded and stored electronically. They were allocated under file folders, which were labelled according to each participant's name (pseudonym), and sub-folders, which included all the data sets relevant to each participant. Moreover, I copied-pasted parts of written reflections from my research journal, which involved informal conversations with participants and teachers, and I allocated them under each participant's file. All files were stored on my personal computer, which was not accessible to third parties, and I activated an access code. Audio recordings were also stored on my mobile and all data were sent to my personal university email, which I considered to be more secure than my personal account. It was very important to have them organised in a way that would make them accessible throughout the analysis process.

Transcription started from day one and most of the data were transcribed verbatim. However, due to time constraints, sometimes, it was not feasible to transcribe verbatim in the early stages of the data collection. To aid my subsequent data collection/analysis, I made partial or summary transcriptions and completed all transcriptions in full at later stages of my research. The same procedure was followed for the observation and field notes written in my reflective journal.

In order to allow maximum readability and to increase the level of accuracy of my participants' accounts (including their non-verbal and paralinguistic behaviour), I opted for a detailed transcription convention following Richards's (2003) basic transcription features (e.g. overlaps, fillers, intonations, non-verbal features) (see Appendix C) However, as the author rightly pointed out, the researcher will inevitably develop some of their own (e.g. in the current thesis bold is used for emphasis instead of italics or underlying).

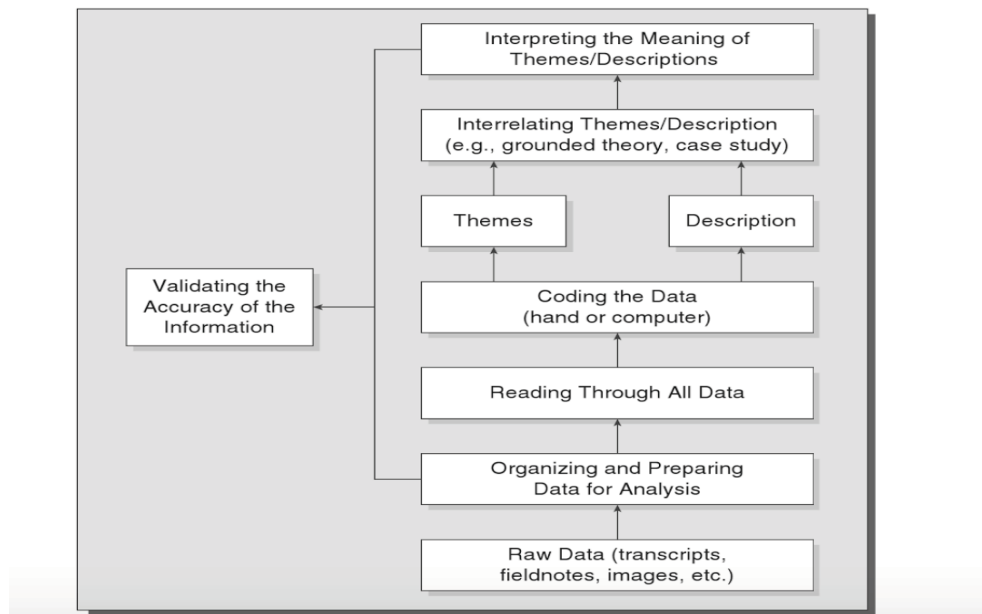
With only few exceptions (e.g. Darcy's firm request to conduct the interviews in Greek), most of the data obtained and subsequently transcribed, were originally produced in English. In order to guarantee a credible account of the original translations (e.g. in the case of Darcy or individual Greek words/sentences), I always transcribed first the original texts in Greek before I translated them into English and subsequently made the comparison. On certain occasions, however, where I was unsure, I utilised peer debriefing and external auditor strategies as part of doctoral supervision tutorials, as well as informal conversations and shared experiences among other colleagues and PhD students.

5.7.3 Data analysis in action

By adopting grounded theory, I started my research without any preconceived theoretical perspectives or by drawing on existing theories. I was keeping my conclusions to be driven by the data. Every topic/theme has emerged from my interaction and simultaneous involvement with the data. As grounded theory suggests, theoretical perspectives are grounded in the data and my purpose is to uncover them and provide a rich contextualisation that can shed light on the complexities of L2

WTC. Let me now present the data analysis ‘in action’ whose key steps, adopted from Creswell (2014), are also summarised in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 Data analysis in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014)



Stage one: Familiarise myself with the data and pre-coding

In response to these general, as well as the more specific, grounded theory guidelines discussed earlier, the initial analysis occurred in parallel with data collection and started after my first contact with the research context and the research participants. All data sets were simultaneously transcribed immediately and typed in word documents verbatim. Sometimes, however, due to the large amounts of data and time constraints, I had to partially transcribe a data set or produce summaries, which were later transcribed in full verbatim. When I completed a transcription, I allocated each data set under each participant’s file and I was reading and re-reading the data in order to immerse myself to it as much as possible. At first, I started with the classroom data, field notes and stimulated recall interviews from the chosen

participants, as well as with the initial interviews with the teachers. While familiarising myself with the data, I was taking notes about my ideas and writing memos about my own interpretations and possible meanings. I was highlighting in a different font colour those segments, words or phrases which I felt were interesting and important. Thus, I was conducting open coding and started developing initial codes, such as damaging ideologies, L2 vision, self-determination and others. When I had some initial codes, I started the reflection process, along with reading relevant literature to expand my thoughts and ideas. This process aided subsequent stages of data analysis.

The same procedure was followed when I incorporated the life stories in my data corpus, simply because life stories happened as soon as the first critical incident happened in class. With almost different eyes, I was in a better position to go back to the data, make comparisons, see overlaps and confirm if I was on the right track with my initial codes, as well as produce newly emerged codes from the new data sets. At this stage, I also identified possible cues in my data, which needed further exploration and therefore wrote memos about them in order to be prepared for the next phases of my field work (e.g. classroom observations and stimulated recall interviews and follow-up interviews) which was not over yet.

Stage two: Generating ideas and themes

Once I had completed the transcription process, I had already familiarised myself with the data and gained a better understanding of what I was seeing. Thus, I started putting together the initial coding I developed through open coding and tried to identify conceptual links and relationships between them. I was mainly looking at the

circumstances under which L2 WTC happened or did not happen, the context in which it happened, actions taken and the consequences of these actions (Mertens, 2005). In other words, I was involved in, what has been termed as, axial coding. In the meantime, I was looking for possible overlaps between the data sets and making constant comparisons. For example, almost all participants during the life story interviews referred to incidents, which have already been discussed during the stimulated recall interviews or aspects of their lives, which again have been mentioned either formally (e.g. SRI) or informally (e.g. during breaks/informal discussions). This rather iterative and recursive process was perceived as quite beneficial in advancing my understanding and reinforcing the validity of my emergent themes. During this stage, I continued writing memos, expanding my own ideas and generating new ones by going back and forth throughout the analysis process, as well reading relevant literature. Since most of the work had been done, I prepared a list with all the emerging themes and I was well prepared to start a more systematic analysis, which I conducted manually (see example in Table 5.2). For each highlighted segment or phrase, I wrote down my own interpretation and underlying meaning and then I started fuller descriptions in the form of memos, before proceeding to the last stage of coding.

Stage three: Revisiting, reviewing and finalising the story line

When I arrived at this final stage, I started revising and reviewing all data sets with the intention to finalise the emerged themes I had developed through open and axial coding. I was reading all my notes, comments, memos and descriptions all over again and made amends and corrections, where relevant. For example, I may have renamed some codes. Once I had finalised the themes as core categories, in that case I

was conducting selective coding, I paid particular attention to all data sets in order to find relevant extracts that will account for the specific themes, which may have been missed. When I secured that no more themes existed, I organised them around each participant, structured by a timeline, which broadly included background, past learning experiences and current learning experiences. For each participant, based on this timeline, I integrated the emergent themes, if there was a theme, under each heading and relevant discussion around them. The themes were then ready to 'be told' through each case's story line. A full detailed discussion regarding each theme will be presented and discussed in the following chapters.

Table 5.5 Example Coding Process

Name	Coded Text	Interpretation of the underlying meaning	Sub-theme	Theme
Regina	<p>I remember the teacher asked me to show her my hands and she told me “don’t you have six fingers?” (.) and I said why should I have six fingers? (.) “Did you a have a house in Albania”? ‘Didn’t you live under a bridge?’ (.) and I said of course I had a house and I was living in the city and it was nice (.) Although I thought that it’s a village and a small society so things will be better [without racism]</p>	<p>Her recollections, imply rather disturbing ideologies underlying the teacher’s behaviour with potentially damaging consequences for Regina’s L2 (Greek) learning in general and L2 WTC in particular.</p>	<p>Embedded ideologies</p>	<p>The role of the teacher</p>
Stacey	<p>At the beginning she told us that she doesn’t care if we participate in the classroom (.) <eer> (.) because (.) this happened (.) I am the kind of person who likes talking either in English or Greek (.) I did it all the time I like to butt in suddenly (.) and she thought that I did it on purpose and because I wanted an extra grade and then she said that I do not care if you talk or not in the classroom (.) I only care about the assignment and the tests (.) then (.) she told us about an extra bonus (2) that classroom participation counts towards our grade (1) what was that? DECIDE [this was for the teacher] I didn’t like that (.) I felt like I was in the primary school (.)</p>	<p>(According to Darcy) teacher’s confusing expectations led to some kind of frustration for Darcy.</p>	<p>Confusing Expectations/ Blaming others</p>	<p>Relationship to the ‘other’</p>

Aria	But in my opinion (3) I am so good (3) I mean (3) I am improving something (4) because you know it's different when you are in a country and you are learning other language. If you are in England or America and you are study English you will get experience even from the people when you get out to take something (3) for example (3) from the supermarket (.)	Significant discrepancies between what Aria thinks of herself and what the teacher thinks about Aria. The teacher's statements reflect Aria's classroom behaviour. Her WTC did not become part of her goal simply because she was unable to realise that she needed to improve.	False cognition/ 'fake' self	Relationship to the self
Serena	All teachers are great (.) I don't have any kind of problems with their psychology (.) I am really satisfied with all the people (.) with the behaviour all of them are kind (.) intelligent smart educated (.)	She is talking about the teachers and what she values about them and she values that they are kind but the emphasis is in these three words which are almost like synonyms. This seems to be important to her.	Values/ Insights into her own vision	Self –concept/ Projected identity
Stacey	I did that because I wanted to help her and find the correct word (.) I did that because I realised that this student doesn't speak English a lot (2) I know that English is not her of course mother tongue (1) she is from Libya but also I think that this specific student doesn't care a lot (1) for example (1) she is missing from many lectures so ok I want to take part and not spend so much time on waiting (.)	This revelation might not be mean-spirited however, it highlights Stacey's dissatisfaction with students like Aria who (according to Stacey), not only do not care and do not talk but when they do, they stall the whole class and they deprive students like Stacey of their right to speak and improve because this is what they want and they have made clear with their classroom behaviour.	Leadership/ Determina- -tion	Relationship to the self and the other

5.8 Establishing trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is a subject of much debate with regards to validity (the accuracy of findings) and reliability (consistency). While in quantitative research there are no voices of misgivings, in qualitative research there is a general consensus that it is not easy and usually counter-productive to aim for reliability and validity in the same way as is required in quantitative research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Nevertheless, measures that strengthen the qualitative research project's credibility, trustworthiness and resonance with the real world have been deemed important and discussed widely. For example, Creswell (2014) has proposed a number of validity strategies, including clarifying bias, triangulation, providing rich, thick description, presenting negative and discrepant information, prolonged engagement, member checking and peer debriefing, which I have addressed in my research as follows.

Clarifying the bias. Creswell (2014) notes that good qualitative research includes comments by the researcher about how the interpretation of the finding is shaped, based on their own background and experiences. By making visible my epistemological stance, I have been open from the outset about where I stand in relation to my research inquiry, and how my position may affect my interpretative sense-making. This self-reflection, along with detailed data-based narratives, has, I hope, created a space which is open to further interpretative possibilities.

Triangulation of data from different sources. The inclusion of multiple case studies and the use of multiple data sources allowed fuller explanations and aided the building of coherent justifications of the emerged themes. It has been argued that, if

these themes are established by coinciding data sources and participants' perspectives, this is likely to add to the robustness and validity of the study (Eisenhardt, 2007; Creswell, 2014). Related to this, the present study offers *rich and thick descriptions* to present the findings and convey their meaning. In qualitative research, this helps the readers to 'travel to the setting' and offers the discussion an element of shared experiences. When the researcher affords many perspectives to a theme, the results become more realistic and richer (Eisenhardt, 2007; Creswell, 2014).

The present study also endeavours to engage with, rather than conceal, any *negative or discrepant information*. I aimed to remain true to the data and extract the beauty of real life situations (e.g. life stories) even if these presented puzzles initially. As it later turned out, however, it was the contradictions and unexpected findings that proved most illuminating, and my desire to engage with them openly was in fact at the heart of my emergent approach to analysis. Therefore, not only does my engagement with such evidence (as shown in the Findings part of this thesis) contribute to the credibility and robustness of this study, but it is also firmly in line with grounded theory procedures adopted for this project.

Credibility was also achieved through *prolonged engagement* in the field. Particularly, my involvement in the site and with the research participants, with the use of ethnographic classroom observations in my research design, allowed more systematic and deep understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (WTC) and lent credibility to the narrative accounts, because these capture events at multiple points in the life of the project rather than offer a single snapshot.

Member checking involves returning to the respondents and presenting them the gathered material, such as themes, accounts and interpretations (Robson, 2011). Member checking was not employed in this study, as such, but rather the study utilised an alternative to member checking. That is, giving the participants the opportunity to reflect on their actions, during the classroom observations, and their personal accounts. To achieve this, the use of stimulated recall interviews, after a classroom event (or the use of follow-up interviews as the data analysis progressed), allowed them to elaborate further and provide their own voices and interpretations. Furthermore, during interviews, participants were given opportunities to confirm or deny what they meant in the form of repetitions, clarifications and summaries made by the researcher.

Peer debriefing and *external auditor* strategies were also utilised in this study, as part of doctoral supervision tutorials, as well as informal conversations and shared experiences among other colleagues, PhD students, family and friends. The former involves other peer groups (e.g. colleagues or students with similar status) to contribute in a way through discussions and by asking questions (Robson, 2011), whereas the latter involves a person who may not be familiar with the project (Creswell, 2014). Lastly, the use of *audit trail* (keeping a full record of my activities in a research journal) (Robson, 2011), memo writing, revising and reviewing the data, while carrying out my research, were also effective ways in establishing trustworthiness. Following all these, I am confident that my analysis presents a credible account of how the findings have been arrived at, what they mean and what implications they may have for further research and practice.

5.9 Ethical issues

Ethical issues certainly are one of the most important factors that should be considered in social research. They involve a set of initial considerations that should be carefully addressed prior to conducting a research project. However, they also involve ethical dilemmas in terms of data reporting once the project is done or, in my case, when the researcher simultaneously conducts research and analyses the data. To this end, this research project took into consideration high standards of ethical care and abided with the following: ethical approval from the university (see Appendix K), informed consent from the management of the educational institution, and individual research participants (students and teachers) (see Appendix J).

Before conducting the fieldwork, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Birmingham's Research Committee, following the standard procedures. Subsequently, I emailed the ethical approval to the manager in order to obtain permission to approach the research site. When approval was granted, I arranged a meeting with the manager of the English department and then I was introduced to the teachers. We arranged a meeting to discuss my project in detail and thus to request permission to observe their classes. Once I secured full access to the research site, I then met with the potential research participants. After explaining the nature of my research and the issues under investigation to every party involved in my research, I distributed consent forms to be signed by both teachers and students. Both their teacher and I emphasised that their participation is entirely voluntary and does not form part of their course. I reassured them that their acceptance or refusal to take part in my study will, therefore, have no effect on their studies and the same is true for

their withdrawal, should they decide to do so at any stage of the project. In the meantime, I gave them opportunity to indicate their interest to me privately, rather than in front of the other students by providing them with my contact details and also suggested that they sign the consent forms, if they were unsure, at a later point. I assured them that they would not be identified by name in my written materials, as I would use pseudonyms and that anonymity of participants and confidentiality of data would be ensured throughout the research process as well as when I report the findings. Any identifiable data that would trace participants' identity will be avoided in recording, transcribing and reporting data. For example, their names or specific features that would enable identification will be changed or removed and the narrative data will be reported selectively (i.e. sensitive and identification details will be removed from the transcripts) in order to avoid tracing back details to an individual participant. Finally, I warranted that I will keep the data securely, not allowing accessing, changing, copying or destroying by other people. The data will only be used for the purposes of this research project and will not be accessible to any third party.

Once I had established all the above, in relation to data collection, the most difficult challenge was then the report of the data, particularly on how I should tell their stories. When the research project was completed or, in my case, while I was doing simultaneous data collection and analysis, I was led to ethical dilemmas which arisen when I had to balance my participants' rights and my responsibility towards the research community, a question raised by Cohen et al. (2007). They believed that a researcher should not "jeopardise the reputation of the research community or spoil the opportunities for further research" (p.75). In other words, in order to remain true

to the data, the study made a deliberate decision to engage with, rather than conceal, any negative or discrepant information, by providing rich contextualised data, as well as thick descriptions of my participants' narrative accounts. Thus, by doing so, I cannot guarantee that some participants might not be hurt with my interpretations nor can I deny the possibility of being recognised by others due to the level of detail in my reports. Doing otherwise (i.e. concealing negative information) on the other hand, is exactly what 'spoils opportunities for future research' and, therefore, does not advance our theoretical knowledge in any field (cf. Kubanyiova, 2008). In line with this, Kubanyiova (2008) pointed out that even though the researcher may learn to be receptive and respectful of the sociocultural context, the opinions and actions of the research participants, being at the same time critical when processing and reporting the data from the lenses of the researcher, seems to be unavoidable data, and as a matter of fact, desirable in the research community when reporting findings. In fact, that was one of the challenges I encountered. Personally, I made the best effort to report the data as I understood it while ensuring that my reports were respectful of those whose personal accounts contributed to them.

5.10 Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed discussion of my empirical study. I started by explaining my rationale and the research questions I sought to answer. I also made visible my epistemological stance before I presented the research context and provided a detailed description the methodological design of the current study and my research participants. Subsequently, I discussed in detail the methods of data collection and their rationale. Lastly, I outlined the data analysis approach, the guidelines and analysis in action. I concluded by reporting the ethical procedures and challenges I have encountered. In the following chapters, I will proceed with the discussion of this study's findings.

6 FIVE SHADES OF L2 WTC IN THE GREEK UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM

This chapter discusses life stories and classroom experiences of five students who took part in this study. The aim is to paint a detailed picture of how the visible manifestations of the person's L2 WTC interact with what is hidden underneath the surface, such as their biographies, visions, motivations and identities and how all these interplay in the unfolding context of classroom interaction, and of the wider institutional and societal ideologies. This approach is in line with my previously described theoretical and methodological commitment to the person-in-context relational perspective (Ushioda, 2009) on the study of motivation in particular and individual differences in general. It has shaped my interpretations of the experiences, voices and histories of the five persons – students in a specific higher education institution in Greece – whose lives were captured by my data collection at a particular time in their personal trajectories, in a particular place, often as a result of larger events in their families or societal histories, and in particular relationships.

The chapter is divided into five parts. Each takes a closer look at one participant's life story and, although structured by a common timeline (from past experiences, current behaviours, through to future visions), is populated by events that are uniquely relevant to each participant. I draw on multiple data sources (life story interviews, classroom observations, stimulated recall interviews and follow up interviews) to weave these together in fuller portraits of my participants' life stories and to allow a conceptual consolidation of what their data may represent in the context of L2 WTC research. I begin my discussion with Regina.

6.1 Regina: The ‘wounded’ fighter

6.1.1 The advent and the first encounters with L2 Greek

Regina was a 30-year-old woman from Albania. She was in her first year of studies at the time of my data collection and she opted for a major in psychology. However, she was yet not attending any courses related to her chosen field of study because of her poor command of both spoken and written English. She was married with three children, two boys and a girl. She was born in Albania, where she lived until the age of seven. Regina started a primary school in Albania at the age of six, but only completed first grade and half of second grade before she and her family immigrated to Greece.

Albania was ruled by Enver Hoxha for almost four decades, under the regime of communism, until his death in 1985. During his time, people did not have the freedom to travel or seek opportunities for a better life and were practically isolated from the rest of the world. He was succeeded by Ramiz Alia, but despite his reform efforts, many Albanians still wanted to leave their country. Anecdotal evidence and public hearings declare that an influx of Albanian immigrants crossed the borders of Greece, which adjoins to Albania to the south and southeast, at the end of 1990. Most of them arrived illegally and many, it is said, had escaped from prisons during the turmoil. The public attitudes among Greeks were not particularly favourable towards the arrival of such large numbers of Albanian immigrants. That, on the one hand, could be ascribed to Greece’s high degree of homogeneity, on the other hand, being subject to negative press treatment, Albanian immigrants who got involved in crime were somehow always in the limelight, the evidence of which was mainly reported in popular media.

It is in this context that Regina and her family came to Greece. However, what they hoped would be a better life started with a great deal of distress, especially experienced by Regina in the early years of her life. Although, at the time of data collection, Regina had been living in Greece for the past 23 years and self-identified as a native speaker of both Albanian and Greek. She did not speak any Greek on her arrival to a small village outside Athens and had to restart primary school from the first grade. As I will endeavour to illustrate in this section, events in Regina's story and her emerging WTC in L2 need to be understood against the backdrop of both her family history and the history of Albanian immigration into Greece, as well as in relation to her multiple languages (including Greek L2 in her early experiences). In the next section, I wish to highlight Regina's recollection of her negative past learning experiences, starting with her first day at school, as an illustrative vignette to show how these painful moments not only shaped the person she is now but also carved out her L2 WTC trajectories.

6.1.2 Facing 'othering' ideologies: "Don't you have six fingers?"

Having come from Albania as an immigrant, Regina faced many problems, because of her nationality, not only with her classmates but also, to her surprise, with her primary school teacher. The following interview excerpt recounts Regina's recollection of what transpired during her early experiences as a newcomer to this classroom.

(.) apart from the children (.) because (.) maybe their parents teach them about these things (.) I felt racism especially from teachers (.) who are educated people and you do not expect something like that (.) for example, I still remember my first day in class (.) they asked me to sit with another foreigner (.) of course I didn't mind that (.) but (.) for two years I was isolated nobody played with me (.) I remember the teacher asked me to show her my hands and

she told me “don’t you have six fingers?” (.) and I said why should I have six fingers? (.) “Did you a have a house in Albania”? “Didn’t you live under a bridge?” (.) and I said of course I had a house and I was living in the city and it was nice (.) Although I thought that it’s a village and a small society so things will be better [without racism] I realised that it was actually worse (.) then (.) the village’s newspaper wrote about me that I am the best student at language [Greek] with a good behaviour and **this** motivated me a lot in order to prove them that they were wrong [for mistreating because of her nationality] (.) that was the worst experience for me (.) (Life story Interview, 18/11/2013).

Although the data presented in this excerpt does not allow me to make conclusions about the exact nature and meaning of the events that Regina refers to, or fully understand the reasons that may have led to them, her recollections, nevertheless, imply rather disturbing ideologies underlying the teacher’s behaviour with potentially damaging consequences for Regina’s L2 (Greek) learning in general and L2 WTC in particular. Let me examine this suggestion further.

To apply Gee’s (2000) framework of identity, the primary school teacher seems to draw on Regina’s *nature identity*, that is, the person’s state rather than something that they have accomplished through their own efforts. Gee notes that the source of this state, or, in other words, the power that determines this kind of person’s identity, falls outside of the individual’s control. In this case, Regina, as an Albanian national, is clearly distinct from the rest of the class and her origins/ethnicity is something that she cannot change. The excerpt above suggests that by appealing to Regina’s nature identity in relation to her ethnicity, the teacher, through her choice of language, makes this otherness prominent in her interactions with Regina in the classroom. What makes this a particularly poignant and deeply alienating experience for Regina (certainly to the listener of Regina’s telling), however, is the way in which the teacher legitimises such ‘othering’ (Holliday, 2010) by assuming an *institution*

identity (Gee, 2000). This means that in her interactions with Regina, the teacher herself performs a particular identity, whose power comes from an institution (i.e. school) and which, therefore, operates in a space that lends a wider legitimacy to specific practices of exclusion. In other words, through her practices from the position of authority, the teacher gives permission to others in less powerful positions (i.e. students) to act in similar ways. In L2 motivation literature, this phenomenon is usually referred to as modelling (cf. Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003), although it is typically only discussed from a positive perspective (i.e. modelling of productive classroom norms). In a setting with equally painful experiences for recent immigrants, Talmy's (2004) discussion of "recently-arrived and monumentally uncool" (p. 150) immigrants to Hawaii, often labelled as FOB (fresh off the boat), has illuminated similar practices of marginalisation in the classroom setting. What is striking in my data, however, is that in contrast with the students who positioned their classmates in this way in Talmy's study, here it is the teacher who, from the power of her institutional authority, models and therefore legitimises such othering by explicit discursive and behavioural references to "an exoticised cultural and linguistic Other" (Talmy, 2004, p. 149).

Regina's relationship with her classmates was clearly affected as a result, especially in terms of her socialisation into the life in Greece outside of the classroom. As she said in the previous excerpt, "I was isolated, nobody played with me". This shows that the classroom environment was not the only space where Regina experienced exclusion. The interview excerpt below recounts Regina's memories of what occurred during her early experiences as a newcomer to the 'real world'.

They didn't invite me to any parties or something (.) during breaks I was alone (.) nobody played with me (2) I remember back then my only friend was a small puppy (3). Then I came to Athens (.) (Life Story Interview, 18/11/2013).

Regina's account suggests that it was not only in the classroom, but, even more importantly, in the outside world across different social networks that she was subjected to the practices of 'othering' on the basis of her nature identity. She was clearly not welcome in her peers' social networks simply because she was a 'foreigner', which automatically excluded her from membership. It is important to acknowledge that the teacher's and the peers' practices must be seen in the context of prevalent ideologies guiding the wider societal attitudes towards Albanian immigration to Greece. Although these may not have been explicitly expressed in the context of the classroom, the snippets of the data presented here show that they were, nevertheless, deeply present in the day-to-day interactions with the teacher and the classmates, both in and outside of the classroom.

So, while it is possible to sense in Regina's account her desire to integrate into her new community and engage in meaningful L2 interactions, the ideological structure as modelled by someone in the position of authority, the teacher, and further enacted through peer interactions across social situations, hardly contributed to the classroom climate in which Regina could exercise her right to speak (cf. Norton, 2000, 2013). Any willingness to communicate in L2 that she may have had initially, prior to her arrival in Greece, seems to have vanished during the first two years of her life in Greece. This finding points to the crucial role that classroom climate, shaped by wider societal attitudes and ideologies and invoked through the teacher's and peers' behaviours, may have a direct impact on the opportunities for students' WTC that exist in such a climate (Peng, 2014). It is, however, important to pursue this

finding further and understand how Regina dealt with what was undoubtedly an extremely unfavourable position in her classroom, and the extent to which this has shaped her WTC in this class and over time.

6.1.3 The sparks of hope: “Then I came to Athens”

A few years later, Regina and her family decided to leave this village and moved to Athens, the capital of Greece, and Regina was hopeful that the people would be more ‘open minded’ towards her. However, she continued to experience negative attitudes, as she expresses in her own words:

Again there was racism (.) when I was playing with other children and then they asked me where I was coming from and I was saying Albania (.) then (.) they stopped playing with me (.) but I had some friends (.) very good friends (.) especially one (2) who helped me to overcome all these things (.) now (.) regarding school a positive and a negative experience (.) one negative that I still remember is when I copied one exercise in mathematics and the teacher found it out (.) so she asked me to stand up on the board and do the exercise which I didn’t know and she slapped me (.) (Life story Interview, 18/11/2013).

The excerpt above hints at Regina’s disappointment over her immigrant experience. Even though the place changed, in this new context Regina continued to be mistreated by both teachers and classmates. Although the nature of the data gathered does not allow firm conclusions about the undoubtedly complex reasons behind such mistreatment, the largely hostile mood in Greece towards Albanian immigrants, which is well-documented in literature and popular media, is likely to have been a key contributing force. It seems, therefore, that an individual’s WTC in this kind of climate may be a rather unrealistic expectation.

Despite the adversity, however, Regina made some good friends in Athens who helped her “to overcome” these difficulties. Even more significantly, Regina had teachers who seem to have been a major influence in her life in general and in changing the course of her WTC in particular: they became the sparks of hope and a source of Regina’s resolve to “make it”, which I come back to later in this section. The following excerpt from Regina’s life story interview represents an example of the role of teachers in Athens in her life trajectory:

And another thing but a good one was in my fifth and sixth grade I had a really good teacher and whenever I was telling him that I hadn’t studied (.) he didn’t believe me and he was telling me ‘come on, stand up and tell me the lesson’ (.) and I did it (.) I don’t know (.) but somehow I knew the lesson (.) maybe because I was paying attention to the delivery because he was really good with me and he was saying very good things to my mother about me (.) and this was a kind of a good push for me (.) To never give up and try. (Life story Interview, 18/11/2013).

