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A grounded theory of authenticity and quality constructions for ethnic restaurants: implications for effective marketing strategies

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Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for any other degree or qualification from this, or any other, University or institute of learning.

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Abbreviations

x

ANT	Actor Network Theory
CC	Constant Comparison
CCT	Consumer Culture Theory
eWOM	electronic Word Of Mouth
QCT	Quality Conventions theory
WOM	Word Of Mouth

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Abstract

Purpose: Authenticity and quality are important criteria in consumers' selection of food hospitality services and are therefore essential characteristics in the development of a competitive marketing strategy and service delivery. This thesis examines the concepts of authenticity and quality at the 'exchange intersection' through an analysis of Greek ethnic restaurants' constructions of authenticity and quality, and their consumers' perceptual and experiential perspectives on these.

Methodology: The research followed a Grounded Theory approach and used qualitative research methods, specifically in-depth interviews incorporating projective techniques to generate data from a cross-national sample of restaurateurs (n=19) and their consumers (n=23) in Greece and in the U.K. NVivo10 was utilised to facilitate the inductive and interpretive analysis.

Findings: Restaurateurs' constructed meanings of authenticity are shaped by their identities and experiences. A restaurant's authenticity is structured upon the ethnicity of the staff, the menu, origin of the ingredients and wine, décor of the restaurant, music and entertainment as well as the methods of cooking. Similarly, consumers construct meanings of authenticity based on their identities. These constructions are either pragmatic iconicity, ancestral indexicality or innovative iconicity. Indexical authenticity is of greater salience for consumers of the same ethnic origin as the restaurant. Both restaurateurs and consumers perceive authenticity as a synonym for quality. Ethnic restaurants' authenticity and quality meanings are transmitted via Word of Mouth (WOM) and electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) between actors.

Theoretical contribution: The thesis contributes to the literature on authenticity and quality by demonstrating how ethnic identities shape the salience of indexical and existential conceptualisations of authenticity. Consumers for example who share the same identity with the restaurant's theme are stricter with their judgements about the authenticity and quality of these restaurants. Relationships between authenticity and quality conventions, which were previously underdeveloped in Quality Conventions

theory (QCT), are explored. An integration of quality and authenticity is proposed via the identified additional authenticity convention category. More specifically, quality and authenticity integrated perceptions are outlined within the ethnic restaurants context for the first time. Drawing on Actor Network theory (ANT), the thesis discusses how these two meanings are transmitted in the communication network of restaurateurs and consumers via word of mouth or eWOM. ANT is enriched now with insights about the ethnic restaurants sector and also by adding quality and authenticity constructed meanings to the theory. Finally, according to the findings, within the communication network of consumers WOM is the most influential communication method for ethnic restaurants rather than eWOM and online feedback.

Managerial insight: The findings indicate how effective promotional methods, authenticity and quality perceptions can help restaurateurs to better engage with their customers while also respecting their culinary culture. Ethnic-themed restaurants are informal but powerful ambassadors for a country's culture. Certification or official authentication could help protect and promote these assets for cultural and financial benefits, and this is discussed.

Chapter 1 : Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Authenticity and quality are important criteria in consumers' selection of food hospitality services and are therefore essential characteristics in the development of a competitive marketing strategy and service delivery. This thesis investigates the constructed and experiential meanings of authenticity and quality by examining the 'exchange intersection' through an analysis of Greek ethnic restaurants' constructions of authenticity and quality, and their consumers' perceptual and experiential perspectives on these. In doing so, the research outlines the factors which attract and influence consumers' preference for ethnic restaurants and how restaurateurs can best meet their customers' expectations. The present cross-national study is based on qualitative research methods and draws on theories concerning quality conventions, actor networks, consumer culture and social identity.

This Chapter introduces the concept of authenticity as a basis for the thesis, and then the key objectives and research questions are outlined. Based on these objectives and questions the research design which guided the research approach and the thesis' theoretical framework is explained, and the structure of the thesis is outlined.

1.2 Authenticity, quality and Rationale for the Study

The term authenticity derives from the ancient Greek word "αυθεντικός", which means something trustworthy and original, not an imitation or imaginary (Cappannelli and Cappannelli, 2004). Authenticity remains an asset to consumers, who desire authentic businesses, brands, places and experiences (Kadirov et al., 2013; Schallehn et al., 2014; Lu et al., 2015). Consumers often express their values through the consumption of ethnic food or by possessing authentic objects, such as original art and traditional souvenirs (Schallehn et al., 2014; Assiouras et al., 2015). However, perceptions of authenticity are personal and elastic (Peterson, 2005). For instance, authentic ethnic food is perceived as an intangible heritage

(Bendegul Okumus *et al.*, 2007) and a personal aspect which connects consumers with their tradition, self-identity, values, religion and family heritage (Beverland, 2005; Bruhn et al., 2012; Assiouras et al., 2015).

The literature proposes three types of authenticity: the objective, the constructivist and the postmodern. For marketers, authenticity is often a strategy for differentiation and positioning (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Wood and Lego Muñoz, 2007; Lu et al., 2015) while for customers of ethnic restaurants numerous components seem to constitute authenticity: the menu, the decoration, the atmospherics, the use of traditional recipes, the food quality and so on (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Jensen and Hansen, 2007; Wood and Lego Muñoz, 2007; Ryu et al., 2008; Lego Muñoz and Wood, 2009; Tsai and Lu, 2012; Zeng et al., 2012).

Quality has been defined not as a solid and pre-fixed construction but a complex and multidimensional one, moulded by compromises, cultures, expectations and opinion-based perceptions (Babakus and Boller, 1992; Fotopoulos and Krystallis, 2003; Ponte, 2009). In other words, its meaning is shaped according to the identities of the actors and their social knowledge about a product (Allaire, 2010). Due to their elasticity and personal truth, the meanings of quality and authenticity often vary across regions, and for different interest groups; therefore, it is possible to have more than one, but typically positive, meaning (Ilbery and Kneafsey, 2000; Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004; Grayson and Martinec, 2004).

This thesis investigates how authenticity and quality are perceived for ethnic restaurants in the U.K. and if there are differences in perceptions and expectations of restaurants compared with those located in Greece, the country of origin. As the meanings of quality and authenticity are fluid in nature (Wang, 1999; Kim and Jang, 2016) the study assesses the factors which shape them, paying particular attention to identities.

Empirical social science research into authenticity (see for example Ebster and Guist, 2005; Jensen and Hansen, 2007; Wood and Lego Muñoz, 2007; Ryu et al., 2008; Lego Muñoz and Wood, 2009; Tsai and Lu, 2012; Zeng et al., 2012), has been limited to consumer perceptions about aspects of authenticity. In particular, there is a lack of prior research relating to

restaurateurs' perceptions of quality and authenticity (Zeng *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, the above research regarding authenticity was based on quantitative data collection, which ignored important concepts, such as the role of identity. Additionally, the need for a holistic investigation was recognised and, more specifically, how identities are expressed and impact on the constructions of and perceptions of authenticity and quality. Analysis of the role of identity was possible by conducting a cross-national study, where a variety of perceptions exists and the meanings are on-going and open-ended (Cavanaugh and Shankar, 2014).

The existing literature recommends research designs for authenticity should use a qualitative approach (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Brown, 2013; Rickly-Boyd, 2013) and cross-national study (Lu *et al.*, 2015) and in particular, in-depth and phenomenological interviews to investigate cultural perspectives and to explore authentic dining experiences (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Brown, 2013; Rickly-Boyd, 2013). This present study followed these recommendations and qualitative data were generated via in-depth interviews with Greek restaurateurs and their customers in the UK and Greece. The interviews included research questions about what, how and with what consequences participants are acting. More specifically, the questions which guided the research were about how restaurateurs' meanings of authenticity influence them to construct their restaurants' menus, how ethnic restaurant owners perceive authenticity and quality and how it would be possible for the ethnic restaurants to be better promoted.

Data collection took place in the U.K. and Greece. For ethnically themed restaurants, perceptions could vary according to the nation (Cavanaugh and Shankar, 2014); therefore, a cross national study has the potential to generate insights that have not been investigated by previous research (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Brown, 2013; Rickly-Boyd, 2013; Cavanaugh and Shankar, 2014; Lu *et al.*, 2015). Additionally, the study also investigated which factors are more important than others when consumers and restaurateurs conceive the concepts of authenticity and quality. Therefore this investigation addresses the literature gap on the definition of

authenticity and its key elements, as recommended in the literature (Reisinger and Steiner, 2006).

Concerning the thesis structure, it begins by first highlighting the theoretical perspectives of authenticity and quality, paying particular attention to the relationship between food and authenticity. The Methodology comes next, by supporting the choice of qualitative research, based on Charmaz's (Charmaz, 2010; Charmaz, 2011) constructivist approach to Grounded theory. Finally, the findings are presented, which include the restaurateurs' perceptions about food quality and authenticity for the very first time and how it would be possible for ethnic restaurants to be better promoted by having authentic food and restaurants of a clear identity.

This generates managerial recommendations to improve communication methods for ethnic restaurants. DeSoucey (2010) suggests that both Greece and the U.K. have a medium level of culinary self-consciousness. This metric stems from three variables: the existence of national food festivals, books about traditional recipes in foreign languages and whether the country has applied to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the recognition of its culinary heritage. As a result, both countries need to improve promotion of their authentic cuisine. Therefore, new promotional methods are required on the basis of actors' perceptions about food authenticity and quality.

1.3 Objectives and Research Questions

This thesis contributes to the literature by offering a better conceptualisation of authenticity and quality, as for the first time the focus is on the perceptions of the actual "producers" of authenticity and quality, the restaurateurs. Figure 1.1 identifies the research objectives and questions which are explained below.

Figure 1.1: Research objectives and questions
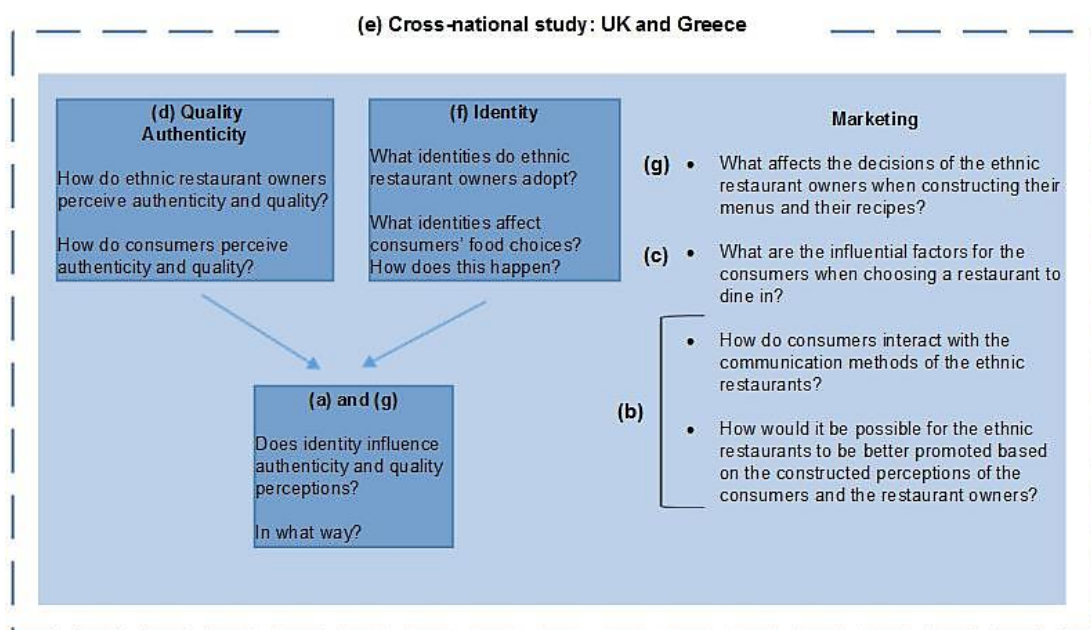
The previous problematic definitions of authenticity and quality are explored and defined by drawing on both restaurateurs' and consumers' conceptualisations of authenticity and quality (a). For the first time, data are gathered by using qualitative research methods, as existing quantitative research highlighted the need for qualitative research (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Brown, 2013; Rickly-Boyd, 2013) and a cross-national study (Lu *et al.*, 2015) by also exploring the restaurateurs' perceptions (Zeng *et al.*, 2012). The constructed communication network of restaurateurs and consumers are described based on Actor Network Theory (ANT). However, this is combined with other theories (quality conventions theory, social identity theory and consumer culture theory) as well to illustrate what comes after that (Walsham, 1997).

Concerning the practical implications, efficient promotional methods are suggested to restaurateurs (b) and these include having authentic restaurants with a clear identity, whose meanings will be quickly and effectively transmitted via word of mouth or eWOM among the consumers. Additionally, the factors that determine an ethnic restaurant's authenticity (c) are outlined, as the Greek Restaurant Association has not specified what requirements are needed for a Greek restaurant to be characterised as authentic. This provides future opportunities to develop a certification of

authenticity for Greek ethnic restaurants located abroad working in favour of 1) preserving Greek culture and 2) the consumers who wish to know which restaurant they should visit for a valuable dining experience. These two objectives were set based on the existing literature as there is a lack of practical guidelines for restaurateurs who wish to offer authentic experiences (Kim and Jang, 2016). What is more, existing literature supports the view that culture can be learnt through an authentic ethnic cuisine and so to attract tourists to the country of origin (Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007; Jang *et al.*, 2012).

