Editorial

The objective of this special issue is to address how Information Communication Technologies can be used to teach Modern Greek more and effectively among the 4 million Greeks of the Diaspora. The contributed papers address pedagogical, usability, design and Interaction Design considerations for ICT approaches to language learning.

The first 3 papers analyze the theoretical frameworks for Computer Aided Language Learning (CALL) in the context of the Greek Diaspora. The next 3 papers analyze case studies of online, or blended Greek courses, their design considerations, and evaluation.

Kourtis-Kazoulis presents a bilingual project with sister classes in Canada teaching the Greek language to children of the Diaspora, and in Greece teaching local children English as a Second Language. This paper suggests ways in which ICT can be used to amplify language and identity in Greek schools in the Diaspora by adopting a transformative pedagogical orientation and a Framework for Technology Supported Academic Language Learning and Intercultural Exchange. The frameworks Kourtis-Kazoullis deals with are the language, identity and experiences of the students as well as the application of transformative pedagogy in the language classroom. The author suggests design enhancements to the project that would better support the weaker language of the sister class setting (in this case Greek).

Vlachos and Athanasiadis discuss the methodological and pedagogical conditions for the integration of networking activities in the foreign language curriculum. It uses the context of Greek Diaspora to analyze how online networking can contribute to learning a second/ foreign language curriculum and proposes asynchronous communication and Project work as a framework that can be used for the systematic integration of online interaction in the second/ foreign language programme of Primary schools.

Georgiakakis et al propose a framework for the analysis of the potentiality, and the evaluation of admissibility of Learning Management Systems (LMSs). They apply the framework on the most commonly used LMSs in a two step process: a) They explore the feature based utility of each system, and b) they evaluate their usability as an acceptance factor by the market. The analysis under this framework finds that not-surprisingly the most fully featured and usable products are also the most popular ones in their respective commercial and open source markets.

Lambropoulos and Christopoulou try to tackle the rigidity of the current educational system in the U.K. by proposing the use of Cultural-based Language Learning Objects (CLLOs) in a blended approach, for increasing interest in teaching and learning Greek language. The main aim of using CLLOs in a ubiquitous way is to introduce students in

the target culture as well as grammatical and structural phenomena of the Greek language in a way that they could enhance their interest in learning it. The authors support that the learning in Diaspora takes place into a 'grey zone' between the second and foreign language.

Damanakis and Anastasiades present a project aiming to train teachers abroad in teaching the Greek language to the Greek Diaspora, and foreigners interested in the Greek culture. They analyze the theoretical motivation for the design of the project. The paper focuses on the pedagogical components of the project, the theoretical background, the methodology and technological aspects, and how it was affected by the blended learning approach of the authors. Damanakis ad Anastasiades used a Web Based Learning Environment for the training of teachers of the Diaspora.

Paleologou presents a description of the current state and evaluation of a software package for teaching Greek to foreign immigrants in Greece. The evaluation of the usage of the software provides insights on ways to better deploy ICT to teach Greek to foreigners in Greece from both an Intercultural Education and a usability perspective.

Zaphiris et al present an online Greek course developed through participatory design and distributed constructionism. They evaluate the course and its evolution through the two design principles that guided its development, and how the students' constructions and participation in the course design affected the usage of the online course.

The editors of this special issue would like to acknowledge the help of all those involved in the collation and review process of the special issue, without whose support the project could not have been satisfactory completed. A further special note of thanks goes also to the editorial team of the Themes in Education journal, especially Dr. Tassos Mikropoulos, whose contribution throughout the whole process have been invaluable.

Thanks go to all those who provided constructive and comprehensive reviews. Namely to Dr. Giorgos Fakas from Manchester Metropolitan University, Dr. Sri Kurniawan from UMIST and Dr. Panagiota Gounari from University of Massachusetts Boston.

In closing, we wish to thank all the authors for their insights and excellent contributions in this special issue.

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