Although the general situation did not change for the better “again there was a lot of racism” – the excerpt above traces some of the potential positive outcomes that the teacher’s supportive behaviour could possibly bring. In essence, when the students receive support and encouragement by their teachers, it is likely that all sorts of barricades, such as anxiety or low perceived competence, will fade away (Kang, 2005; Wen & Clément), thus, contribute positively to one’s WTC. Indeed, when Regina felt that she had the support of her teacher, this immediately had positive effects on her WTC: “I did it” – meaning that she stood up and explained the lesson. Returning to Gee’s (2000) framework of identity, the ‘Athens’ data show significant changes in WTC opportunities for Regina as soon as those in a position of authority draw on other than ‘nature’ identities. The teacher in the above example recognises

and discursively appeals to those aspects of Regina's identity (e.g. a diligent student) that allow her to reclaim a particular institutional identity (i.e. a student; an I-identity) that she had had in common with her fellow classmates ever since she started primary school but which, sadly, was overshadowed by her previous teacher's appeal to Regina's otherness. Furthermore, and perhaps even more importantly, the 'Athens' teacher's act of *recognition* (Gee, 2000, p. 103) brought to light discursive aspects of Regina's identity (i.e. D-identity) – that of a hard worker, a diligent student. Although these are clearly attributes that Regina can control (i.e. by applying herself and investing her effort into the school work), they could only resurface within the fabric of the classroom dynamic and thus contribute to actual WTC opportunities through their discursive recognition by the teacher. It appears, therefore, that the way in which some teachers' supportive acts in Regina's new school environment contributed to her WTC opportunities were twofold: firstly, they enabled Regina to reclaim her institutional identity of a student that she had shared with others and which put her on an equal footing with them; secondly, and even more significantly, they highlighted those aspects of Regina's identity that put her in a valued, rather than marginalised, position in the classroom.

Obviously, this rather positive influence she had had, as enacted by the teacher, shaped her motivation in a beneficial way. This brings the role of context to the core of successful language learning and suggests that in such conducive environments, motivated students will perform to their maximum potential, a tenet which has been highlighted in self-determination theory (cf. Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2002). In line with this, the 'social validation' continued shaping Regina's motivation and WTC trajectory, even in the context of poor material

conditions, precisely because of the positive influence she had. Regina successfully completed secondary and high school, despite the financial hardship experienced by her family, which made it difficult for Regina to have a suitable space for studying. However, as she recalls, this did not prevent her from trying:

I remember that here we lived at a very small house and often it was impossible to study (.) but my **huge** motivation to succeed because of what I went through didn't stop me and I was studying even in the toilet (.) (Life story Interview, 18/11/2013).

The above excerpt shows the strength of Regina's determination and helps us to understand her drive for embarking on her studies as a mature student. Before the end of high school Regina met her husband, got married and gave birth to her first child. Soon after the second, and then the third child arrived. When she recalled these memories, although happy for her children, she shared the following:

Sometimes I wish I could turn back time in order to do some things that I didn't do. I regretted for my studies and what I didn't do (.) I didn't complete my dream so I started thinking about studying again. It was always in my mind (.) when I was thinking that I am quite happy (.) I was thinking that something it's missing in my life and that I want to study something (.) but I had my children and I didn't have somebody to take care of them but (.) when my first child grew up then I decided to ask for information about [university] studies (Life story Interview, 18/11/2013)

During my very first observations of Regina, when I saw how highly motivated she was (and I knew her age and family status), I wrote in my field notes: "Why now?" or "What had she been doing all these years?" (22/10/13). I must admit that I admired her courage despite all these commitments. After a fuller exposure to Regina's life story and to her classroom behaviour, it was obvious that her dream had always been there, she only had to postpone it for a while and when Regina was at the

right time and place, she resumed in its pursuit. That was when I met her, and it was from this vantage point that she shared her life story with me. Although this narrative distance made some of her earlier memories somewhat less painful for her to recount, the data in her life trajectory nevertheless make it obvious that the “then I came to Athens” phase of her story was a turning point in rekindling her dream: not because of the geographical location, but rather because of the (previously poignantly absent) readiness of significant others (most prominently the teachers) to recognise, often against the backdrop of the negative societal attitudes and potentially damaging ideologies, those aspects of Regina’s identity that formed part of her cherished dream.

6.1.4 Emerging imagined identity: Because “she knows me”

Having shown some of her past learning experiences as well as her social life, and the impact they had back then on Regina’s life in general, in a similar vein, I would like to now look at her current learning experiences. In stark contrast with the early experiences, in the observed classes Regina was the most actively engaged and talkative student. She always sat in the front row and filled the learning hours with her frequent questions, which made her a dynamic participant in the classroom. She was the only student who constantly volunteered to answer questions asked by the teacher or read passages in class. Most importantly, she was the only student who participated in all of the role-plays that took place throughout the first semester, and in some of them she was the main protagonist.

Even though Regina was the most active participant in this class, she was at the same time the only student with frequent mistakes in her speech, which never put her off taking part in any activity or task the teacher had assigned in her class. One of

my field note entries says: “I wonder where she gets this motivation? She looks very determined” (04/11/13). My note was influenced by the assumption that frequent mistakes would lead to some kind of avoidance in volunteering and answering questions or participating in communicative activities, which obviously, as will be seen later, was not the case for Regina, and which made her an interesting case for me to focus on. Despite the errors, she had a positive attitude towards English. Indeed, in her own words she said: “I love it [English] and I want to learn it (.) that’s why I try”. She also expressed her desire to possibly emigrate to another country: “I need English if I want to migrate in another country later” (Stimulated Recall Interview, 06/11/13). Although this clearly suggests an instrumental motivation and could lead to a valid conclusion with regards to her WTC, it proved to be more than that, and I will return to a more extended discussion of this in the next section.

As I have mentioned before, observing the whole classroom and the students’ level of English, it was clear that the specific course level could be challenging for Regina’s competence. In Regina’s classroom, the students’ level of English should be B2, with the aim to move towards C1 by the end of the course. Although Regina has passed her entry test (see Section 5.3) and, as a result, she well deserved to be there, her actual linguistic knowledge showed the opposite. Indeed, as her teacher reported in an interview, Regina suggested to drop the class and move to a lower level. As the next excerpt from the teacher’s interview shows, however, the teacher suggested another option, which seems to have ultimately helped Regina to improve her English:

Actually (.) at the beginning she had suggested to be out at a lower level and when I talked to her I said: well I (.) I said look (.) stay here for a couple of

weeks and we will see how it goes because (.) I mean (.) could see that she was a mature student willing to make the effort (.) and she is also as a personality a very daring person (.) she doesn't mind making mistakes <um> (.) she is like a (2) powerful person (.) a passionate person (.) she is not shy at all (.) so (.) **all** of those personality traits combined together and made her improve her English a lot **because** she was that talkative and participative (Follow-up Interview with Teacher A, 03/08/2015)

As can be implied from the excerpt above, Regina acknowledged the fact that this class, in terms of the required level of English, was beyond her current level of proficiency, even though she had passed the entry test. She probably realised that after a couple of lessons, and therefore she suggested to the teacher that she should withdraw from this class. Because of her active participation, which she is likely to have displayed from the very beginning, the teacher, however, was not prepared to let her go. The qualities that the teacher valued, implied through her description of Regina as a “daring”, “powerful”, “passionate” and “not shy”, were embodied in Regina's classroom behaviours, which may be why she was committed to persuading Regina to stay. Indeed, in the same interview, when I asked the teacher what she appreciates in her students in general, this what she said:

The fact that they want to make the effort I do not care if they are active participants and if they are coming with a low level of English from the one expected (.) But if I see them really, really, try hard that's what gives me the energy to do even more (.) even if they do not always make it (.) even if they make mistakes (.) If a person works or has a family (2) I had mothers of small children and they were willing to make the effort (.) [Referring to Regina] (Follow-up Interview with Teacher A, 03/08/2015).

It is clear, from the excerpt above, that Regina's “willingness to make the effort” was highly appreciated by the teacher. It could possibly be the one characteristic that distinguished Regina from the rest of the class and somehow won

over the teacher. In line with this, this is what the teacher said when I asked her why she let Regina stay in her class:

You know after so many years of experience you develop a sort of a feeling as you see your student (.) how he or she behaves in classroom you know where that student could go or could not go (.) and I could see that Regina could do it (.) she wouldn't have a problem coping with the class (.) but that had to do with the personality traits I mentioned <er> but also it had to do with my feeling (.) my gut feeling after so many years in the classroom. (Follow-up Interview with Teacher A, 03/08/2015).

Another important aspect here, is that the teacher really draws on her experience of what mature students are like and therefore she suggests to Regina that she stay in her class, exactly because she knew that Regina could eventually be able to cope with the level of the class. Therefore, I will now discuss a particular episode in the classroom, a role-play during which Regina participated actively and even passionately. Apart from the theoretical insight that I wish to highlight with regard to the teacher's relationship with Regina, this deliberately extensive excerpt of classroom interaction also indicates (and is representative of a general trend in Regina's classroom-based data) the frequency and amount of Regina's talk in the class. It should be noted here, that tasks have been found to be quite influential on learners' L2 WTC (e.g. Cao, 2011; Peng, 2014). This in turn suggests that teachers' choice of tasks has the power to construct or equally inhibit learners' L2 WTC. In this particular classroom context, the teacher made extensive use of role-plays which appeared to be quite effective to encourage oral fluency (Harmer, 2007) (certainly for Regina).

Returning to the activity that is at the core of the excerpt data, the teacher announced to the students that four people will act out a role-play in relation to that day's reading material. The topic was about 'spying' between Germany and America. The leaders of these nations should discuss why this happened. After this introduction, the teacher said:

Teacher A: (...) One of you will be Angela Merkel (2) THIS WILL BE REGINA (.) She has secured the part (.) she has auditioned and she got the part (.) Another one will be Barak Obama (.) So, here is your chance to become a US President (.) (Classroom Observation, 05/11/2013).

The above excerpt supports the claim that, due to Regina's "willingness to make the effort", as reported by the teacher earlier, the teacher somehow privileges Regina by selecting her as the main 'actor' in the role-play. She makes her decision explicit in the class, which suggests that the teacher somehow already knew, and therefore had already decided, that Regina would want to participate. Probably, from the general tendency in her classroom, it was clear to the teacher that Regina enjoys playing an active part and that she could probably always rely on her for this type of activity; so here, the teacher clearly is drawing on her knowledge and experience of Regina and really making that identity of an active learner very relevant to this particular moment.

It is important to mention here, that none of the rest of students volunteered to participate in this role-play (namely Merkel/Obama role-play) and, as a result, the teacher had to choose for the rest of the 'actors'. In addition, that was not the only role-play that took place throughout my observations. Four more role-plays took place

and Regina participated actively in all of them. Again, the rest of the students had to participate because the teacher asked them to.

During our first stimulated recall interview (after the Merkel/Obama episode), I asked Regina what were her thoughts when the teacher asked her ‘first’ to participate in the role-play, in the hope to generate more insights into Regina’s relationship with the teacher. While it is fair to say that it has not been very fruitful, Regina, quite confidently stated that “She [the teacher] knows me, my character is like Merkel (.) I really liked that she chose me (.) I was pleased” (Stimulated Recall Interview, 06/11/13). Regina’s statements show some sort of certainty that the teacher “knows” her and therefore confirms the idea that having known each other, it was expected, from both, that the teacher will rely on Regina and, in turn, Regina will want to participate. In addition, it is likely, that when the teacher asked her first to participate, and from the way she called Regina (loudly with a great emphasis on her name), this might have given Regina some kind of power to manifest her social identity in this class and display her role as a valued person in the classroom microcontext. Now let me present an excerpt which shows why the teacher chose Regina as the main ‘actor’:

<um> at that time Merkel was not the Greeks favourite person (.) and (.) I was afraid that nobody would want to play her (.) in the role play (.) however it would be interesting as a role play that is why I chose it (.) and because of Regina’s personality (.) I thought at that point that would be the only one to really cope with the role ((laughs)). (Follow-up Interview with Teacher A, 03/08/2015)

As the teacher said in the above excerpt “nobody would want to play her”, (Merkel) which shows that, indeed, the teacher relied on Regina and confirms

Regina's previous statement that the teacher "knows me". The findings here suggest some sort of shared implicit understanding. The teacher knows that she will be willing and therefore she draws on her identity as the active learner and Regina embraces this role in class. It is almost as if Regina expected the teacher to call on her and, at the same time, the teacher expected Regina to participate willingly. The accounts from both Regina's and her teacher's perspective show that they both *knew*, or, in other words, that they had developed a deeper sense of affinity. Returning to Gee's (2000) perspectives on identity, Regina and her teacher seemed to participate in a relationship which reached beyond their institutional and discursive identities; it was based on their shared membership in a specific affinity group. I will pick up this analytical thread later to discuss the nature of this affinity group and its significance for Regina's WTC. For now, I wish to delve into the classroom discourse data to shed further light on Regina's participation in L2 interaction in the observed classroom, to demonstrate the stark contrast with her early experience of silence.

Regina [as Merkel]: Hello (.) <er> (.) Mr Obama (.) I am so nervous with you (.) and your (10) kivernisi [in Greek – government in English] say me please why did you tap tapped my telephone?

S1 [as Obama]: cause all the (xxx) other countries (xxx)

Regina: yes, but did you ask me?

S1 [Obama]: no

Regina [Merkel]: No? but this right? (7) It's my personal telephone (17)

S1 (Obama): [silent]

Teacher A [US Intelligence]: The tapping was ok, as Mr. President said everybody does it. Where is your problem?

S2: [Head of German security]: I think it's very illegal to do that because it's his personal information

Teacher A [US Intelligence]: Well, we didn't get any of your secrets! Don't worry!

Regina: A: only that? You say me don't listen my personal secret or everything with me **But you listen** my telephone?

S1 [Obama]: The German Intelligence is not spying the American people?

Regina: no we don't (.) we don't

Teacher A [US Intelligence]: we have proof!

Regina: say it!

Teacher A [US Intelligence]: we have spotted you followed Mr President's phone with satellite.

Regina: We? We? I think it's not true (4) but I am sure for me you have done that. **Obama** are you the president of America? Or not? Are you? why did ask your your? You **must** to answer to me (.) why you tap me telephone? (.) what do you want to know for my telephone? You want to **hear**? but what do you want to hear for my telephone? why did you ask me (2) don't you ask me whatever you want have? Why don't you ask me whatever you want? have you something in your mind? Something?

S1 (Obama): [silent]

Regina: Did you remember I AM Angela Merkel? I am not the normal person (.) I am kangelarios [in Greek – chancellor in English) ok but why?

S1 [Obama]: because all people spying in the real world. Why not?

Regina: it's not serious (.) You live in the real world and you tapped my telephone? I think you are not in real world if you having (.) tapped my telephone.

(Classroom Observation, 05/11/13)

Looking at the excerpt above, it is intriguing to note the palpable contrast between the experiences she described in the early data, as a young learner in the Greek classroom (see Section 6.1.1), where she described how she was positioned as a 'foreigner', her loneliness and the general attitude towards her by others thus denying her the right to speak (cf. Norton, 2000), whereas in this particular instance, all these hardships do not feature anymore. As can be seen, being supported by her surroundings, in this case, the teacher, which has been found to be a strong mediating factor for students to make the effort and invest in L2 communication (e.g. Myers & Claus, 2012), she appears to be in control of her own behaviour (autonomy) and of her own learning by exercising the identity of the active learner.

Moreover, we can clearly see that the same person, who was once silenced by the teacher's ideologies in her early experiences, is now the teacher's first choice, and she is very keen on practicing her communication skills, despite the fact that grammatical inaccuracies are quite obvious and frequent in her speech. However, what could be seen as the gaps in her linguistic competence clearly did not discourage

her from trying again and again, even though, ultimately, she was unable to provide grammatically correct answers. In fact, Regina appears to be so absorbed and focused on performing her 'role' as Merkel, that any challenges or grammatical inaccuracies did not seem to matter nor affected the flow of communication, probably because she was part of a very enjoyable experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Egbert, 2003) in which she could exercise the identity of the active learner. She was the main protagonist of the activity, as she was the one who actually did and led the talking. Without Regina, the role-play would not be executed, since none of the other students wanted to participate and even those who did participate in the role-play, as can be seen from the above excerpt, were not very keen on communication. This important finding suggests that although linguistic confidence has been found influential (e.g. Clément, 1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985), it does not always correspond with actual competence and certainly was not the case for Regina.

Her overall experiences clearly differ from the ones she was experiencing in her the earlier days, and the classroom context and relationship with the teacher were not the only differences. Regina's social life outside the classroom walls was also different in terms of socialisation. In those early days, we had a very clear sense of her being isolated and having a puppy as the only friend to talk to, whereas now these days are gone. In stark contrast with her past social life, Regina now is a valuable member of the classroom context, probably because the teacher made that obvious in her interactions with Regina, and because of the situated identity she was projecting, the active learner.

In addition, Regina entered this class with a totally new set of identities than the previous one of 'the newcomer'. For instance, she was a mother and a wife, thus a mature student, based on age and the experiences she had had. The identities she was carrying with her, have been defined by Zimmerman (1998) as 'transportable identities' because they tend to 'travel' with the individual in any context and in any situation. As a 'mature' student, therefore, she might have gained some sort of respect precisely because of the identity of a mother and a wife, which were obviously valued by the teacher, based on what she said, and subsequently might have been appreciated by the students. Such friendly and supportive behaviour by the teacher can be 'infectious', capable of triggering students to follow suit (modelling) (Dörnyei & Murphey (2003). In line with this, I was watching Regina throughout the breaks, surrounded by her classmates, I was sometimes even sitting with her and the rest of the class and looking at a person who was having fun, sharing experiences, talking about her family, especially her children, and, most importantly, a person who was liked and probably admired. This finding suggests that it may be that now she was viewed differently by others (teacher-classmates) because of her new identities, it may be the positive relationship that has been established with those people, it may be that the teacher is drawing on her identities, in that case the identity of the active learner, but it also may be that the teacher also drew on other aspects of her identity, which may have facilitated the learning process for Regina. In fact, Regina's identity as an 'active learner' was indeed one of the many identities that she had, and the teacher, in that instance (Merkel/Obama role-play), drew on that particular identity.

However, there were instances when the teacher emphasised the fact that she was a mother and a wife by drawing on these 'transportable' identities and making

them relevant to that particular context. For instance, the students (not Regina) were asking what the word 'combine' means. The teacher gave the Greek as well as the English explanation and then she drew on Regina in order to give a relevant example for the students to understand the meaning of the word from the context. The teacher said: "for example, Regina you are combining studies and children" (Classroom Observation, 05/11/13). Another example is when the teacher was asking a synonym for the word 'former' from a vocabulary exercise they were doing. One student found the synonym, which was 'ex'. So, then the teacher said: "my former husband or my ex-husband (looking at Regina), or the former president, the ex-president". When the teacher asked if everything was clear, Regina said: "if we have another husband before, what do we say? My former husband". So, the teacher said: "yes". But we usually say my ex-husband (2) why ((laughs)) you have two husbands" (and then the class started laughing) (Classroom observation, 4/11/13). Interestingly, this was not the only teacher who seemed to draw on Regina's identities. There is evidence in my data, from my interviews with other teachers who taught Regina at some point, not in this particular excerpt but at some point, who commented in a similar way. When the first semester ended and Regina moved on to the next level of English courses, I remember sitting with some colleagues and chatting about students' progress and I could not help but asking how she is doing. One of her new teachers said, "Considering she is mother with three children (2) she is doing great!!!".

This suggests, that there is a more widely accepted and valued identity in this particular context because it is not just one's teacher's views, identities and ideologies but it is a view, which is socially situated in that context. These teachers collaborate, work together and are shaped by the wider sociocultural context, and the things that

they value collectively may really influence the way individual teachers will then draw upon those identities in their classroom. Precisely because of these ‘dominant’ ideologies or views, learners might be positioned in unfavourable positions in the classroom, based on their gender, ethnicity, race or class and thus not only refused their right for entry, but even worse, their right to speak (Darvin & Norton, 2015). This suggests that is not only what identities the learner brings into the classroom situation but is also what the teacher brings and what is meaningful to them. It is important to mention here that both of Regina’s teachers, who I have mentioned so far, have been exposed to multicultural experiences, not only as part of their job (e.g. at the university) but as part of their studies, they have lived and studied abroad (e.g. Teacher A has lived and studied in UK and France). This finding suggests that the teacher may be the key in facilitating WTC by drawing on students’ identities but what the teacher values depends on personal experiences. In other words, it may not only be what the learner brings into the WTC context but also what the teacher brings, and how the shared affinities (Gee, 2000) transform the classroom context into a meaningful environment in which people can invest their identities for the benefit of their development, either language development or general personal development. So, let me now look at the data from the teacher’s point of view, and see what the teacher seems to value in her students and therefore how she facilitated and built in the WTC situation for Regina.

The fact that they want to make the effort (.) I do not care if they are active participants and if they are coming with a low level of English from the one expected (.) But if I see them really, really, try hard that’s what gives me the energy to do even more (.) even if they do not always make it (.) even if they make mistakes. (Follow-up Interview with Teacher A, 03/08/2015)

As can be seen from the excerpt above, the teacher obviously appreciates students' effort. Whether they achieve the desired outcome or not it does not really matter, as long as they try. The level the students already have or the number of mistakes they make does not seem to determine the teacher's treatment to the students. When I asked particularly about Regina, this is what the teacher told me:

<O:> I remember Regina (.) Regina is **still** among my **favourite** students and she was actually (.) <er> she was **exactly** as you described her and I have to tell you that she was the **weakest** student when we started the class but you see (.) she had an advantage others didn't (.) she had the maturity (.) she was older in age <eer> (.) she has a family three children <um> (.) so: when she came into the college she was **determined** to make it (.) her level English was very low (.) actually (.) (Follow-up Interview with Teacher A, 03/08/2015)

In this excerpt, the teacher describes Regina as her favourite one, even though the course has ended and Regina is no longer her student. From the way in which she talked about Regina, and especially when she said, "O: I remember Regina", I could see in her eyes that the teacher was really proud of Regina's accomplishments (despite the commitments and difficulties) and she will be forever remembered as an example of someone who was determined to "make it" and who did actually make it. Teachers transmit knowledge without expecting to get anything back other than to see their students' progress and develop. It seems that, in a way, Regina fulfilled the teacher's expectations. To support this claim, I will go back when the teacher said "But if I see them really, really, try hard that's what gives me the energy to do even more" (Teacher A, follow-up interview, 03/08/2015). This teacher saw Regina trying really hard and therefore the teacher validated her identities (social and situated), as means, in order to "do even more", that is to draw on these identities and give rise to Regina's L2 WTC, which otherwise would probably remain hidden.

What is interesting here, to reflect on in an effort to understand not only why she was willing to communicate, but most importantly what has changed between the past and the present, is that Regina has now entered this classroom with a very different identity from the one that she had been assigned as “a newcomer” to this country. In the earlier stages, there was a very clear sense of how her identity as a “newcomer”, as an “immigrant” really impacted how she was viewed by others, and the kind of opportunities that she was given, or not, in the classroom to speak (Norton, 2000, 2013). These ‘old’ identities (e.g. the immigrant) are not relevant anymore because and, this is what is even more intriguing, now the teacher draws on Regina’s new identity as a mother and wife, because these new identities are valued; she is ambitious and still aspires to achieve things in her professional career and for herself, despite the very significant commitments in her personal life, and how the teacher validates these identities depends on what the teacher brings in the WTC situation. For example, if the teacher from Regina’s background somehow valued her immigrant-bilingual identity and made that important, Regina would not have been silenced and deprived of learning opportunities. This shows that it is not so much the learner’s determination that affects their WTC, but rather how they are positioned in the classroom context by others that will determine the communication opportunities to be had.

In the case of Regina and her university teacher, it was the teacher who drew on, shared and understood Regina’s particular identities. In other words, on the basis of their shared experiences (such as that of a sojourner in the UK, or a mother), the teacher not only knew and valued Regina’s identities, but also made them available

for others in the classroom to appreciate, referred to as modelling (cf. Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). It is almost like the kind of validation that she got here really helped her to come to terms with who she really was and who she really wanted to become. What am I saying is very similar to what Norton (2000, 2013) is saying in her study of five immigrant women who were studying English in Canada. This finding suggests that there may be other aspects than learner identity or learner self-determination that impact on their WTC behaviour. In fact, the data has some important inferences about the role of context, and how the social context and how one is seen by others can greatly contribute to what the individuals then see for themselves and for their future vision. Mercer (2015) argued that a learner's self is both socially and mentally constructed, bringing context as a core component to one's self system. She further adds, that an interplay of past experiences and present interactions do shape an individual's here and now and future self. In this spirit, therefore, learners' relationship to themselves, of what they aspire to become, is very much interlinked and interdependent to the context in which they are embedded and interact, and these relationships in a way determine the extent to which their future visions will be materialised. The findings suggest that there are lots of factors that conspire in order to provide that environment where WTC can be nurtured. As the relationship to the self featured very prominently in Regina's data, I would like now to pursue this further.

One last thing I wish to discuss in the case of Regina is her imagined identity, because the classroom data makes it very clear that this is an important aspect of Regina's experience. Imagined identities fall into the realm of imagination (Norton, 2013), with which learners express their future desires about future self-states (Darvin

& Norton, 2015). While they are certainly overlaps with possible selves theory (cf. Dörnyei 2009), in that both entail future-self guides, imagined identities are very much dependent on the context (Norton, 2001). In Regina's case, there are many instances in the data which showed some sort of determination without (so far), however, stating what she aspires to become and achieve. For example, in the past learning experiences when Regina talked about the good teacher and said "this was a kind of a good push for me. To never give up and try", or when she said "my huge motivation to succeed because of what I went through didn't stop me and I was studying even in the toilet". Learners who are, or who have been, subject to unconventional relations of power or discrimination, can link to the past and construct new sets of identities through their imagination (Early & Norton, 2012).

In relation to her current language learning experiences, Regina's overall classroom behaviour (talkative, participative) speculates that there is something invisible which is not said explicitly by Regina during her interactions in the classroom, but which can be understood by her actions and, quite interestingly, it is acknowledged by her teacher in particular when she said "when she came into the college she was determined to make it".

It was almost at the end of our life story interview when I asked Regina how she imagines herself in the future and what are her future goals and dreams. In her own words, she said:

(2) I know that I will succeed one day (.) and I want to tell them that I made it (.) this is what I am (.) I am what I am [her motto] (.) I want to become a very good user of English (.) and my dream is to become a psychologist (.) For example at a conference and give a speech and (.) have 200-300 people to look

at me (.) and I want to make my mother proud of me because of what we have been through (5) (Life Story Interview, 18/11/2013).

It seems that the excerpt above points to some crucial aspects of Regina's lived experience and her driving force, which clearly impacts on her WTC. In order to unpack these aspects, I would like to especially look at the phrase "I know that I will succeed one day and I want to tell them that I made it", because it shows something very powerful and calls for a more in-depth analysis as it directly uncovers Regina's explicit manifestation of her future vision and imagined identity, which both guided and gave meaning to her classroom behaviour and seem to have greatly contributed to the choices she made and the actions she took during classroom interactions simply because, if it were not for them, Regina might not have displayed such eagerness. On the other hand, it was all this hardship (e.g. her interactions with the first teacher as a newcomer, relationship with the classmates), coloured by her early negative exposure to harmful ideologies, which helped Regina to build her resilience and gave rise to her future aspirations. Regina brought these aspirations with her to her new classroom, where she expects them to grow and materialise. Back then her nature identity deprived her from the right to speak because the teacher drew only on this particular identity to make Regina distinct from the rest of the group, whereas now, the teacher values this identity (among others) because it is generally valued in this specific context, and by drawing on all Regina's identities (active learner, mother, etc.) the teacher has made them relevant, thus, L2 WTC is manifested and becomes relevant. This suggests that WTC should not be looked as an individual phenomenon, but rather as fully embedded in the social relationships and macro-structures which shape, but go far beyond, the immediate classroom setting. A person-in-context perspective for understanding WTC has enabled me to see WTC as 'a tip of an iceberg', where

the majority of it is submerged. It is almost like Regina's life story and her struggles to claim her right to speak – her right to 'be' who she wants to be, instead of being put in a box by others because of the assigned identities that had nothing to do with who she is and wants to be as a person – is the submerged macro-context and only the tip of the iceberg (L2 WTC) is visible. This does not mean, however, that the rest of it is not there (the macro-context). Actually, it is and it is what makes the iceberg.

The excerpt above clearly has some important resonances with Regina's early experiences. It appears that her early lived experiences of being excluded, of being somebody who is an outsider, who is a 'foreigner' (e.g. The 'Athens' data), have made her build a strong desire to prove herself to others. I would like to reflect now on one part of the previous phrase "and I want to tell them that I made it". What makes this interesting is that there is a sense of determination that she wants to prove to somebody (them) that she can make it. What is even more interesting is why she wants to prove it. Perhaps, it is because she had all those kinds of experiences, all her life, where she was positioned as somebody who was an outsider, who had to show people that she could do it, simply because the wider context seemed to have low expectations of her achievements. It is also clear that here, 'them' could be seen as a reference group in which she does not belong, which she makes clear distinction between herself (*I*) and the others (*them*), which is similar to Norton's (2000, 2013) participant Saliha, who was granted little opportunities to use French because of the nature of her work and the relations of power in her workplace.

Despite having this vision of what one would like to achieve and how to go for it, such clear strategies have limitations. I am suggesting here, that having a vision of

what you would hope to achieve does not happen in a vacuum. It happens in the social context and sometimes those visions are not simply made available to us because people assign to us particular identities which are not at all helpful. These identities do not help us to transcend our actual selves. This is what may have happened earlier in Regina's past experiences, but now, in this particular instance, when the teacher makes these particular identities very important, valued and something to aspire towards, it helps Regina to see that; it really shapes how she perceives the plausibility of her own future vision, she can now really see that it is of course perfectly acceptable to want to be a psychologist, whereas previously that may not have been the case. This also might explain why Regina was highly invested in her interactions with her classmates, because she was seeking entry into a better future for her in order to show "them" that she made it; otherwise, without such entry, she would show "them" that they were right. "Them" probably, not only refers to all those people from her past (teacher, classmates) who treated her in such an unfair way, but also to the wider Greek society (indeed, what the teacher did and said seems to be a representative of the wider society) and ideological structure which both marginalised and tangibly denied her the right to speak and her right to a vision to become who she wanted to become. Now, despite the struggles in her life story, she can claim her rights and she does so by invoking two aspects which will enable her to show them that she made it, and which help her to build her new identity. The identity she desires and imagines to project, not the assigned identity (that of an immigrant) which had nothing to do with who she is and wants to be as a person. In fact, Regina seems to be fighting this identity and displaying very clear resistance. As a result, she first indicates the fact that she wants to become a good user of English. It seems that English is being used as a 'tool' in order to prove her critics that they were wrong and

ultimately ‘disappointing’ them. She valued English for the access it could give her to the world. In addition, becoming a competent user of English and being able to talk it is not only prestigious but also gives her a social advantage to build her identity in order to communicate who she wants to become (i.e. “a psychologist and a good user of English in order to fulfil her goal (i.e. give a speech in 200-300 people”). This suggests that Regina’s investment in English and, therefore, her willingness to communicate must be understood with reference to her reasons for learning English, her changing identity and her plans for the future. As mentioned before, she started studying English at the university for social advantage and hoped ultimately to become a psychologist. She knew that she needed to be a good speaker of English in order to work as a psychologist and give speeches.