Having given an account of the main issues emerging, this section consolidates these into the key research questions addressed by this thesis. Essentially, they can be split into two kinds: those relating to an <u>investigation of authenticity and quality perceptions by restaurateurs and how these relate to consumers</u> **(d)**. It should be noted that the investigation of the ethnic restaurants serves two functions: first, an exploration of restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity and quality to contribute to a fuller understanding of the nature of ethnic food. Ethnic restaurants in this study are perceived as a combination of the perceptions and identities of the restaurateurs. Secondly, the thesis investigates how to better promote ethnic restaurants abroad according to customers' needs, identities, expectations and perceptions while not at the same time losing the authenticity element. Therefore, the comparison between the customers' and restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity will be investigated for the very first time. To summarise, research is needed to explore and identify appropriate communication methods for promoting restaurants, using the consumers' identity and perceptions about food authenticity.

To <u>investigate the participants in their natural environment, the study takes place in an international context as a cross-national study</u> **(e)**. Hence, the data were gathered in the U.K. and Greece. Their natural environment also seemed ideal to <u>investigate the participants' identities</u> **(f)** and <u>how these affect food choices and construct meanings</u> **(g).** These objectives have been set with the aim of filling gaps in the literature. As the existing literature argues, the classification of restaurants so far has been based on pricing

levels (Kay Olsen *et al.*, 2000). For this reason, a socio-demographic investigation about the variation of taste perceptions and meal experiences has been called for.

From the above-mentioned objectives (a,b,c,d,e,f and g) emerged the following research questions, which are about what, how and with what consequences participants are acting. The questions have been divided into four categories: 1) Quality/Authenticity, 2) Identity, 3) The compound of the previous two and 4) Marketing implications.

Quality/Authenticity

How do ethnic restaurant owners perceive authenticity and quality and how are these constructed in their restaurants?

How do consumers perceive food authenticity and quality?

Identity

What identities do ethnic restaurant owners adopt?

How and what identities affect consumers' food choices?

Does identity influence perceptions of authenticity?

In what way?

Marketing implications

What affects the decisions of the ethnic restaurant owners when constructing their menus and their recipes?

What are the influential factors for consumers when choosing a restaurant to dine in?

How do consumers interact with the communication methods of the ethnic restaurants?

How would it be possible for the ethnic restaurants to be better promoted based on the constructed perceptions of the consumers and the restaurant owners?

Answers to the questions were derived from two research methods: 1) in-depth interviews and 2) from the application of a projective technique (Atik and Ozdamar Ertekin, 2013; Vidal *et al.*, 2013). The projection of ethnic restaurants' menus during the interviews garnered participants'

understanding of their identity, food authenticity and the ethnic restaurant's reputation.

1.4 Overview of the research design

The study first analyses the existing literature concerning the concepts of authenticity, identity, quality conventions theory, grounded theory, social identity theory and consumer culture theory. The author conducted the research based on interpretivism and inductive reasoning by also taking into consideration the symbolic interactionism and constructivism of grounded theory. Through interpretivism the researcher seeks to understand the constructed realities of the members of a society during particular processes, such as consumption (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). The scientific knowledge derives from social life by giving value to everyday procedures and by interpreting them afterwards and not *a priori* (Haraway, 1988). In particular, interpretivism is recommended for studying subjective, fluid and dynamic meanings such as quality and authenticity which are the research domains of the current thesis (Devine *et al.*, 1999).

In order to explore these fluid and dynamic meanings a research design is proposed and is depicted in Figure 1.2. According to the research concept, each actor holds a certain identity based on which perceptions about food and restaurant choices are constructed. What is more, social identity theory interprets how social values are constructed stemming from the social groups of actors. In the same way, actors' identities are constructed and sustained within a social group.

Actors in the current study can be either restaurant owners or consumers. Apart from a physical entity, consumers and restaurant owners have an online presence within the network. For instance, consumers may write online reviews about ethnic restaurants, checking-in to ethnic restaurants on social media or by posting pictures of ethnic restaurants on social media. Similarly, restaurateurs may have an online presence by replying to these reviews or by promoting their restaurants through social media. As can be expected, the core of the setting is the restaurant as each and every action takes place within the restaurant or due to the restaurant. In most cases, the ethnic restaurant business is judged according to expected and

experienced authenticity and quality, which are influenced by actors' identities.

Quality Conventions Theory (QCT) provides a suitable framework to categorise ethnic restaurants by taking into consideration the constructed meanings of quality as these are established by actors' identities and perceptions. These categories are Domestic, Market and Inspirational with each category suggesting different meanings for the quality concept (see Sections 2.4 and 7.3). The interaction between the actors is described (Section 7.4), and the linkages between actors is described as a network of heterogeneous populations without any hierarchy as actor network theory suggests (see Sections 1.5.3 and 2.9). Actors can be Greek consumers and restaurateurs or of a different ethnicity who might or might not have visited Greece. The whole network is in operation based on the word of mouth or the eWOM and how concepts of authenticity and quality are communicated to actors. Naturally, if the quality of the restaurant is good, the probability that actors will recommend it increases and this expands further the network (see Section 7.4). The design of the current thesis has been structured upon this concept and it can be depicted as follows:

Figure 1.2: Research Design

Purpose

To examine the concepts of authenticity and quality at the 'exchange intersection' through an analysis of Greek ethnic restaurants' constructions of authenticity and quality, and their consumers' perceptual and experiential perspectives on these.

Disciplinary background

Marketing and sociology

Theoretical framework

- Social identity theory, consumer culture theory, actor network theory, quality conventions theory

- Authenticity and identity

Empirical focus

Greek restaurant hospitality sector

Methodological approach
Grounded theory

Cross-cultural in-depth interviews

Data management facilitated by NVIVO 10

Results
(Chapters 5, 6 and 7)

1.5 Research Approach and Theoretical Framework

1.5.1 Food as a Theoretical Perspective

As food is a basic human need for survival, it soon became the basis of civilisation and even today it holds deep, multi-layered meanings. Food is a shaper of identity and a strong component for social groups, such as family, ethnicity, class or religion (Choi and Henneberry, 2000; Scholliers, 2001).

Food is integral to our traditions as it is highly connected with life-cycle series (from christening to funeral) and annual series, such as holiday. Our diet can also depict our social relations and individual differences. Between cultures there is a huge range of potentially edible items which are ignored in other cultures. Mediterranean citizens do not eat animals which have always been far away for them (wolves, camels, lions, penguins), nor animals which are very close because they are considered to be part of their "family" (Caplan, 1997). For instance, donkeys and dogs have been considered to be human-friendly since ancient times and useful for agricultural work or hunting.

Food therefore is a cultural system and taste is culturally shaped and socially controlled. In fact, in the early 1900s nutrition concerns for the working classes were taken into consideration because they could be a threat to industrial productivity and as a result to the nation's capacity to defend itself (Caplan, 1997). Since the 1970s attention has shifted to the cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes, which have been linked to diets high in fat, sugar, and low in fibre (Keys and Keys, 1975; Keys *et al.*, 1986; Kromhout D 1989; Choi and Henneberry, 2000). Simultaneously, these diseases mean higher costs for national health care.

To conclude, food and our daily diet have always been an expression of our social life, our culture and part of our history. Moreover, our diet can cause fatal health problems with consequences on our body and the country's health and financial system.

1.5.2 Marketing approach

Concerning the interpretation of a dining experience in an ethnic restaurant, various sciences are involved: psychology interprets the feeling of nostalgia or the driving forces like the colours of a restaurant, sociology interprets the identity aspects of the consumers, ethnography interprets the ethnicity and culture of the individuals. The current thesis draws on marketing, which has the potential to interpret restaurateurs' and consumers' perceptions and interactions. At the same time, the study aims to explore the actors' social identities, experiences, expressed opinions, communication methods and values.

1.5.2.1 Marketing and consumer values

Food consumption is one of the strongest memories of a traveller, therefore food is critical for the tourist systems of each country (Timothy and Ron, 2013). Tourism can be enhanced when sites are connected with historical events and notable figures. These dominant stories can also construct dominant identities in and through a tourist site (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004). Food festivals, recipes, ingredients, dining customs are silent and highly determinant factors of cultural heritage and tourism (Timothy and Ron, 2013). In the same way, specific places like local bars and restaurants provide the context for consumers to judge food authenticity in tourism (Hough, 2011).

According to equity theory, consumers have *a priori* some expectations about the place where they are willing to dine and they tend to judge it according to what they initially expected plus the cost of the dining (Susskind, 2002; Han and Ryu, 2012). In fact, customers can act and react according to their values or prior information without actually consuming a product as they can be influenced by word-of-mouth (Ryu et al., 2008). Values are stable over time and set the basis for attitudes and so they are conceived as influential factors for consumer preferences, food choice motivations and food consumption away from home (Botonaki and Mattas, 2010). Value from the consumers' side is defined according to what is received (benefits of the service) vs. what is given (costs or sacrifice in acquiring and utilising the service) (Ryu *et al.*, 2008). Consumers, as a

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result, prefer products from which they can gain value-related benefits (Jensen and Hansen, 2007).

As far as consumer values are concerned, the feeling of nostalgia is a strong contributor to experiential value. Psychology defines nostalgia as a positive emotion, linked with the self-concept (Bryla, 2015). The word appeared for the first time in the time of Homer, describing Odysseus's homesickness for Ithaca (Angé and Berliner, 2014). Nostalgia as a word combines two meanings in Greek: the νόστος (nostos) and άλγος (algos), which refer to a painful desire to return home (Chen *et al.*, 2014).

However, nostalgia can be a feeling not only about the past but for the present and the future as well, as it can include potential anxieties about the future (Angé and Berliner, 2014) which may be particularly salient. A human-being can easily feel out of place: immigrants, for example, may feel homesick while natives may express their nostalgia for the "good old days" (Willem, 2011). Similarly, nostalgia has bonded with food, home, the feeling of security and cultural identity as well (Schermuly and Forbes-Mewett, 2016). Hence, nostalgia seems to attach feelings to places, memories and eating.

When it comes to products and their value, it appears that products' value has different meanings for each person (Jensen and Hansen, 2007). As the nostalgic emotion attracts customers, it can be one component of a restaurant's image, and that is why many restaurant owners collect and display antiques to decorate their restaurants (Chen et al., 2014).

1.5.2.2 Marketing Communications

As decoration of an ethnic restaurant can communicate meanings so can food taste and consumption contain symbolic meanings and cultural phenomena as these values are usually class-based and establish social relationships through communication (Warde, 2014). At the same time, ethnic food is a profitable target-market due to its strong point of differentiation within the global market (Choi and Henneberry, 2000). Another competitive advantage of ethnic food authenticity is that it effectively combines two marketing tools: tradition and nostalgia (Bryla,

2015). Tradition is used by marketers as it fulfils the consumers' needs for trust and stability. However, consumers' attraction and market success may be achieved only if tradition is combined with a high level of authenticity (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Bryla, 2015).

Food authenticity has been used by marketers as part of brand-positioning (Robinson and Clifford, 2012; Lu *et al.*, 2015). Specifically, food authenticity adds to the brand equity of an ethnic restaurant by linking three dimensions with the dining experience: brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality (Lu *et al.*, 2015). Brand awareness means that consumers can quickly recognise the restaurant's name among others and also recall its symbol or logo. Also, ethnic food may influence consumer perceptions about the identity of a whole community by transmitting and simultaneously creating cultural connections and emotional linkages (Buchanan *et al.*, 1999; Chhabra *et al.*, 2013). An ethnic restaurant's identity is shaped in the consumers' mind by the authentically exotic and unique experiences that it provides (Lu *et al.*, 2015). In particular, the core elements of an ethnic restaurant, the menu and the cooking style, are perceived by consumers as the country's ambassadors and presenters of its culture (Wood and Lego Muñoz, 2007; Lego Muñoz and Wood, 2009; Jang et al., 2012; Tsai and Lu, 2012). In fact, according to Wood and Lego Munoz (2007) ethnic-themed restaurants are the second most influential representative of a foreign culture after the mass media. At the same time, these cultural phenomena, such as the taste, are highly influenced and in some cases determined by marketing communication methods, such as advertising (Warde, 2014).

1.5.3 The theoretical framework of the research

As it is analysed in Sections 2.5 and 2.6, identity can influence people even in cross-national situations and can also link networks apart from their region and ethnicity. Stryker (2007), however, moved further away by comparing the "identity theory" with a social psychological framework, "structural symbolic interactionism". Interactionism is a theory which assumes that our behaviour and perceptions are influenced by the interaction with other people (Silverman, 2011). Symbolic interactionism suggests various forms of communications which determine actors'

perceptions and behaviour and also shape the society (Goulding, 2002). Therefore, according to symbolic interactionism, meanings are constructed by society's members, who tend to interpret other people's actions and then reacting to them accordingly (Solomon, 1983; Mick, 1986). Both theories (social identity and interactionism) argue that these processes are ubiquitous in society's structure and networks. Further analysis about symbolic interactionism will be presented in Section 4.5. In addition to this theoretical framework, Actor Network Theory (ANT) (Section 2.9) assists in the depiction of the interactions and relations of the network of the relationships between consumers and Greek ethnic restaurant owners (Walsham, 1997). As ANT relies on qualitative research and describes identities and relations it sets the framework for exploring the domain of ethnic restaurants and their consumers (Callon, 1984).