6.1.5 WTC from the ‘Wounded’ Fighter perspective: ‘and I want to tell them that I made it!’

As became evident in her earlier experiences, Regina’s story was situated in the context of immigration and is quite representative of what students might have to deal with as newcomers in a new environment, in that case the classroom context. The complex history she had before she started studying at the university was somehow affected by the wider attitudes because Regina’s resources were not valued when she entered a context resistant to immigrants. Thus, as subject to discrimination, she was marginalised from the very beginning and was not allowed to take part in the language practices. Under these conditions of marginalisation, WTC is rather an unlikely expectation, simply because the context does not give the person the space to exercise their right to speak. Past learning experiences, both positive and negative, (in Regina’s case mainly negative) usually “leave an imprint on learners’ practices,

not because of the powerful emotional charge, but because they are linked to the images of the person they would ideally like to become or avoid becoming” (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 129). The hardships Regina was facing, however, seem to have helped her build her resilience and given rise to her vision (i.e. become a psychologist), which has now been strengthened, and did not include the immigrant identity she was once assigned, simply because she does not accept being positioned as an uneducated immigrant in the world, with nothing to offer (i.e. what she was afraid of becoming) (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Regina not only wanted to be accepted, she wanted to thrive. She built a very clear sense of herself and who she is and what she wanted to do, what she needed were the conditions which would allow her to show her true self and the person she aspired to be, or some kind of validation to trigger all these things. It was years before Regina gained access to a social network (the current classroom context) and with it the right and opportunity to speak, because in that specific context her nationality no longer marginalised or silenced her by prevalent ideologies; and she was no longer equated with ignorance because not only had she a very clear sense of herself, but she happened to be in a context where all the identities she was carrying with her were valued and appreciated by someone who once tangibly denied her the right to speech and vision – the teacher, who also made others to appreciate. The validations she got from the teacher almost re-ignited her future vision, changing her identity and with it her WTC. Her data showed how the past and the present intersect in people’s actions and that there are very clear links between WTC and a broader construct, which links to Norton’s (2000, 2013) work, claiming the right to speak and the right to vision. That is very different WTC, it is almost like one is going to speak, or not. Here it has very clear links with that assigned identity and how you see your agency in the world around you, how you

want to prove to others that you can make it, and how you want to reject specific labels assigned to you because maybe you are not expected to speak at all as a foreigner. WTC in this context, in Regina's life story, may have to be reconceptualised along the lines of claiming the right to speak and claiming the right to vision. Her data poses something crucial, that in the current age of globalisation in a multilingual era we have to face these questions even more than before (Kubanyiova & Crooks, 2015), and a person-in-context relational view seems to be a very important paradigm to sufficiently account for all these complex issues. This suggests that the teachers' tasks are a lot more important and maybe teachers have to start thinking out of the box, asking questions like why someone is silent or what is happening to this person and what is my role and responsibility.

Regina's case brought three dimensions together: (1) psychology of the language learner; (2) other identities the learner brings in the classroom and, most importantly, how the 'learner' may not become a prominent identity; and then (3) how the teacher's role is important in validating some of those identities, because they will have an impact on what the person will do in the classroom, how they will behave and the kind of visions they will have for the future – but how the teacher validates all these identities depends on the kinds of identities that the teacher brings into the classroom, and how both persons (student and teacher) interact in a relational manner.

6.2 Darcy: Too 'clever' to fail

6.2.1 Background as 'the best' student

Darcy was in her first year of studies when I conducted the current study's fieldwork. Her father was Greek and her mother was Albanian. Her parents met when her father was travelling to Albania for business purposes. They got married and they decided to live in Greece. After some years, Darcy was born in Greece and, therefore, she is half Greek half Albanian and a native speaker of both languages. However, due to her father's origins she was considered more Greek than Albanian. This happened because since her father was Greek and she was born in Greece, she took her father's surname. She is twenty-years-old and the oldest child of her family. Even though she had relatives in both countries, Darcy spent most of her life in Greece where she went to primary school with the exception of one year, which she did in Albania, because she and her family had to go to Albania for family reasons. After that year abroad, Darcy came back to Greece and she continued her secondary school. However, one year before the end of secondary school she decided to leave and continued in Albania until the end of high school. She started learning English in Greece at primary school, at the age of nine. In the Greek educational system, students start learning English in the fourth grade and so did Darcy. However, English classes at school take place only two hours per week and usually classes consist of at least twenty students and, therefore, families who can afford to pay for extra classes and private tutoring, send their children to English Language centres.

When we did our second interview, Darcy reported that she was a good student in general, although she did not study much apart from the last year of high school because it was obligatory in order to enter to a university. Regarding English,

she said that she wanted to start learning English so much and when she did she was the best student in her class. However, when it came to exams for the FCE (B2 Level, CEFR) she failed and, as a result, she stopped learning English at the language centre and never tried again. She continued only at school, where English is taught as part of their curriculum. Her next regular contact with the language was when she started studying at the university. Before that, there was a gap of about five years without proper instruction. When she graduated from the Albanian high school, she continued on to one of the top universities in Tirana which she attended simultaneously with the university in Greece, at which I conducted my study.

6.2.2 Past learning experiences: “others were looking at me like I was an alien”

As her past learning experiences show, unlike Regina, who was mistreated because of her nationality, Darcy’s mixed ancestry was never an issue. In fact, she was in a more advantageous position for two obvious reasons. Firstly, as I have already said in the previous section, her father was Greek, she was born in Greece and her surname was also Greek and thus there were no obvious identification cues which would connect her to an identity of a ‘foreigner’, which was assigned to Regina by the teacher and the wider community. Secondly, because Darcy was almost ten years younger than Regina (she was born in 1993), the most heated debates in the public discourse around immigration from Albania had faded away by the time Darcy started school. Even though the differences in the two participants’ immigration history may have meant that Darcy was not subject to race-related mistreatment, Darcy too, was at the heart of potentially damaging ideologies in relation to her left-handedness.

The only thing which I think I have told you is about the fact that I am left handed and other people were looking at me like I was an alien (2) it was weird. Other than that, I've never felt any kind of racism because I come from Albania (5) and others didn't believe it [that she is from Albania]. (Life Story Interview, 19/11/2013)

Although her statement suggests that the fact that she was left handed did not really affect her, the excerpt does hint at potential issues related to the public perception of left-handedness as 'otherness' (Holliday, 2010). While it is important not to conflate Regina's and Darcy's experiences, it does appear that the potential to be seen as an "alien" was prominent in both these participants' life stories. Darcy did not say as much as Regina did about her early experiences, but there are clues in the above excerpt, in what it hints at, as well as in what it is silent about, which may have had some significance in shaping Darcy's story, even if she might not have wanted to share the details, let alone admit that being seen as 'alien' and 'weird' would bother her in any way. I will return to the discussion of possible links later.

What learners hold to be true about themselves appears to significantly influence their actions, motivations, attitudes and the goals they set for the future, as well as their position and relationship to the world (Mercer, 2011b). According to Darcy, in our life story interview, her overall academic background was successful. In primary school, she was a very good student "I was a very good student", in secondary, she "did quite well" and in high school she managed to pass with a very high grade in one of the top universities in Tirana; and actually started studying at the university at the same time which shows a certain level of confidence about herself and about what she can achieve. Especially during her secondary and high school years she acknowledged and projected herself as the student who never had to work

hard and yet did very well. As she said, she relies on her understanding in the class “I didn’t study just what I remembered from the lesson in the class”. Let me now present another interview excerpt with regards to her experience at the university in Tirana.

First time felt really good (4) but (4) you know students there (2) are (2) for example (3) most of them come from the countryside (3) not the capital of the city like me and there is easier to pass at a university so their level was very low level and actually (4) they shouldn’t be (3) it wasn’t fair (.) and I couldn’t stand this. Once the teacher asked something I stood up on the board to write the answer and the others were looking me like I was an alien. (Life Story Interview, 19/11/2013)

In the excerpt above, it is obvious that Darcy is distancing herself from the rest of her classmates. Particularly notable is her use of the word “alien” which differs quite significantly from how she used it when referring to other people’s perceptions of her left-handedness in the previous excerpt. In the former example, she was made feel ‘alien’ by others, whereas in this example, alienating herself from the majority is her deliberate act of distancing herself from the rest of the class. Darcy drew on her situated identity (Zimmerman, 1998) of a knowledgeable person; that is, she positioned herself as someone who knew the answer while the rest of her classmates did not, and therefore she alone belonged in that class, whereas those who did not know the answer and whose “level was very low” (and, in her mind, this seemed to be everyone else) “should not be” there. By labelling herself as “alien”, however, she has transformed the concept from one meaning ‘not ordinary’, ‘not normal’ or ‘weird’ (as may have been implied by others’ perception of her left-handedness) to ‘extraordinary’ and ‘superior’ (as implied by her in the current data transcript). Firm conclusions are certainly not warranted in the absence of more data, but juxtaposing these two cases of ‘looking like an alien’ does make one wonder whether Darcy’s

current positioning may in fact be a reaction to her past positioning by others, in other words, her desire to retell her story in her own terms. In fact, Darcy's effort to project her identity as someone who knows best and, by the same act, position others as less capable or knowledgeable, is visible throughout her data (i.e. from the way she talked about herself in interviews). Interestingly, however, the examples that she referred to as evidence of her superiority were typically grounded in assumptions and beliefs, rather than details, of other classmates' achievement (e.g. because "most of them come from the provinces", it is reasonable to expect that they are less qualified to be in the same class as her.). This further corroborates the suggestion that what an observer is witnessing in Darcy's account is her intentional (while not necessarily conscious) act of taking ownership of her own narrative. I will return to the implications that this narrative act may have had on her WTC in the actual English classes.

6.2.3 Encountering 'small failure' in English: "I was the best yet I didn't pass" but "I never had a good relationship with the English teachers"

Despite her successful academic background at school and her academic achievement at university, which are likely to have given her a sense of self-confidence, her language learning experiences were not equally successful. Actually, although she was also a very good student at English (from what she said), she failed her First Certificate in English (FCE) examination and, as a result, gave up and did not try again. In her own words:

I was about to give exams for the FCE but (.) I had a small failure (3) I think first year of high school (2) I don't remember (.) I was the best in my FCE class and yet I didn't pass I failed one part I don't remember in which part. In

Albania, I continued English at school and I remember that my teacher shouted at me a lot because I was the best in my class yet I failed (Life Story Interview, 19/11/2013).

In past psychological research, this phenomenon of protecting one's self-worth has often been discussed in connection with self-handicapping strategies that learners typically deploy to that end (cf. McCrea, 2008). When I asked her what her feelings were about this, she said: "I was lost (.) it was weird (.) after that I didn't try again because I was afraid of failing" (Life Story Interview, 19/11/13). As a successful student, Darcy was clearly used to successful experiences too. Therefore, it looks like this "small failure", as she called it, came out of the blue and suddenly all those accomplishments along with the self-image she had built for herself (such as 'the alien' in the sense of the best in the class), were at a great risk of being shattered. It is possible that this negative experience may have shaped her desire to avoid situations which would pose a serious challenge to her 'hero' narrative, as she, after all admits herself: "I didn't try again because I was afraid of failing". This already signals relevance to WTC, as it appears that protecting her narrative acquired a centre stage in her language learning efforts and posed a major obstacle to her WTC. Darcy's data indeed suggest such connections with self-handicapping strategies, as the following excerpt from Darcy's life story interview shows:

One of my teachers was fair but she was too good and I remember that she gave us one writing (.) the topic was how to keep fit every time the same topic and I didn't like the topic so (.) I never submitted it (2) I don't know but I never had a good relationship with the teachers of English (.) (Life Story Interview, 19/11/13).

The excerpt above suggests that the fact that she explicitly says “I never had a good relationship with the teachers of English” is actually the effect of her avoidance strategy. In that instance, Darcy seems to have adopted at least two avoidance strategies. Namely, *self-worth protection* and *self-handicapping*. Self-worth protection is a general strategy, in which, in the fear of failure, learners quit any effort under the assumption that not trying is the underlying factor rather than incompetence, (Mayerson & Rhodewalt 1988; Rhodewalt et al. 1991, Thompson et al. 1995) and indeed Darcy never tried to submit the assignment. Whereas, a self-handicapping behaviour involves the learner placing a real or imagined obstacle in order to have a ready excuse for any potential failure (Convighton, 1992; McCown & Johnson 1991). In that case, she blames the topic and the teacher “I never had a good relationship with the English teachers”. As can be seen in her own words, she found and described the teacher as “fair” and “too good” as a person. Despite the characteristics that she highlighted of a good teacher, that this one clearly possessed, she still dismisses her for not obvious reasons. After the last statement, I asked Darcy why she never had a good relationship with the English teachers and she said: “I never liked them and the same goes here at the university” (Life Story Interview, 19/11/13). This shows that there is some sort of discrepancy in her account. This could have happened as another effect of her avoidance strategies, that no matter how good the teacher is, Darcy will still display a face-saving attitude by complete withdrawal to protect the possibility of something going wrong and losing face, simply because if this happened she will no longer be able to display the identity she has built, that of the good learner who has done so much with such a little effort.

Having observed Darcy's behaviour in class (for which I will talk more extensively in the next section), I did not want to push her any further to elaborate on this statement. After her last statement, it was clear that she would not tell me anything more. Although within this limited data set is difficult to provide the reasons why Darcy never had a good relationship with her English teachers, the general tendency seems to be her effort to protect her self-image.

In the next section, I will discuss the impact of these ideologies in her current WTC behaviour. From the discussion so far, it seems that the identity of the successful learner has contributed to Darcy's efforts to protect her self-worth and employ specific self-handicapping/avoidance strategies that would redirect the blame for lack of success away from herself (in order to protect her image of herself as a successful English language learner).

6.2.4 Current language learning experiences: The teacher "is nice, no irony" but "what is the point?"

Having shown some of her past learning experiences and the impact they had on Darcy's learning experiences, it is clear that as Darcy has created a sort of a protecting wall, unfortunately at her own expense, which she kept carrying at the current classroom as well. As I have mentioned before, Darcy shared the same classroom with Regina, however, she displayed a totally different WTC behaviour. In fact, Darcy's classroom behaviour appeared to be challenging on many occasions towards the teacher, and even towards her classmates, by displaying lack of attention, engagement, motivation and especially with regards to her language choice. She

almost never volunteered to read or answer the teacher's questions in exercises, unless they were completing exercises and students had to give answers in turns. For example, the teacher was giving instructions and the students had to listen carefully, Darcy was not only paying no attention and had no interest, she was also playing with her classmates' sunglasses, and the teacher had to comment on that incident and this was a general tendency in Darcy's behaviour. Particularly, the teacher said: "Darcy, leave the glasses down dear (.) give them to S3". In that particular instance, Darcy remained silent and the teacher continued and said: "that's it, bravo, that's it" (Classroom observation, 5/11/2013). Being able to see her face and how she reacted (smiling with a certain degree of irony in her face), that silent moment in what it hints as well as in what is silent about, showed some sort of dissatisfaction with the situation she was deliberately in. Silence itself can be employed as a means of communication and, in that moment, Darcy appeared to make use of silence as a strategy, most likely out of her desire to protect a positive face (King, 2013).

Another aspect of Darcy's challenging classroom behaviour in class was her rather persistent and intentional use of Greek instead of English at any point in time. While the use of L2 was certainly preferred, the use of L1 was also welcome (evident in the teacher's interactions with the majority of students) as long as it was used appropriately (Atkinson, 1993), most likely based on the assumption that the use of L1 supports the development of the second language (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). For example, there were many instances when the teacher deliberately used Greek to explain the meaning of a particular word, or when she wanted to help a student who was struggling to find the appropriate one. In both cases, this suggests that the use of L1 should not be prohibited, but neither should it be actively encouraged as a

substitute for L2 learning (Swain & Lapkin, 2000), but rather the teacher should find a balance. Despite the fact that excessive use of L1 was not allowed, otherwise that balance would have been lost, Darcy made extensive use of this single option in an effort to challenge the teacher. It should be noted here, that students who deliberately decide to join this particular institution are subsequently expected to engage in English interactions as part of their studies. When I conducted a stimulated recall interview with Darcy, in an effort to shed more light on her intentional use of L1, despite being aware of that factor, Darcy did not seem to embrace the idea of using English more often than Greek ascribing this absenteeism to the context.

When I speak with someone who does not speak Greek I **can** speak very **confidently** but **here** I know that they speak Greek and so what is the point (.) It's not that I am shy (.) I just can't do it. (.) (Stimulated recall interview, 06/11/2013)

In the above excerpt, Darcy tried to emphasise two things. Firstly, that she has the ability, the knowledge to speak in English and secondly, that she is very confident. This distinction between an imaginary context, where Greek is not spoken and therefore English would be necessary to communicate, and this context “here” is almost like she is trying to transfer the blame from her to the university, as if the context is the reason why does not trigger her to use English. In all the other classes, using Greek could be acceptable to a certain extent due to the degree of difficulty of field modules. But, in the English class it was almost obligatory for all students to use English, or at least try, since that was the purpose, to be able by the end of the course to develop their conversational skills. Therefore, a greater emphasis was given to speaking skills. Even though Darcy knew that from the beginning, she was the only

student who insisted on using only L1, despite the teacher's constant efforts to remind her that she should be using English.

Before I present data from various incidents that took place in a typical day in class, I would like first to give some background information on what was happening in the classroom. The teacher and students were discussing today's topic, which was about 'spying on other people'. Probably the teacher wanted to provide the context as well as ideas for the next task, the first role-play with Merkel and Obama. The excerpt below shows a sample conversation between teacher and students regarding this topic. Among the various questions the teacher asked in order to elicit answers from the students, she asked the following:

Teacher A: How did Angela Merkel feel about it [about spying on her].

S1: Pissed off (3)

Teacher A: [explained the difference between American and British word 'pissed'. Approximately for a minute]. So (.) How did she feel?

S1: sad

Teacher A: why sad? Why did she bother?

S2: Because she thought they were friends

Teacher A: ok

S3: she trusted him (2)

Teacher A: ok she trusted the guy (2) What does she have to hide (4) in your opinion?

Ss: a lot (.) a lot

Darcy: /// [Darcy was saying something in Greek (xxx) and actually tried to interrupt the other students while talking]

Teacher A: **Darcy? Either you speak in English or you stop talking.**

(Classroom Observation 04/11/13)

This excerpt clearly shows the teacher's efforts to create opportunities for conversation in the target language, which seemed to have worked as students provided possible explanations in this specific question. Darcy, not only did not

participate in the conversation, but also, in a way, tried to obstruct the flow by speaking in L1 and even worse interrupted the students who were trying to. Which in fact, highlights another example of her developed avoidance strategies, probably because, similarly to her past learning experiences, if she would take part she would eliminate the image she wished to project to others, in that case her classmates, as the student who has done really well throughout her educational experiences. Therefore, she prefers to withhold any effort for the sake of her image and at the expense of her own benefit. However, this seemed to have annoyed the teacher to a certain extent. As a result, the teacher had to comment on Darcy's language choice probably for the sake of the conversation in order to keep the flow and possibly 'protect' those who invested on that conversation. From the teacher's statement, it is clear that any kind of interruption as a part of a conversation would have been acceptable as long as it was in English, but using Greek in these moments would probably have inhibited the efforts she has made to create the conditions for L2 practice; unless Darcy had tried and had been willing to make the effort like her classmates, which would have been certainly appreciated by the teacher (e.g. in the case of Regina). If Darcy had at least tried, the amount of English and Greek might have not mattered because they teacher would have helped her. On the contrary, there are more examples of this avoiding tendency in her behaviour. After a couple of minutes (approximately two minutes) students asked for a break. When they came back the teacher gave them about five minutes to do the reading for discussion. When they finished, the teacher started asking questions again, probably for the same reasons, to create opportunities for L2 practice. The following excerpt is another example of Darcy's involvement in the conversation. The teacher asked the following:

Teacher A: Can you name any famous spies?

Ss: Mata Chari

Teacher A: Mata Chari!!! Mata Chari was a spy when?

S1: nineteen (.) ninety

Darcy: /// (□) [in Greek]

Teacher A: **You speak a language [Greek] I do not understand (.) so (.) I told you something before (.) don't let me repeat it (.)**

(Classroom Observation, 04/11/13)

The above statements were very common in the teacher's vocabulary repertoire in her interactions with Darcy. Darcy's challenging behaviour seemed to have annoyed the teacher from the way she said it. The chosen excerpts so far are actually a small sample of what happened in the class in a single day as this was happening very often. As can be seen, the teacher mainly commented on Darcy's involvement when Darcy not only used Greek, but also when she was interrupting other students who tried to avoid using Greek. It was clear that Darcy would do anything but speak in English in order to challenge the teacher in every opportunity. Although she knew that this was something that the teacher did not approve of she kept doing it.

When the first role-play took place, Darcy did not want to participate, which was clear because, as I have already said, apart from Regina, all students had the choice but nobody seemed to be interested in taking advantage of it, therefore, the teacher had to choose and Darcy was not chosen by the teacher probably for two main reasons. The teacher somehow knew from the general tendency in Darcy's behaviour that she would not want to participate, and even if she did, she would use Greek and as a result, the whole effort from the teacher to help those who needed and wanted to learn, would be unsuccessful. It is interesting to note here, that when the first role-

play started, as the participants were talking Darcy, tried three times to interrupt the flow again. The following except shows what happened and how the teacher reacted to that:

[The students were acting the role-playing]

Darcy: /// Miss, Can I ask something? [in Greek]

Teacher A: ///nope.

[She kept talking in Greek, commenting and popping in many times while the students were talking (xxx). After a couple of minutes]

Darcy: /// (xxx) [in Greek].

Teacher A: **Darcy? you had your chance to be within the conversation (.)**

Darcy: Miss? /// (xxx)

Teacher A: /// **Darcy? (.) out (.) the next time you speak (.)**

(Classroom Observation, 05/11/13)

As I have already mentioned, several role-plays took place throughout my classroom observations. Apart from Regina who participated in all of them, for the rest of the students the teacher had to choose. It is interesting to mention here, that Darcy was never chosen to participate in any of the role-plays, probably because of the above-mentioned reasons. With the same methodological approach and objective, the teacher chose another role-play to promote oral fluency. A speaking task, relatively similar to the role-plays they have done, but with a slight difference. The students had to act a dialogue in dyads, therefore, it was obligatory for all of them to participate. Darcy was chosen by her pair but she did not want to stand up and act the dialogue. However, as I said, she did not have a choice. The topic was about 'neighbours'. Now, let me present the only except from Darcy's communicative behaviour in class.

S4: Hello. How are you?

Darcy: Fine thanks

S4: I am working in the garden (5) I my plants do you want to help me

Darcy: Yes of course

(Classroom Observation, 10/11/13)

As can be seen from the above excerpt Darcy's statements are very short and simple. And it was not her poor vocabulary repertoire, as I have already mentioned, her academic background was successful. It is clear that she did not want to participate, probably for the above-mentioned reasons, to protect her self-image. Even if she knew what to say in that particular conversation, she would not spend a great deal of time trying, as that would put at risk the image that she wanted to project. It is also obvious that she did not want to take advantage of the opportunity she was given, probably because she could not see it that way. In addition, from the overall data that I have presented so far and the general tendency in her attitude, it is obvious that Darcy's experience in the current classroom seems to have provided her with little sense of enjoyment, compared to her earlier experiences of learning English. This might explain the fact that many times she appeared to take no responsibility for her learning and challenged the teacher, despite the fact that she did that in a course that would form the foundation for the rest. In addition, it looks like Darcy did not manage to establish a good relationship with her teacher, as Regina did, and, in fact, she never tried to, since she kept challenging the teacher at every opportunity. Having observed all these a couple of times, my field note entry says 'why is she so reluctant?' A number of cues in the data point at Darcy's negative attitude towards the teacher. From the general tendency in her classroom behaviour, it looked like Darcy did not really like her English teacher. The following statements, from our subsequent

stimulated recall interview, show how Darcy felt about her current teacher. In her own words, she said:

Because of teacher's behaviour towards the other classmates (2) and maybe I showed her my dislike (2) I didn't like (.) I didn't want to attend (1) I didn't want to speak in English on purpose (.) I remember I was speaking more in the past (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 12/11/2013).

Although Darcy ascribed her lack of engagement and withdrawal from any kind of communication in English due to the teacher's behaviour towards her classmates as the main first reason why she did not like this teacher, and admitted that she may have shown her that she does not like her, it seems from the discussion so far that the teacher might have nothing to do with this. In fact, even if the teacher is "too good" it would not change the fact that Darcy will act on threats to her self-worth and actually she might be aware of a real threat. For example, if others see her as an excellent student, that she always believed she was, and if she fails to meet the teacher's or the students' expectations then she will no longer possess that identity, and therefore it is much easier for her to simply blame others (i.e. the teacher) for her behaviour in the classroom, which in actual fact, looks like her desire to protect her self-worth rather than her response to a disliked teacher. Therefore, Darcy almost created this not very successful relationship with the teacher, which certainly seems to be a side effect but not the underlying factor. However, in our subsequent stimulated recall interview she reported that she did not have any issues with the delivery of the lesson or the course in general: "the delivery was more than fine and the course was fine". The following excerpts show at least another two reasons which, according to Darcy, guided her classroom behaviour:

At the beginning she told us that she doesn't care if we participate in the classroom (.) <eer> (.) because (.) this happened (.) I am the kind of person who likes talking either in English or Greek (.) I did it all the time I like to butt in suddenly (.) and she thought that I did it on purpose and because I wanted an extra grade and then she said that I do not care if you talk or not in the classroom (.) I only care about the assignment and the tests (.) **then** (.) she told us about an extra bonus (2) that classroom participation counts towards our grade (1) what was that? **DECIDE** [this was for the teacher] I didn't like that (.) I felt like I was in the primary school (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 12/11/13).

She further added that based on what the teacher said she "I didn't want to participate" and incident where the teacher asked her to go out, without however, stating what she actually might have done.

I remember once she asked me to go out like I was in high school and this happened just because I talked a bit (.) after that I changed my attitude even more (.) but I had to go out (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 12/11/2013).

Overall, in the above excerpts, Darcy admitted very explicitly her unwillingness to expend any more effort and there seemed to be at least three reasons why Darcy did not like her English teacher. Firstly, it was because (according to her) she did not like the teacher's behaviour towards the rest of her classmates. Another reason is because of the teacher's confusing expectations, which looks like they led some kind of frustration for Darcy, and finally, because the teacher once asked her to go out, which probably made her re-live her past experiences when she was at school. However, there is no evidence in my field notes that the teacher somehow displayed any inappropriate behaviour towards Darcy's classmates. On the contrary even unconsciously, it was Darcy who on numerous occasions inhibited her classmates' learning. The course outline, which all students receive, had very clear outcomes and

finally, as became evident from the data, Darcy actually challenged the teacher a lot. Although she did not participate (most of the students failed their mid-term exam, but Darcy passed), she passed TOEFL and moved to the next level of English. Interestingly though, she said that she does not have a negative attitude towards English, despite her current and past experiences (L2 failure). In her own words she said, “I like the language (.) my problem is always with the English teachers!” (Life Story Interview, 19/11/13).

This was the second time she mentioned it. Although I never received as full an answer as I was hoping for, it was clear, since my first attempt in the same interview, that Darcy did not want to elaborate further on that and therefore I did not want to push her; based on my feelings of what I had seen in the class and during our first interview, somehow, I knew that she would not want to share. Darcy’s challenging behaviour was not only my own observation. It seems that the teacher had the same point of view when I asked her about Darcy. Let me now present an excerpt which shows what the teacher has said:

Actually when you asked me about personality of my students if plays a role that would be one of the persons I do not count the personality because she has a very negative one (.) she is very sarcastic (.) she thinks she know everything **but she doesn’t** and actually I made a great effort to include her (.) I mean it was not the first time I ever had to have such a student but these are really hard to include in class because you do not like them and if they were up to you (.) you would kick them out of the class but you can’t and the student must not realise that is how you feel about him or her however, as you said she wasn’t very talkative and from point onwards (.) she was in a class that was very strong that they wanted to participate in general and also they were very friendly to each other **except for her** she was sort of an outcast the whole class in general so the reason what she didn’t actively involved her she didn’t want to I tried to involve her somehow but to tell you the truth I left her to her own devices because I was afraid that I would have

the opposite results If I pushed too hard but definitely not a likeable person. Her level of English was **a lot** better than Regina (.) a lot better but and most probably she thought that she deserved to have been placed to a higher level maybe she felt that wasn't for her level (.) (Follow-up Interview with Teacher A, 03/08/2015)

When I subsequently asked her about Darcy's repeated efforts to use Greek in class the teacher said:

<Yeah> that is exactly the student personality who wants to challenge you (.) who wants to show look I am the bright person here I am the leader not the teacher and she did that without (xxx) (Follow-up interview with Teacher A, 03/08/15)

As became evident, the teacher indeed confirmed their not very successful relationship. Based on her knowledge of this context and Darcy's challenging classroom behaviour, it is clear that she could clearly see this kind of arrogance in Darcy's behaviour, which obviously she did not approve of. Indeed, it looks like Darcy sometimes displayed some kind of arrogant behaviour probably because she thought that she had a privilege that others did not. She was also studying at one of the top universities in Tirana and she was accepted there because she had undergone exams and passed with a very high grade. So, the process was different from the one that was followed at the university in Greece. Therefore, she was probably feeling superior and did not bother to interact with her classmates, and she may have not felt that she had to prove something in the class. In addition, as the teacher said, she might have thought that due to her superiority and her abilities she does not belong to that low level of students. However, as the teacher said, she made an effort to include her, but once she realised that Darcy simply did not want to, she drew on her experience as a teacher of what young people are like and, based on that, she decided that is

sometimes best to let them decide for themselves. It was obvious that Darcy did not want to be included, maybe because she felt that there was nothing common with the people in this context. Consequently, the teacher did not invest as much as she did for Regina and, as can be seen, language level was not a factor at all, it was not because she did not want to, but simply because there was nothing more to do than she already have done. Moreover, the data shows that there is some sort of wisdom in the part of the teacher that she knows she has the power to help students to learn English and create the conditions that will be fruitful for their language learning; however, there is a certain point where she can go and that point seems to be exceeded when that relationship of give and take from both sides has not been established. In fact, that is the kind of relationship that teachers need to see when they have invested for the benefit of their students. In other words, in return for your efforts you just need to see that there is some sort of investment on the part of the student as well. However, if there continues to be no investment and, in fact, it is even the opposite, the kind of arrogant challenging behaviour, then you are probably not prepared to go the full length to invest in and help the student because you can see there is not much you can do. In Darcy's case, the teacher clearly did not see Darcy as someone who does contribute to that relationship and therefore it was very difficult for the teacher to do anything more, because Darcy seemed to tangibly deny that kind of relationship. In addition, the teacher admitted that she did not want to push her because that would probably bring the opposite results. Indeed, Darcy reported an example about her mother, which shows that she is an argumentative person and she will do the opposite of what she is being told. She said: "Actually (.) I never listen to my mother, whatever she says I do the opposite". She also said that she doesn't know why she does it,

maybe because they are alike (“I don’t know (2) maybe because we are the same”)
(Life Story Interview, 19/11/13).

Although Darcy ascribed her lack of communicative behaviour to the teacher, even when the teacher changed, her communicative behaviour did not alter. There is evidence in my data, from my interviews with other teachers, who commented in a similar way. When the first semester ended and Darcy moved on to the next level of English courses, I remember sitting with some colleagues and chatting about students’ progress and I could not help but asking how she is doing. The teacher rather dissatisfied with Darcy’s classroom participation, confirmed my initial speculations. It appeared that even though she did like the teacher (as she admits below), she displayed the same behaviour in class which, in accordance to what she has said before (“I never had a good relationship with the English teachers/ my problem is always with the English teachers”), suggests a general negative attitude towards English teachers. This is what she said about her new teacher when I asked her during a break:

I like the teacher (.) s/he is nice, no irony (.) s/he doesn’t correct whatever we say and he doesn’t interrupt me (.) but the other teacher interrupted us (.) S/he let us speak (.) S/he is better and pleasant and it’s important to see a smile from the teacher.

Despite all the reasons why she may have liked the teacher, she displayed exactly the same WTC behaviour. This suggests that all those ideologies that Darcy was bringing with her may be very powerful in influencing her, despite the fact that she may have liked the teacher there is something more powerful that influences her

behaviours. It is interesting to mention here, that a note from my reflective journal says:

Even her answers to my questions show her UNWTC. She could have definitely said more but maybe she did not trust me, as it looks like, she has the same attitude towards all English teachers and I am an English teacher too (Field Note Entry, 19/11/13).

It seems that the identity of the gifted learner that Darcy is trying to project in her accounts is associated with the identity in which she thinks of herself as the best and the identity which she also wants others to associate with her, which in reality clearly contradicts the actual identity she was manifesting in class (i.e. the dodger). In the classroom, she mostly drew on her identity as a good student, yet she had not specified any achievement goals that would reflect this kind of identity, apart from the mid-term exam result. Despite her overall successful academic background, language learning identity goals are absent from Darcy's manifestations. She might have realised her inadequate skills to engage in English (maybe she realised that after the failure in the exam) in any kind of communicative activity and it is likely that she perceived her engagement in class as threatening the perceived identity she wanted to project, and hence she may have decided to completely withdraw participation because the fear of not fulfilling the course requirements would be a threat to the identity of the gifted learner.

6.2.5 Summary

I described Regina using a prototype of a 'wounded fighter'. That is, the wounds that she experienced in her early learning years and the negativity that she had to face as a 'foreigner', significantly shaped her response to her learning: she was

determined to 'show them' that she 'made it'. Darcy, it seems, also experienced 'wounds' in her past experience, but rather than a fighter, she could be best cast as a 'wounded avoider'. Although I am much less able to substantiate the claim about Darcy's woundedness with explicit narrative accounts of how she was treated because of her left-handedness, the very silence in her overall dataset in the context of significant cues she offered in one of her accounts adds more weight to, rather than diminishes, the possible interpretation I have developed with regards to her WTC.

Darcy tended to project herself as a gifted student who has done very well without having to work hard and relied on her understanding in the class, and the importance of this image may be understood as her response to change the 'alien' narrative in her lifestory, from one who is 'abnormal' in her biology, to one who is 'extraordinary' in her academic ability. Overall, she had a successful academic background apart from one incident, when she failed an important exam in her English, which, although did not feature very prominently in her accounts when she talked about it as a 'small' failure, the fact that she did not want to try again along with her current classroom behaviour suggests that this might have had a huge impact on her learning at the expense of maintaining a positive self-image: she believed (or, perhaps even more importantly, needed to believe) that she was a wonderful English speaker who has now failed a test and that, to her, may have signalled a threat – evidence that she may not have been as good as she had thought she was. Thus, instead of learning the lesson and trying again and speaking more, she invested her energy into protecting her narrative in which she was heavily invested, using every available strategy, including projecting negative attitudes towards foreign language use, avoiding communication, blaming English teachers, and the like. In other words,

it seems that Darcy became to herself 'too smart to fail' and therefore avoided every opportunity where such a risk of failure became possible, which included WTC-relevant opportunities in her English class.

One can only speculate about the many complex reasons for such different 'shades' of WTC for Regina and Darcy. What, however, becomes obvious is the presence in Regina's case and the absence in the case of Darcy, of the kind of transformative relationship that has the power to change one's WTC trajectory. Darcy, unlike Regina, does not appear to have experienced the 'then I came to Athens' phase of meeting a significant other (such as a teacher), who would 'know her' in the same way that Regina did. The reasons are likely to be complex and coming from both sides of the possible relationship dynamic, that is, Darcy as well as the significant other(s). For example, it is quite possible that what was a 'transformative relationship' for Regina became, by its very nature, a damaging one for Darcy. In other words, Regina's preferential treatment in Darcy's class because of the affinity developed between Regina and her teacher may have reinforced a sense in Darcy that she was not the best and therefore strengthened her need to build an even better protection for herself. However, the close relationship of Regina and her teacher may have equally prevented the teacher herself from really 'seeing' Darcy for who she was and what she was trying to do.

In essence, what the data discussed so far, for both Regina and Darcy, do allow me to conclude is the clearly relational nature of WTC, the connection which allows the emergence of affinity around people's cherished identities and valued practices that go beyond the nature or institutional identities (cf. Gee, 2000). Being

positioned as an ‘alien’ by others is hard if not impossible to overcome without the discursive relational intervention shown in Regina’s data. Darcy’s data show that being an ‘alien’ by choice, that is, projecting to oneself the image of superiority as Darcy has done (quite probably for understandable reasons), may lead to building such a strong barricade of avoidance strategies that makes the relational intervention itself difficult. This is not only because Darcy’s avoidance and self-handicapping strategies are, by their very nature, deployed to resist such relationships, but also because they may not be easily seen by relevant significant others for what those strategies are. Thus, those whose relational intervention is likely to be needed the most (i.e. in this case, the teacher’s), are either not able to recognise it or may not be willing to invest into such a relationship. Darcy’s data in relation to her current language learning experiences make both these options a real possibility.

6.3 Aria: The Interaction avoider

6.3.1 Background

Aria was a 22-year-old student from Libya who has been living in Greece for the past two and a half years. She has an older brother and a younger sister. Her mother was a housewife who devoted her life to raise her children and her father was an official for the Libyan embassy in Greece, which was the reason why they came to Greece in the first place. When I met Aria, she was in her second year of studies at the time of my data collection and she aimed to study Business Administration. Similar to Regina, Aria too had started relatively early at the college in order to attend a series of English courses which was essential for her continuation to her desired programme of study, since all classes are taught in English. Her native language was Arabic. Even though she had been living in Greece for the past two and a half years, due to her

father's job commitments, Aria did not manage to pick up the language. During our life story interview (21/11/13), she said: “no (2) but (3) I understand some”, meaning that she does not speak Greek but she does understand some of the basics.

Due to her father's job, Aria experienced the international setting many times from an early age. However, as I will endeavour to illustrate in the next section, where I will be talking about her past learning experiences, multicultural experiences were part of her life, part of who she is, hence, she does not seem to embrace these experiences in ways that could be beneficial for her. On the contrary, she seems to 'blame' these experiences for not 'making it' which suggests another example, similar to Darcy, of developing avoidance strategies.

6.3.2 Past learning experiences: Multiculturalism on heat

Aria started school in Libya at the age of four, instead of the age of six, where normally all students start the first grade, because her mother was teaching her the letters at home. Therefore, she considered herself as “so smart”. In her own words, she said “I was so smart till fourth but from fourth to fifth (3) I lost my way” (Life Story, 21/11/13) and she thought that until the fourth grade, all of which took place in her home country. The above statement from Aria's interview, clearly shows the picture that Aria has painted for herself. She used to consider herself as an intelligent person, since she started learning the alphabet from the age of four, which is quite difficult as students usually learn the letters at the age of six when they start first grade, and to Aria this is a proof for her cleverness and likely to contribute positively to her future aspirations. However, as can be seen, she does not feel that anymore. In fact, she believes that she “lost her way”, which suggests some sort of self-

consciousness of her later limited achievements. Interestingly though, that particular period of her life she mentions, “from fourth to fifth”, was the period in which her father’s first transfer took place and the whole family had to travel to Malta. Let me now present an interview excerpt as a sort of preview of what happened to Malta:

One in Malta my dad was there (2) but (2) in Libyan school (3) but something different from Libya they putting like English from the first level an (2) that’s something which make me nervous because I didn't know the language (.) I know nothing (3) but my dad was the ambassador (2) I had no idea but they were helping me (4) in English. (Life Story Interview, 21/11/13)

Even though she had the privilege to study in a Libyan school in Malta, she still blames this transfer as the underlying factor for not doing that well, which shows that she clearly did not embrace the idea of being in another country or the fact that at least she was in a Libyan school. For Aria, it was still ‘another country’. Interestingly though, she does not mention any race-related issues, like in Regina’s case, probably because the identity of an ‘immigrant’ was not the case for Aria in that particular context, simply because in stark contrast with the ‘others’ in Regina’s early experiences, Aria’s social identity was more advantageous, possibly due to her father’s status.

Another important aspect of this excerpt is that, Aria, being familiar with another educational system, encountered difficulties in relation to her language learning experiences, English. As she reported, her classmates had already started learning English since the first grade, whereas Aria in her home country did not, simply because children learn English, as in most countries, at the beginning of their third grade. Therefore, it looks like Aria was not only unhappy with the transfer, but

she also had to deal with another unexpected issue, learning English for the first time in a class with a group of students whose level of English was much better than hers. This shows the uneasy tendencies in Aria's language learning experience, in that case, her lack of knowledge in English. In addition, the fact that she was helped due to her father's status was not helpful at all, as I wish to illustrate in the next section, in fact, it seems that the 'problem' was not solved; and even though she does mention it as "something different" which made her "feel nervous" that 'problem' with English does not seem to prominently feature in Aria's early experiences, because when I asked her what her feelings and thoughts were when she was in Malta, she talked about her family instead of her unpleasant position in class:

The good points if you are with your family (3) ok (3) you missing your grandmother, grandfather some friends but it's ok (3) I was with my family (3) I was so little and I didn't have many friends (4) I was ok (3) I didn't mind. (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013)

The above interview excerpt highlights the importance of family for Aria. That since she was with her family everything else did not really matter. Another interesting aspect of these experiences is that, although she stayed there for two years, she did not pick up the language, and socially, she did not make any friends, both of which could have helped her to improve her linguistic competence in English or other languages that are spoken in Malta, and possibly boost her self-confidence in her interactions with speakers of other languages. Aria and her family stayed in Malta for only two years and then they went back to Libya until the beginning of her high school years. Her father had to go to Egypt, where the whole family stayed for one and half years. Staying in this country was not a problem for her because they share the same language and culture. In her own words, she said: "In Egypt, we spend a

year and a half. (2) actually (3) it wasn't no problem (4) we have the same language, culture (.)” (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013).

After Egypt, the family moved to Ukraine, where they stayed for four years.

The following interview excerpt is a recollection of Aria's experiences in Ukraine:

In Ukraine (2) we spend 4 years there (3) they have a Libyan school (4) so I went to a Libyan school (3) but (3) I was had a small problem with the teachers because they are not Libyan (2) but from other countries (2) so we cannot communicate (2) we can't understand (3) they are not Libyan but they teach Libyan (3) you know (2) in Libya there are many schools but there [in Ukraine] (3) there is only one school you have to study there (3) you cannot choose (2) and you know (2) in Ukraine we tried an English school but they told me that you have to be from the beginning. (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013)

Similar to her previous experiences in Malta, Aria, again attended a Libyan school. However, again this experience seems to have provided her with little enjoyment, this time because of the teachers' non-nativeness. Having no other option for a Libyan school, Aria tried to attend an English school which did not work out for obvious reasons – her lack of linguistic competence in English – which still existed as after Malta, when she went back to Libya, she did not study English. This shows that although she has been in an unpleasant position before with regards to her English competence, the 'lesson' has not been learnt and as a result she is found in the exact same position again, just a few years later. The following interview excerpts describes that indeed her second contact with English was in Ukraine:

My first contact was in Malta (3) I have no idea (2) even the letters (3) but they were helping me as I told you (3) but (3) In Arabic and other courses I

was ok (3) I do my job (2) but in English (2) no! Then second contact with English was in Ukraine (3) before Ukraine nothing about English (2) so, I started the letters only (2) small things (3) a few words (.) (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013)

The above excerpt suggests Ukraine as a turning point for realising that she has to start learning English for her own sake since every time that seemed to be the issue. From the data so far, it is clear that, like Darcy, Aria may have constructed a particular self-image in which she considered herself as the person who is intelligent and is doing well. However, there are at least two events which seem to fade away that picture of hers. The first took place in Malta, where she entered the classroom context having no clue about English, and the second in Ukraine, where she was actually, and understandably, rejected access to an English school. It is encouraging though that she acknowledges the fact she does not do well anymore “I lost my way”, hence, she does not seem to take the initiatives and do something for it. In other words, and similar to Darcy, Aria shows to have developed some kind of avoidance strategies in order to protect her self-worth (Tompson et al. 1995) as the student who started school a lot younger than others because she was “smart” and possibly as the learner whose multicultural experiences should have provided a great deal of intellectual and experiential knowledge.

The last important aspect I wish to discuss in this section, is Aria’s inactive social life. Even though during our interview she talked about so many life events she has experienced, she never mentioned or included a memorable experience (e.g. something related to friends, enjoyment). When I asked her about the potential benefits of travelling to so many places, throughout her life, she said: “Well, yeah (3)

it sounds good from right (5) in left it's bad (4) this going to have positives and negatives (4)" (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013).

Although it is difficult to predict why Aria did not want to share any positive experiences, my suggestion is that probably she did not share because there were no positive ones, and the reason why they do not exist might be because simply she did not create them. It seems that Aria was so attached to her family and maybe the concept of 'family' that socialising or achieving academic goals were not her priority. From a linguistic perspective, she was privileged to visit and stay in different places, yet, she did not see it that way and she did not seem to embrace the perks of being a 'visitor' and take advantage of various opportunities for learning that would probably exist. Even though she does not embrace it, she did not seem to have a negative attitude towards the international community, since there is no single statement which points towards this. This finding seems quite puzzling, based on the assumption that if she had a positive attitude she would pick up the language, socialise and make friends and try to become a part of the community in order to enjoy her life and create positive memories in the place she was. In the next section, I wish to discuss the impact of her past language learning experiences in her current classroom context and in her WTC.

6.3.3 Current language learning experiences: Victim of a false cognition

In the previous section, I provided an overview of Aria's multicultural experiences. It is clear that from an early age she has been exposed to the international setting, hence, she did not embrace it in ways that could be beneficial for her. In addition, as her past experiences revealed she never had a chance to learn

English properly and the constant movements from place to place were not the underlying factor. My suggestion is that that it was more her avoidance of a face-threatening situation, in that case her limited linguistic competence, rather than her unwillingness to communicate. I would like now to look at her current language learning experiences, which show similar tendencies to her past learning experiences. As I have said previously, Aria started studying at the university because she and her family came to Greece due to her father's job commitments. She started learning English about two and a half years ago and she also had private tutoring at home. When Aria and her family arrived in Greece, she immediately enrolled in the university to attend a series of English courses in order to improve her English. By that time, she was already nineteen-years-old and with very limited exposure to English language learning. Understandably, therefore, she was unwilling to start learning English at this age, as she recollects in the following interview excerpt:

The exactly was in 19 years old (.) it was so late (.) actually I came to the school by force and I told to my dad no (.) no (.) I have no idea about English (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013)

Having no willingness to learn English, and probably because of the difficulties she would encounter, Aria failed in some of the English courses twice. One of these failures was at the current English course, which I observed as part of this research project, but not with the same teacher. Nevertheless, she acknowledges the fact that she should have learnt English at an earlier age in the following excerpt:

About English I have a negative experience (2) I wish I had (2) <um> (2) if the years (3) going back (2) I want to start English so early (3) from the beginning (.) (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013)

Despite the negative experiences in English, she seemed very regretful for not studying English properly. My guess is that this regret might have come because of the difficulties she encountered in English when she started at the university. The interview excerpt below demonstrates those feelings and the difficulties she encountered as a new EFL learner in this class:

You know (2) it's something (.) not wrong (3) umm (2) you lost idea (2) you lost something (3) because you just start you have to turn back from the beginning (3) but you start from the beginning so (3) it was like difficult the first year because the first time I studied English (3) I had no idea (4) just have some words (3) and (4) that's it. (Life Story Interview, 21/11/2013)

Indeed, in class Aria constantly avoided answering questions asked by the teacher, reading passages in the classroom or participating in any kind of communication activity either individual, pair or group work. She was a 'quiet' student who did not belong to any cluster of students and she was sitting alone in the first row. Many of my field notes concerning Aria's classroom behaviour show that she would not spend a great deal of time engaging with her peers, socialising or interacting with others, which did not only happen inside the classroom. In line with this, sometimes, I was watching her in the school yard sitting alone during the midday breaks, having her mobile phone for company and sometimes she did not even go out of the class. She stayed in class, alone and silent. Although sometimes there were other people in class who gave her 'opportunities for communication' and she could socialise if she wanted to, she actually never did. However, she seemed to be paying attention to the lesson, hence, she almost never raised her hand to talk, or ask any clarification questions, unless the teacher asked her a question. There were many

occasions when the teacher asked them to work in pairs or groups and that was the time when Aria asked the teacher clarification questions, maybe because in this way she would avoid interacting with others. Unlike Darcy, Aria did not display a challenging behaviour towards her teacher or her classmates and, interestingly, although her general tendencies have similarities with Darcy's behaviour in terms of participation, Aria did make the effort just a few times and mostly after encouragement from the teacher. For example, in this time the students had to read a text and find some missing words. The teacher started asking questions in order to elicit new vocabulary from the students:

Teacher B: So (2) What the investors were looking for? (2) looking for? looking for what guys?

Ss: Entr (.) entrepreneurs (.)

Teacher B: Entrepreneurs (.) ok (.)What is an entrepreneur (3)? Someone who hasn't talked? Aria? What is an entrepreneur? He is a what? A kind of (1)

Aria: umm (2) umm (14) a manager [very silently]

Teacher B: An owner of a?

Aria: Manager [little louder]

Teacher B: Of a mansion or?

Aria: Manager [louder]

Ss: She said manager [for Aria]

Teacher B: Uhh (.) an owner or a manager of what?

Aria: [silent]

(Classroom Observation, 31/10/13)

As can be seen from the excerpt above, even though she knew the answer, Aria would not make an attempt to answer a question unless the teacher asked her to; and when the teacher does call Aria, as "someone who hasn't talked" she seems to hesitate to give an answer to the question. In addition, the excerpt above points to something crucial in relation to the teacher's attitude towards Aria, that the teacher probably wanted to help her and involve her into the conversation for her own sake.

Indeed, the teacher did want to help Aria because Aria made that clear to the teacher when they met, as she revealed when I asked her about this episode in a SRI:

Because when I came first class (.) I told her (.) <um> (.) I lost two semesters (1) I want I want to improve my English I want to graduate as soon (.) so s/he's know (.) s/he's already know my story (.) and she (.) promised me to help me (.) and to improve my English (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 01/11/13)

Even though Aria asked for help and the teacher seemed willing to offer, most likely due to a deeper sense of affinity (Gee, 2000), based on common experiences (e.g. that of an international student), interactions, like the previous one, were very common between Aria and her teacher (excerpt with the word manager) and although she had an unsuccessful background in English and failed twice, she did not seem to engage in ways that would help her to improve, as she expressed to the teacher.

However, there was one instance, where she did. Before I present data from this classroom episode, I would like to provide the general context. While the teacher may have aimed for an L2 communicative task to promote oral fluency with increased student talking time, as can be seen, teacher-student turns are almost equal and TTT outweighs student's opportunities for L2 practice despite the fact that the majority of her questions are open-ended. The teacher was giving a lesson about geography, students and teacher were talking about various places on earth and then they talked about continents and they started talking about Arabic countries:

Teacher B: We have two words (.) Qatar and Lebanon (.) What are these?

Ss: Arabic countries.

Teacher B: Arabic countries (.) ok (.) in your groups (.) What do you know about these two countries? In your groups (.) in pairs (.) two minutes (2) any

kind of information that you can give me (.) **In English** [students are working in pairs but Aria is on her own and she asks the teacher about the kind of information she needs to say – this lasted 2 minutes]

Teacher B: Ok (.) yes [another student speaks] (1m) someone else? Any ideas? In terms of climate? Aria? How would you describe the climate? What kind of weather? Have you been to Qatar or Lebanon?

Aria: No:

Teacher B: You haven't? (.)

Aria: Lebanon yes

Teacher B: Lebanon yes (.) How's the weather like there?

Aria: Umm (3) they have (.) umm (4)

Teacher B: Is it hot? Is it cold?

Aria: No (.) it's between (.) it's not cold

Teacher B: Ok (.) it's kind of average. How do we call this?

Ss: Temperate climate

Teacher B: Where would you put them in the map? Are they part of Europe? Are they part of Africa? Near what other countries?

Aria: It's near from <eer> (.) and far from turkey <eer> (.)

Teacher B: Yes (.) Turkey near Turkey yes (.) Other countries around? [other students spoke and the teacher said let her speak – for Aria]

Aria: Arabic countries

Teacher B: Arabic countries? What other Arabic countries do we know?

Ss: [say various countries]

Aria: Syria (5) **no** (.) It's far from Egypt [Egypt someone said Egypt]

Teacher B: Ok excellent. Would you like to add something Stacey? [she then said something (25) but Aria didn't agree]

Aria: No (.) it's different it's different the democratic or (.) <um> (.) the Islamic country so Qatar is Islamic country and Lebanon <um> (.) they have (6) like Libya and Saudi Arabia and (xxx) in Emirates they are Islamic countries but (.) Egypt, Tunisia um Morocco these another countries they are like un (xxx) not democratic (.) I mean (.) other religious like a Christian (.) and (xxx) yes.

Teacher B: Ok excellent. Brilliant. Thank you very much.

(Classroom Observation, 05/12/13)

In the long excerpt above, we can clearly see Aria's interaction with the teacher and the amount of talk. The person whose general tendency was to avoid, in any kind of interaction, broke that silence probably because it was something she knew and she was familiar with. It was the moment where transportable identity

(Zimmerman, 1998) became relevant to her interactional context and suddenly, all those negative influences those anxieties were not important anymore. What seems to be important is creating an interactional space in which students' transportable identities can be invested. This points to something crucial on how transportable identity is negotiated interactionally in an L2 exchange. This shows that Aria does not feel an 'outsider' anymore, but she places herself as a member of the group discussion. Once Aria had identified which of her resources, in that case some knowledge of Africa, was valuable in this context, she was able to reduce the power of imbalance between herself and her interlocutors and speak with greater confidence, which has a resemblance with Norton's (2000) study about immigrant women.

In addition, in this excerpt, and similar to Regina's case, we can clearly see how the teacher aided that fruitful conversation by drawing on Aria's identity as a knowledgeable and experienced person of the African context. As can be seen, the teacher invokes her social identity and makes it relevant to the classroom context which facilitated her WTC behaviour. This important finding points to the relational nature of L2 WTC. The data here suggests that it is not only the student who may make his or her identity visible and relevant to the classroom context, should this 'identity' be triggered somehow by the teacher, but it also points to the role of teacher who has the power to transform students 'being' into 'becoming'. And that was not the only example. In another similar task, again about geography, Aria spontaneously, participated in another discussion probably for the same reasons. Let me now present an excerpt from another classroom episode:

Teacher B: If you have a tourist from another country (2) very into club life (.) the first thing they ask you (.) are there any clubs? To get drunk? So, you

need to know (.) tell them there is nightlife or there is little nightlife. So, in this particular case little nightlife but we will cross it out because it's not like one part of Tunisia (.) Tunisia has not /nightlife/

Aria: /NO VERY/ [Teacher didn't hear her]

Teacher B: So we wouldn't consider it as a main aspect of /why we would visit the country/

Aria: /No/it's there/ in Zarjis it' s no night life (.)

Teacher B: /Yes/ yea tell me have you been to Zarjis? Personal experience? Tell me about that?

Aria: <Yeah> (.) There is no nightlife?

Teacher B: Are there any clubs?

Aria: There is no clubs in Zarjis (.) like restaurants (.) you can find many (.) but like bars clubbing no

Teacher B: Is alcohol prohibited?

Aria: Yea

Teacher B: Can you? Just tell us a tiny bit (.)

Aria: <Um> (.) it's like going for holiday, swimming but nightlife it's no

Teacher B: In terms of religion (.) is it kind of strict?

Aria: No it is kind of democracy

Teacher B: Is it a tourist industry?

Aria: <Yeah>

[Teacher B and another Student speaks (1.09)]

Teacher B: A friend of mine told me that things have changed in Tunisia

Aria: Yea (.) after the revolution (10) but there is no different (xxx) umm

Teacher B: So no difference (2) In terms of what?

Aria: Because when I have been (1) after the revolution and after the (xxx) there is no big difference

Teacher B: Very interesting (.) very good point.

(Classroom observation , 12/12/13)

The excerpt above clearly shows another effort by the teacher to create the conditions for communication practice, involve Aria and keep the flow of the conversation going, because somehow the teacher knew that Aria would have something to say. Similarly, to Regina's case, Aria and her teacher shared an implicit understanding at this specific moment. Interestingly, that effort seems to be fruitful, which suggests that Aria will speak only when she is familiar with the topic. In line

with this, MacIntyre et al. (1998) highlighted the importance of topic in affecting one's L2 WTC and pointed out that familiarity with the topic potentially increases learners' linguistic confidence, while lack of knowledge inhibits L2 communication, even for a confident L2 speaker. Most notably however, the excerpt shows how transportable identities can be invested in the classroom context. This time the teacher did not have to draw on her identity in order to trigger her to speak. It appears that after all these efforts, Aria finally understood the teacher's intention. In addition, these findings highlight the importance of bringing the 'worlds' into our classrooms, which goes hand in hand with Yashima's (2002) conclusion to encourage Japanese EFL learners to be more willing to communicate in their L2, their exposure to different cultures and international affairs should be increased in contexts such as the classroom. Indeed, my assumption was confirmed in another stimulated recall interview, when I asked her why she spoke in that specific instance, and this is what she said:

Aria: Because something I know it (.) as I told you if I feel (2) [Here she was looking for a word and I helped her].

Researcher: Comfortable?

Aria: yes (.) I will (.) I could say but if I am not sure I will never speak.

Researcher: So (.) If you are comfortable with the topic or the vocabulary about the topic (.) or both?