ANT is grounded in empirical cases, therefore a communication network of Greek ethnic restaurateurs and consumers appears to be challenging due to its complex nature, relations set up and collective actions (Law, 2009). A reasonable approach to the Actor Network Theory could claim that a network has been established among consumers, digital platforms, social media and restaurant owners, from which emerge relations and collective actions.

In other words, the previously described network is a heterogeneous constitution of several ethnic restaurants. Its heterogeneity relies on the variety of perceptions about authenticity and quality which restaurateurs and consumers construct. At the same time, for Murdoch et al. (2000) food networks are by definition heterogeneous due to the diversity of local resources, local ecologies and social relations. As a matter of fact, a network engenders specific consumer choices and actions by excluding alternative ones (Ilmonen, 2001).

As for communication among actors, nowadays, they are often encouraged to share their experiences and recommendations online. These practices are defined as "expressions of the consumers" (Keller and Fay, 2013, p. 459) and attract new customers and they also reflect an active engagement of the consumer with the product. According to ANT, the networks of

heterogeneous materials rely on "knowledge" such as talk, conference presentations, blogs and other material forms which shape social relations and vice versa (Law, 1992). This process of sharing experiences with others is the result of the existential authenticity perception (Leigh *et al.*, 2006), as will be analysed in Section 2.2. Turning to these communication processes, they rely on word of mouth or the e-word of mouth (see Section 2.8).

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

The previous Sections provide an introduction to the main subject of the thesis, which is about promotional methods for ethnic restaurants and authenticity/quality perceptions in the light of identity influences. Then, a theoretical framework followed about food and marketing aspects to highlight the research field of the current study and its contribution to marketers, professionals and culinary culture.

With regard to structure, the thesis proceeds as follows: **Chapter 2** reviews the existing literature about authenticity, quality, marketing and identity. The first review of the literature is about authenticity and quality conventions by focusing on culinary and food perceptions. Next, the investigation moves to social identity theory, consumer culture, constructed social networks and word of mouth. Finally, an overall definition about a successful restaurant is given based on existing literature. **Chapter 3** presents the context of the current thesis, which is about the Greek culinary culture and Greece as context. These two Chapters (2 and 3) set the basis for the later data analysis and construction of a new theory, as grounded theory suggests.

Having analysed the existing literature in Chapter 2 and the Greek culinary culture as a context in Chapter 3, **Chapter 4** presents the methodology and more specifically the grounded theory approach. First, the author justifies the choice for qualitative research and interpretivism and then the use of a constructivist grounded theory approach (Section 4.4) in combination with symbolic interactionism (see also Section 4.5). Data collection occurred in the U.K. and Greece, by conducting interviews with consumers and restaurateurs. Then, data analysis is considered by retracing the coding stages which used the computer assisted qualitative data analysis software programme NVIVO v10. After the analysis, respondent validation is outlined

by relying on constant comparison and feedback on the practical implications of the research through a feedback workshop with practitioners and consumers. Ethical issues are outlined next to confirm that the research was undertaken in full accordance with the University's guidelines and the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

Chapter 5 proceeds with the findings relating to restaurateurs. In more detail, Chapter 5 discusses the findings relating to the restaurant owners and more specifically their perceptions about authenticity and promotional aspects. The influential factors for authenticity constructed meanings are discussed in detail in Section 5.3. Similarly, in **Chapter 6** the findings about consumer perceptions are outlined by focusing on relevant aspects about authenticity and promotion. Again, the influential factors of constructed authenticity meanings are investigated but this time for consumers (Section 6.3).

Following analysis of the restaurant owners' and consumers' perceptions in chapters 5 and 6 respectively, **Chapter 7** integrates the previous findings and investigates the constructed network of the participants. The findings are depicted in a new theoretical model which combines concepts from theories about quality conventions, consumer culture and actor network.

Chapter 8 discusses the findings in the light of the existing literature and also how the current thesis contributes to the literature. All the above Chapters are summarised in **Chapter 9,** where the limitations and the further research are also outlined. Finally, come the **references** and the **Appendix**, which includes the author's notes during the interviews, the interview questions, the chosen menus for the projective technique application and the event's feedback which was organised for respondent validation purposes.

Chapter 2 : Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter critically analyses the key theories informing this research, namely authenticity, quality and identity. The conceptual commitments of the theories are presented and empirical evidence relating to food is reviewed. The current thesis bridges cultural theories (e.g. social identity theory) with theories of practice (e.g. quality conventions theory). A theoretical framework is suggested which addresses gaps in the network of ethnic restaurant owners and consumers, which is structured upon their perceptions and expectations concerning meanings of quality and authenticity.

This Chapter begins by outlining theoretical perspectives on authenticity (2.2). Next comes the bridging of food and authenticity meanings within the existing literature (2.3). The third part deals with Quality conventions theory, by focusing at the same time on the food and dining sector (2.4). Quality conventions is a theory which takes into consideration values of the modern world and industry. Due to this, it could be beneficial in adding to cultural theories, which tend to neglect post-modern values and the autonomy of the individual. For this reason, the following Section about Quality conventions theory assesses Social Identity theory and also how this theory has contributed to the food and dining sector (2.5 and 2.6). Emerging from Social Identity Theory, Consumer Culture Theory has been chosen to explore the intersection between consumption and identity construction (2.7). After this, the word of mouth and e-word of mouth Section (2.8) outlines communication among consumer and restaurateurs about ethnic restaurants and their meanings of quality and authenticity. Finally, the last Section (2.9) gives a brief overview of the theoretical concept of the thesis, which is summarised as an analysis of identities and word of mouth as influences upon the construction of food authenticity networks within the ethnic restaurant sector.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives on Authenticity

From a marketing perspective, the definition of authenticity is embryonic and vague (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Beverland, 2005; Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Mkono, 2013). Marketers have defined authenticity as a social and commercial construction for differentiation and positioning (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Wood and Lego Muñoz, 2007; Becuţ, 2011; Bryla, 2015; Lu *et al.*, 2015), where the search for authenticity is nowadays ''*one of the cornerstones of contemporary marketing*'' (Brown *et al.*, 2003, p. 21) and a fundamental element of reinforcing a brand's identity (Beverland, 2005; Alexander, 2009; Lu *et al.*, 2015).

However, authenticity can be seen via the lens of different interest groups (by consumers, by the government or by restaurant owners) and therefore it is possible to have more than one - but typically positive - meaning (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004; Grayson and Martinec, 2004). From a consumer perspective, an authentic product is likely to be well received, regarded as original, trustworthy and unique (Beverland, 2005; Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Schallehn *et al.*, 2014; Assiouras *et al.*, 2015).

Lu et al. (2015) divide authenticity into three types: objective, constructivist and postmodern.

Objective authenticity. This type of authenticity exists only if there can be tangible, absolute and objective criteria against which a product can be compared (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Ebster and Guist, 2005; Leigh *et al.*, 2006; Mkono, 2013; Lu *et al.*, 2015). It concerns objects which may be examined by an expert who is aware of the tradition and who is able to determine their true and honest nature (Leite and Graburn, 2009; Lu *et al.*, 2015). Coffee, for instance, is characterised as authentic according to the percentage of coffee beans rather than including coffee plant skins, stems or any other non-coffee bean raw materials (Roberts, 1994). Another example of objective authenticity are the EU-sponsored labels which are given to food producers of "traditional" food products, associated with the place of origin (DeSoucey, 2010). The most relevant EU designation schemes are: Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed

(TSG). As far as ethnic restaurants located in foreign countries are concerned, objective authenticity may be difficult to achieve due to the lack of ingredients produced in the country of origin and/or following traditional cooking methods (Kim and Jang, 2016).

Social constructivist approach to authenticity (indexical). Actors judge authenticity according to their experiences (Belhassen *et al.*, 2008). Experiences rely on three cornerstones: interactions, interpretations and practices. This implies that authenticity is a social projection, subjectively perceived, and permitting "*various versions of authenticities regarding the same object*" (Wang, 1999, p. 352). This type of authenticity is not objectively defined but symbolically and personally constructed (Reisinger and Steiner, 2006). Authenticity for the constructivists is a perception of cultures, which includes deeper meanings and different interpretations for every human (Lu *et al.*, 2015). The meaning of authenticity can be negotiated, interpreted and agreed by the actors (Hughes, 1995) as its meaning has a pluralistic nature (Zhu, 2012), influenced by a social discourse (Belhassen *et al.*, 2008), *a priori* expectations and stereotypes (Wang, 1999).

As far as food authenticity is concerned, the constructivist approach, and more specifically semiotics, suggests either an iconic or indexical perception (Mick, 1986; Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Iconic authenticity is defined as an approved copy of something original, a replica. However, in some cases, the inauthentic can be so realistic that it could be accepted as of value and even celebrated (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004). In contrast, indexical authenticity is defined as an original product. For instance, the authenticity of an ethnic restaurant's menu relies on its stability over the years. It cannot be copied, it cannot be transformed, it is associated with the "real thing" (Grayson and Martinec, 2004, p. 297), it is the "truth" (Grayson and Martinec, 2004, p. 310). The indexical authenticity of a restaurant's food is "about the real vs. the fake" (Levy, 2006, p. 124).

Postmodern authenticity (existential). Existential authenticity is an activity-based approach and is not yet well tested (Wang, 1999; Leigh *et al.*, 2006; Rickly-Boyd, 2013). Existential authenticity goes beyond "object-

oriented" perspectives as it relies on experiences and perceptions and whether these are conceived of as real or not (Rickly-Boyd, 2013). Additionally, existential authenticity takes into consideration the current need of humans for hedonistic fun and eclecticism of lived experiences while there is also a need to share new experiences with others (Leigh *et al.*, 2006; Steiner and Reisinger, 2006; Kim and Jamal, 2007; Mkono, 2013). This is a subjective perception during a quest for fun and pleasure through consumption, which is named pseudo-events (Mkono, 2013). In other words, consumers seek enjoyable illusions and therefore inauthenticity could also be well accepted (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006).

For ethnic restaurants, postmodernists suggest that consumers perceive them as authentic only if their desired emotions or experiences can emerge from what they eat or see (Lu *et al.*, 2015). As people tend to believe not only in what they taste but also in what they see, ethnic costumes and the roles of the cooks and waiters may define an ethnic restaurant as authentic (Peterson, 2005; Mkono, 2013). People who are not familiar with the current culture tend to believe in this type of authenticity (Lu *et al.*, 2015), which means that the actors perceive authenticity as an interaction between the world and their identity (Steiner and Reisinger, 2006). Consumers who are not aware of authentic cuisine cannot figure out the differences between an authentic dish and for example, a western blended dish (Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007).

These three types of authenticity are depicted in the model of Leigh et al. (2006, p. 491), see Figure 2.1:

Figure 2.1: The three types of authenticity in the existing literature

Objective Authenticity	Constructive Authenticity	Post-modern Authenticity
• Object	• Society-community	• Self

Source: (Leigh *et al.*, 2006, p. 491)

2.3 Food and Authenticity

The food system connects consumers with restaurateurs cross-nationally with potentially a mix of formal and informal relations between them (Murdoch and Miele, 1999). For instance, an online search of the phrase: "the roots of fusion cuisine" reveals that the roots of the fusion cuisine are ancient, because humans have been exchanging their culinary traditions for centuries. However, the preservation of traditions and uniqueness have always been crucial issues for society and citizens (Fabricant, 1994; Boyer, 1998; Matheson, 2008; DeSoucey, 2010). That sense of uniqueness and originality about a product or experience is named today: "authenticity".

Similarly to Leigh et al. (2006), Beer (2008) depicts the interconnected influences of culture, the society and self in food choice. Personal experience can additionally contribute to the characterisation of food as authentic or inauthentic. Individuals are in an endless interaction with society, and their personal experiences create the relations which may define authenticity.

Figure 2.2: Beer's model for defining food authenticity
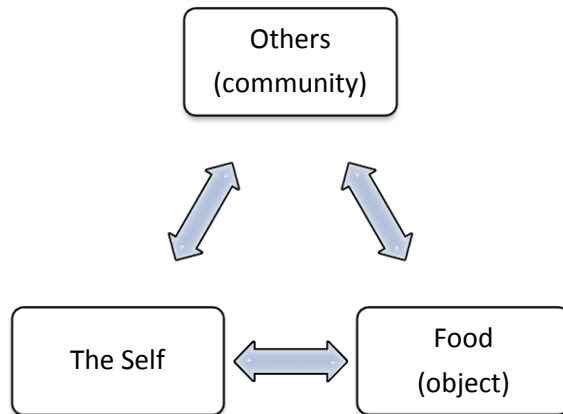
Source: Beer (2008, p. 161)

The authentication of food products is promoted by producers and governmental authorities by indicating signs of origin and quality to protect the market in quality goods from inferior, copycat products (Guillou, 2010). According to Tregear et al. (1998), consumers possess views about food authenticity and quality, therefore several signs are in use by manufacturers or by the government to communicate authenticity. The most common means to communicate food authenticity are the labels, packaging or the

description of a food product, while the perceived authenticity of ethnic products depends on the natural taste, the product's quality and the region of origin (Bryla, 2015). What is more, authenticity, high-quality food and good taste seem to have the highest influence on consumer choice for ethnic restaurants (Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007).

The authenticity of a food product is also linked to the place of origin, and thus location becomes a factor in food preferences (Choi and Henneberry, 2000). DeSoucey (2010) defines the term "gastronationalism" by pointing out that food firstly is part of a culture and personal identity, and therefore the term stands for the sociological relationship between diet and nationalism. Moreover, it signals the use of consumption, food production and distribution to demarcate national attachment, as cultural goods. Gastronationalism's role is to protect and promote certain food items which are grounded in their place of production. By using food as a vehicle of national identity, it meshes the power and resources of cultural, political, and economic identities as they shape and are shaped by institutional protections. For example, immigrants use ethnic restaurants as means of preserving their culture (Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007). Also, an institutional example of "gastronationalism" is the EU's national or regional origin labelling programme, which promotes the food culture of local areas (DeSoucey, 2010)

Food and region create symbolic linkages with consumers (Tregear *et al.*, 1998) and positively influence the consumers' willingness to pay even a premium price (Fotopoulos and Krystallis, 2003). Personal and social factors are stimulated by perceptions of place and the quality of "authentic" food products. For example, meal structures such as dinner and lunch are associated with specific types of locations as well as certain types of foods, which suggests that the same consumers could make a different food choice depending on the situation and location (Marshall and Bell, 2003). However, consumers do not judge authenticity by entirely relying on the region (Tregear et al., 1998); consumers are also influenced by their situational identity and by information given by friends and family (Lego Muñoz and Wood, 2009). Research on Thai ethnic restaurants suggests

that consumers' perceptions about authenticity rely more on food aspects rather than the restaurant's atmosphere (Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007). The role of marketing in packaging, labelling and communicating the above meanings to consumers is crucial. The product's name, its description, packaging and ingredient information are also taken into consideration by the consumers.

Several efforts seek to create an objective criterion so as to judge tourist attractions as authentic or not (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004). The International Association of the Italian Restaurants (Girardelli, 2004) has specified the requirements for an Italian restaurant to be characterised as authentic. Therefore, an Italian restaurant is authentic only if:

- the ingredients are Italian,
- at least three quarters of the wine in the cellar is Italian,
- at least one of the waiters speaks Italian, and the rest can explain the dishes properly and
- if the chef has had proper training in Italian cuisine.

Conversely, Greek ethnic restaurants lack any form of authenticity criteria or any other official authentication.

2.4 Quality Conventions Theory (QCT)

Consumers' awareness has shifted in recent decades to the interrelationship between diet and health and as a consequence towards food products of premium quality (Nelson, 1970; Fotopoulos and Krystallis, 2003). However, quality is not simple to define, as its meaning varies from actor to actor and across countries and regions (Ilbery and Kneafsey, 2000), and is dependent upon personal needs and cultures (Migliore *et al.*, 2015). Quality has been defined not as a solid and pre-fixed construction but rather as a complex, heterogeneous and multidimensional perception which can be constructed according to discussions, compromises, cultures, indifference, expectations and opinion-based perceptions (Babakus and Boller, 1992; Fotopoulos and Krystallis, 2003; Kirwan, 2006; Ponte, 2009). In other words, its meaning is shaped according to the identities of the actors and their social knowledge about a product (Allaire, 2010). For instance, the

quality of food products is so subjectively driven that it is often judged by actors in terms of whether their needs are satisfied, or their culture is expressed (Migliore *et al.*, 2015).

The constructed and personal meanings of quality transmit positive values for a product or service. In fact, quality is assumed to be a social construction that is so important to the members of a society that in some cases it can influence them even more than the product's price (Renard, 2003; Ponte, 2009; Climent-López *et al.*, 2014). What is more, if consumers' experiences and quest for quality goods are satisfactory, then the product or service will be recommended to others (Nelson, 1970). Under these circumstances, quality seems to be judged based on social interaction, which leads to the construction of relative perceptions and conventions among members of the society (Ponte, 2016).

Quality conventions are a synthesis of economic, technological and sociological notions (Baird, 2008). On that basis, quality conventions may be defined as the result of underlying systems of negotiations which cause an agreement between different actors, who, because of their compromises share mutual expectations and a collective understanding about quality (Murdoch *et al.*, 2000; Renard, 2003). In other words, the convention could be the sharing of values, tastes, experiences and expectations. However, it should be noted that convention does not eliminate the existence of power relations among the actors; power could stem from the social relationships of a food network (Renard, 2003). However, this power does not set hierarchical values among quality convention categories but rather proposes different conventions as asymmetries in power relations among the actors (Ponte, 2016). These social actors construct quality conventions which are agreed among them and which seem to determine their actions (Eymard-Duvernay *et al.*, 2005). In contrast to social theories (e.g. social identity theory) and their weakness for ignoring the autonomy of the individual and new technologies, quality conventions take into consideration technologies, mass production and material forces (Warde, 2014).

Several authors have applied the QCT and its mechanisms-conventions to understand actors' perceptions of the quality of a product or a service

(Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991; Renard, 2003; Kirwan, 2006; Baird, 2008; Ponte, 2009; Ponte and Sturgeon, 2013; Climent-López *et al.*, 2014; Gibbon and Riisgaard, 2014). However, the initial credit belongs to Boltanski and Thevenot (1991), who first proposed the theory. In introducing the concept, Boltanski and Thévenot (1991) note the existence of multiple, archetypal orders of worth, which can be utilised to justify stances and actions. Specifically, in their initial definition of quality they identified three categories of conventions: market - industrial, domestic and civic (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Six categories of conventions

Convention theory: 'quality convention'	Convention theory: 'organising principle'	Global value chain analysis: quality-related mechanisms for exercising 'drivenness'	Type of 'lead firms'	Mode of governance (and degree of drivenness)	Examples of specific global value chains
Industrial Market	Productivity Competitiveness	Influence on setting 'content' of quality and standardisation, in some cases broad standards, minimising cost of matching 'civic' quality content through external certification processes	Branded, manufacturers, Retailers, Discounters	Buyer-driven (High)	Mainstream coffee, Clothing
Civic	Welfare	Capacity to match 'civil society' demands regarding minimum socio-economic and environmental standards	Marketers of 'ethical' products Civil society groups Certifiers, auditors	Moving towards buyer-driven (Medium)	Fair trade, organic and other 'sustainable' coffee
Domestic	Loyalty	Capacity to develop trust through repeated interactions and/or geographic indication; extract rents from the 'uniqueness' of products or production / trade relations	Producer groups under appellation systems International traders Niche/ speciality marketers	Producer-driven, but often not driven at all (Low)	Specialty coffee, Haute couture clothing

Source: (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991)

As is depicted in Table 2.1, each category is linked to a particular "world of production" (Storper, 1993), where actors operate and interconnect according to distinct principles for judging quality. For instance, in the "Industrial - Market" world, characterised by standardised, mass production, quality is assessed according to the degree of reliability and level of efficiency, manifest through codified standards and technical specifications (Tregear *et al.*, 2016). In contrast, in the "Civic" realm quality is evaluated with a view to the contribution to social benefits and societal welfare. The third and last category, the Domestic, describes the loyalty which consumers have for special products of a niche market. This is generated if these products are produced in specific regions and as a result are treated as unique. Overall, the current typology is not intended to be exhaustive as it derives specifically from French culture, which Boltanski and Thévenot studied. Therefore, in other domains, alternative orders of worth may exist (Climent-López *et al.*, 2014).

In more recent work, Boltanski and Thévenot (1999) developed their arguments regarding political, social and monetary orders of worth. The main theoretical premise behind this study is that six orders of worth exist, instead of three, as their previous work suggested. These are depicted in Table 2.2 and are: the Inspired, the Domestic, the Civic, the Opinion, the Market and the Industrial.

Table 2.2: Six orders of worth

	Inspired	Domestic	Civic	Opinion	Market	Industrial
Mode of evaluation (worth)	Grace, nonconformity, creativeness	Esteem, reputation	Collective interest	Renown	Price	Productivity, efficiency
Format of relevant information	Emotional	Oral, anecdotal	Formal, official	Semiotic	Monetary	Criteria, statistics
Elementary relation	Passion	Trust	Solidarity	Recognition	Exchange	Functional link
Human qualification	Creativity, ingenuity	Authority	equality	Celebrity	Desire, purchasing power	Professional competency, expertise

Source: (Boltanski and Thevenot, 1999, p. 368)

In more detail, in the Inspired world there are people who do not take into consideration the opinions of others, who feel independent and rely more on their emotions and creativity rather than the recognition of others. In this order there are beings who dream, imagine, rebel or have living experiences. A typical example of these worthy persons are artists. Concerning the Domestic world, people's worth depends on trust, personal relationships and tradition. People feel that they are part of a body, a family or a network. In this case, chiefs, bosses or relatives could be part of the Domestic world. The network relies for its expansion on recommendations, giving birth, reproduction or invitation. With Opinion, worth is the result of other people's opinion, recognition and signs of public esteem. This order of worth has been established based on gossip, rumours, opinion leaders, celebrities and other popular personalities. The civic world concerns the common good. Personal interests are compromised towards the collective and the general interest. An example of this worth could be federations, public communities or representatives. In contrast, the Market suggests people who are competitive with each other, opportunistic and worthwhile when they are rich. Price and possession are fundamental values within this mercantile world. Finally, the industrial world relies on production and efficiency. Experts judge the quality and function by applying methods, by consulting figures or by using tools. All the processes are organised, measurable and standardised.

Accordingly, Renard (2003, p. 88) proposes four categories of food quality based on previous work of Sylvander (1995):

- Industrial coordination, which rests on standards, norms, objective rules, and testing procedures.
- Domestic coordination, based on face-to-face relations, on the trust in people, places or brand names.
- Civic coordination, which rests on the adherence of a group of actors to a set of collective principles, which structures its economic relations.
- Market coordination, or coordination by market laws, basically through the mechanism of prices.

The most recent research about food quality and cooking conventions is based on the version of Boltanski and Thevenot about convention theory (Truninger, 2011). The research's context was a multi-food processor, which distribution is made through events and not shops. For this reason, the product and its demonstrative events contain economic, social and cultural elements and they disclose symbolic messages about cooking. One of these social and cultural messages is that consumers will have less physical contact with food due to the product's technological features and as a consequence they will use their cooking skills less. Under these circumstances, theories of practice and conventions theory have been investigated, which resulted in the following convention quality categories:

- The market category is about evaluations based on price or the economic value (e.g. the cooking budget).
- The industrial category is about evaluations based on efficiency, expertise and professionalism (e.g. the technical reliability of domestic technologies).
- The domestic category is about evaluations based on ancestry, tradition, locality, personal relationships and trust (e.g. cooking with local ingredients)
- The civic category is about evaluations based on fairness, respect and protection of civil rights (e.g. healthy cooking)
- The opinion category is about evaluations based on public recognition through fame (e.g. the reputation of brands)
- The inspiration category is about evaluations based on emotions, creativity, originality and aesthetics (e.g. food presentation, organoleptic food properties)

Baird (2008) proposes six types of quality conventions more briefly and simply than previous authors did. Moreover, she argues that conventions have different meanings and worth for various market fields, such as the opinion convention for the financial market.

1. Market – quality is assessed by price
2. Industrial – quality is assessed by measurable criteria and statistics
3. Opinion – quality is assessed by fame and signs that identify it
4. Domestic – quality is assessed by trusted relationships and personal interactions of esteem and by reputation
5. Civic – quality is assessed by the contribution to society or the collective good and
6. Inspired – quality is assessed by personal experience of creativity.

More recently, Ponte (2009, p. 240) has provided an expanded framework of quality conventions in relation to the wine sector. As is depicted in Table 2.3, Ponte's research proposes six categories of wine quality. The Inspirational one relies on personal tastes about unique wines, which mean it could be a cult of winemakers. The Domestic type of quality relies on trust and repetition, which means that specific brands of wine or a specific region of origin are preferred. The Opinion quality convention relies on non-objective judgements, as consumers, in this case, could be influenced by publications. The Civic category considers consumers' environmental consciousness and food safety, which could be stated with labels on the product. The Market quality convention, on the other hand, purely relies on price and the applied promotional methods for the wine. Finally, the objective quality convention is named as Industrial and is judged by external and objective measurements such as laboratory tests to judge the quality of the wine.

Table 2.3: Quality conventions in the wine sector

Quality convention	Instrument of verification of quality (general)	Instrument of verification of quality (in wine)
Inspirational	Personality	Unique wine; cult winemaker or property
Domestic	Proximity, trust and repetition	Brand/varietal, terroir or geographic origin
Opinion	External non-objective judgement	Endorsement by wine writer, judge, publication
Civic	Impact on society and the environment	Assessment of food safety, environmental and social impact, labels and certifications
Market	Price	Price and promotion
Industrial	External objective measurement	Laboratory tests, codification of procedures

Source: Ponte (2009)

Moving beyond the orders of worth, the theory of quality conventions analyses the interaction among actors and society about product quality concepts by taking into account the fact that each actor has an identity, personal perceptions and criteria for evaluation (Evans, 2011). Perceived quality, therefore, is influenced by social norms and commonly respected principles (Eymard-Duvernay, 1993). What is more, collective agreements and conventions construct a network from which identity could stem (Renard, 2003).

When it comes to food, the same food product can be evaluated with subjective criteria as the quality judgments can vary among actors and social groups (Climent-López *et al.*, 2014). QCT does not explicitly address questions of authenticity despite its integral nature of debates about quality food. On the other hand, consumer culture theory (Arnould and Thompson, 2005) also suggests that identities are constructed through consumption.

Therefore, actors who have the same criteria belong socially to a group with the same values. In fact, actors can act and react according to their values, without consuming a product, just based on prior information and word-of-mouth (Ryu et al., 2008).