Aria: <Um> it's a (.) you can say a general about the topics the vocabularies (.) if I will know something for sure (.) of course I will say

(Stimulated Recall Interview, 06/12/13)

The above excerpt suggests that, apart from her obvious limited communicative competence, there might also have been some sort of issues with her self-confidence, both of which may have led to all these communicative issues and

the general avoidance that was guiding Aria's classroom behaviour, although her overall classroom behaviour does not suggest any serious efforts for improvement, as she should have done after such unsuccessful learning experiences. This finding is also coherent to Yashima's (2009) proposition that, "unless one has something to say about a topic or opinions to express about an agenda, one does not have an urge to communicate" (p. 155). Whenever she spoke, it was actually after encouragement because the teacher might really have wanted to help her. Indeed, this is what the teacher thought and said about Aria:

The fact that she was not able to participate, from my point of view as a teacher (7) I do not believe that this student should have been to this class (4) <er> the gaps that she has neither did allow her to participate to the point that she should nor did result in being confident (3) that she is a member of this class (3) and when I tried to include her (1) in familiar topics (.) for example about Libya, geography (1) she was willing to tell us her ideas etc. but her communication was reaching a certain point () the weaknesses were obvious (2)and I do not think (1) I think this caused her many problems (4) she learns Greek she wants to learn more but this takes time and she should have had extra support and advising prior to her studies (2) I know that her advisor would have liked to help her but she hasn't approached her but she did not (2) I think she **could not** participate not that she did not want to (1) I think she was out of context 1(2) I feel that if I could do something to help her (1) I could have put her in another class level (2) she is not for this class. (Follow-up Interview with the Teacher, 28/01/14)

The above excerpt suggests that, even if Aria would have liked to learn more or speak more (although it was not much prominent in her interactions), there might have been other factors, such as communicative competence and self-confidence, both of which have been found influential for learners' WTC (e.g. MacIntyre, 1994) that did not allow her to invest in her classroom interactions more and, therefore, the teacher suggested that is best for her to attend another class. However, another factor

associated with her low self-confidence, that teacher might not have considered and therefore might not have acted accordingly, is the possibility of Aria being socially anxious, leading to complete silence in Aria's communicative practices. As a matter of fact, silence can be very well employed as a defensive strategy for those who feel socially anxious (King, 2013). In fact, as King (2013) puts it "within an EFL context a learner may remain silent not only out of a desire to protect his/her positive face, but also to save the teacher's negative face which may be threatened by asking for repetitions or explanations" (p. 55). It would be fair to say, however, that I neither witnessed nor did Aria express in any part of our interviews (though she had the chance when I asked her how she was feeling on various occasions) any feelings of being anxious. Yet, when students become members of a group for the first time, L2 anxiety, inferiority, fear of not being accepted or restricted identity and freedom to express themselves are some of the potential barriers that might be manifested in the L2 classroom. This suggests that in any case, teachers should be aware of all those factors that may obstruct learners' communicative behaviour and find ways to reduce anxiety, combat silence and cultivate group cohesiveness (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003).

Nevertheless, the teacher's statement not only confirms the influential factors that may have deprived her of communication opportunities but also confirms the circumstances under which, despite the issues, Aria would invest, the circumstances in which transportable identity is invoked, invested and becomes relevant to a person's L2 WTC. What is even more interesting is that, despite the fact that there is no evidence of any real effort, she feels that she has improved and that she is good. When I asked her about how she views herself as a language learner, in the next SRI interview excerpt, it appeared that her beliefs about her progress remained intact.

But in my opinion (3) I am so good (3) I mean (3) I am improving something (4) because you know it's different when you are in a country and you are learning other language. If you are in England or America and you are study English you will get experience even from the people when you get out to take something (3) for example (3) from the supermarket (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 13/12/13)

The above excerpts suggest that there were significant discrepancies between what Aria thinks of herself and what the teacher thinks about Aria. The teacher's statements do reflect Aria's classroom behaviour. However, the same cannot be said for Aria. It seems that Aria's WTC did not become part of her goal simply because she was unable to realise that she needed to improve, which was evident in her statements where she never aspired to become a competent L2 speaker or at least acknowledge that she needs work in order to ultimately arrive at an adequate level in her English.

6.3.4 Summary

Aria's story has been a constant journey full of multicultural experiences, which she did not seem to embrace for the benefit of her own learning and development. In stark contrast with Darcy, whom I described as the 'wounded avoider' simply because she denied all the possible opportunities available to her, it looks like Aria was an 'interaction avoider' in any possible way. She was not unwilling to communicate, yet she did not seek opportunities and she clearly did not see the supportive relationship that was present in her teacher who tried to include her many times, and she only succeeded in particular tasks. What inhibited her performance was that she did not possess the communicative competence to cope with the rest of the class and thus, her self-confidence was quite low. Therefore, her

general tendency in her classroom behaviour was a constant avoidance, yet not complete withdrawal as there were some occasions on which, despite the difficulties she was facing, she expended the effort. This finding supports results from empirical studies which have identified both communicative competence and self-perceived confidence as unfavourable influences on someone's L2 WTC (e.g. Cao, 2011, Peng, 2014). However, it was also evident that when she did participate, it was only when her transportable identity was engaged and came into being and therefore gave rise to her L2 WTC because the kind of tasks gave her the opportunity to invest her real experiences and opinions. Transportable identities require students to be who they really are, because only in this way they will be able to link the current tasks to their future personal visions (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). Thus, in Aria's case when her transportable identity was invoked, suddenly all the communicative issues were not relevant anymore. Another important finding which features very prominently in Aria's data is her relationship with her self-concept. What learners think and feel about themselves has the power to influence their behaviours, motivations and attitudes towards learning a foreign language. It seems that Aria's belief of herself was so powerful that she was unable to see and admit her weaknesses. The self-beliefs she was holding true for herself not only influenced the way she acted and the kind of decisions she made in the current classroom, but also defined the goals she set for the future in which L2 vision was absent. Thus, there was no room for improvement, probably because she thought that she was good enough to meet the expectations of the particular course, even though she had failed twice. Therefore, rather than holding on to her true self, Aria became a victim of her 'false' one. These beliefs provide learners with a sense of continuity and help them make sense of their position in the world and their relationship to it (Mercer, 2011b). However, the findings suggest that

when a person's beliefs are consumed by false cognitions, constructed by previous experiences, in relation to who the person really is and what s/he can do, then the outcomes can be catastrophic; students become a threat to their own self and thus jeopardise their own learning and development in the end.

6.4 Serena: "The educated, smart, intelligent"

6.4.1 Background: A bright future on the way

Serena was a twenty-one-year-old student from Estonia. Like all the other participants, she was also in her first year of studies at the time of field work. She had always wanted to study at an English-speaking institution. Even though she could have studied at the University of Manchester in the UK, as she had received an offer, she let it go because that option would cost a lot of money and her family could not afford it. Therefore, as she wanted to study Business Administration, she chose Greece and the university-college, where I conducted my study, for two reasons. Firstly, as she said, "it was much cheaper than any other option" and secondly, she had relatives and she could stay with them in order to save money from rent, while at the same time have people to help her in case she needed anything at the beginning. Another reason was she "anyway speaks English here" since she does not speak any Greek she would be able to speak in English not only during the teaching hours, but also in her social life, like during the breaks or when going out with friends.

She was not born in Estonia though. She was born in Latvia, as this was the place where her parents met. Her mother was Latvian and her father was Estonian, living in Latvia temporarily because he was studying there. As a result, she started her

kindergarten in Latvia and then they moved to Estonia, where she had been living until she decided to study abroad. However, she travels to Latvia quite often to visit relatives.

As I would like to illustrate in this section, Serena was a successful learner from the beginning of her studies. An array of forces such as the school and her family all contributed to the person she aspired to be. She appeared to be a highly motivated learner, but only in certain occasions.

6.4.2 Past Learning Experiences: Emerging L2 Vision

Back in Estonia, Serena started primary school at the age of six, in a quite demanding and strict institution, in which she stayed until the end, despite the difficulties she was facing, especially during her first encounters with Estonian as an L2. As mentioned before, Serena was born in Latvia and therefore Latvian was the first language she acquired. Spending more time with her mother (due to her father's study commitments), she did not use Estonian that much (if at all) and then, when she started school in Estonia (after her father had finished his studies, the whole family resided in Estonia for good), it was quite difficult for her. Apart from the obvious difficulties, as she had to deal with her bilingualism, quite soon she started learning a third language, English. Her school was placing a great emphasis on the English language. It was not an English-based school but, according to Serena and probably compared to other schools from her country, students were taught English at least three times a week and maybe even more. The following excerpt highlights a recollection of Serena's overall experience at this school:

(.) in the beginning it was quite hard for to me ok with my English knowledge because and also with my Estonian knowledge and I was a little bit confused because I was never using these languages in my family so I needed to take private teachers and in the beginning I remember that I had a problem with the pronunciation **especially** because in my family we were not using English so to be ok with English you need some kind of experience or (1) so it was quite hard for me after my private teacher she helped me with this situation to be ok with English at least to understand something and especially we focused on grammar and different stuff like this and because it was very hard in general to study in my school not only English but all the subjects were very tough because school is really tough <um:> so it was so (3) I mean I couldn't turn so much attention on English because I needed also attention to another subjects (Life Story Interview, 28/11/2013)

The excerpt above from Serena's reflection shows that her overall experience at this school was difficult and required a lot of commitment in order to succeed. Being bilingual and learning a third language (English) concurrently required a lot of effort and caused a lot of difficulties for Serena. The difficulties with Estonian and English led her to seek help by having private tutoring at home. Although the exact difficulties she faced with Estonian are unknown, simply because she does not say, and therefore it can only be imagined, she nevertheless stresses the difficulties in English, especially with regards to pronunciation and grammar, for which she got the help in the first place. Clearly the above statement shows that the learning context was hard in many ways: new environment, new languages and tough curriculum. Serena was really trying to find ways to cope with her languages and overcome these difficulties. What is interesting though, is that it looks like Serena is trying to be apologetic, especially when she told me that she and her family did not use English at home which (at least to me) sounded very normal and understandable. Unless one of the two parents is a native speaker of English, or the whole family lives in an English-speaking country, it is quite uncommon to find people speaking English at home.

Another important dimension is that out of all these experiences she chose to share her difficulties in English, which already show within themselves important hints suggesting that ‘English Language Learning’ was something that she valued, something that she may have considered as important to aspire towards. Therefore, I would like to examine this suggestion further, starting with her English language classroom at this school and to explore how she ended up valuing English.

Unlike Regina, Serena did not mention any heart breaking negative experiences as a newcomer to this school. However, there were some similarities which I would like to illustrate in this section, starting with a recollection of her overall experience at this school and all the hardship she went through at the beginning mainly because of the school’s high standards. During our interview, when I asked her about any negative experiences she chose to share the following:

Ok let’s say we had a really crazy teacher of English in our school she was very famous because she might like or dislike the student and she was quite (3) like she could scream and especially because I was a very **shy** student I couldn’t not only speak I couldn’t stand a voice because I was so much scared of her, I was small but after my teacher changed and it was very ok, she was calm understanding I mean teacher can to be strict but she don’t be you know like a crazy with her own prejudice about every student so she doesn’t like someone that’s it caput [that’s it] you can do whatever you want you cannot change the situation it’s very hard but it’s ok I mean (Life Story Interview, 28/11/2013)

The above statement is another point which deserves attention, because what the teacher is doing here is actually very similar to Regina’s case. In Regina’s case, the teacher’s treatment, probably because of the damaging ideologies over Albanian immigrants, ultimately denied Regina her right to speak (Norton, 2000, 2013), simply

because the teacher placed Regina in a more disadvantageous position. In Serena's case, the teacher, for unspecified reasons, distinguished between the liked and disliked students. Although it is unknown to which group Serena belonged, it can only be assumed, it is clearly a very different denial in comparison to Regina, as here Serena deliberately chose not to speak. The difference is that in Serena's case, what denied her the right to speak was the fear of being disliked or negatively evaluated by the teacher, which resulted in her avoidance to communicate in English. The excerpt does not provide a full picture of what really happened and what underlay the teacher's behaviour, however, it clearly suggests that in such climate filled with fear of being disliked or criticised by the teacher, students are unlikely to be willing to communicate. In both cases, it was the teachers who, instead of facilitating the learning process for the students in any possible way, manifested their own powerful and damaging ideologies and philosophies, to the detriment of the students, unfortunately resulting in silence and withdrawal.

In the previous excerpt, Serena talked about the strict teacher and the impact this had on her L2 WTC, but she also mentioned a calm teacher and continued as follows:

My secondary teacher (3) her name was (X) she was actually half (1) living in United Kingdom because her daughter live there (.) she was very calm and she was very great teacher (3) I started to go on well. (Life Story Interview, 28/11/2013)

In the excerpt above, the role of the teacher again features; not as prominently as in Regina's case, but it is intriguing that Serena, when going back to her memories, does focus her attention on the teachers, particularly to the strict and the calm ones,

suggesting very different impacts that these may have had in her general learning experience and the choices she made. At first, Serena had the strict teacher, with whom she chose to remain silent, probably because such a climate did not allow her to interact in ways that she may have liked to or to manifest who she really is and what she can do. On the other hand, although she does not share much about the calm teacher's behaviour, apart from the fact that she was calm, it can only be speculated that calmness was one of the characteristics she was looking for in a teacher in order to uncover her true self and be the person she would have liked to be, maybe because the silenced person had nothing to do with who she really was. She also mentioned another good teacher, her tutor who helped her get over this unpleasant situation of being afraid to speak and ultimately helped her to build her linguistic confidence. In her own words:

I had a very good private teacher so she helped me a little bit with the base (.) I mean when you start not to be afraid to speak in English and you little bit start to understand you start to be more fluent in your language but when you are confused and you are ashamed to speak or you don't you know (3) you need to have some kind of insurance of the base that you will start to develop your knowledge so when I received this let's say base only with my teacher because only like this and slowly and calmly she could understand me everything from one subject to another not like school you know a lot of people and teacher are strict (2) it's more difficult. (Life Story Interview, 28/11/2013)

The excerpt above is another example in which the characteristic of a calm teacher again features. It seems that, for Serena, a teacher being calm is really important and is one of the qualities she is looking for in a teacher. It also suggests something crucial about the environment in which Serena is willing to invest. That is an environment filled with calmness, support, security and small steps at a time; an

environment in which she will bloom and feel comfortable to explore aspects of her abilities that would otherwise remain hidden, and manifest her dream and goals. Indeed, Serena had some dreams and goals.

Having successfully completed secondary school, Serena continued to high school at the same institution, despite the obvious difficulties. Generally speaking, high school can be very stressful because this is the time in a person's life where they have to make important decisions about their future; for example, what to study or even where to study. Of course, not all students have the maturity, at this age, to make these important decisions unless they have specific career oriented goals. Serena, however, did. Despite her young age, she made an important realisation; to study abroad, and therefore she started focusing on English much more. In the following excerpt, she admits this realisation:

So yes during the high school I understood that I would like to study abroad (.) I would like to study in some English establishment let's say (.) or in United states or in United Kingdom I didn't think about Greece yet (.) so (.) I started to focus on English I went to International house of English I (xxx) my test of proficiency there and (.) that time I believe my English was better than now (.) maybe now my speech is more fluent but that time I had a really great grammar, writing essays and everything (Life Story Interview, 28/11/2013)

In the excerpt above, Serena not only expresses a wish to study abroad but also, and very interestingly, attaches English to that wish, thus projecting her ideal L2 in relation to the attainment of a desired-end state (Higgins, 1987, 1998). In addition, the fact that she took immediate action by focusing on English and started studying in a specialised institution in her country, the International House of English, shows how

strong that wish was, and speculates some kind of determination to take control of her own behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2002). It is likely though that the vision to study abroad would not have been materialised if it was not for the English language. She could have chosen to study business anywhere in her country, but she chose abroad because of English. This suggests that she valued the language as a means for greater opportunities. For example, when I asked why she did not study business in Estonia she said that they have a business school in Estonia but she wanted to study “completely in English”. In fact, Serena had already clear goals for the future and they indeed involve English:

I (1) actually I have some ideas and would like to make International business and (2) I believe English it's a language (2) which is spoken everywhere (1) all around the world (1) it's the first language and especially that (2) considering United States which is the **leader** of economy (1) in world economy (1) it's a necessary language for those people who want to make business (.) international business (.) shipping or something (.) Before that I (2) would like to collect money and of course to have some kind of experience (.) let's say some nice company and to work there for the experience, for collecting some money and (.) Then I have some ideas to open my own business (.) I am already trying make this plan come true (.) but we will see (.) (Life story Interview, 28/11/2013)

The above excerpt reveals Serena's very specific goals she has set for the future. These goals involve conducting international business and run a business of her own. In addition, the excerpt shows how she views and values English language, as well as some sort of respect and admiration for the international community, similar to what Yashima (2009) has called as 'international posture', especially when she refers to America as the leader in economy. The data suggests that English language is simply valued because she considers such kind of education as the

necessary tool that will equip and offer her access to the international community that she is seeking to gain as a future goal.

6.4.3 Current learning experiences: I have a dream

In respect of her learning experience at the current university, Serena's academic performance, at least in the English class which I observed, was excellent. Soon after some observations they had their mid-term exams and the teacher informed me that she got the best grade (along with Stacey). Serena was quite active (though only in certain occasions) and, along with Stacey (the next participant), was ranked as one of the best students and together actually somehow the 'leaders', as both of them were sitting in the front row, and were talkative and participative. However, Serena's classroom behaviour presented some kind of fluctuation. Ranging from complete participation to complete withdrawal. In fact, she appeared to be more willing to speak only in certain occasions.

Serena seemed quite happy with the current situation. She seemed particularly satisfied with the people and the teachers she was surrounded in this particular context. In her own words, when I asked how she feels now about the university, she said:

All teachers are great (.) I don't have any kind of problems with their psychology (.) I am really satisfied with all the people (.) with the behaviour all of them are kind (.) intelligent smart educated (.) (Life Story Interview, 28/11/2013)

The above excerpt reveals some echoes from her past memories, probably from her first English teacher or the various difficulties she faced at school, and

clearly shows how she compares her past with the present. Again, she talks about the teachers, saying that the teachers in this particular context are intelligent, smart and educated, which signals something important. She is talking about the teachers and what she values about them – she values that they are kind – but the emphasis is in these three words, which are almost like synonyms. This seems to be important to her, like when she talked about the “calm teacher”, and with this comment now she already gives insights into her own vision, maybe because this is how she sees herself and wants to be seen by others. As I will endeavour to illustrate, she seemed to be more willing to speak under circumstances in which she could project the idea of the ‘smart, educated, intelligent’ person. She particularly seemed to be eager to participate when the activity required some sort of general knowledge, elaboration and discussion, and when she did, her answers showed quite a fluent and confident speaker of English. That could be another factor that may have helped her to maintain her academic performance at the same level. She was not that willing though in grammatical exercises, maybe because grammar was not something that she valued. For example, students were about to complete a listening task which involved a lecture in relation to Qatar and Lebanon. The teacher tried to activate ideas and pre-teach some potential vocabulary by asking questions about these two countries, in the hope that this would help students understand the lecture. In the excerpt below the teacher asked the following question:

Teacher B: What do we already know about these two countries, Qatar and Lebanon?

Serena: Well (2) first of all these two countries are very (.) rich in natural resources like oil and also (xxx) they produce of petrol (.) so these countries actually could be very rich but (.) in the same time <er> the literacy and the (xxx) and also the (xxx) the population is very very low there is not social

support because in the country actually is a big mess and mostly uh there are very big difference between rich people and poor people ///

Teacher B: /// and how do we call these people?

Serena: a class

(Classroom Observation, 05/12/13)

Even though there are some minor mistakes in her speech, and some words are inaudible, the excerpt above nevertheless shows a fluent speaker of English using appropriate vocabulary and answering accurately the teacher's question. However, Serena's classroom behaviour displayed different and sometimes even contrasting learning behaviours, especially in her classroom participation patterns, which switched from full engagement to complete withdrawal. She was always engaged in the lesson, listening carefully to the teacher talking, but not always participative. After observing a few classes, I began to notice that although she was fluent and one of the best students in the class, she did not participate as much as she could. I also noticed that she had never cut in, as other students did, even though there were activities which required some sort of elaboration and conversation among students. When she raised her hand, she waited for the teacher to give her permission to speak. After observing this behaviour, a couple of times, I started wondering about the possible reasons behind this behaviour. In line with this, my field notes concerning Serena's classroom behaviour show a fluctuation from totally activeness to complete withdrawal:

There is a stark contrast between her abilities and performance. I assume there might be two possible reasons. Either because she already knows that she is good and therefore there is no need to prove herself to anybody or because she does not find it meaningful (Field Note Entry, 05/12/13)

In order to shed more light on her classroom behaviour, I conducted the stimulated recall interview to ask why she answered this particular question and not others. This is what she told me:

In general (.) I mean such things like natural resources and geography I mean they are interesting for maybe that's why I had some kind of information and I knew about this topic before I enter the lesson so I believe it was kind of sharing the knowledge with the teacher and other students. (Stimulated Recall Interview, 06/12/13)

According to Serena, she answered this question because she knew something and because she wanted to share with the class. However, this was not the only time. There was another occasion when they were speaking about tourism and words such as cruise and vessel came up. It was the first time seeing her cut in and explaining that "a vessel is actually a boat" (Classroom Observation, 24/10/13) simply because others did not. Her data has so far suggested that maybe it was not only that she wanted to share, but maybe it was also a good opportunity, since she knew and the others did not in both cases, to showcase her knowledge and project the identity of the 'smart, educated, intelligent' person. It looks like in Serena's case, L2 WTC may only happen when this encompasses this particular identity. However, this behaviour seems rather puzzling. Having known about her desire to study abroad and her goals for the future, as well as how she seemed to value the ability of speaking in English, her overall behaviour did not reflect these goals and the determination she had shown prior to her study abroad experience. It seems, therefore, that Serena may have spoken on these occasions not only because these occasions would allow her show some aspects of the identity she wanted to project, but it also appears that she did not invest more on various opportunities simply because she may have not been given many. To

support the above claims, I will start by presenting a long excerpt in my first interview with her teacher about Serena:

It was (4) she comes from another culture I think (4) <um> she respects another person's turn and she feels that in order to speak she must be given permission whereas we as Greeks (5) ok (2) This was an interactive course and what we are trying to achieve was a uum participation as possible from the students. This however, is against the policies like raising your hand or ask permission to speak and I prefer them to cut in and say something than not participate at all. This student thought that she had to be given permission (.) she always had something to say (2) I think I asked her many times (.) I used her as a model because she was giving very correct answers instead of me giving a model answer she had the ability to do it and the reason why I sometimes did not ask her to give me an answer is because I knew that she knows the answer (2) I wanted weaker students to participate and I think that is why sometimes she did not participate (.) She did really well in the exam, she has very good writings (.) the best writings actually and she is ready to move on to the next level and she is clearly a very good student in my class (.) She is punctual she waits for me to choose her to speak (2) She always contributes but she needs encouragement I do not think that she is not interested because she has something to say but I think that it was her level good (7) All of them were quite good but (3) she is more comfortable with the language clearly and she did not have many issues with the grammar she is more familiar maybe because she communicates in English not only inside but also outside the class maybe she did not need it (the course) too much. (Follow-up Interview with Teacher B, 28/01/14)

The above statements from her teacher confirm that Serena was quite disciplined, probably because she was taught to be in such demanding school and also that indeed Serena was good, at least at grammar. This might explain why Serena was not particularly interested in participating in grammatical exercises, which may have not provided her with an 'optimal challenge', something that has been pointed out in discussions of flow theory (cf. Egbert, 2003) and she never cut in the class unless permission was given to her. In addition, this confirms my speculation that Serena chose when to speak only when she had something to show. In that case, project the

identity of the 'smart, educated, intelligent' because she knew that she did not need too much work with grammar; indeed, after looking very closely at my data I realised that I do not have any classroom data which shows Serena's participation in any kind of grammatical activity. Another important dimension of this excerpt is the teacher's role in the class and the choices they have to make, which sometimes lead to dilemmas. The teacher here clearly admits that although she has used Serena as a model answer (although there is not much data indicating this, apart from the two times I mentioned), sometimes she had to exclude her in an effort to give opportunities to weaker students to speak, thus she may have to temporarily withdraw that right from the more privileged ones. However, it seems that this exclusion for the benefit of weaker students happened to the detriment of Serena, because this led her to a complete withdrawal. It may have not lowered her level of knowledge, but it certainly denied her opportunities to move a step forward. She indeed spoke more when she had the opportunity to manifest the identity of the 'intelligent, smart, educated' but this happened only twice because there was nobody else to fill in the gap at that particular moment. She may have wanted to speak more, but maybe she did not raise her hand because there was nothing more to prove and she knew that she would not be chosen.

Another incident where she chose to remain silent was in a pair work activity with Stacey. As I said before, both were the best students in class but sometimes seemed competitive to one another, which was evident when Stacey took the lead and spoke for both of them, whereas Serena did not even bother to comment or add a point. Since they were sitting together, whenever a pair activity occurred they had to work together. There were at least two pair activities which took place during my

observations of their class. When I asked Serena about one of them (21/11/13 – the theme of the topic was about an imaginary place they would like to travel and what they could possibly see in that place and students had to come up with one selection and report to the rest of the class and share ideas with the other classmates), in a subsequent SRI, she revealed that, in that particular occasion, she remained silent because she did not agree with Stacey's choice:

I think we discussed it and then we write about it (.) the same Stacey the same me so maybe it was also we are kind of leaders and cannot let's say agree (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 22/11/13)

Although it is unknown what they actually discussed, Serena's dissatisfaction with Stacey in that specific occasion is clear and for that reason she did not want to participate and did not even make the effort. This is another example which shows how the classroom dynamics and relationship between teachers and classmates can determine if a person will speak after all. Maybe in that particular occasion Stacey saw Serena as a threat and therefore she did not let her speak, which led to Serena's complete withdrawal. On the other hand, Serena may not have been bothered to speak (otherwise she may have tried somehow) simply because this opportunity for speaking may not have offered her anything more, nor would have allowed her to show something about herself and identity. However, Serena's deliberate choice to remain silent during this particular pair work points to something crucial in relation to the teacher's role in managing classroom dynamics. Since this was (at least) the second pair-work, the teacher could have asked students to change seats to form different groups. In this way, not only would students get to know each other but also the teacher facilitates the learning process because fixed positions lead to 'fossilised

patterns' and thus negatively affect contact and interaction among students (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003), which might explain why Serena did not invest in speaking.

Even though I thought she was good and, most importantly, her teacher thought the same, interestingly, Serena did not feel that way and she did not have the same opinion as the teacher (and I) had. Despite doing excellently in the exam and displaying performance in class which was beyond the required level, she thought that she was an average student in general but a good one in this class, probably because she was comparing herself to the other students, who, as it looks like, belonged to lower level than hers. This is what she said when I asked her how she felt about her herself:

I believe I'm average I believe actually it depends maybe it depends where If I was for example right now in Great Britain I will not be a good student in my opinion my English will not be so good but (2) considering here in Greece I am quite ok because I am using English maybe more often than Greek students and I don't know so well Greek so I am speaking English quite often (Life Story Interview, 28/11/13)

The above statement shows how she views herself compared to the others in her class. She is being quite modest and strict with herself, although her academic performance has shown that not only is she by no means an average student, but she is actually the best. However, if she thought that she was average she could have participated more, but she did not and she acknowledges why she did not. Serena ascribed her lack of participation to the fact that teacher should ask and help weaker students and not her.

It depends on my mood of course because if I have the mood to answer a lot and participate a lot want to answer or if I want to participate this also might influence me (3) also usually (2) there are other students and my teacher usually asks those students who had the problems because I believe that she wants first of all to have them a little bit to me their level better so she knows that I know the answer so she try to ask somebody who needs help (Stimulated Recall Interview, 06/12/13).

The above statement shows some kind of contradiction in her accounts. On the one hand, she says that she is average and on the other hand that she does not have problems with the language. Indeed, as the teacher revealed many times, the teacher did not ask her because she wanted weaker students to participate. Serena seems to acknowledge that and could also explain the reasons why sometimes she did not participate. Nevertheless, she is aware of her self-image and self-worth. This also suggests that she might not have raised her hand too often because she knew that the teacher would not ask her unless nobody else participated on that specific occasion; here, another important aspect of Serena's classroom behaviour, is her kindness, maybe. She seemed particularly sensitive to how the teacher might feel if students did not participate at all. Therefore, Serena seemed to be volunteering more to answer teacher's questions because she also felt that somebody had to do it in order to satisfy the teacher:

Somebody in the class has to be active somebody should be active it is not good at all for the teacher When we are active if others are not active or are not interested at least that least two students because you make the teacher more excited because if nobody speaks that is not good for the teacher (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 06/12/13)

6.4.4 Summary

Serena was exposed to English language teaching from a very young age, not only at school but also at home, where she had private tutoring. It is likely that her enhancement of intercultural communicative competence, not only in relation to English because of her high exposure, but also because of her constant travels in Latvia, may have eliminated possible language barriers that students may face when they are immersed into a new community, and therefore she appeared to be more confident in her current classroom, which was not the case for Aria (although it could have been since she had experienced the multicultural setting too, and in fact it was much more prominent than in Serena's case). The difference in these two participants' data may be ascribed to the fact that these two participants were located in this particular context under completely different circumstances. In essence, Aria just 'happened to be there', whereas Serena was there by choice. This finding suggests that L2 WTC is rather an unlikely expectation when students perceive their learning environment as coercive and imposing (which might have been the case for Aria in the first place).

Interestingly, when she spoke about her past learning experiences, she chose to focus on the teachers. Particularly the strict and the calm ones, which shows the different kinds of impact they had on Serena's L2 WTC. This is already an important hint about how she valued English and that she did not like that she was silenced with a strict teacher, but with the calm one things were different. Therefore, it is evident that Serena valued English and had a positive attitude towards what English symbolises, most likely because she wanted to study abroad and she had future goals and dreams in which English was attached. Her decision to study abroad may have

been the result of such frequent exposure and because of what she values as a person (i.e. English). Her career oriented goals required excellent command of English and the best way to achieve that was through studying abroad. This important finding from Serena's case confirms previous findings from Yashima et al.'s (2004) study with regards to international posture. That is, international posture influences motivation, which in turn influences competency in the target language. Her international posture seems to have been shaped by social and cultural influences.