Food quality can be judged before the food purchase, or after the consumption, based on consumer experience. Search goods are those whose quality is judged by consumers prior to the purchase based on the price, the size or the colour, while experience goods are these whose quality is judged after the purchase by taking into consideration the food taste or the flavour of it (Nelson, 1970; Migliore *et al.*, 2015). In fact, existing research on the aspect argues that word of mouth plays a more influential role in purchases of experience goods rather than of search goods (Nelson, 1970).

Food consumers who rely on face-to-face interaction with the producers and take non-economic benefits into account are linked to a more recently added quality convention, the *regard convention* (Kirwan, 2006; Ponte, 2016). Kirwan (2006) suggests that quality meanings are constructed during the personal interaction between producers and consumers or even before that as the recommendations of a close friend or family members may be taken into account. His new convention category illustrates the "mutual satisfaction" (Kirwan, 2006, p. 308) of producers and consumers, who seem to enjoy their interaction experience. Producers feel proud and almost friends with their regular customers while the customers experience attention, sociability and friendliness. Correspondingly, a successful interaction among producers and consumers results in the mutual fulfillment of expectations for quality and socialising during the process of purchasing (Thévenot, 2002). Proposals for new categories of conventions have always been welcome as further exploration of the theory is advocated by various authors and its creators as well (Lamont and Thévenot, 2000; Murdoch *et al.*, 2000; Kirwan, 2006).

2.5 Self-Identity and Social Identity

Identity relies on the perceptions of who we think we are and which social groups we belong to (Christiansen, 1999; Schermuly and Forbes-Mewett,

2016). However, the term is not so simple to define, as a human being can be a synthesis of multi surfaces and, apart from what we see (appearance, image), a human can also be a salient[1] participant in social groups. As a member of these social groups, it seems that a person also holds the group's values. These values determine what we are and most of the time how we act, according to these behavioural paradigms.

A social group has been defined as a group of two or more individuals who interact and also have a social correlation, a shared vision of themselves (Turner, 1982). Belonging to a group creates feelings of happiness and stronger mental health (Stead *et al.*, 2011). This membership of a social group is part of so-called social identity and is often determined by the "Twenty Statements Test" (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954). Based on this test, we pose ourselves one question: "Who am I?", and responses take into account consideration of roles, status or the membership of a group. Therefore, individuals construct their identities the way they see themselves in relation to the group (Islam, 2014). In summary, the construction of our identity stems from the belief about which social group(s) we belong to.

As Woodward (2004, p. 7) argues: "The question who am I is only one part of the story... Identity combines how I see myself and how others see me. However, also, by the connection between what I want to be and the influences, pressures and opportunities which are available... Identities are formed through interaction between people…". In the same way, Bisogni et al. (2002) perceive identity as a self-image which is involved during the interaction with people, social groups and objects and which reveals multiple layers of cultural, social and structural meaning. Due to this fluid and personal character of identity, interpretivism has been suggested as an ideal approach to uncover perceptions and feelings about the term (Devine *et al.*, 1999). Identity has been defined through the literature in relation to: gender, gender identity; ethnicity, ethnic identity; or self. However, in the

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[1] Salient participant: someone who becomes a member of a social group unconsciously. As Maslow's theory (1943) suggests, the need of belonging may lead people to choose a social group and become a salient member of it. The interactional influences which will be created afterwards are the main issue of the Identity theory.

current thesis identity is conceived of as an integration of all these and relates to who we are in the present (Vignoles *et al.*, 2011).

Identity was conceptualised as a social behaviour process during the 1930s (Mead, 1934). Stryker and Burke (2000, p. 285) simplified Mead's study in one sentence: "Society shapes self shapes social behaviour". Therefore identity theory aims to outline the interactions between one member of the society and the influence of the society on its members. Moreover, the numerous roles of one person and the potential conflicts which may arise are still a topic of research. There are social structural sources of identity and relations among identities, and we may also notice internal, cognitive identity processes (Stryker and Burke, 2000). The two meet in behaviour which expresses identities, often in interaction with others. Social group members express their identities through their behaviour. More recently, identity has been defined as a result of roles blended in organised networks of social interaction and structures which create expectations and so if these expectations do not meet then some of the members may be left outside the networks (Stryker, 2007). Individuals who are members of the in-group tend to make comparisons with out-members, aiming to increasing their self-esteem and feeling of superiority (Tajfel, 1974).

However, based on the number of the social groups which exist in a society an individual may adopt the same number of identities as the member can conceptualise itself as part of those groups. In that case, a member holds "multiple identities" (Stryker and Burke, 2000; Spickard, 2013). What is more, competition among identities is expected. Being a member of a social group is translated into commitments and identities, which implies that potential membership in other networks or groups may create conflicting identities (Williams and Patten, 2006). As a matter of fact, "the greater the number of related identities, the greater the difficulty of dealing simultaneously with relationships among them" (Stryker and Burke, 2000, p. 292). This insight could be applied widely to religious, voluntary associational, political and any other type of relationship that allows variation of identities. An example of a political identity conflict is given by Stryker (2007, p. 1097): "Suppose one holds an identity as an honest person

as well as an identity as a loyal person and these identities are of roughly equivalent salience and centrality. Suppose, as well, that a person— say, a politician -finds him- or herself in a setting in which that person must interact both with members of the person's party and members of an opposition party. The potential for trait-identity competition, perhaps conflict, in the person's behaviour is manifest". Similarly, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) found also that identity can be developed attached to roles even in multiple networks and across situations.

Apart from roles, identity is also enhanced and expressed via consumption. Products could be the means of cultivating and projecting desired identities. Products and goods can transmit values to the consumer as they may contain symbolic meanings (Solomon, 1988; Englis *et al.*, 1994; Dittmar, 2007; Berger, 2013; Thompson *et al.*, 2013). These values are promises to the consumer and are defined by Kotler and Keller (2006) as intangible aspects which influence the consumer even before the purchase e.g. during the communication or advertising of a product. Similarly, during consumption, identities can be constructed or reinforced. This argument is analysed further in Sections 2.6 and 2.7.

2.6 Ethnic identity and food choice

In a global context, food is a necessity for sustaining life, but at the same time, it is not universally available nor equally produced. For these reasons, food holds symbolic meanings and has the power within social relations whereby it may construct lifestyles (Cooks, 2009). Food, therefore, apart from being a source of energy for our body can also be seen as a product for making profits, as a memory or a cultural good (Del Casino, 2014). Fischler argues that "you are what you eat" (Fischler, 1988, p. 279), meaning that food shapes our bodies but it is also a pattern of our social standpoint, on which our identity may be projected. As has been stressed, food does not only concern individuals and their health or psychology but it also sets the basis for collective, social meanings by affecting a whole social system (Jackson *et al.*, 2013). Food has a symbolic meaning for individuals and how they conceive themselves as part of the society (Plastow *et al.*, 2015).

Identity theory is based on the assumption that humans, as part of society, must have a role which will determine their actions and choices (Stryker, 2007). Hence, a food choice can be the result of an expressed identity and a role within a social group. In fact, through these roles people relate to others and construct internalised meanings. For Woodward (2004, p. 96), identity is an inner social role, which soon becomes part of a person, so that "…identification does not involve copying; it involves taking that identity into yourself...". More specifically, constructing and maintaining an identity through food is not an individual or stable process but rather a collective and dynamic procedure which relies on subjective views and experiences about ingredients, dishes or cooking techniques (Parasecoli, 2014). However, diet and identity are not linked in a causal relationship due to the reflexive nature of identity, which seems to be influenced by practices and the context within which food choices are made (Fox and Ward, 2008b). The construction of an identity also relies on the procedures of growing, preparing and consuming food, as during these procedures consumers are linked with others, such as their parents, media or culture (Cooks, 2009).

What is more, food is one of the most influential factors during the construction of an ethnic identity (Timothy and Ron, 2013). Traditional food has a profound value for ethnic groups but it does not have the same meaning for everyone, as it relies heavily on perceptions and circumstances (Rudawska, 2014; Schermuly and Forbes-Mewett, 2016). On top of that, due to the complex and fluid meaning of identity, traditional food has been a major influential factor in the evolution of identities and negotiating cultural difference, the so called translation process (Hall and Gay, 1996). Ethnic identity is positively related to traditional food consumption and negatively related to the consumption of convenience food. What is more, someone could be identified as a particular member of an ethnic group if at least three of the following factors are fulfilled: the language, the religious affiliation, participation in traditional celebrations or food preferences (Laroche *et al.*, 2005). Ethnicity is a highly influential factor in the construction of identity and in making food choices as well. Food choices of ethnic groups rely heavily on their dynamic ethnic identity, ideals (such as values and symbols)

and social roles resulting in identity and ethnicity to be shifting and renegotiated over time (Devine *et al.*, 1999).

Identity is also constructed through social interaction with other individuals. Hence, a stronger feeling of belonging to certain ethnic groups is often constructed (Hough, 2011). Social interaction leads individuals to construct their perceptions about what is ordinary and normal to eat and to follow these social norms for eating (Sneijder and te Molder, 2009). In addition, meals can establish and enhance a sense of belonging based on common behaviours, ingredients, flavours and food preparation procedures or indicate someone as an outsider if these aspects are not mutually shared (Parasecoli, 2014). Therefore food, and especially the traditional food, expresses the belief about belonging to certain ethnic groups. Those who determine food preferences, though, are the social influences which is usually, parents (Atik and Ozdamar Ertekin, 2013).

The social ties with family which emerge from food are so strong that immigrants tend to compare the food they used to have from their family in their country of origin with the ethnic food they have in the country where they have migrated to and they conceive themselves as gourmets and objective connoisseurs of authentic culinary culture (Parasecoli, 2014). Immigrants and ethnic minorities preserve their cooking and eating customs in order to feel closer to their origin and home country. In some cases, such as that of Cubans during the Special Period, food and more specifically starvation has been the reason for emigrating in search of a better future (Alfonso, 2012). Cubans of London were able to re-create and revise their food traditions by taking into consideration health and nutrition aspects and at the same time maintain a link with their home country.

Apart from the social environment, nationality greatly affects the construction of an identity. Based on the levels of an ethnic identity it is possible for someone to inhabit multiple identities. Without these multiple identities some people might be "in-between" and potentially facing an identity crisis due to which an individual is unable to identify their original homeland or country of residence (Timothy and Ron, 2013). Apart from nationality, locality is expressed through a food identity, which may

construct networks and mechanisms around the production of and demand for good quality food products (Lougheed, 2013; MacDonald, 2013).

Members of postindustrial societies construct food networks and define themselves based on lifestyles or food consumption (Parasecoli, 2014). What is more, identity is such an influential factor in the construction of behaviour that it determines present and future food behaviour and practices, such as vegetarianism, and proposes relevant social groups such as vegetarians, whose members follow absolute practices and also experience a strong sense of belonging (Fox and Ward, 2008b). Following the same context of vegetarianism, it can be assumed that food and relevant practices have also been the means to achieve personal life values and to reinforce social relations with individuals who share the same values, such as personal health or animal welfare (Hoek *et al.*, 2004; Fox and Ward, 2008a).

Young people tend to believe that personal image or values could be either bolstered or harmed by the foods which they consume. Even for people aged 13-15 consumption of food products helps them to create a desired identity so as to fit in with a desired peer group (Stead *et al.*, 2011). Therefore food choice has a symbolic meaning which is determined by consumers' perceptions and expectations about their image and social status or about the construction of their identity within certain social groups (Stead *et al.*, 2011). For older people, and especially for those who are living alone, food is perceived typically as a necessity; however, when they share their meals with others they describe meals as a pleasure (Gustafsson and Sidenvall, 2002). A change in social life can bring changes to the perceptions about food consumption and preparation and the attached identities (Plastow *et al.*, 2015).

2.7 Consumer culture theory (CCT)

CCT proposes that consumption is a socio-cultural process and the consumer is an object who holds an identity and personal values during the consumption (Dittmar, 2007; Thompson *et al.*, 2013). In fact, in addition to the self-defining transmission of identities, CCT conceives consumers as producers of culture and values (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2008).

CCT suggests that consumers are active participants in the construction of a product's social-cultural-ideological image (Ahuvia *et al.*, 2006). This means that consumers can be not only seekers but also makers of identities and so by considering social identity theory as well, a consumer is depicted as a member of a group with collective identity due to adaptation to the group's habits (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). These habits are expressed through consumption and naturally consumers construct their identities through consumption activities (Belk, 1988). With regard to identities, consumers may construct an actual identity which is how they feel about themselves. Thus when consumers choose to consume a specific product, they have unconsciously or consciously selected it from other products due to its utility and also its symbolic meaning (Solomon, 1988; Englis *et al.*, 1994; Wattanasuwan, 2005; Berger, 2013).

Turning to the ideal identity, consumers tend to visualise an ideal world which makes them enslaved in the fallacy of consumption (Wattanasuwan, 2005). According to Dittmar (2007), when we consume we feel that we are approaching our ideal identity due to the fact that through consumption we are in quest of identity and happiness. Davis' research (2005) identified the conative aspects of purchases which represent for consumers autonomy, freedom or pride. In the same way, through consumption an individual will even experience deep feelings, such as love and, as our love for objects depicts who we are, once again through consumption we express ourselves in an ideal way (Ahuvia, 2005). Even when consumers desire to discover a new culture they tend to visit ethnic restaurants (Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007).

CCT advocates the collection of qualitative data for interpretive epistemology due to the rich insights which they can provide (Spiggle, 1994; Thompson, 1996; Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Ahuvia *et al.*, 2006; Thompson *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, for the definition and conceptualisation of consumers' identities we need to grasp deeper meanings. A person is "actively looking for meaningfulness in life" (Wattanasuwan, 2005, p. 180) and socialisation through the consumption of products (Wattanasuwan, 2005).

Through food, consumption identities and social relationships can be structured, converted, communicated or maintained (Wattanasuwan, 2005; Dittmar, 2007; Fonseca, 2008). Likewise, consumers can be transferred from their past identity to an ideal one, to what they truly wish to become (Ahuvia, 2005). During periods of identity-crisis consumers can be helped to resolve their inner conflicts and to identify themselves within social groups by also clarifying their social relationships (Ahuvia, 2005; Dittmar, 2007). This would have a positive result on their mood as most of the time they tend to become happier during or after consumption (Dittmar, 2007). The contribution of CCT is therefore the understanding of food's deeper meanings for consumers and also how consumers construct identities through consumption.

To sum up, existing literature suggests a fluid nature of authenticity, quality and identity. What is more, it seems that food meanings rely on subjective perceptions. Behaviour emerges from the identity of each individual and certain experiences. These aspects are studied in the current thesis by conducting interviews with both consumers and producers of ethnic food. However, in order to do so actor's communication channels need to be studied in order to investigate how actors interact and communicate social meanings about quality and authenticity moreover, a specific ethnic context is beneficial to provide the necessary basis for studying these aspects.

2.8 The influence of word of mouth (WOM) and e-word of mouth (eWOM)

Ethnic restaurants have always prompted discussion about their authenticity and quality. Consumers have constructed these uncertainness about ethnic restaurants because in their eyes access to authentic ingredients seems effortful and also because these restaurants are detached from the country of origin and possibly from traditional cooking methods (Kim and Jang, 2016). However, if they perceive an ethnic restaurant as authentic they are more than happy to spread the word in particular to consumers of the same national origin with them (Lu *et al.*, 2013).

Word of mouth (WOM) was initially defined during the 1960s (Arndt, 1967) and since then little has changed in the definition. Most of the existing literature suggests that WOM is the informal communication between consumers about a specific brand, product or service and its impact is conceived to be even greater than advertising as it can shape consumer behaviours due to its non-commercial, trustworthy character (Litvin *et al.*, 2008; Jeong and Jang, 2011; Lu *et al.*, 2013; Nguyen and Romaniuk, 2014). In general, word of mouth is conceived as a powerful motivational factor for attracting and retaining customers (Keller, 2007; Han and Ryu, 2012; Nguyen and Romaniuk, 2014). As far as full-service restaurants are concerned, word of mouth is often the result of customer satisfaction and commitment to a particular restaurant (Han and Ryu, 2012).

However, the influence of word of mouth concerning a restaurant's reputation has not been researched satisfactorily, though we do know from the current literature that positive electronic word of mouth (eWoM) stimulates consumers' intentions to dine in a restaurant (Longart, 2010). Specifically for the restaurants and their reputation, word of mouth can work either for the food or for the service. Especially, for food-related recommendations, it has been noticed that people who are pleased with the food tend to share their experiences more than those who were not satisfied with the served food (Susskind, 2002). In either case, both for the food or for the service, dining in restaurants is an ideal context for research into word of mouth. This is because food is a daily need for the consumers and it causes consumers to be highly involved with it, while due to the intangible nature of a restaurant's services, the oral exchange of views is widely applied between the consumers (Lu *et al.*, 2013). If customers are satisfied they will recommend the place to friends and this is how the word of mouth will work in favour of the restaurant (Smith, 1996).

The value of WOM is that it can be more influential than promotional marketing. Popular restaurants for instance are often mentioned by WOM, making online coupons, discounting and other sales promotions unnecessary or less effective (Lu *et al.*, 2013). This is because consumers perceive that high quality food does not require a huge amount of promotion.

If authenticity is promoted via communication channels like WOM or the eWOM, then brand name awareness could be increased or a clear brand image could be established and preserved (Lu *et al.*, 2015). Recommendation from friends and family is the most influential method of attracting consumers, especially if these are accompanied with emotional and material support (Kuhn and Galloway, 2015).

Nowadays, online consumer discussion about products, brands or services seem to be the evolution of word of mouth. This is the so called electronic word of mouth (eWOM). Positive eWOM is of low cost, more rapid than any other traditional channel and its impact is highly positive on product sales (Litvin *et al.*, 2008; Lu *et al.*, 2013). In fact, compared to traditional WOM, eWOM has a much higher impact on individuals due to its 24/7 availability and high influential power (Litvin *et al.*, 2008; Steffes and Burgee, 2009; Jeong and Jang, 2011). Restaurant owners should know that consumers' driving force for sharing their positive opinion online is food quality rather than discussions about prices (Jeong and Jang, 2011). However, one promotional method cannot fit all products and businesses and so the current thesis explores relevant methods per restaurant category (Phillipov, 2016).

2.9 Actor Network theory (ANT)

During the 1980s a combination of theory and methodology was developed as a contribution to the sociology of knowledge and translation (Walsham, 1997; Fox, 2000) based on the previous work of Peirce about semiotic networks and symbolic interactionism (Akrich and Latour, 1992; Latour, 2005; Knappett and Malafouris, 2008; Latour, 2014). This theory/methodology has been named Actor Network theory (ANT) and it investigates heterogeneous networks constructed from relations and collective actions based on power relations and flows of information, such as word of mouth (Law, 1992; Callon, 1998). These relations can be depicted as a set of natural and social chains which surround a particular subject or object within the food sector (Law, 1986; Goodman, 1999). The theory also has the advantage of not taking into consideration any distance as actors are connected remotely (Latour, 1996).

In more detail, ANT relates to the heterogeneous relations among actors, such as humans, objects, text, machines, blogs, money, organisations and geographical arrangements by describing rather explaining how these relations are formed (Law, 1992; Murdoch, 1997; Fox, 2000; Law, 2009). Therefore, ANT is suitable for describing the communication network of ethnic restaurant owners and consumers, who can be named as actors according to ANT's terminology. Nowadays, the network relies on word of mouth among consumers and electronic word of mouth as both consumers and restaurateurs have an online presence (see Section 2.8). The reputation of an ethnic restaurant relies on consumers' comments and experiences but, also restaurateurs are capable communicating among actors by using digital platforms, such as social media. In addition, food bloggers can influence other actors within the network and inspire substantial audiences to visit or shun ethnic restaurants.

On that basis, some actors (or actants) seem to be more powerful than others. However, even in these cases there is a notable effort to sustain the dependent relations on which their power relies and these unequal relations are the ones which sustain the social network of heterogeneous materials (Law, 1992; Latour, 1996). Actors are obliged to remain faithful to their alliances according to which they are defined and are also controlled by others and *vice versa*. In other words, when ANT points to one actor holding many others it means that one entity gives a role to others and this is how a relation is created among the actors (Latour, 1996; Walsham, 1997). This situation is the so called *translation (Callon, 1984, p. 75),* meaning that ANT is also known as the theory of translation (Callon, 1984; Law, 1992; Fox, 2000).

Actors define the network associations and are by themselves associated with other actors; an actor is always a network as well as a synthesis of identities or relations (Law, 1992; Latour, 1999). Naturally, as actors can associate with other actors they can disassociate as well. During the *interessement* (Callon, 1984, p. 63) allies are formed and during this process it is the identity which guides the actors to associate with or to disassociate from other actors. Actors' choices of allies are defined by their

identity, power and goals (Callon, 1984; Law, 1992). Since these relations are vast the network cannot be depicted in two or three dimensions, but it has as many dimensions as the connections among the actors (Latour, 1996). However, what is described by ANT are the associations, the motivations and the actions of actors within an empirical field work, therefore a combination of theories is needed in order to explain rather than just describe what comes after these (Walsham, 1997). ANT can furthermore be defined as a theory of space in which social life is structured in a perpetual flow, which means that there is room for numerous types of relations and connections in a variety of domains such as food, fashion, politics and so on. (Latour, 1999).

Within the ethnic restaurants network, there is an open relation system where citizens hold several religions or ethnicities and also have various socio-material resources. Aspects of religion or ethnicity are those which construct identities, thus within the network we may observe a variety of identities and perceptions. To illustrate actors' perceptions, a certain context is needed and for this purpose quality and authenticity have been proposed for Greek ethnic restaurants. ANT explains how similar eating habits stem from different ethnicities, populations and religions. These populations are actors who hold certain identities according to which they judge food quality. Their judgements establish the relations among actors and construct meanings communicated within the food network.

2.10 Defining a successful restaurant

Successful ethnic food marketing strongly depends on proactive marketing strategies and also on the product's image, promotion and advertising (Choi and Henneberry, 2000). The definition of a successful restaurant typically focuses mostly on financial factors (Di Pietro *et al.*, 2007; Susskind, 2010; Harrison, 2011). The restaurant's profitability, turnover and health inspections are important metrics for the success of a restaurant (Harrison, 2011) as well as, financially, the restaurant's revenue (Di Pietro *et al.*, 2007; Susskind, 2010) or the revenue per available seat per hour (Susskind, 2010).

Another measure of success is customer loyalty and customer satisfaction (Han and Ryu, 2009; Harrington *et al.*, 2011). If a restaurant has loyal customers, it can reduce promotional costs and increase profits (Bowen and Chen, 2001). On the other hand, those restaurants which cannot understand and fulfil consumer needs are expected to fail (Parsa *et al.*, 2005).

A successful restaurant should create the feeling of uniqueness, meaning to have a clear identity as a vehicle of differentiation among other restaurants (Muller, 1999). Market success and customer attraction can be achieved by offering authentic and high-quality products and services (Muller, 1999; Sulek and Hensley, 2004; Namkung and Jang, 2007; Tsai and Lu, 2012; Bryla, 2015). The most useful rule is to "*feed consumers' ego as well as their appetite*" (Smith, 1996, p. 44).

2.11 Summary

Authenticity has been defined in the marketing literature without precision. For consumers, authenticity has a generally positive meaning such that they conceive the authentic products as trustworthy and unique. Naturally, the meaning of authenticity can be negotiated and interpreted by members of a society differently (Wang, 1999; Kim and Jang, 2016). Based on Quality Conventions theory, quality seems to have a fluid meaning for consumers who are highly influenced by perceptions, therefore quality is a social construction, crucial for the members of the society and highly influenced by social norms, the industry, the economy and also commonly respected principles. Under these circumstances, the meanings of both authenticity and quality are highly influenced by identities.

According to social identity theory, identity is a social role which is constructed through social interaction with other members of the society. The need to belong is translated into membership of social groups, a role which carries values, obligations and expectations. As was outlined in this Chapter, food choices can be determined by identities and they can also reinforce the sense of belonging to a social group and as a consequence the identity itself. Therefore, our diet plays a crucial role in our sense of

belonging, our health, our mentality and our life expectancy. These aspects will be further analysed in the following Chapter.

Chapter 3 : The Greek culinary culture

3.1 Introduction

The Greek culinary culture Chapter describes the traditional Greek dishes, the food habits of the Greeks over the centuries and also the Greek context of the last decade. Section 3.2 is a description of the Greek culinary culture, the food customs and traditions. In the end, Section 3.3 is about Greece current financial and social situation and how the households and its citizens' food habits have been affected. The Chapter concludes with a summary of the key points about Greece, its food habits and culture as a context for the reader.

3.2 Greek culinary culture

Greek cookbooks provide insights into national cuisine and also into local food traditions. The traditional Greek restaurants which serve authentic dishes are called "*tavernes*" and are assumed to be the most original, professional authentic Greek cooking (Nomikou, 2010). Greek culinary culture passed directly from mother to daughter for decades as it was not until the 1920s that the first cookbook was published (Jacob, 1991). The first known Greek cookbook was the "Cooking guide" of Nikos Tselementes, which includes modern Greek recipes. Tselementes modernised Greek cuisine as he twisted traditional recipes with French influences (Ball, 2003) and he introduced béchamel and bouillabaisse to Greek housewives. However, the modern art of cooking in Europe has its roots in the Renaissance in France, an epoch highly influenced by the golden age of Greece and therefore Tselementes assumes that every culinary preparation has its origins in Greek cooking (Tselementes, 1970). In the same way, Psilakis and Psilaki (1997) argue that we perceive sweet and sweet-and-sour sauces to be part of French high cuisine, whereas they originate from Ancient Greece and Byzantium.

From what we know about the ancient Greeks, they consumed their meals in two phases: first was the "*siton*", cereals and wheat, which were the basic ingredient for any meal and then the "*opson*" (vegetables, meats, fish, sauces) (Hoffman, 2004). After their meal ancient Greeks used to have the

"*poton*", which was the drink (Hoffman, 2004). At that time and still nowadays typically this is wine, and as a matter of fact, many owners of traditional Greek restaurants (tavernes) were and still are producers of wine (Nomikou, 2010). Apart from the wine, another beverage is *ouzo,* which also may accompany the modern Greek meal phases of *orektika (=appetizers), kurios* (=main courses) and the *gluka* (=sweets). Initially the *"mezedakia"* or "*orektika"* (deriving from the Greek word *orexis,* meaning to 'desire') are served, which are a kind of appetisers, miniature servings of dishes, such as meat balls, olives, small portions of cheese, fried potatoes, or sprats (Chantiles, 1992; Nomikou, 2010; Barron, 2011). When the *mezedes* are finished, bread, salad and the main course follow (Barron, 2011). The main meal is named *kurios piato* and after its consumption comes the last dish: fruits or sweet treats (Chantiles, 1992).