Having known about Serena's background, relationships with her teachers aided my understanding of her current classroom behaviour, although she seemed a highly-motivated learner who had clear goals and future plans her classroom behaviour did not reflect that. In fact, Serena's data suggest that even if the conditions are right, like a positive vision and a good relationship with the teacher, L2 WTC may still not happen. This may be because the learner thinks, for example, that there is no need to engage in any communicative behaviour as there is nothing more to do to prove her/himself, as they may feel that s/he has already established the identity of the good student. For example, in Serena it may not have sometimes happened because she may have known that the teacher would not ask her opinion, because many times teachers wanted to involve less talkative students in the task/conversation, etc. However, the fact that she sometimes participated and other times she did not, does not suggest that she is unwilling to communicate, nor that she did not have a positive attitude towards English, in fact, Serena had the vision and the aspiration to accomplish her dreams and goals. In addition, the fact that since high school she had already decided where to study, in what field and in which language, shows a person with a strong personality, self-confidence and self-determination, a person with clear

goals and visions from the beginning. She was obviously a learner with a strong sense of identity and belonging who fitted easily into the new learning environment, despite of the differences.

6.5 Stacey: The limelight seeker

6.5.1 Background: A second chance

Stacey was a nineteen-year-old student from Greece. She was also in her first year of studies. She was the only child of a teacher and a clerk. Stacey, like Serena and Aria, with whom she shared the same class, was attending a higher-level programme of Academic English than Regina and Stacey, because at the same time she had private tutoring to obtain the B2 examination certificate. At this university-college, she was studying international relations and she had actually already started attending core modules along with her English course, unlike other participants who attended only English. Stacey could have chosen not to attend English classes at all, because in the placement test she achieved a high score which suggested a good command of spoken and written English, or she could have moved to the next level of academic English series. Instead she decided to attend this particular course first, as a preparatory course, in order to familiarise herself with the context, course objectives and language use. As her story will reveal, Stacey had several negative experiences throughout her schooling. Firstly, the fact of being left handed; secondly, various problems with teachers; and thirdly, more significantly, because of some failures. Stacey's story is really situated and representative of a typical student from the Greek Educational system and EFL learning in Greece (see Section 1.2 and 5.3), in which Stacey, like Darcy (on some occasions) started English at the age of eight in the primary school and at the age of ten in a private language school. Both parents and

students tend to seek help from private language institutions or foreign language schools because it is generally believed that state schools are not sufficient to equip them with the ‘tools’ to learn English, mainly because the state schools are not exam-centred in relation to English (which is not the case for private schools). In fact, state schools tend to be national exam-centred and therefore most students drop English classes usually in the last two years of upper secondary school because all schools put great emphasis on the university entrance exams, which tend to be very difficult and demanding, especially for schools which have a high demand and require high grades in the core modules, like international relations (Stacey’s chosen field of study). As an outcome, Stacey, not only had to give up her English classes but she also failed twice her national exams, in such case students usually are disappointed because there is no other way to study in Greece in the state sector. Thus, those who really want to study, usually seek other options, such as going abroad or studying at private universities-colleges which, in reality, are not highly respected (see research context Section 5.3)

In the current language classroom, Stacey appeared very talkative and participative, sometimes at the expense of other students in the class (I will provide examples with Aria and Serena on this matter). When I asked her about this she ascribed her talkativeness to her “nature” that this is who she is, however, as I will endeavour to illustrate, it seems to be more than that. In fact, throughout our conversations, Stacey made it clear many times that she considered herself as a very good learner and that she wants to succeed. She seemed to do whatever it took to maintain that profile.

Actually, Stacey had very clear goals, she wanted to become a proficient user of English as she studies international relations. During our life story interview, quite determined, she stated:

The most important thing is to finish with my studies and get my degree with a very good grade (.) and then (.) probably (1) a master's afterwards (.) something like that. (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

6.5.2 Past learning experiences: An arsenal of excuses

Stacey also started school at the age of six. Similar to Darcy, but unlike Regina, Stacey had some heart-breaking experiences when she started school because she was left-handed. Even though being left-handed is not related to racism because of someone's nationality, and therefore it was not the same experience as Regina's, it is nevertheless some sort of discrimination against a specific group of people who share the same characteristics. In a flashback, she said:

When I started school (4) I was 6 years old (3) and (3) generally speaking it was ok (4) apart from one thing (4) I had a problem at the beginning of my first year as I was left handed (.) There was a discrimination at that time (.) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

The statement above looks familiar with what Darcy has said. She further added:

They used to think [the Greek Society] that a right-handed student is more clever than a left-handed student. It was rare...I was left-handed and actually in my class we were only two (6) so (3) the teacher didn't like me (3) <yeah> probably because she was narrow-minded!! As a result I couldn't sit with a right-handed student. Thank god there was one other girl who was left-handed as me and we were sitting together (.) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

Although the excerpt above does not feature very prominently, it is yet another example of damaging ideologies from the teacher's perspective, marginalising students in specific categories (Darvin & Norton, 2015) and denying them the right not only to speak but also, and more importantly, the right to be who they genuinely are (Norton, 2000). The identity of the 'the left-handed' person is clearly not valued in that specific context and it is made relevant to the others (classmates) not to appreciate. Therefore, in such a climate, WTC is rather an unlikely expectation. And that was not the only negative experience. When she started the first year of upper secondary school she had some problems with a teacher. In the following excerpt Stacey admits having problems with a teacher, yet she does not really tell what kind of problems she had with this particular teacher:

During my secondary years I stayed in that specific school (3) for one year because I had some issues with a teacher (4) so I had to change school but I do not want to talk about it (4) I can only tell you that he was rude, very strict and he insulted us (4) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

Although I would have liked to ask and learn more about this incident, bearing in mind that participants have the right to choose what they want to tell me, I did not want to push any further. However, the fact that she does not want to share this bitter (to her) experience by simply saying "I do not want to talk about this" one can only speculate on her feelings and how hard it must have been for her. Although it is unknown why the teacher behaved in such a negative way towards Stacey, and probably other students, it is clearly a very negative experience for a student to

change school for these reasons and it indeed this had a negative impact, as she recalls in the following excerpt:

This had an impact on me because I missed my friends and I didn't want to change school (3) but I had to (2) given the circumstances (2) however (2) and thank god it didn't affect my grades (3) but you know (2) I needed some time to get used to the new situation (3) and I was a bit scared (3) and I didn't want to go school (3) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013).

In the excerpt above, it is obvious how much this situation affected Stacey because she lost her friends and was obliged to change school. Despite the difficulty she was clearly facing, she did not forget to mention that although this was quite heart-breaking "it did not affect her grades", which shows that being a good student was important to her and actually even more important than friends and school environment. The fact that she says that she did not want to change school can only speculate the extent to which that teacher affected her well-being, and probably Stacey did not want to go to the new school because she was afraid that she might have a similar experience.

However, she later told me that "she was ok there" and that she was a "good student". At some point though, at the beginning of upper secondary school, she revealed that her grades started falling, and when I asked her why this happened, she said:

For personal issues (2) because (2) maybe I was sick and tired (3) I thought that I have no more abilities (2) something like that (2) because (3) you know (3) I did my best (2) from primary to secondary school and then when I started high school I was tired (5) I was a bit confused (3) regarding which

direction it's best for me (2) then (2) I realised how much I love history (3) I didn't study much but I was quite a good student (3) actually (2) this was a period of my life in which I wasn't that serious (2) yea (3) imagine that it was the first time that my mother gave me some 'warnings' (.) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

The excerpt above seems rather confusing. On the one hand, she says that she did not invest too much in her studies “for personal reasons”, which one can only assume a family or health problem, for example, on the other hand she ascribes her lack of engagement to the fact that she had “no more abilities” because she had studied too hard previously. In addition, she seems to attribute her low performance at school to her confusion about her future direction and not being “serious”, meaning that probably she did not yet have the maturity to decide what she really wanted and that is probably why her mother had to step in and advise Stacey “for the first time”, which means that indeed Stacey was doing well up to this point. This was another incident where Stacey did not want to share (e.g. personal reasons). Despite admitting that her grades started falling, she still projects herself as the gifted student who did quite well without much effort (e.g. history). However, there is some sort of contradiction in her account. The fall in her grades is the outcome of her little effort, nevertheless she still says she is good, maybe because she does not want to admit the opposite (my suggestion is that maybe she was not that good after all), which is evident based on her grades and her self-handicapping behaviour with which she appears to have created some sort of impediment to her performance (McCown & Johnson, 1991). The fact that some students are good and do well through their schooling does not necessarily guarantee that they will continue or that they will succeed at a more advanced level. Maybe Stacey realised that she was not that good after all, or that she could not make it, or that high school was out of her league, and

therefore she chose to withdraw from any effort. This important realisation may have led her to develop some sort of avoidance strategies at the expense of her own learning. It seems easier to ascribe a failure to not trying (and therefore the fall in the grades) than admit that you are not that good, especially when you have constructed a self-image for yourself as being the best. To support this further, let me now present another excerpt in relation to her English lessons:

Actually (3) I started a bit a late (2) I was 10 years old. However, I really liked English and I was the best student in my class (2) it was a private foreign language school (3) I was learning English until the end of my secondary school (1) and (1) as I said I was a very good student because I liked the language (.) The last year of my English class (2) I (.) I had a health problem (2) nothing really serious (2) but (2) I missed a lot of classes and as a result my grades were falling (.) In addition, that year, I had to give up my English (2) because at this time (2) I had to focus on my national exams (.) I wanted to study International Relations and this school requires a really high grade in order to accept you (2) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

In the excerpt above, she mentions many times that she was very good in English, despite the fact that she started at a late age. The downturn actually came before the beginning of high school. However, it seems to be easier for her to withdraw and drop English classes, rather than been labelled as the student who did not do well, which was very likely to have happened since her grades took the downfall. In this excerpt, Stacey tells me when she started learning English, and her effort to emphasise how good she was features very prominently by mentioning it twice. In the previous excerpt, even though she changed school and this had an impact on her, she again did not forget to mention that this negative experience did not affect her grades. These suggest that demonstrating that she is a good student, no matter what the circumstances, was her priority. As became evident during the first two years

of studies, Stacey's academic performance took a downturn. When we started discussing her last year of high school. This is what she told me:

Final year of studies (2) the most important year (3) I was good (2) and really serious (3) this was my turning point (2) I realised that I need to study in order to get what I want (3) I studied a lot in order to enter the university in Athens and study international relations but (2) I didn't make it (2) difficult topics (3) misunderstandings (3) and (2) I got my results and actually I failed (2) so (2) I was disappointed because I tried a lot! Then I decided to study for the national exams one more time (2) I said to get more serious now (4) I studied for one year (.) I failed again (.) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

To begin with, in this excerpt she acknowledges that this is “the most important year” and indeed it is, as Greek students have to make important decisions and work really hard in a quite demanding system to secure a place at their chosen school. She even had to give up her English class at the private language school because she wanted to ‘focus on the national exams’ which is quite typical for Greek students. In fact, it seems to be some sort of avoidance strategy for which there is a general tendency, so in case of failure there is a ready excuse like they (i.e. students) have tried everything and focused only on the exams. In this particular instance, she seemed mature enough (i.e. serious), admitting the fall in her grades as a turning point, probably because she was used to successful academic achievements, as she has always said she was good, and a failure was not what she had envisioned for her future. She was, therefore, now determined ‘to get what she wanted’ and study international relations, but she “didn't make it” and ascribed her failure to the task difficulty and misunderstandings and not to herself, which is likely, given the previous statements of not studying the first two years, to be the actual reason behind this failure. Even though she may have tried hard (she still considers and demonstrates herself as a good student who studied really hard), maybe it was not

enough or maybe these first two 'idle' years had an irredeemable effect on her success, which she clearly does not acknowledge, probably because she has not realised it yet. The fact that she did not quit shows some kind of persistence and determination, however, there is again some sort of contradiction in her accounts. In the same excerpt when she said that she decided to try again, she said: "get more serious now". This means that maybe she realised after all that she did not try as much as she should in order to succeed and she was not 'really serious', therefore, now she wanted to go the extra mile though, unfortunately, that effort remained unfruitful as she failed again. Yet, she did not admit this important realisation maybe because it is easier to blame 'others' in order to protect her self-worth in the danger of a potential failure (Covington, 1998) which did take place in the end. My point here is that Stacey may not have been that good after all and maybe that was the reason she was striving and insisted on reminding me of the person she aspired to become and constantly bringing up her ideal self (Higgins, 1987, 1998), that of the good student. In the interim, after all these issues, she decided to start studying English again in a private foreign language school and kept emphasising how good she was and what the teacher believed about her. This is what she said:

I started intensive courses for one year (2) in an adult classroom (2) so (2) a second contact with English (3) I was doing really well and I paid more attention (2) very good grades (3) my teacher was really satisfied with me and until recently I was doing really well (2) actually I just finished with my English (.) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

The above excerpt is the first example of the steps that Stacey followed after her unsuccessful academic experiences. It looks rather apologetic, aiming to show that, even though she did not do well in her exams, she is still the good student and, in

fact, she is doing really well in her English, with only a second contact and only within a year. However, it seems that all these failures led to an important realisation in relation to who she really is and what she really wants to do, and therefore she decided to take action and do something. This is what she said:

So, I decided to attend an institute for vocational training [in Greek called IEK] (.) I was about to start studying journalism (2) but suddenly something changed and I didn't go there (3) I heard about the college (3) that it has a program in International relations and since it was my favourite one and my area of interest I decided to get some information and pursue this one (2) if I can (2) I searched for programs and I found out about this one. I did that on my own my mother didn't know anything (.) So I got all the information I needed and after coming here (2) I was convinced that I belong here (2) and this is what I want (2) I wanted to study this program (2) my only concern was about English (2) I told them that I do not have a B2 but I have already started English and I am about to get it (2) they said it's ok (3) you do not seem to have any problems with the language (2) Besides (2) There are extra language courses for you to attend (2) that will help you to improve even more (2) I decided that I want to study here (2) which I like very much (2) and I finally managed to convince my mother (2) and I am here now (.) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

In this excerpt, Stacey describes actions taken, though again, some parts of her story are missing. For example, she said that “something has changed” and she did not attend the IEK after all. However, she looks determined to do something this time and maybe that is why she did everything by herself. The fact that she said that she “convinced” her mother probably goes back to the idea that private universities are not well respected in Greece, and probably her mother was not very fond of the idea too. It is likely that she might have disappointed her back then, and now she was asking for a second chance to prove that she is good. It seems that being labelled as the good student was the identity she wanted to project. Based on the results, these

efforts were not very fruitful. She did not have the opportunity to prove that she was good during schooling but she would do whatever it takes to prove it now.

6.5.3 Current language learning experiences: Being on top no matter what

In stark contrast with her past and quite unsuccessful background, in the learning experiences in the current classroom she did present as the student she seems to have aspired to be, that of the best with the good grades. More specifically, Stacey was the most actively engaged student. She seemed particularly talkative in speaking tasks which elicited discussion, most likely because they provided her with the optimal experience, that is exercising her communication skills (Egbert, 2003). Always sitting in the front row, I never saw Stacey idle for a single time. In terms of her English command, Stacey was among the good students (along with Serena), fluent and confident in comparison with the rest of the class which was below the average on many aspects. In fact, these two students got the highest score in their mid-term exams, and that was not only my observation, it was also acknowledged by the teacher:

She has the basic knowledge in English (4) she does English (.) she has the background she is beyond the expected level (2) she already attends courses in her field of studies so she is familiar with the language writing reading skills very good and comprehension skills (.) what she needs it to exercise other skills such as speaking writing (2) and listening very good she understands lectures (.) She is cooperative and she attends (.) **wants** to participate **more than what is necessary** (.) she likes hijacking the conversation ((laughs)) she learns during the lesson (.) As far as her assignments she does all of them (.) she is punctual (3) she is a person who has something to say and she always take into consideration the feedback she does her homework and even more she builds up she (.) has the potential (.) (Follow-up Interview with Teacher B, 28/01/2014)

In the excerpt above the teacher reveals some aspects of Stacey's overall behaviour. It seems that Stacey had already managed to establish the identity she wanted to project, and very quickly she differentiated from the rest of the class exactly because of the characteristic of talkativeness which she ascribed to her 'nature', but there are important hints which show that it must have been more than that. Her classroom behaviour, in terms of activeness, participation and talkativeness, showed similar tendencies to Regina. However, as I will illustrate the two of them have very clear differences. At the beginning, Stacey was concerned given that she had to give up her English for almost three years because she wanted to focus on the exams:

I was really anxious at the beginning I faced some difficulties in my second module (2) a core module (2) which is taught in English of course (2) like all of my other modules (2) especially with the language (2) it was a chaos actually I started thinking to give it up because I may not be able to pass (2) it was really difficult (2) however (3) fortunately (2) as the time goes by I get used to that (2) of course I study a lot (2) and it's better now (2) my only difficulty is that sometimes I do not understand all the words (2) which is normal (2) I think (2) ok I am also attending this course but (3) to be honest with you (3) it wasn't that useful or helpful (2) and I cannot really say that I improved my English (2) I think that I should have moved to the next level (2) it wasn't necessary to do it (.) (Life Story Interview, 27/11/2013)

In the excerpt above, it is evident how easily Stacey would give up at the first difficulty, which was also evident in her background experiences (e.g. when she dropped English lessons). However, the same does not seem to apply to situations where she can display the identity of the good student. She might have been afraid at the beginning, simply because she did not know what she was about to face in this new learning environment, but it is likely that when she actually started in this class

she realised that this learning context was not out of her league anymore. In fact, such a classroom climate, where the majority of students were below the average, could easily allow her to emerge as the person she was striving to project and therefore, now, she is being rather critical about the course, invalidating anything good that it might have offered to her, for example, exercising more frequent speaking, which is unlikely to have happened with the other courses as most of them were lectures and lectures are not meant for discussions. If this was the case, and the course did not really help her (as she reveals), then she might have shown similar tendencies to Serena and withdrawn on occasions where she knew something or there was no reason to speak, especially because her general classroom behaviour had already established the identity of the good student. Not only did Stacey not withdraw at any point, but she appeared to be competitive many times at the expense of other (not necessarily weaker) students, demonstrating her superior academic skills in comparison to the others. Being on top was a priority on many occasions. The reason why she was investing too much in English communication was very clear. She thought that by improving her English she would improve the other courses as well and she will get better grades, but she also presented a great tendency towards leadership. Indeed, there were many occasions where she demonstrated her leading role, for example, as I said before, with Serena. There were at least two pair activities in which Stacey took the lead and Serena did not talk at all. Stacey and Serena clearly have similar identity-related goals and there are many similarities between these two participants. However, the differences lie in the amount of talk. Certainly, Serena was a more experienced speaker, because this was the language she was communicating in the moment she arrived in Greece, whereas Stacey's exposure to speaking was taking place only during the teaching sessions. Other occasions included Stacey interrupting

weaker students, for example Aria. As I said before, Aria was not at all participative. However, there were only two occasions where she spoke. On both occasions, Stacey persistently raised her hand and although the teacher did not give her permission, Stacey interrupted their conversation, thus the teacher had to say to Stacey “let her (Aria) speak”. Actually, in that specific moment the teacher seemed quite annoyed when she said to Stacey let her speak (i.e. Aria), which is understandable. The teacher has already said that Stacey “speaks more than she should”. In fact, there were many times where she had to tell Stacey “not you again” or she said “someone who has not spoken”. However, Stacey’s constant effort to become a part of all the conversations would have been fine with the teacher, as long as it did not interfere with the rest of the class. With this particular student (Aria), the teacher has made efforts to include her many times and out of numerous repeated efforts there were two occasions where she managed to make her speak for a longer period, and some others occasions, like when she said “what is a manager?” (Classroom Observation, 31/10/13). Stacey tended to hijack conversations, but this time she might have exceeded teacher’s limits because it happened to the detriment of the less talkative and participative student in class. When I asked her, in our subsequent SRI, why she behaved in this way, she said:

I did that because I wanted to help her and find the correct word (.) I did that because I realised that this student doesn’t speak English a lot (2) I know that English is not her of course mother tongue (1) she is from Libya but also I think that this specific student doesn’t care a lot (1) for example (1) she is missing from many lectures so ok I want to take part and not spend so much time on waiting (.) (Stimulated Recall Interview, 01/11/13)

There is some contrast in her account here. If she really wanted to help her she may have let her speak, since the teacher fulfilled that job, or just have whispered the

word. Instead she chose to jump in. Although this revelation might not be mean-spirited, it nevertheless highlights Stacey's dissatisfaction with classmates, like Aria, who, according to Stacey, not only do not care and do not talk, but when they do, they stall the whole class and they deprive students like Stacey of their right to speak and improve, because this is what they want and they have made that clear with their classroom behaviour (i.e. Stacey). The excerpt above points to something crucial with regards to a person's relationship to the others and the role of the teacher in managing classroom dynamics. Despite having the signs, as in the case of Serena, where the teacher failed to see that she remained silent during a pair work (see Section 6.4.3), and the same happened when Stacey interrupted Aria when trying to speak, the teacher was still unable to see what was really happening in her classroom. Promotion of 'acceptance' in the L2 classroom, therefore, could have been the key to resolving such negative feelings among students, by learning more about each other, promoting proximity, contact, interaction and cooperation (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). On the one hand, strong students like Stacey see weaker students as possible threats to their learning, and weaker students like Aria might be afraid to speak when they know that they will be interrupted, stopped or criticised, or cause any dissatisfaction. This shows that more privileged students, in terms of knowledge, also marginalise weaker students with their behaviour and deny them their right to speak, even if the teacher wants to help them. This important finding resembles Talmy's (2004) study among immigrant students, who were also positioned in unfavourable ways by their classmates. In addition, when the teacher, for obvious reasons, gives some priority to other students who do not participate a lot, stronger students may withdraw when they feel that the teacher will not always choose them to speak. Indeed, Stacey told me that although she participates a lot, there were many times where she was "bored" and she

wanted others to “speed up”. This suggests that strong students may easily get bored or withdraw when they have to wait or when they know that the teacher may privilege weaker students on many occasions. This also shows how complicated a classroom environment can be, as this creates dilemmas with regards to what do you do and with whom do you go with; the good student, or do you help the weaker ones and how do you know they want to be helped? When this interruption happened for a second time and I asked her about this incident, she simply said this time: “I wanted to share with the students I did not want to stop her I just had some extra information” (Stimulated Recall Interview, 13/12/13).

Stacey wanted the teacher to think that she is a good student and the teacher’s opinion mattered to maintain this profile. Therefore, she would take any advantage to get confirmation by the teacher, unfortunately, at the expense of others.

6.5.4 Summary

Stacey’s not very privileged academic background, her quite unsuccessful learning experiences, and her leading personality all seem to have contributed to constructing her perception of herself as an important and distinct person, at least in the academic sphere. Her story is really situated in the Greek educational system and foreign language learning. She was the typical learner, who gave up everything else (e.g. English) in order to achieve a goal, yet failed twice. The outcome of such effort suggests that she may have not been that good after all, and therefore she is constantly trying to hide by projecting that she was good. Even though she had ups and downs, she used to consider herself as the good student. In the current classroom, she seemed to enjoy a particular identity that of the ‘best student’ and she would clearly do whatever it took to maintain that identity, even at the expense of other students in

class (e.g. Aria and even Serena). She seemed to value English probably because she was embedded in the Greek crisis and she was perhaps viewing a good command of English as a ticket for career advancement and opportunities. Furthermore, getting good grades may have been the passport for better opportunities, but also the kind of proof to keep the profile she was striving to establish, which may have been questioned based on the results from her past learning experiences (that she failed). Her data suggests that L2 WTC was displayed so powerfully as the only 'means' to be constantly reminded that she is good and to get confirmation by the teacher. Her high level of L2 WTC may not have been materialised to that extent if L2 WTC was not attached to the projected identity.

7 CONCLUSION: SEEING L2 WTC AS THE ‘TIP OF THE ICEBERG’

The study set out to investigate the situated nature of L2 WTC in the higher education context, from the Greek perspective. My aim was to place the person in their context so as to paint a fuller picture of the ‘person’ doing the talking by unravelling all those hidden elements that define who they are and who they want to be, and how all these interplay at the micro-level of the classroom context and become visible in their L2 manifestations. In this section, I will summarise the major findings of the empirical study before I arrive at the key insights, which make an original contribution to IDs in general, and L2 WTC in particular. I will conclude with implications for L2 pedagogy, making recommendations for teachers in order to facilitate L2 WTC in their classrooms, and suggestions for future avenues for L2 WTC research.

7.1 A summary of the ‘five shades’ of WTC

What the results of this study have yielded is that whether or not these participants displayed L2 WTC, it was determined by an array of factors that worked together in nurturing (or not) their L2 WTC intention in this particular context. Another important finding refers to language learners’ self, shaped by their past learning experiences and capable of guiding their L2 WTC choices. However, an intriguing finding was that what learners hold to be true about themselves is not always translated into successful L2 WTC; simply because learners may have constructed a self which does not correspond with their real self, of what they can or they cannot do, or of who they are and who they wanted to be. That self could be

based on false cognitions or a ‘false’ self, which may be a threat to their L2 WTC. What was even more evident and prominent in my participants’ data is that it is not only how learners’ see themselves, but also how others see them and thus, their relationship with others determines the extent to which they will invest in L2 practices. This shows how social relationships among the speakers have the power to change the classroom discourse and dynamics.

Despite the hardships in Regina’s story, which have nevertheless shaped the person she is now, Regina’s sense of self was strengthened not weakened. What she needed were the conditions which would allow her to be seen and valued for the other identities she was bringing along, other than that of the ‘immigrant’ which was prominent in her past experiences. Regina’s transformation from the ‘wounded’ into the ‘fighter’ was only possible through the supportive relationship with the teacher in this particular context (i.e. affinity identity – sharing other than institutional practices, e.g. that of motherhood, immigrant, etc.), which had the power to change her L2 WTC trajectory from being silent to being active and participative and, therefore, gave rise to her L2 WTC, which was evident in her L2 manifestations in class. This important finding points to the crucial role of the teacher and the power they have to transform the classroom dynamics into conducive environments where L2 WTC can be cultivated.

Regina’s transformative relationship, however, was absent in Darcy’s case. This was simply because Darcy, instead of learning the lesson of that ‘small failure’ in English, as she called it, and trying harder to improve for her own sake, expended all her effort and energy on denying that kind of supportive relationship with her

teacher, and ultimately, the absence of that relationship became an absent L2 WTC. Therefore, instead of being a ‘fighter’ she chose to become an ‘avoider’ in any possible way. As an outcome, it was easier to exercise all sort of barricades of avoidance strategies (e.g. blame the teacher), rather than ‘admit’ that she needs help – let alone seek it – which obviously had an enormous impact on her L2 WTC. In these two participants’ data, the role of the teacher in their L2 WTC in the classroom is very different. With Darcy, the teacher’s role was very limited, which was also acknowledged by the teacher. In essence, it is almost like using the proverb you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink. Despite teachers’ efforts to bring the horse (i.e. Darcy) to the water, by creating an environment where there were possibilities for Darcy to take advantage of, she chose to dismiss the teacher and with that her L2 WTC. Thus, as can be suggested, it is not only the relationship to one’s self, but also the relationship to others, and how they both interact in the unfolding context of classroom interaction.

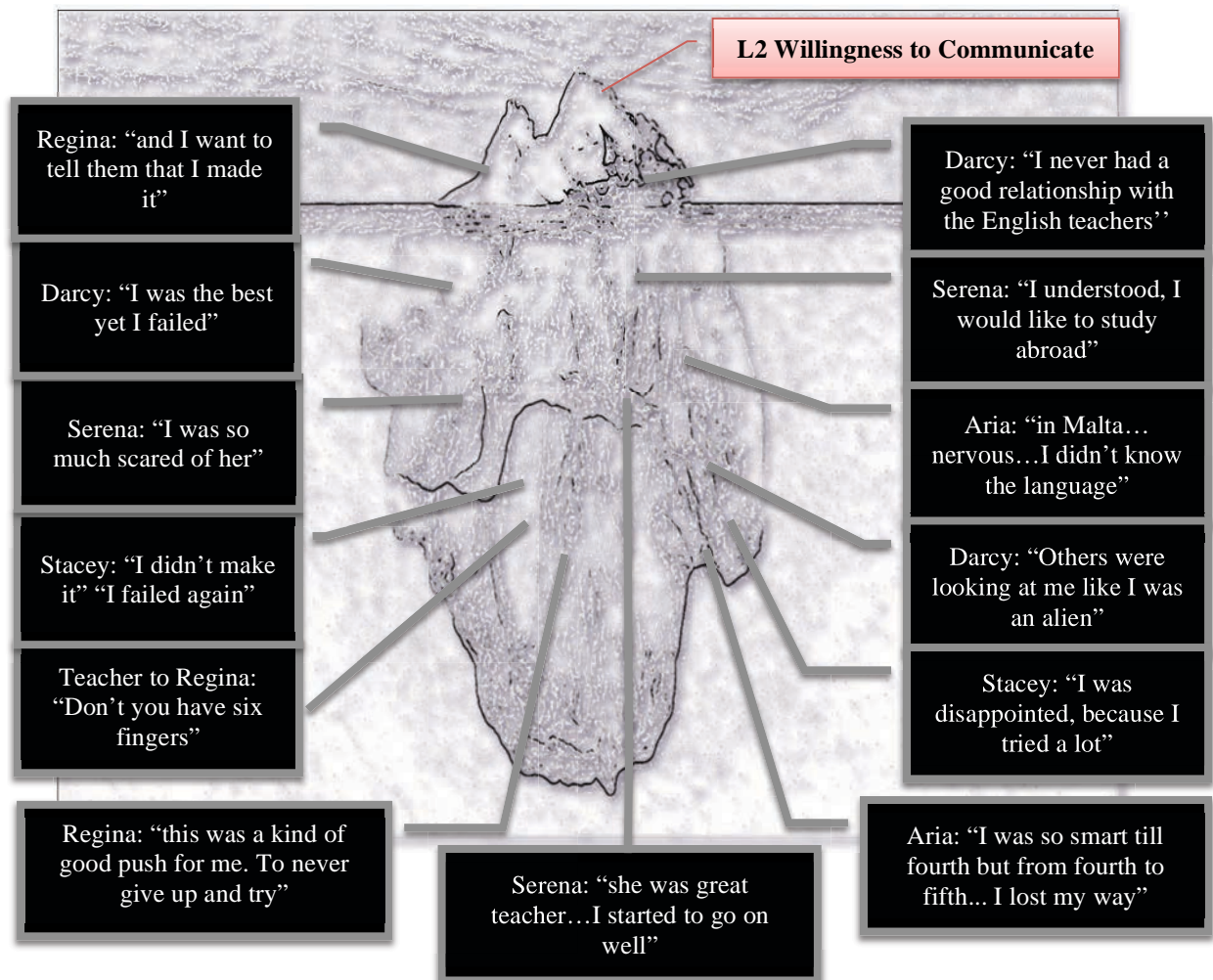
What features in Aria’s case, was the role of self-concept in mediating her L2 WTC, which in a way, dictated her classroom participation. Her rather ‘optimistic’ self-concept, despite her quite unsuccessful educational journey, did not allow her to see the broader picture. Therefore, she failed to see the teacher’s efforts of establishing a supportive relationship that would benefit her own learning. Her L2 WTC was not absent however, it only happened when the teacher invoked her transportable identity and made that relevant to the classroom context, which seemed to have been the only way in which Aria was willing to invest in L2 practices.