Nowadays, many Greeks are abandoning their culinary heritage in favour of prepared meals (Psilakis and Psilaki, 1997). On the other hand, there are authors who search for and promote Greek identity, aiming to sustain the original recipes and ingredients against globalised fast foods (Ball, 2003). For instance, Tselementes attempted to modernise Greece and also to keep its cultural identity by suggesting the recovery of original Greek recipes and names and at the same time aiming to get rid of various Eastern influences and "corruptions" of the original taste (Tselementes, 1970). Similarly, Cretan writers (Psilakis and Psilaki, 1997) suggest that the Ottomans were nomadic people who did not have a specific culinary culture and so the savoury creations of Athenian deipnosophists appear today as Eastern delights with Turkish names due to the domination of Greece by the Turkish during the Ottoman period (Turkocracy).

Modern Greek cuisine is described by Tselementes (2009), who was the first to propose the consumption of canned foods after Greeks refused to use them because they conceived them as American goods and a consequence of American imperialism (Ball, 2003). His cookbook includes recipes which have mainly vegetables, due to the fact that the Greeks tend to consume meat in moderation. To name a few of them: the *dolmadakia* (main ingredients: vine leaves and rice), the Cretan *dakos* (main

ingredients: rusks, feta, olive oil and tomato), grilled octopus (made with vinegar), *kolokuthokeftedes* (made with courgettes and spearmint), *fava* (a similar dish to hummus, made with split peas, olive oil and onions), cheese pies and spinach pies, *mousaka*, *pastitsio* and so on.

As can be expected for Greek cooking, there are regional variations within the country. Greeks cooked with the raw materials which were regionally cultivated and available to them (Hoffman, 2004). As a consequence, we may say that Greek cuisine has the following main subdivisions: Cretan cuisine, Aegean islands cuisine, North Greece cuisine, Athenian cuisine and *Politiki* cuisine (originating from Istanbul, the former Constantinople). *Politiki* cuisine, for instance, was depicted in the film "A Touch of Spice" (Boulmetis, 2003), where Soula Bozi was the consultant about the dishes presented. Soula in her book "The Authentic Recipes of Constantinople" (Bozi, 2007) included dishes which have their roots in Istanbul (the former Constantinople or Poli) when the Greeks were still living in peace with Turkish, French and other Europeans and Mediterranean populations. These dishes are the spiciest within Greek cuisine, possibly because of the Greeks' interaction with Eastern populations. The writer describes *Politiki* cuisine as fusion cuisine of different civilisations that fulfil their need for social life and gatherings rather than their hunger (Bozi, 2007). Its origins date back to the Athenian deipnosophists, when Constantinople was still part of the Athenian empire.

The basic material of *Politiki* cuisine has always been fish and, secondly, meat, with both being accompanied by vegetables. Consumers in Constantinople could find three different types of bakery store: those which produced bread, those which produced koulouria with sesame (savoury small crullers) and those which produced sweets like *tsoureki* (a type of brioche) or lucums and also cheese pies and *mpougatsa* (a sweet pie with cream) (Bozi, 2007). Especially after 1922, when the Greeks of Constantinople had to immigrate back to Greece they transmitted their culinary heritage to where they were located (North Greece, Athens, etc.). The most common recipes of the *Politiki* kouzina according to Bozi (2007) are the *melitzanosalata* (mashed aubergine mixed with sweet peppers),

artichokes with lamb, *artichokes à la Polita* (artichokes from Constantinople, made with carrots, potatoes, onions, lemon juice and dill), Aubergines Imam (aubergines with onion, garlic and olive oil), cuttlefish stuffed with rice, onions, sultana and pine kernels, shrimps with saffron and rice, squid with rice, onions, sultana and pine kernels and, finally, lamb with coriander. As far as the sweets are concerned, the most common ones are mpougatsa (a sweet pie filled with cream similar to custard), malempi (made with milk, rose water and mastic), cream with mastic (made with milk, sugar and mastic), asoures (made with sugar, wheat, sultana, apricots, pistachio, hazelnuts and rose water), *chalva* (made with meal, butter, sugar, pine kernels, cinnamon and orange or lemon juice).

The well-known poet, Constantine Cavafy, famous for his poem "Ithaka", was born in Constantinople to Greek parents but educated by French and English teachers (Cavafy, 2003). That was common for upper class citizens of Constantinoupoli as they tried to learn as many languages as possible and to own houses in Constantinople and Europe as well. For these reasons, the family spent their time between Paris, London, Liverpool, Egypt and Constantinoupoli (Cavafy, 2003). During 1849-1899, Cavafy's mother collected recipes which are included in the book "Charikleia Cavafy: The recipes" (Cavafy, 2003). The recipes are quite similar to the previously described *Politiki* cuisine: *kebab, giouvetsi, chalvas, tsoureki, garlic sauce*. Additionally, Charikleia included sweets in her recipe book: *galaktompoureko* (made with butter, lemon juice, eggs and milk), *moustalevria* (made with sugar, flour, walnuts, grapemust) and *ravani* (made with rice flour, sugar, butter and eggs). What is more, meat recipes are noted: *patzas* (beef or lamb leg boiled with garlic, egg and lemon), *mialia* (panned breaded fried beef brains) and *glossa vodini* (boiled beef tongue with white sauce).

Apart from the regional variations, the Greeks consume specific dishes for each festival or during the period of Lent (Chantiles, 1992). Marika Mitsotakis, the wife of Mitsotakis (Greek prime minister), described history and recipes in her book (Mitsotaki, 2011) and wrote about how she insisted on having lamb on skewers at Easter, a tradition of the Athenians, contrary

to her husbands' Cretan tradition of boiling the lamb at Easter. In the same book, she describes what the Greeks eat on each occasion: having lamb at weddings, eating lamb's liver when a woman is pregnant, serving *pastitsio* to someone who has lost too much weight, and so on. Finally, if a characteristic Greek food could be suggested the Mitsotakis family recommend *gemista* (vegetables stuffed with rice). Apart from the *gemista*, other dishes are described as authentic Greek dishes, some of which are the well-known *mousaka*, *pastitsio* (made with pasta and beef and pork mince), *taramasalata* during the period of Lent (made with cod roe), *soutzoukakia* (meat balls with tomato sauce), *keftedes* (fried meat balls), *giouvetsi* (beef meat with orzo), breaded cod served with garlic sauce (a similar dish to fish and chips), *stifado* (rabbit with tomato sauce and onions) and *bamies* (okra boiled with tomato sauce and onions).

Foreign ethnographic researchers have also derived insights into Greek food habits and culinary traditions (Chantiles, 1992; Hoffman, 2004; Barron, 2011). According to their description meat is always served with herbs and vegetables, legumes are quite popular and the most common ingredients are olives, olive oil, sea salt, vinegar, yogurt, cheese, honey, lemons, capers, peppers, aubergine, sultana raisins, dill, basil, nutmeg, onions, tomato, artichokes, beans, beets, cabbage, lettuce, okra, spinach, squash and several types of fish (Hoffman, 2004; Barron, 2011). As regards the most popular herbs and spices which can be found in Greek cooking, these are allspice, anise seeds, cardamom, cinnamon, citron, cloves, cumin, dill, bay leaves, saffron, rosemary, oregano, mint, thyme, basil, parsley, marjoram and mastic (Chantiles, 1992; Hoffman, 2004; Barron, 2011). These researchers tend to describe the most common Greek dishes with English names: 'eggplant salad' instead of *melitzanosalata*, vine leaves stuffed with rice instead of *salmadakia*, fried meatballs with beef mince instead of *keftedes*, and so on. Other popular dishes are little fried fish, fried squid, mussels, cheese pie, spinach pie, chicken pie, lamb pie, lentil soup, chickpea soup, egg-lemon soup, roasted lamb shanks, lamb wrapped in filo, pork stew, chicken baked in yogurt, chicken kapama, grilled duck, oven-stewed rabbit and boiled snails.

3.3 Greek context

Over the last seven years, Greece is facing severe financial crisis due to internal factors and unethical political decisions. Over recent decades, the Greek political system has guided its citizens towards a certain lifestyle by, for instance, increasing public expenditure, which has resulted in high levels of accumulated public debt (Kouretas and Vlamis, 2010). Apart from that, political parties have been wasting public money for decades, and have not brought an end to tax evasion, undeclared work and corruption, even within their own parties or by public employees (De Grauwe, 2009; Frangos, 2012; Koukiadaki and Kretsos, 2012; Duquenne and Vlontzos, 2014).

To make matters worse, in March 2010 and after extensive debates, Germany and France agreed to provide financial support to Greece if necessary, accompanied by financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Nelson *et al.*, 2010). By June 2015, Greece was facing even more severe economic challenges and austerity measures, as the government was running out of cash. According to the Congressional Research Service of the U.S.A. (Nelson *et al.*, 2015), it was this lack of cash which led the far-left Greek government to close the banks and order capital controls. So far, there have been three "Memorandum" programs, and still, the figures have not improved much (Markovits *et al.*, 2014).

Soon the crisis was transformed from an economic problem to a social phenomenon. Greek citizens have been deeply affected by the crisis and had even had to change their food habits to worse and cheaper food choices (Frangos, 2012; Duquenne and Vlontzos, 2014). In 2016 the Greek government presented a survey (ELSTAT, 2016) which showed that 53,2% of the households cannot afford to eat poultry, red meat or fish every second day whereby the percentage of the wealthy households was 1.8%. Similarly, restaurants in Greece have been affected greatly in terms of their turnover as customers cannot afford eating out in restaurants. Restaurants' turnover in Greece has been reduced by 8% from 2007 to 2013 (ELSTAT, 2013). The increasing rate of VAT over the last three years had also reduced the eating out in restaurants in Greece.

3.4 Summary

The culinary culture can reinforce the sense of belonging to specific ethnic groups. As a matter of fact, adherence to the Greek traditional diet can fulfil the human need of belonging, reinforce the Greek ethnic identity and also serve the need of offering to ourselves, which is about having a tasty and healthy diet. As a context for study, Greece provides a valuable basis for exploring the effects of a financial crisis and, most importantly, how the restaurant sector has been affected. Turnover of the businesses has been greatly declined as consumer purchase behaviour has been negatively affected for food product purchases due to the financial crisis which Greece is facing over the last seven years.

Chapter 4 : Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter describes the research methods which were used for data collection and analysis. A cross-national study was conducted aiming to investigate the phenomena and experiences of ethnic restaurant owners and consumers. The investigation was qualitative in nature following a constructivist Grounded theory approach. Interviews were conducted in order to generate data during which the projective technique had been applied to stimulate participants' answers. Data were then analysed by coding with the use of the NVIVO v10 program and interpreted based on inductive reasoning and symbolic interactionism. Analysis followed a constructivist strategy and clusters were created for this purpose. The thesis aims to develop a middle-range theory. During the research, ethical issues were taken into consideration, as anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed and consent forms were signed also by the participants before the beginning of the interviews. Finally, the whole research process was in full accordance with Newcastle University's guidelines and the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

4.2 Justification for Qualitative research

As the purpose of the study is to investigate the phenomena, perceptions and experiences of ethnic restaurant owners and consumers, a qualitative approach is appropriate as it studies perceptions and experiences in depth (Silverman, 2011). In more detail, the study aims to answer research questions about quality, authenticity and identity aspects. The focus is on the ethnic restaurant sector and the marketing field.

Additionally, a qualitative approach was chosen due to the existing literature's recommendation for qualitative research (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Brown, 2013; Rickly-Boyd, 2013) and a cross-national study (Lu *et al.*, 2015). A qualitative research can also focus on personal and constructive interpretations of authenticity and quality. On top, Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) and social identity theory suggest as well the collection of qualitative data for interpretive epistemology due to the rich insights which

they can provide (Spiggle, 1994; Thompson, 1996; Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Ahuvia *et al.*, 2006; Thompson *et al.*, 2013). With regard to these and as the thesis seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of identity aspects, food choices, constructed meanings and promotional methods, the author chose qualitative research methods. The exploration of processes, social phenomena and activities guided data collection, whereas the analysis followed the principles of Grounded theory (Charmaz, 2010).

In keeping with a qualitative approach the thesis contains an in-depth investigation about **how** consumers perceive authenticity and quality aspects, their interaction with other consumers and restaurateurs and also **how** restaurant owners judge the authenticity and quality of their food menus and the marketing communications materials that reference it. The thesis addresses these gaps in the literature and sets research objectives which will be answered by the findings of the thesis.

These objectives, according to qualitative researchers (Charmaz, 2010), were working guidelines rather than truths to be proven. In more detail, the main purpose of the data collection was the exploration of processes, the investigation of new concepts, the elicitation of personal perspectives and the exploration of social phenomena and activities (Charmaz, 2010; Lawless and Heymann, 2010; Vidal *et al.*, 2013).

4.3 Interpretivism

Unlike in ethnography, under which the researcher typically seeks to be "invisible" (Walliman, 2011), the qualitative grounded theorist works in an interpretative and involved framework (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). Just as Li (2008, p. 108) remarks: "...the characteristics of the researcher can shape field social interactions...". Similarly, Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran (2001) propose that a participant-observer can be blended in with the observed culture. That blending will lead the researcher to studying the sample in depth. The participant researcher is in a position "to see the world through the sample's eyes, to feel what the participants feel, and to experience what they experience" (Li, 2008, p. 103). Therefore, during the interviews, the author was able to observe the sample in-depth as apart from their answers it was possible to observe their body language,

emotions, feelings and facial expressions. An in-depth investigation was feasible as the interviews with restaurateurs took place in their restaurants, which enabled me to explore their interactions with consumers, to look at the menus of their restaurant and to blend in with the hospitality service they provide.