In stark contrast with Aria, who was located in this particular context by circumstances, Serena was there by choice. Serena's successful academic background and her early exposure to English constructed a very clear and focused sense of self with specific goals. Although she appeared to be a highly motivated learner in terms of her future aspirations, her L2 WTC was not consistent with the profile that one would expect, but rather she appeared to be WTC on certain occasions which involved a particular identity she wanted to project – that of the 'smart, educated, intelligent' person, which was evident in her accounts, especially when she referred to the teachers.

Stacey's perception of herself as 'being the best student' seems to have shaped the way she perceived her relationship to her learning environment, including her teachers and peers, which was evident in her striving to make herself visible and heard and to take the leading role in the classroom. In fact, WTC may have happened most of the time for Stacey, but not for the others, which shows that even if the conditions are right within the classroom environment, and even if the teacher wants to help, WTC may still not happen. This is because there is an array of forces that may obstruct opportunities for communication and these forces lie in the relationships among the people who are embedded in this particular context. In Stacey's case, her relationship with the 'others' (e.g. Serena, Aria) – maybe because she was seeing them as possible threats to her learning for different reasons – made L2 WTC an unlikely expectation for 'others' to manifest. So far, it seems that all of the literature around WTC corresponds to Stacey. However, when it comes to the diverse circumstances and backgrounds, things become much more complicated and, therefore, her data suggests that it is important to adjust the research focus on these.

In this section, I provided a summary of my participants' 'here and now' L2 WTC, focusing mainly on 'the surface manifestations', which in some ways already contain hints of their past histories, prevalent ideologies, visions, motivations, etc. In this vein, before concluding this section, I would like now to go 'beneath the surface' and provide a representation of all those elements which are not visible, but are always there, those which define a person and 'travel' with them in every context and in every relationship (see Figure 7.1 below).

Figure 7.1 The Tip of the Iceberg



7.2 'The Tip of the Iceberg': A conceptual metaphor of L2 WTC through the lens of a person-in-context relational view

Understanding the social embeddedness of one's identity through the lens of Gee's (2000) framework signals a crucial point: Regina's willingness to communicate did not reside in the power of her will alone. While she may have had an inner desire to speak across the contexts of schooling, she had experienced as a newcomer to Greece, the existence of genuine opportunities to apply her desire in communicative

action which largely depended on the openings in the social fabric of that action, which legitimised it by recognising (and therefore foregrounding rather than pushing back) Regina's valued identities. In settings where such recognition did not take place, silence and withdrawal, rather than willingness to communicate WTC, underwrote Regina's way of being and acting. But, like WTC in later stages of her life story, Regina's silence, too, happened in a particular context, in a particular relationship, rather than outside of them (cf. Morita, 2004). On the other hand, Darcy's L2 WTC was absent and resided in her will so powerfully that, although it allowed room for relational interventions, her L2 WTC was overshadowed by avoidance strategies, capable of diminishing every genuine opportunity for L2 communication. She was projecting her powerfully constructed identity of being an 'alien', and she obviously wanted this identity to be seen by others; in this particular context, it was, by its very own nature, against becoming socially embedded and receiver of a supportive relationship. All those elements that constituted her 'iceberg', she wanted to remain submerged, and they did to the detriment of her own learning. For Aria, L2 WTC did not happen as often as it should, despite the lavish opportunities given to her by the teacher on various occasions, because she was victimised by false cognition and she was unable to see those opportunities. If she had embraced and invested more in that relationship (among others – e.g. other students), which she obviously needed, she would not have become socially isolated and resistant to L2 communication, but rather she would have become a member of the classroom microcosm and thus, participated more in L2 interactions other than the ones which invoked only one aspect of her identity (i.e. transportable identity). Serena and Stacey had similar identity goals, yet the two displayed different L2 WTC patterns. While Serena's L2 WTC happened occasionally, when the identity of the

“smart, educated, intelligent” became relevant in this particular context and within these particular relationships, Stacey’s always present and prominent L2 WTC became absent and a threat to the other students’ cherished identities, which could have been equally materialised in the classroom context if the ‘shared implicit relationship’ (among the students) with ‘the other’ (i.e. Stacey) was allowed to be cultivated and translated into equal opportunities for classroom interaction for all students.

This does not mean that the past research on WTC or individual differences research in SLA has not produced valid insights into the phenomena of individuals’ WTC or, more broadly, to participate in L2 practices. Yet, the findings generated through this study show that those insights may have only allowed a glimpse of the tip of an iceberg. By bringing to the surface some of the hitherto hidden workings of WTC, this study has foregrounded at least three critical insights that might need to be accommodated more firmly into the mainstream WTC research. First, individuals’ WTC, whether understood as a more general ‘propensity’ or a dynamic moment-by-moment unfolding, must be seen as part of their larger story-telling practices which unravel across lifespans and lifeworlds. To this end, the recent signals towards a narrative turn in ID research in SLA (cf. Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015) represent a promising direction in advancing our understanding, especially if individuals’ complex and varied social settings in which they participate – and of which they make sense through their tellings, or in other words, larger parts of the previously hidden iceberg – are encompassed as relevant to the study of a more narrowly defined phenomena such as WTC. Sometimes these social and cultural realms are referred to as ‘figured or as-if worlds’ (cf. Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998) in which

“characters and actors are recognised, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others” (p. 52). Translated into the world of the classroom then, each world is populated by a group of agents (i.e. teacher, students), who participate in a restricted range of significant acts or changes of state (e.g. full participation, silence) as guided by particular set of forces (e.g. instrumental motivation) (Holland et al., 1998).

The second implication of the findings in this study, however, necessarily challenges the notion implied in the new narrative orientation to ID in SLA research, that the individuals’ story-telling can be understood as a temporary and spatial trajectory of their own accomplishment. Of course, this challenge is not new and has been part of the debate for decades, not only in the general field of applied linguistics, but also in L2 motivation research in particular, especially visible in the work of Bonny Norton (e.g. Norton, 1995; 2000; Darwin & Norton, 2015). The data in this study have confirmed that while the individual’s accomplishments and their own narrative fashioning of the so called ‘hero’ journeys (cf. Campbell, 1949/2008) must continue to be exposed and celebrated, the workings of the dialogue and relationships with others that allowed (and, equally significantly, that may have denied) these accomplishments must gain a much firmer place in theorising the psychology of L2 learning. We are in theoretical and methodological need to advance our appreciation of the beauty of the iceberg, but wanting to do so without understanding the ecosystems that contributed to its formation would miss an important part of the story: the one which shows how the iceberg came into being (or why it did not) in the first place.

The previous is closely connected with the third and final point that I wish to argue on the basis of this study's findings. A frequent response to limitations of research on individual differences in SLA (many of which have also been highlighted in this study) has been to pursue alternative theoretical routes on the account of incompatibility (see the debates around motivation and investment as an example of the tensions between psychological and sociological explanations of language learning phenomena). This, of course, is understandable and often fully justified. Seeing larger parts of the iceberg requires not only adding to one's conceptual repertoire, but essentially asks of a researcher to see differently: the tools that allow vistas of the iceberg rising above the water will hardly suffice as one ventures below the surface of the unseen. This shift in seeing has been reflected in my epistemological stance, which has differed significantly from the tradition typically deployed in WTC research. My claims about individuals' WTC in this thesis are made on the basis of a painstaking weaving together of multiple threads of individuals' narrative meaning making across their lifespans and life-worlds – not always visible in the moment but always present in it – rather than on the basis of their self-reported 'signing up to willingness' typically relied on by much of past WTC research. But while my epistemological stance has departed from the research practice in much of the psychologically-oriented research, I remain convinced of the need to build my critique from within. In other words, I see the findings in this study not as rendering the psychological perspective irrelevant, but rather as an opportunity to seek better and more responsible ways of accounting for human psychology, especially in contexts which afford both limited and limiting ways of telling one's own story. It is true that doing so may require a radical re-envisioning of the core of the domain's inquiry (cf. Kubanyiova, 2016) from seeing L2 WTC (just like any other

constructs within the traditional domain of inquiry), not as an ‘individual characteristic’ but rather as an emerging sense making, which can only happen in a relationship. This project compels me to conclude, therefore, that the study of L2 WTC, is not essentially a study of individual differences. By saying this, I do not deny the urgency to study human psychology in the context of language learning and teaching or, indeed, of the psychological constructs that have, after all, aided my own conceptual inquiry in this thesis. Instead, by calling for shifting the focus from individual characteristics to individuals’ meaning making inside their relationships with others in the world, I simply call for engaging with theoretical seriousness and methodological rigour with the final part of Ushioda’s (2009) already well-established ‘person-in-context *relational*’ view.

7.3 Implications for L2 pedagogy and language teachers’ professional development

The key insights which emerged from the current research implicated a number of issues for L2 pedagogy, with the aim to facilitate language learners’ L2 WTC and improve their L2 communicative competence. Above all, it is crucial for language educators to understand EFL learners as ‘persons’, recognising their unique experiences, histories, identities, motivations, goals and visions, which are not always visible, yet always present, to ‘travel’ with individuals in any context and in any relationship. The strong links between WTC, self and identity, in this study, provide empirical support for regarding EFL learners as “real people” rather than “theoretical abstractions” (Ushioda, 2009, p. 220). To this end, it appears that the language classroom should not be seen as an empty space to fill in the teaching hours but rather that practitioners and language educators should devote equal time and energy to

finding out more about their students. This important realisation brings learners' identities to the heart of the L2 learning process and L2 achievement. Of course, this is not new and is certainly well-documented (cf. Norton, 2000, 2013), however, the study's results provided strong evidence of how the chosen tasks allowed the majority of the participants (with the exception of Darcy) to negotiate and invest their identities. This suggests that teachers should pay particular attention, when designing L2 tasks, to allow active oral participation and to better understand students' stories. According to Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014), some useful suggestions might be: a) *language learning histories, autobiographies and narratives*, usually in the form of writing tasks. The use of guided-narratives is a potent drive for students to 'craft' their identities through their thoughts and imagination; b) the use of *photovoice* in the language classroom, a relatively new visual approach, during which students take pictures of situations, events or people they consider meaningful to them and, subsequently, they render their interpretations of why they are important in an oral or written form; c) *diaries*, in which students can report their struggles, worries or anxieties of learning an L2 in a particular context. This technique can be particularly useful in study abroad or in ESL contexts where students are subject to other issues, such as accommodation, work, or relationships; d) encouraging students to keep *reflective journals* in which they can reflect on their own learning process in class and attach their experiences and aspirations. In this way students interact with the materials and thus shape both the instructional input they are exposed to and their emerging identities (personal and academic); and e) teachers may wish to *become ethnographers of their own classroom* by observing and recording the dynamics in their L2 classroom in order to afford fuller accounts of their students' identities and lived experiences.

The present study also makes clear that the teacher is the key in constructing or equally inhibiting one's intention to speak in the target language. When students perceive their teachers as supportive and friendly, referred to as modelling (cf. Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003), it is possible that they will follow their lead. Thus, teachers should aim to 'build up' strong relationships among the people who are embedded in the classroom setting, not necessarily between teacher and student but also between student and others because only in transformative relationship and a supportive environment, L2 WTC is a likely expectation after all. Undoubtedly, learners may experience quite a long list of negative feelings when they become members of a group for the first time, such as L2 anxiety, inferiority, fear of not being accepted or restricted identity and freedom to express themselves. However, there are various ways with which language educators can reduce anxiety, combat silence and cultivate group cohesiveness. The key seems to be the promotion of *acceptance* amongst the students. For example, by learning about each other, promoting proximity, contact, interaction and cooperation. These kind of 'relationships' do help students bring out and negotiate their classroom identity and a sense of belonging to a learning community. This can be done in the form of life stories (a writing diary, an activity or a task) where students can exchange real information about themselves (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). The relational nature of L2 WTC, emerged from this study, implicates the significance of the relational interventions and communication between teacher and students which have the power to transform the classroom discourse and dynamics into genuine opportunities for L2 practices.

Another important dimension to promote good group dynamics and, thus, contribute to learners' L2 WTC, is the way of organising the classroom. For example, a circular seating arrangement, in contrast to the typical sitting in rows, commonly used in the majority of EFL classrooms (including the ones I observed), is likely to inculcate a positive effect on learners' overall language learning experience and convert impassivity and defiance into active participation and excitement – what has been called as the *social crux* (cf. Falout, 2013), which is defined as the “sustained connections between people through mutual engagement of imagination that sparks communities into learning and action” (p.133). In essence, both socialisation and substantial interaction within a group are likely to vitalise mutual support, self-adaptive and self-regulatory behaviours (Falout, 2014).

However, as it also became evident, even if the conditions are right, an array of forces may obstruct learners' L2 WTC. This in turn implies that dealing with a single variable is far from capable of shaping one's WTC and combatting silence. This important realisation calls for the adoption of multi-strategy approaches (contextual and learner-internal) in teaching. As King (2013) rightly pointed out, in relation to silence, language educators seeking to achieve greater oral participation in class, will find themselves in a more favourable position should a multi-strategy approach be adopted, because such an approach entails manipulation of multiple factors concurrently. He further argues that “if we try to alter just one variable relating to a learner's silent behaviour, there is a distinct possibility that a meaningful and prolonged modification towards increased oral production may not occur” (p.165).

Quite often, learners, misguided by ‘false beliefs’, appear convinced that becoming successful and competent language speakers is out of their reach, and they see no point in trying. In their book on building vision in the language classroom, Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) have reflected on this situation from the vision perspective. They suggest that one of the key actions concern helping these ‘pessimists’ to look beyond their negative experiences of learning, which often feed this helplessness and take a forward-pointing action by enabling them to form realistic expectations about their future L2 visions. This, they argue, can be an important step in making students' L2 futures plausible, and helping them to “get rid of the preconceived notions and prejudices that are likely to hinder L2 attainment. Without doing so, any visions developed might be unsubstantiated” (p. 91). One example of strategies they have proposed to this end is an integration of ‘case studies’ of both successful and unsuccessful language learners into the teaching materials. The data from the present research study could provide rich accounts for the development of such case studies. In other words, not only does this study point to the importance of helping students to create plausible images of their future L2 selves, but the empirical material this research project has generated can serve as the basis for the development of relevant teaching materials that can address this implication.

As the study’s findings make obvious, learners’ self is shaped by past learning experiences. This suggests that in order to better equip students for their future, teachers should pay particular attention to the retrospective processes that constantly “reconstruct learner’s past selves” (Falout, 2015, p. 47), because it appears that past selves may have the power to act as motivational self guides should they be manipulated properly by the teacher. While, triggering past events may certainly

prove to be problematic (e.g. in the case of memory distortion or a very negative language learning experience), teachers should help students resolve troubling events and try to stimulate the positive perspectives of one's past self. In other words, creating the conditions, which will allow students to reflect back on their personal pasts, may provide learners with positive mindsets for both themselves and the contexts they are embedded to, thus, notably contribute to their L2 development (Falout, 2015).

Finally, the study may also offer implications for reforms of EFL education in Greece and elsewhere. Despite the small number of participants that took part in this study, yet adequate to provide rich contextualised data, the situations and experiences in which my participants were involved, either in their past or in the present, are likely to resonate in any EFL multicultural setting, in the current era of globalisation which calls for 'adaptations' in order to accommodate learner's needs. This implies that teachers should be aware of the profound inclusion of multicultural elements in their syllabus design and methodological approaches, more than before, and thus, reflect the 'current' classroom which is characterised by its diversity.

7.4 Limitations and directions for future research

Although the present study makes several theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions to our understanding of learners' L2 WTC, there are also several limitations, which mainly lie in its methodological dimension. Where appropriate, I will offer suggestions for future research in accordance with the limitations described. To begin with, the study could have benefitted from a slightly larger sample of both student and teacher participants. It should be noted here, that

while the relatively small sample size may pose a possible limitation regarding the issue of representativeness, the multicultural element incorporated in this study is likely to resonate in various EFL and ESL contexts, in Greece and beyond, which are now characterised by the 'beauty' of diversity, more than before, in today's globalised world. I must admit, however, that I was rather restricted in my choices for a richer sample size on various occasions. First, from the very beginning, I was granted access to only two of the six classes, which were taught by two different teachers, out of the four available English teachers. Subsequently, although I made the best effort to include more participants (I aimed for seven), the number was reduced to five because, while they largely honoured the purposive criteria (see Section 5.4.3), two of them had to be excluded for unspecified and unexpected reasons (hence the convenience sampling which after all played the most important role in determining the list of the key participants).

Another possible limitation is the amount of interview data. While I exploited all the critical incidents with subsequent stimulated recall interviews, and provided invaluable insights regarding the classroom behaviour, as a novice researcher, it would be fair to say that I could have extracted more fruitful data if I had used a different approach in my conduct (instead of using them more broadly as a way of shedding light on particular episodes in class), thus enhancing and strengthening the claims made in my reports. Having said that, in order to gain an even deeper understanding, I could have also incorporated in my research design, the instructors' point of view for every critical episode, instead of interviewing them in a more complementary way in the form of follow up interviews as the data analysis progressed. With these in mind, it would be wise to say that future research should

offer insights into teachers' perceptions of their students' L2 WTC and the classroom episodes they participate in.

While the choice of my sitting position was carefully considered in my effort to be inconspicuous and to avoid drawing unnecessary attention, it is worth noting that since I have done some pilot observations and thus gained habituation with the whole class, I could have sat in the front corner from the beginning of the observations and not changed seat only when a role-play occurred. This suggests that some important factors (e.g. student's faces during teacher-student interaction) may have remained uncovered.

The focus of the study was on L2 WTC in a specific context over one academic semester, which although it offered rich contextualised empirical evidence from diverse personal and educational histories, suggests undertaking a longitudinal observational study over an academic year and identifying why possible fluctuations might occur in learners' L2 WTC. The study also focused on 'the moments' during which L2 WTC came into being, a possible line of inquiry would be to focus on 'the moments' during which learners are UNWTC (unwillingness to communicate) in L2 and examine their 'silent' moments, which could be a real challenge for the researchers.

Finally, a person-in-context relational view serves a very useful conceptual metaphor in understanding and researching individuals' meaning making inside their relationships with others in the world, unearthing potential influences, which would otherwise remain hidden, and understand how these relationships are constructed,

shaped and contribute to a person's L2 WTC in the world of the classroom and beyond. Therefore, it seems particularly necessary to be integrated in future research which seeks to explore new avenues of L2 WTC, as well as other complex and multidimensional constructs.

7.5 Final thoughts

To conclude, the study set out to investigate the situated nature of L2 WTC in the EFL context from the Greek perspective. By adopting a person-in-context relational view as a theoretical and methodological lens, the study bridges different theoretical frameworks from self and identity theories, which, while undoubtedly differ in focus, appeared to complement one another in ways that contributed greatly to my understanding of the persons' L2 WTC in the classroom and thus, succeeded in painting a more holistic picture of the persons in their context, a 'relationship' which is after all far from one-directional. In line with this, the qualitative multiple case study design has demonstrated that L2 WTC is a rather complex and multidimensional construct, and how the invisible (the past) interacts with the visible (the present), and how both shape learners' here and now communicative actions. It is my hope, however, that the findings generated from this study did not merely allow a 'glimpse of the iceberg' but rather, perhaps, have brought to the surface some of the hitherto hidden dimensions of WTC and has therefore contributed to both SLA research in general and L2 WTC in particular.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Classroom material from Class A

Media says Obama knew US spied on Merkel

29th October, 2013



Several German news sources are questioning how much President Obama knows about the US spying on German Chancellor Angela

Merkel. The 'Spiegel' magazine reported that the USA's National Security Agency (NSA) started tapping Ms Merkel's mobile telephone in 2002, under the George W. Bush administration. It says President Obama knew that the tap was still in place as early as 2010, before he visited Berlin in June of that year to tell Germans of the warm friendship that existed between their two countries. A newspaper reported that the contents of Ms Merkel's SMS messages and phone calls went straight to the White House. The US Embassy in Berlin was used as a base for the surveillance.

The spying allegedly began when former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder was in office. US intelligence sources were suspicious of his refusal to support the second Iraq War. Obama told Ms Merkel last week that he had not known of the bugging. However, a media report cites an NSA official who said Mr Obama ordered the programme to be escalated. A document from the NSA warned of "grave damage for relations" if its spying programme was discovered. Ms Merkel is shocked that the USA may have engaged in the sort of spying she thought was a relic of the Cold War. She was also spied on in the former East Germany, before the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.

Sources: Die Welt / BBC / IB Times

Writing

Countries should never spy on the leaders of other countries. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

news sources / spying / mobile phone / administration / friendship / surveillance / intelligence sources / suspicious / bugging / escalated / Cold War / communism

True / False

- The article says American media is asking questions about the spying. T / F
- The USA may have started tapping Merkel's phone in 2002. T / F
- A magazine said President Obama knew about the spying from 2008. T / F
- The White House was used as the base for spying on Angela Merkel. T / F
- The spying supposedly began with Ms Merkel's predecessor. T / F
- Obama told Merkel he had known nothing about her bugged telephone. T / F
- A US agency warned spying could damage international relations. T / F
- Angela Merkel spied on other people before the Berlin Wall came down. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. sources | a. intensified |
| 2. tapping | b. cordial |
| 3. administration | c. headquarters |
| 4. warm | d. supposedly |
| 5. base | e. references |
| 6. allegedly | f. serious |
| 7. suspicious | g. ex- |
| 8. escalated | h. monitoring |
| 9. grave | i. doubtful |
| 10. former | j. government |

Discussion – Student A

- How might relations between Obama and Merkel be from now?
- What do you think the two would say to each other if they met?
- What "grave damages" might there be for the USA?
- Don't all countries spy on other leaders?
- Is spying today more prevalent than before?
- When do you think countries will stop spying on each other?
- What questions would you like to ask Angela Merkel?
- What do you think her answers might be?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. questioning how much | a. in the former E. Germany |
| 2. Obama knew that the tap was | b. damage |
| 3. the warm | c. for the surveillance |
| 4. the contents of | d. was a relic of the Cold War |
| 5. used as a base | e. of communism |
| 6. a media report cites | f. Ms Merkel's SMS messages |
| 7. grave | g. an NSA official |
| 8. the sort of spying she thought | h. President Obama knows |
| 9. She was also spied on | i. friendship that existed |
| 10. the collapse | j. still in place |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What should Barack Obama do to apologise?
- What do you think of the USA for spying on Germany's leaders?
- Should Germans be angry about this scandal?
- How damaging might the information from Ms Merkel's calls be?
- Should the German government move the US Embassy in Berlin?
- What questions would you like to ask Barack Obama?
- What do you think his answers might be?

Spelling

- German news cluesors
- German acnrloheCl Angela Merkel
- the George W. Bush motianrsditan
- the warm friendship that estxeid
- Ms Merkel's SMS smaseesg
- used as a base for the ialeuvnesrlc
- The spying lgaeldeyl began when...
- sicssiuuop of his refusal
- a media report siect an NSA official
- ordered the programme to be acdleaest
- a lrcei of the Cold War
- the collapse of oinucmsmm

Answers – Synonym Match

Role Play

Role A – Angela Merkel

You are furious with Barack Obama. Tell the others three reasons why. You want Mr Obama to apologise for his and his country's actions. He must appear in Berlin and say sorry to German people live on TV. He must also release all details of how the US spied on you.

Role B – Barack Obama

The spying is no big deal. All governments do it. You do not think you have to give any big apologies. The US did nothing wrong. Tell the others three reasons why you think so. Tell Ms Merkel she is over-reacting. Her government also spies on other leaders.

Role C – Head of US intelligence

You are angry the world found out about the tap on Angela Merkel's phone. Tell the others three reasons why. You think Barack Obama should stay silent on this issue. It will go away. Tell Ms Merkel that the tapping was OK because you didn't hear any of her secrets.

Role D – Head of German security

You are angry your security services did not prevent the tap on Angela Merkel's phone. Tell the others three reasons why. You think the USA must now give all details of its spying programme. Tell Barack Obama he must resign for agreeing to the tapping of Ms Merkel's phone.

Speaking – State security

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most important for state security at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| • military security | • environmental security |
| • political security | • food and water security |
| • economic security | • energy security |
| • security of borders | • cybersecurity |

Answers – True False

Appendix B: Classroom material from Class B

1.2 Real-time listening Qatar and Lebanon

A Activating ideas

1. What do you know already about the two countries, Qatar and Lebanon?
2. Study the maps and the photographs on the opposite page. What extra information do they give?

B Understanding an introduction

1. Read the information from the faculty handout on the right. What does *the geography of a country* mean? its location, ...
2. **1.4 [DVD] 1.A** Watch the first part of the introduction to the lecture. Make a list of the sections of the lecture.
3. **1.5 [DVD] 1.B** Watch the second part of the introduction. Complete the subheadings column of the handout.

C Understanding a lecture

1. **1.6 [DVD] 1.C** Watch the main part of the lecture. Work in pairs.
Student A: Make notes about Qatar.
Student B: Make notes about Lebanon.
2. Ask your partner for information about the other country and complete the handout.
3. Which country do you think has the higher Human Development Index? Why? **1.7 [DVD] 1.D** Watch the final part of the lecture and check your ideas.

Faculty of Human Geography

Does the geography of a country affect the human development of its population? In the next lecture, we compare countries and try to answer this question.

small countries:
Qatar and Lebanon

island nations:
Singapore and Tonga

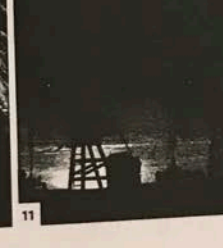
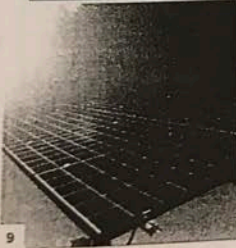
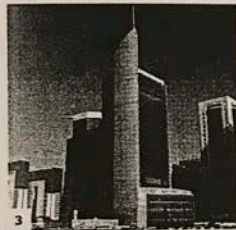
large countries:
Turkey and Chile

headings and subheadings	Qatar	Lebanon
1. Location		
1.1. Region		
1.2. Borders		
2. Population		
2.1.		
2.2.		
2.3.		
3. Land		
3.1.		
3.2.		
3.3.		
4. Climate		
4.1.		
4.2.		
4.3.		
5. Natural resources		
5.1.		
5.2.		
6. Human Development Index		

D Developing critical thinking

Compare the information about the countries for each area. Which parts of each country's geography affect its HDI figure?

12 Theme 1: Listening



Appendix C: Transcript Conventions

.	Falling final intonation
,	Contour of intonation
?	Questioning intonation
!	Exclamatory
:	Lengthening of sound
(.)	Every brief pause in less than a second
(3)	Pause in seconds
(xxx)	Unclear / Inaudible
(X)	Avoid identification
((laughs))	Non-verbal features
<er>	Fillers
[]	Researcher's comments
because	Emphatic
CAPS	Emphatic and louder
///	Overlaps
T	Teacher
S(1)/Ss	Student (x/y/z)/ Students

Appendix D: Life Story Interview Guide

Introduction

This is an interview about your life story and more specifically your language learning story. As a social scientist, I am interested in hearing your story. The main focus of this interview is going to be on your language learning story, but I would like you to tell about other things as well, including some of the most important things that have happened in your life and how you imagine your future. The story is selective; it does not include everything that has ever happened to you. I will ask you to focus on a few key things in your life – a few key scenes, people and ideas. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. I will guide you through the interview so that we finish it all in about 1 hour or less. It is important for you to understand that my purpose in doing this interview is not to figure out what is wrong with you, to judge you or make you feel uncomfortable. The interview it's only for research purposes, and its main aim is just to hear your story. Everything you tell me is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. Thank you so much for your participation and I hope that you will enjoy this interview.

Get to know you

At this stage I would like get to know you a bit better. I just want you to tell me a small summary about yourself. Who is 'Giota'? Just tell me anything that best describes you as a person.

Chapters

To begin with, we will divide your life into three main chapters. Since the focus of this interview is on your language learning story, in order to help you, the chapters are ready made for you, as follows:

1st Chapter: when you started school

2nd Chapter: at the school

3rd Chapter: after school

Key scenes in your life story

Now that we have divided your educational/language learning life into these specific three chapters, I want you to focus on specific key scenes, incidents, episodes or events that took place at a particular time and place. Please also remember to mention any other key life scenes/incidents/episodes/events that took place during these chapters. I want you to do that for every chapter. In other words, I want you to focus on moments in your life story that for specific reasons (e.g. good, bad, vivid, memorable) are important or significant in your life. Please try to be specific.

According to your mentioned scenes/incidents/episodes/events in each of your chapters, I want you to name, for each chapter, a:

- High point: a scene, episode, or moment in your life that was a positive experience.
- Low point: the opposite of the first; a bad experience. Even though it may be unpleasant, I would appreciate if you could provide as much detail as you can about it.
- Turning point: a specific key scene/moment/episode that marked an important change in you or your life and which you now consider as a turning point in your life.

In addition, I want to tell you that for each key scene/incident/event/episode you mention in your chapters I will ask you to describe in detail what happened, when/where it happened, who was involved, what you were thinking and feeling, why you think this scene is important/good/bad, what does this specific scene say about

you as a person or your life and finally why it is a high point, a low point or a turning point. Please try to be specific. In the last part, when we finish all the chapters of your life, I will ask you choose (out of the mentioned ones) the highest point, the lowest point and the most turning point of your life story.

Challenges

I want you to consider any challenges, struggles or problems you have encountered in your life. Some examples as themes are: a life challenge, a failure at school/college or a regret. You can also use anything else that you consider as a challenge, a struggle or a problem.

Now, we're going to talk about the future.

Future scenario

Now tell me about how you imagine your future. I want you to tell me about your dreams, hopes, plans and goals for the future. What do you hope to accomplish in the future? How you imagine yourself in some years from now?

Reflection

We are almost done with this interview. The last thing that I would like you to do is to reflect about today's interview. What you were thinking, how you felt during the interview? Did something bother you? Did you feel uncomfortable talking about yourself? Any other comments that you would like to add about the interview process/stages?

Appendix E: Sample Interview Data from Life Story Interviews

(Life Story Interview with Regina, 18/11/2013)

This is an interview about your life story and more specifically your language learning story. As a social scientist, I am interested in hearing your story. The main focus of this interview is going to be on your language learning story, but I would like you to tell about other things as well, including some of the most important things that have happened in your life and how you imagine your future. The story is selective; it does not include everything that has ever happened to you. I will ask you to focus on a few key things in your life – a few key scenes, people and ideas. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. I will guide you through the interview so that we finish it all in about 1 hour or less. It is important for you to understand that my purpose in doing this interview is not to figure out what is wrong with you, to judge you or make you feel uncomfortable. The interview it's only for research purposes, and its main aim is just to hear your story. Everything you tell me is voluntary, anonymous and confidential. Thank you so much for your participation and I hope that you will enjoy this interview. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask me anytime. Now, to begin with, as I have already said, I would like to get to know you a little bit better. What I need is a small summary about yourself. Who are you? Just tell me anything that best describes you as a person.

R: (4) <um> (.) /yeah/ (.)

G: /Why are you smiling/?

R: I don't know (.) it's a bit strange (.) Who am I ???

G: Yes (.) just a small summary about you (.) I can give an example about me like (2)

[here I narrate an example]

R: My name is (X) I am 30 years old (.) I have a family (.) I have three children (.) I am (6) quite suspicious as a person and this is because I was fooled many times in the past because I used to trust people a lot (.) I'm very stubborn and what makes me even more stubborn is when others tell me that I will not make it and I will not succeed in something (.) I have targets and when I have a target I will make it for sure. (8) (xxx) I'm studying at (I) and I'm studying psychology (.) I do it because I like it and I want to try and understand other people and what happens around me (.) I do it for me most importantly (.) and I do not care what others think.

G: I would like to know how you ended up here in Greece?

R: <Uh> (.) as an immigrant (.) because my parents were looking for something better for their family (.) They didn't like some things in their country and they wanted a better future for us too.

G: At what age?

I was seven years old (.) I started here but then I did it part time in (X).

G: Let's start with the chapters (.) if you remember I told you that we will divide your life into three chapters (.) The first chapter is when you started school (.) when you were little (.) whatever you can remember (.) ok ? Then the second chapter when you were at the school (.) and the final chapter after school (.) I want you to focus on specific key scenes, incidents, episodes or events that took place at a particular time and place. I want you to do that for every chapter. In other words, I want you to focus on moments in your life story that for specific reasons (e.g. good, bad, vivid, memorable) are important or significant in your life. Please try to be specific. In addition, according to your mentioned scenes/incidents/episodes/events in each of your chapters, I want you to name, for each chapter, a (.)

High point: a scene, episode, or moment in your life that was a positive experience (.)
a low point: the opposite of the first; a bad experience. Even though it may be unpleasant, I would appreciate if you could provide as much detail as you can about it (.) and (.) a turning point (.) a specific key scene/moment/episode that marked an important change in you or your life and which you now consider as a turning point in your life. For every key scene/incident/event/episode you mention in your chapters I will also ask you to describe in detail what happened, when/where it happened, who was involved, what you were thinking and feeling, why you think this scene is important/good/bad, what does this specific scene say about you as a person or your life and finally why it is a high point, a low point or a turning point. Please try to be specific (.) Finally, in the last part, when we finish all the chapters of your life, I will ask you choose (out of the mentioned ones) the highest point, the lowest point and the most turning point of your life story (if there is one). Hope that's clear and of course, I will help you during this interview (23) (xxx) so let's start with the first chapter now (.) You did first grade here in Greece?

R: No (.) first and second grade half in (xxx) and then in Greece (.) and I did first grade all over again (4) I was in the first grade in (year) (.) I was living in a village (.) there was a lot of racism

G: Tell me about it (.)

R: (.) apart from the children (.) because (.) maybe their parents teach them about these things (.) I felt racism especially from teachers (.) who are educated people and you do not expect something like that (.) for example I still remember my first day in class (.) they asked me to sit with another foreigner (.) of course I didn't mind that (.) but (.) for 2 years I was isolated nobody played with me (.) I remember the teacher asked me to show her my hands and she told me "don't you have six fingers?" (.) and

I said why should I have six fingers ? (.) ‘Did you have a house in Albania?’ “Didn’t you live under a bridge?” (.) and I said of course I had a house and I was living in the city and it was nice (.) Although I thought that it’s a village and a small society so things will be better [without racism] I realised that it was actually worse (.) then (.) the village’s newspaper wrote about me that I am the best student at language with a good behaviour and this motivated me a lot in order to prove them that they were wrong [for mistreating because of her nationality] (.) that was worst experience for me (.)

G: (.) o: god (.) this experience must have been really tough for you

R: They didn’t invite me to any parties or something (.) during breaks I was alone (.) nobody played with me (2) I remember back then my only friend was a small puppy (3). Then I came to Greece (.)

R: How were the things here? Better?

R: A little bit (.) yes (.) but again there was racism (.) when I was playing with other children and then they asked me where I come from and I said my home country (.) then (.) they stopped playing with me (.) but I had some friends (.) very good friends (.) especially one (2) who helped to overcome all these things (.) now (.) regarding school a positive and a negative experience (.) one negative that I still remember is when I copied one exercise in mathematics and the teacher found it out (.) so she asked me to stand up on the board and do the exercise which I didn’t know and she slapped me (.) and another thing but a good one was in my fifth and sixth grade I had a really good teacher and whenever I was telling him that I hadn’t studied (.) he didn’t believe me and he was telling me ‘come on, stand up and tell me the lesson’ (.) and I did it (.) I don’t know (.) but somehow I knew the lesson (.) maybe because I was paying attention to the delivery because he was really good with me and he was

saying very good things to my mother about me (.) and this was a kind of a good push for me (.) To never give up and try.

G: What about your English? When you started?

R: (3) at school (.) and some extra private classes at primary school during fourth and fifth grade (.) but some (.) because it depended on my mother's financial (.) so in total three years or something.

G: ok let's go to the second chapter.

R: (.) secondary in Greece everything was good (.) I didn't have any issues (.) I wasn't the best (.) I passed though (.) I had problem with ancient Greek and back then I didn't have any private lessons or any kind of help (.) what I knew was only from school (.) I remember that here we lived at a very small house and often it was impossible to study (.) but my huge motivation to succeed because of what I went through didn't stop me and I was studying even in the toilet (16).

G: Any English?

R: Nope (.) nothing really special (.) just what we did at school (.) we couldn't afford extra lessons.

G: Are there any turning points? If not, let's talk about high school

R: No nothing (.) high school I did it part time in Albania (.) it was kind of an open high school open (.) I was living in Greece and a bit in Germany (2) they just give you what to study and the dates and you go there just for the exams (10) before I finish I met my husband and we got married (.) then the children (.) everything was great at the beginning but then carefree time finished other things and problems came up (.) and sometimes I wish I could turn back time in order to do some things that I didn't do.

G: For example? Other decisions?

R: I regretted for my studies and what I didn't do (.) I didn't complete my dream so I started thinking about studying again.

G: After how long you decided to study?

R: it was always in my mind (.) when I was thinking that I am quite happy (.) I was thinking that something it's missing in my life and that I want to study something (.) but I had my children and I didn't have somebody to take care of them but (.) when my first child grew up then I decided to ask for information about studies and so I started lessons in order to get to a Greek university but (.) I needed to get the certificate of competence in Greek (.) this is a requirement for immigrants but at the end I went to the college because I had some issues with my papers.

G: You decided to attend the college but you knew that everything was in English (.) did that scare you? Because you told me that you stopped learning English you just did some at school and no diplomas or something.

R: I was afraid at the beginning but they told me that the first courses will be in Greek and after two years the courses will be in English (.) so I said ok (.) And they will give the opportunity to take my time and learn the language (.) besides he had English three times a week in total 8 hours which was more than enough and I also have some extra lessons until now (.) a private lesson.

G: Are you telling that what I have seen in the classroom is just past knowledge and what you did during primary school and a bit of secondary?

R: yes

G: then you are perfect congratulations (.)

R: well yes (.) there is one good thing with me (.) if I learn something I will never forget it I learn it (.) but when I don't if it's not inside my mind then no (.) however, from time to time I did some private lessons (.) but because it was from time to time it

was like nothing actually so that was my only help around 2-3 years before I start the college.

G: So do you like the language?

R: yes (.) I love it and I want to learn it (.) that's why I try.

G: that's why you are so active? Do you do that only with English or with other classes as well?

R: yes I am like this in all of my classes if I like the subject (.) If it gives me some kind of motivation (.) I want the lesson to include participation, conversations, I want exercises I want the T to ask questions to everybody not only one person (.) for some others this is boring but for me it's great (.) teachers' role in the classroom is really important (.) I am the parent I teach them behaviour but the teacher transforms that and he/she gives it shape.

G: Ok (.) good (.) now I want you to consider any challenges, struggles or problems you have encountered in your life. Some examples as themes are: a life challenge, a failure at school/college or a regret. You can also use anything else that you consider as a challenge, a struggle or a problem. Is that clear?

R: Look in my opinion there is no failure as such (.) it's not actually a failure something that happened at school (.) actually I do not think that somebody is a loser because he doesn't study much (.) but for somebody who studies then yes we could name it as a failure because this person tried (.) a failure in terms of disappointment for me is for example when I was waiting a better grade at the test and I didn't get it (.) I was expecting something better and it was really bad because of the age (.) the group (.) I tried (.) but of course some days ago I had some big family issues so that affected my study.

G: Now tell me about how you imagine your future. I want you to tell me about your dreams, hopes, plans and goals for the future. What do you hope to accomplish in the future? How you imagine yourself in some years from now?

R: (2) I know that I will succeed one day (.) and I want to tell them that I made it (.) this is what I am (.) I am what I am (.) I want to become a very good user of English (.) and my dream is to become a psychologist (.) For example at a conference and give a speech and (.) have 200-300 people to look at me (.) and I want to make my mother proud of me because of what we have been through (5)

G: I hope that for you and I am sure you will make it (.) I can see that for sure (.) finally, I would be really happy if you could give me some feedback. We are almost done with this interview. The last thing that I would like you to do is to reflect about today's interview. What you were thinking, how you felt during the interview? Did something bother you? Did you feel uncomfortable talking about yourself? Any other comments that you would like to add about the interview process (.) stages?

R: No (.) it was fine (.) I liked that I went back a little bit which is something that I always think (.) I could have written a book (.) so it was ok (.) and it is not bad to share your experiences with other people (.) it's good to share your story and maybe (.) help other people to think that they are better than they think because there are worse things in the world.

G: Ok (.) thank you very much for one more time (.) that was the end.

Appendix F: Sample Stimulated Recall Interview

(Stimulated Recall Interview with Stacey, 01/11/13)

G: I am going to talk about some events that took place in the classroom and I want you to recall and reflect on these events. If you do not understand what I mean please feel free to ask.

S: ok

G: good (.) ok, now let's listen to this event [played the recorded episode]

G: So, what can you tell me about this incident? Why you wanted to interrupt her?

A: (.) I did that because I wanted to help her and find the correct word (.) I did that because I realised that this student doesn't speak English a lot (2) I know that English is not her of course mother tongue (1) she is from Libya but also I think that this specific student doesn't care a lot (1) for example (1) she is missing from many lectures so ok I want to take part and not spend so much time on waiting (.)

G: how you feel when the teacher said let her speak or when the teacher says "not you again" "someone else"?

S: not so bad now (.) the first lectures I wanted to talk so (.) let's speed up because we are so back and I feel bored (.) For example (.) today I was a little bored when the teacher asked some students who didn't care (.) who didn't pay attention (.)

G: How important is teacher's opinion to you? Does it matter?

S: YES! Yes (.) of course it's a big motivation for me (.) to become better

G: What's your position in this class? How do you feel?

S: I do not feel like the leader I just I want to do my job I want to get an A to every course and that's why I am here I do not want to waste my money for nothing

G: ok I see. Thank you. Now, one last question. Today also I noticed that you were struggling with a word but you didn't give up. Do you generally do that?

A: yes (.) I put pressure to myself to find it because for all these things I said

G: Good (.) So, I would like to thank you for one more time and I'll see you soon

S: ((laughs) (.) no problem (.) Bye Bye (.)

Appendix G: Interview guide with the teachers

GENERAL QUESTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of students• Nationalities• Ages• Majors/ Field of Study• Level• Course Objectives/ Goal objectives• Material/ Syllabus• Grades/ Exams/ Next level of Academic English
TEACHER A
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How did you become an English Teacher/ How did you decide• Why did you want to become a teacher in the first place? Intentional/ Accidental• Teaching Experience• What do you like about teaching?• What is the best lesson for you? What happens in those lessons?• Teacher's general approach to teaching multicultural classrooms• What do you actually appreciate in your students? When do you feel disappointed? • Background /Studies • Multicultural experiences as a Teacher/ as a Student • Significant experiences/ Positive or Negative • Feelings and Perceptions of working with foreigners • Class A in particular/ Perception/Feelings • What about Regina/ Role-playing • What about Darcy/ use of L1

TEACHER B

- Tell me about you background as an English Teacher/ Studies/ Experience
- Teaching approach/ Classroom management
- Perceptions about the good language learner
- What can you tell me about student X?
- What about (Aria, Serena, Stacey's) academic achievement?
- Why you think (Aria, Serena, Stacey's) participated or did not participate in the lesson?

Appendix H: Sample Interview with Teacher A

G: How did you become a teacher? How did you decide to become a teacher?

T: I decided to become a teacher because I think that the classroom is an environment (.) with surprises and I like surprises in the workplace (.) I would never imagine myself working (2) at a desk (.) in front of a computer all the time (.) So (.) teaching actually (3) combines two of my loves (.) the for children and (.) the love for languages

G: How long have you been teaching?

T: **20** years!!

G: Can you please give me information about your professional background? Your studies for example?

T: Yea, (.) I am (.) I have a bachelors degree in Translation (.) from a Greek University (.) and I've got another bachelors degree in Marketing and Management (.) from an American University (.) my (.) and I did my MA in a British University in TESOL (.) That's my academic background.

G: So, in general, becoming a teacher was intentional or accidental?

T: Intentional (.) yes

G: During your studies, during you first degree, where there any specific moments where you made that decision, I mean to become a teacher?

G: Not at first well (.) because (.) well (.) I went into translation because I love languages (.) then I discovered that I also love children because I had already (.) I was already doing some teaching during my studies (.) So (.) when I discovered that these could be like the perfect combination (.) that's when I decided to go into teaching.

G: During you bachelor studies did you have any multicultural experiences?

T: <um> (2) No (.) because (.) even when I was in the American college (.) it was in Greece and all my classmates were Greeks (.) of course in the Greek University everybody was Greek (4) as far as the teachers are concerned (.) **yes** (2) cause I did have some Americans (.) some British <er> (2) in both schools (.) yes.

G: Do you recall any significant experiences that helped you to develop your multicultural attitude?

T: <Er> (.) No (.) not at university because back then <er> in Greece (.) well Greece was (2) a more closed kind of society we didn't have immigration yet from other Balkan countries (.) it was still communism regime and (.) we were surrounded by communist countries (.) so (.) if you wish Greece was only Greeks (.) and the very few teachers that actually <um> taught in Greece were Americans and British but I wouldn't call that a multicultural experience (.) I have that experience once I started working for the college (.) That's when I started having a multicultural experience but as a teacher.

G: As a student?

Yes I did (.) actually for my Greek bachelor in translation I had to do an obligatory six months seminar (.) abroad the problem and I went to France was (.) However (.) again I was surrounded by Greeks because we were like the Greek classmates of that university (2) So (.) ok I had some contact with the French people but I wouldn't call like an all round multicultural experience.

G: During that period where any specific moments, as a foreigner, where you struggled? or enjoyed these experiences?

T: No (.) absolutely not (.) but then again (.) I had been in France before and I had friends in France (.) so (.) if you wish I was somehow accustomed to the French

culture (.) it was enjoyment all the way (.) I had problems with the other Greeks (.) not with the French ((laughs))

G: Did you have any problems with the language?

T: No (.) and actually I started out as a teacher of French not as a teacher of English

G: What about during your Masters since you did it at a British university, what about your experiences there?

T: Well (.) the classmates came from different countries (.) the only thing is that I did it online (2) which means that yes we did a seminar and I did meet the other classmates and my teachers in England but it was not again an all round multicultural experience (.) in the sense I wasn't based in England but I was based in Athens (.) so (.) we went there for the summer seminar and it was a great experience <um> (3) multicultural in the sense that (2) there was only one other Greek person (.) all the rest were Americans (.) they were Canadians (.) British of course (.) we were almost the same age because I did my MA when I was a bit older (.) so (.) at the beginning I was afraid like I was going to be the o:ld person in the class but I wasn't <um> but that was about it.

G: After you Masters and apart from the college, what about now? You also teach at the university of (X) in the pre-sessionals, what can you tell me about it? You should meet many new people from other countries?

T: **A lot** (.) Not only the colleagues but especially the students (.) like 90% of them are Chinese (.) Japanese (.) Thai, Arabs and this is even more interesting because at the college (.) whatever other nationality I've got in the classroom, I still have some Greeks but here the students are non Greek completely (.) and with a culture that is totally different because at the college I've got mostly Europeans and from The Balkan Countries (.) When we talk about the Chinese (.) The Thai this is like

completely different so if we are talking about multicultural experiences I think that the one I've been having for the past 3 years here can be described as the most multicultural experience I've ever had (.)

G: Before you start working at the college, did you have as a teacher any multicultural experience?

T: No, because before I start at the college I was working in another school and we no immigrants in Greece so it was an all Greek class.

G: So, your first contact was when you started at the college?

T: <Yeah>, which was 14 years ago.

G: How did you feel? Were you comfortable? Working with people from other nationalities?

T: Well I loved that and back then there were something like 20 different nationalities (1) today it's not that (1) we had even Koreans lot of Arabs (.) today it is not the same things we mostly get Albanians or from the Balkan countries in general (.) We had a lot of Turks and (.) It was a challenge at the beginning because I was not used to it but it was so so nice to discover new cultures and having to adapt teaching to different cultures as well

G: and why did you like it? What was the reason?

T: You see (.) Because I love teaching other cultures anyway as a person and if this becomes part of the job so much the better (.)

G: Let's talk about now this specific class I observed. Before we go there I would like to ask you one or two more things. So, can you please tell me what do you like? What do you enjoy about teaching? In other words what is the best lesson for you? What is the worst?

T: My worst thing is demotivated students and I think that is every teacher's nightmare and my best thing would be the exact opposite the very motivated students
(.)

G: When do you feel disappointed? As a teacher?

T: It again has to do with motivation. When I have demotivated students I try my best to motivate them through different kinds of approaches (.) methods, I involve them and ask them what they want to do etc. and when they are still demotivated. That's when I become really really disappointed (.)

G: What do you actually appreciate in you students?

T: The fact that they want to make the effort I do not care if they are active participants and if they are coming with a low level of English from the one expected (.) But if I see them really really try hard that's what gives me the energy to do even more (.) even if they do not always make it (.) even if they make mistakes (.) If a person works or has a family (2) I had mothers of small children and they were willing to make the effort (.) now if we go into the personality to tell you the truth I see my students as learners (.) I try to close my eyes to certain personality characteristics (.) we are human being sometimes students you know sometimes some students will win you over more than others but if you disregard the ones that (2) with whom you don't have the chemistry so much (2) it will become a problem in the classroom so yes I **do** like some students more than others but I try to think of all of them as **learners** (.)

G: what about Regina? Do you remember Regina?

T: <O:> I remember Regina (.) Regina is **still** among my **favourite** students and she was actually (.) <eer> she was **exactly** as you described her and I have to tell you that she was the **weakest** student when we started the class but you see (.) she had an

advantage others didn't (.) she had the maturity (.) she was older in age <er> (.) she has a family three children <um> (.) so: when she came into the college she was **determined** to make it (.) her level English was very very low (.) actually (.) at the beginning she had suggested to be out at a lower level a:nd when I talked to her I said: well I (.) I said look (.) stay here for a couple of weeks a:nd we will see how it goes because (.) I mean (.) could see that she was a mature student willing to make the effort (.) and she is also as a personality a very daring person (.) she doesn't mind making mistakes <um> (.) she is like a (2) powerful person (.) a passionate person (.) she is not shy at all (.) so (.) **all** of those personality traits combined together and made her improve her English a lot **because** she was that talkative and participative

G: Why did you let her stay in you class? Did you see something? What did you see?

T: Yes (.) you know after so many years of experience you develop a sort of a feeling as you see your student (.) how he or she behaves in classroom you know where that student could go or could not go (.) and I could see that Regina could do it (.) she wouldn't have a problem coping with the class (.) but that had to do with the personality traits I mentioned <er> but also it had to do with my feeling (.) my gut feeling after so many years in the classroom..

G: Do you remember the first role-play? With Merkel and Obama? Why did you choose Regina before any other student? Do you remember why you did that?

T: Yes I do (.) <um> at that time Merkel was not the Greeks favourite person (.) and (.) I was afraid that nobody would want to play her (.) in the role play (.) however it would be interesting as a role play that is why I chose it (.) and because of Regina's personality (.) I thought at that point that would be the only one to really cope with the role ((laughs)).

G: What about Darcy? Do you remember her?

Oo yes I do (.) Actually when you asked me about personality of my students if plays a role that would be one of the persons I do not count the personality because she has a very negative one (.) she is very sarcastic (.) she thinks she know everything **but she doesn't** and actually I made a great effort to include her (.) I mean it was not the first time I ever had to have such a student but these are really hard to include in class because you do not like them and if they were up to you (.) you would kick them out of the class but you can't and the student must not realise that is how you feel about him or her however, as you said she wasn't very talkative and from point onwards (.) she was in a class that was very strong that they wanted to participate in general and also they were very friendly to each other **except for her** she was sort of an outcast the whole class in general so the reason what she didn't actively involved her she didn't want to I tried to involve her somehow but to tell you the truth I left her to her own devices because I was afraid that I would have the opposite results If I pushed too hard but definitely not a likeable person. Her level of English was **a lot** better than Regina (.) a lot better but and most probably she thought that she deserved to have been placed to a higher level maybe she felt that wasn't for her level (.)

G: I remember you telling her all time in English please?

Yea (.) that's <eer> (.) I am sure you've come across the student personality who wants to challenge you (.) who wants to show that (.) look (.) I am the bright person here (.) I am the leader here not the teacher (.) and she did that (xxx).

G: I would like to thank you one more time for your kind help.

Appendix I: Participant Information sheet

Participant information sheet

Study title:

An investigation of the situated nature of Willingness to Communicate in the Greek EFL classroom context. 'A person-in-context approach'.

Researcher:

Panagiota Nikoletou, PhD researcher, School of Education, University of Birmingham

Research Supervisor: Dr Maggie Kubanyiova, Lecturer in Educational Linguistics, School of Education

You are being invited to take part in the research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

1. What is the purpose of the study?

The study aims to investigate language learners' willingness to communicate in a second language (L2 WTC) in the Greek English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom context. More specifically, the main aims of this research are:

- To enrich understanding of willingness to communicate in the Greek context from a person-in-context approach and uncover the dynamics of L2 WTC.
- To help EFL learners understand their own L2 WTC and improve their communicative competence in L2.
- To improve English as a foreign language teaching (EFL) in Greece and in other similar contexts. As well as enable language teachers to manage classroom interactions in ways that are supportive of the students' L2 WTC in the L2 classroom.

2. Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to take part in the current study by the virtue of being an undergraduate EFL student at a college in Greece. Additionally because as Greek student you share a common educational and English as a foreign language learning experience in order to represent the general experience of EFL learning in Greece.

3. Do I have to take part?

Participation in the research is strictly voluntary. *It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. Should you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. Should you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. **The deadline for requesting withdrawal is 30/05/2014, and your data will be removed from the study if you contact me on or before this date.** It is important to note that whatever you choose to do, this will have no impact on your marks, assessment or future studies.*

4. What will happen to me if I take part?

By agreeing to be involved in this study you agree to participate in the following research process during your academic year of studies (i.e. approximately 32 weeks):

- Classroom observations

I will visit your class approximately twice a month in this academic year and would like your permission to observe, take field notes and audio-record your interaction in the class.

- Language learning autobiographical interviews

You will take part in an interview where you will talk about your current studies and level of English, background language learning experiences,

history and environment, beliefs and some information about you as a person, etc. I would like to record our conversation after obtaining your permission.

- Questionnaire

You will be invited to complete a questionnaire during the research period. The questionnaire is going to be about the impact of a wide range of L2 classroom interaction microcontexts on your L2 WTC.

- Follow-up interviews

During some of the classroom observations you may be chosen to take part in follow-up interviews in which I will ask you to tell me more about specific classroom events and provide further explanation on your own behaviours. I may ask you some further clarification questions to help me to understand better your behaviour in the specific lesson.

Please note that you have right to refuse to answer any question when you are interviewed, you do not have to answer all interview questions if you do not wish to do so. It is also important for you to realise your right to withdraw from the study for whatever reason. You will be able to contact me directly to request withdrawal from the study. My contact details are at the end of this participant information sheet. However, please be aware that the deadline for requesting withdrawal is 30/05/2014, and your data will be removed from the study if you contact me on or before this date.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part? (where appropriate)

I have not identified any potential disadvantages and risks to you for taking part in the study. It is important for you to understand that any information about you during the study will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous and that *whatever you choose will have no impact on your marks, assessments or future studies.*

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

- You will have the opportunity to reflect on your own language learning experience, find out about your current strengths and weaknesses and understand your willingness to engage in a range of interactional situations involving English (or another L2), which will be helpful for the general development of your English language skills.
- As an undergraduate student, you may find it useful for your future studies to experience and learn about research. You will gain knowledge conducting a research project and familiarising yourself with a range of research instruments and terminology, which can be helpful for your future studies.
- I will also be happy to provide information about my life and learning/cultural experience in the UK and offer guidance or useful resources for your future studies and I will organise two workshops during this academic year which you will be welcome to attend if you wish.

7. Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

Anonymity and confidentiality of data will be ensured throughout the research process. Any identifiable code referring to your identity will not be recorded in transcribing and reporting data, e.g. your name, ID number, specific features that would enable identification – all of these details will be removed from any data that you provide, including transcripts of interactions, interviews and questionnaire. In addition, the data will be kept securely in paper and electronic form and no one else will have access to the full database apart from me. The data will not be displayed in any way and will not be shown to or discussed with other participants. Data will be used for research purposes (i.e. analysis and presentation in my PhD thesis) and dissemination in research articles and conferences. I am under no obligation to report anything you say that could be defined as illegal.

However, disclosure may be required if you were to say something that potentially indicated that you or someone else was at risk of harm. If you said something of this type I would inform the university or local authority immediately about the matter, wait for their response and follow their advice. You could then choose whether or not to continue taking part in the study.

8. What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research will be used in my PhD thesis. Findings will also be shared with professionals and academic researchers in applied linguistics, which will contribute to better understanding L2 WTC. If you would like to be informed about the results of the project, please state that at the end of the consent form and I will be happy to email you the results.

9. Who is organising and funding the research?

I'm conducting the research as a research student at the University of Birmingham, School of Education.

10. Who has reviewed the study?

This research project has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, University of Birmingham.

11. Contact for Further Information

Panagiota Nikoletou

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Academic supervisors

Dr. Maggie Kubanyiova

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, please contact the School of Education, University of Birmingham.

Thanks for taking time to read the information sheet. If it is possible for you to participate in the study, please sign the consent form in the following page

Appendix J: Consent Form

Consent Form

My name is Panagiota Nikoletou, a research student at the University of Birmingham, School of Education. I am conducting research in a project entitled: *An investigation of the situated nature of Willingness to communicate in the Greek EFL classroom context. A 'person-in-context' approach.*

I can be contacted at:

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Please read the following statements and tick the relevant boxes:

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may decide to withdraw, by the deadline specified in the information sheet, without giving any reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above study.

Please tick box

Please tick box

4. I agree to my L2 communicative activity in the classroom being audio recorded.
5. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.
6. I understand and accept the way my identity and data will be used, and that every effort will be made to protect my confidentiality.

No Yes

7. I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored (after it has been anonymised) and will form the basis of a report or other form of publication or presentation.

Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of Researcher Signature	Date	

Please send a report on the results of the project:

YES NO (circle one)

Address for those requesting a research report

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the project.

Appendix K: Ethical Approval for the research project