4.4 Grounded Theory

Existing research about food and identities suggests that a grounded theory approach should be followed in order to study further the food-related identities of different social groups (Bisogni *et al.*, 2002; Johnson *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, data collection and analysis was based on Grounded theory (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002), according to which data collection and analysis should take place simultaneously, even during the initial phases of a study. Specifically, Charmaz (2011) proposes that after an interview the researcher should go back to the literature and reconsider it. Doing so is essential as the analysis could be conceived through a completely different filter, according to the newly obtained data. Since grounded theory involves "theorising fieldwork" (Silverman, 2011), the data should be studied in-depth and moving back and forth from data to theory is highly recommended (Charmaz, 2011).

The above mentioned procedure for grounded theory follows the "Charmaz" version rather than that of *Strauss and Corbin* or the *Glaserian* approach to Grounded Theory (Goulding, 2002). Specifically, the research adopts a symbolic interactionism lens as both Charmaz and Corbin and Strauss propose (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). However, there are some differences between Strauss and Charmaz, and this thesis follows the latter's approach for two reasons. Firstly, Charmaz (2010; 2011) introduces the liberal-participant researcher, who constructs categories and theory according to his/her chosen data, in contrast to Corbin and Strauss, who suggest specific prescriptive techniques which should be followed by the researcher (Gibbs, 2007; Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Gibbs, 2010). Secondly, Glaser and Strauss (1967) propose that the literature review be conducted after an independent analysis of the data. As they stress, a literature review can restrict analytical considerations to the concepts in the

literature and therefore prevent the researcher from open-mindedly looking beyond what is already known. The data collection and analysis are still 'simultaneous'. However, with the approach of Charmaz (2010) a literature review should be undertaken initially and then re-evaluated again after the first gathering of data. Charmaz takes a different view of the use of literature by suggesting that to have a 'theoretical conversation' with the literature, you need to know what is known and where gaps or inconsistencies exist to be able to 'situate' your own findings. This approach was adopted in this study.

In addition, the use of grounded theory aided the conceptualisation of the perceptions of the participants. The contribution of grounded theory is that the researcher becomes as close as possible to the events, identities, choices, processes and experiences of the participants. At this point, it should also be stated that grounded theory is a method of studying processes and actions, not individuals. The application of grounded theory was also essential due to the goal of interpreting the different meanings that food has for the different social identity groups where the restaurateurs belong (Gephart, 2004).

Data analysis begins with coding the data, then grouping the codes (through constant comparison) into more abstract categories which can sometimes be referred to as themes. Since grounded theory is theorising fieldwork (Silverman, 2011), data collection was formulated by interviewing restaurant owners in their businesses and then the data that emerged were coded in two phases. As the emerging data were coded the result was to theorise from data and to stress how authenticity and quality meanings are perceived in relation to identity.

Grounded theory contributed to constructing a theory by studying processes and actions (Charmaz, 2010) and by answering questions about what and how (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). Consequently, the focus was on what the process for the adoption of identities is, which identities are adopted and what are the consequences and actions which emerged from adopting these identities.

The research questions were posed in relation to the coding and were about: what, how and with what consequences participants are acting (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). All the answers were given from two resources: a) the interviews and b) from the open discussion about the menus (see projective technique). During the whole process of data collection there was a moving back and forth to the literature, which made it possible to "break the data up and then generalise" (Charmaz, 2010).

Based on the suggested methods of Grounded theory the communication processes between consumers and restaurateurs were analysed thoroughly and a new matrix was structured about how authenticity is perceived and communicated amongst the consumers and the restaurateurs. This interaction between consumers and restaurateurs enabled the author to stress how quality and authenticity are perceived collectively (via symbols-codes) and not just individually (Charmaz, 2011; Charmaz, 2013).

4.4.1 Constructivist strategy

Constructivism focuses on how participants construct meanings and actions in relation to a particular topic. With reference to authenticity, the study focuses on:

a) how consumers have constructed authenticity and quality perceptions and if/how these affect their food choices.
b) how restaurateurs construct a menu based on their authenticity and quality perceptions and how they communicate the authenticity concept.

Constructivist grounded theory has shifted from the general grounded research question of "what is going on?" to "how do people construct their experiences?" (Gibson and Hartman, 2014). Data collection under this approach is an interplay between the researcher and the researched (Gibson and Hartman, 2014). As a result, the research was affected by the interviewees' responses and by the prior actions. Consequently, as constructionists point out, data in the research were treated as views and not as hard facts (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002).

4.4.2 Clusters

Based on the guidelines of grounded theory, the whole research was depicted in clusters, visual clouds of the author's own material. After the initial literature review, the author followed the approach of Charmaz (2010) and proceeded to the gathering of data and then to the early categorisation of them into codes, the clusters. Clusters are in fact an exercise to facilitate beginners in coding; they are a data map. Charmaz (2010) introduced clusters as a pre-writing of memos, even in the phase when the researcher would not have gathered data completely. Therefore, the pre-writing of memos, the clusters, was conceived as an analytical exercise.

The project was divided into clusters which enabled the author's supervisors to evaluate the pre-memos so as to make fruitful suggestions and remarks. For this particular study, the clusters are depicted in Figure 4.1:

Figure 4.1: Clusters

Box A	Box B	Box C	Box D

Box A

Understand food consumers & restaurant owners

Identity
Authenticity perceptions
Quality perceptions

⬥ Identity's influence on food choice
⬥ Construct authenticity meanings
⬥ Social interaction
⬥ Authenticity's influence on food choice / constructing a menu

Box B

Levels of identity

Class, religion, ethnicity (macro-level)

(Interaction among individuals-regions)

⬥ Regional level (Athens)
⬥ National level (Greece)
⬥ Supernational level (Mediterranean)
⬥ Out-group level (UK)

Box C

Data Collection

Interviews with restaurant owners
Interviews with consumers
Projective technique
Cross-national study

Box D

Behaviour

Authenticity and quality of restaurants and their menus
Food choice

Construct Theory

⬥ Food perceptions-authenticity
⬥ Communication methods & their effect on consumers and their restaurant/food choices

According to the clustering of the current thesis we may define consumers' and restaurant owners' authenticity and quality perceptions on the basis of their identity and symbolic interaction during consumption (Box A, light blue section). The above mentioned conceptions are defined via the lens of the region (Box B, white section) based on the approach of Grounded Theory.

To begin with the identity concept (Box B), it may be constructed at a macro-level (Box B, light blue section) or at a regional one (Box B, white section). Additionally, both identity and social interaction between the restaurant owners and consumers are the basic forces which drive them to make food choices or to choose menus for their restaurants (see findings). Such food and menu choices are conceived as authentic and of good quality (or not) according to the individuals' perceptions and identities.

Authenticity and quality are analysed based on the identity concept for food consumers and restaurant owners at a national, super national and out-group level (Box C). As a result of the cross-national interviews with restaurant owners and consumers the relationship between quality and authenticity is revealed, compared to region (distance from the origin) and identity. In this phase the ANT and eWOM concepts among actors had not yet been introduced. These concepts emerged after the memo writing and the clusters as it was noticed during the data collection phase. This was expected, as grounded theory's principles propose that themes emerge from the data.

Finally, the practical outcome was to propose communication methods for ethnic restaurants on the basis of the interaction between consumers and restaurant owners (Box D).

4.5 Semiotics and Symbolic Interactionism

Charmaz (2013) encourages grounded theorists first to develop their theoretical framework according to the observed data from the fieldwork and then to compare it with "classic" theories, such as social identity theory or symbolic interactionism. In fact, a qualitative researcher can only evaluate receiver reactions, whereby semiotic analysis can provide reasons for these reactions (Solomon, 1988). Similar to constructivist Grounded theory,

semiotics can be applied to elicit new theoretical or methodological insights by taking into account previous research on similar topics (Brown and Turley, 1997). Similarly, Peirce's approach to semiotics has a constructivist nature (Mick, 1986).

Interactionism is a theory which assumes that our behaviour and perceptions derive from processes of interaction with other people (Silverman, 2011). Contrary to psychologism (which conceives behaviour to be directed by our genes), symbolic interactionism suggests various forms of communications via which humans designate their perceptions and behaviour and also shape society (Goulding, 2002). Therefore, according to symbolic interactionism, meanings are constructed by society's members, who tend to interpret other people's actions rather than plainly reacting to them (Solomon, 1983; Mick, 1986).

In the past, researchers (MacCannell, 1986) have blended semiotics with symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism seems has many overlaps with semiotics as both are highly influenced by Peirce (Solomon, 1983). In more detail, social life is expressed through symbols, of which the most powerful of all is language (Goulding, 2002). The role of language has been underlined by many researchers as the essence of communication and social interaction (Boden, 1990; Lofland *et al.*, 2006). As such, language is the path through which subjects express their ideas (Denzin, 1992; Berger, 2013).

Semiotics are "an approach to understanding or interpreting the meaning(s) of some idea or phenomenon" (Brown and Turley, 1997, p. 251). Giddens (1979, p. 9) argues that semiotics can be chosen for *"the explication of social and cultural phenomena"*. The semiotician explains how communication is socially produced based on each involved culture (Solomon, 1988). Therefore, semiosis can be found within relations, it can be an action or influence which presupposes a collaboration of three elements: a sign, its object and the reaction to the sign (Weiss, 1942; Mick, 1986). These terms can be defined as follows: "*an iconic sign relates to its object insofar as it imitates or resembles the object… An indexical sign relates to its object by some correspondence of fact... A symbolic sign*

relates to its object in an entirely conventional manner and, as such, requires the participative presence…" (Mick, 1986, p. 199).

Peirce's approach to semiotics, as discussed by Weiss, Mick and Berger (1942; 1986; 2013), suggests that apart from language, a sign can be anything that contains a meaning for members of the society. Peirce conceives semiotics as a philosophy which emphasizes the essential role of the involved objects and therefore his epistemology is constructivist (Mick, 1986). As for the signs, they can be encoded everywhere: in foods, magazines, films, music, packaging, clothing or advertisements (Solomon, 1988; Englis *et al.*, 1994; Berger, 2013).

As far as authenticity aspects are concerned, previous research has defined two specific types of authenticity based on Peirce's semiotic framework: iconic and indexical (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). In addition, Actor Network theory (ANT) has been structured upon Peirce's work (Latour, 2014). Peirce's suggestion is to test semiotic concepts as they are open to criticism and not prejudgements or absolute truths (Weiss, 1942). As such, the open nature of semiotics is based on the third element of Peirce's model, the interpretant: the reaction to the sign. Apart from the reaction, the other two elements are the sign and the object. This reaction and decoding are based on the interpreter's identity and therefore it varies for each individual (Mick, 1986). Concerning the current study, the author has decoded the data according to her identity and was able to understand for instance the feeling of nostalgia which consumers of a Greek identity were expressing during their visits in a Greek ethnic restaurant in the U.K.

4.6 Choice of Data Collection, Sampling and Data Analysis Methods

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), a variety of data formats should be employed to produce an integrated qualitative study. This research combined the methods of in-depth interviews and a projective technique (Atik and Ozdamar Ertekin, 2013; Vidal *et al.*, 2013). Given the importance of the restaurant setting to supply elicitation cues, in-depth interviews were held face to face within the dining environment. All UK participants were owners of Greek ethnic restaurants and varied according to their generation status (first to third generation Greeks) and restaurant exclusivity according

to average meal price. To access maximum variation in perceptions of authenticity, participants were also sampled in Greece on the basis of patronage by local customers and tourists, menu price points, location and social media recommendations.

Mainly because of the use of grounded theory, a systematic examination of a variety of data was needed "aiming at the generation of theory" (Harris *et al.*, 2009, p. 81). Clearly, "theory without data is empty; data without theory say nothing" (Silverman, 2011, p. 356). With the sampling being based on grounded theory, a theoretical sampling approach was undertaken (Glaser, 1992; Curtis *et al.*, 2000). Theoretical sampling is a sampling strategy in qualitative research which targets specific data: rich-information informants. This purposeful sampling provided information about the emerging concepts and aided the researcher in investigating varied conditions and dimensions (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). In this case, the chosen sample was decided by also taking into consideration the possibility of generalising based on the findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Finally, the interviews process was deemed complete when the marginal interview yielded no fresh insights (Goulding, 2002). That phase has been defined as "saturation" (Bisogni *et al.*, 2002; Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Flick, 2014). Saturation occurs when additional data gathering results in no new categories or relevant themes emerging and for these reasons seems to be "both simple and complex as well" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 148). As a consequence, this process could have lasted forever, as different conditions could be studied each time, various dimensions could be given each time by the respondent, etc. Therefore, the researcher had to accept what had not been covered as one of the limitations of the study. As such, sampling for grounded theory is an open and flexible process which cannot be predetermined (Trotter, 2012). In the current thesis the theoretical saturation was achieved with n=19 interviews with restaurant owners (11 and 8 interviews in the UK and Greece respectively) and n=23 interviews with consumers (of a variety of identities and locations). More information concerning the consumers' and restaurateurs' identity can be found in Table 4.1 (Participants' profile).

Table 4.1: Participants' profile

Restaurant owners			
Gender	**Ethnicity**	**Bio**	**Restaurant location**
Female	Greek	She lives in Greece. As a child she spent some years in Crete, where she was raised by her grandfather.	Athens
Female	Greek	She has lived in the U.K. for 10 years. She was born in Greece and came to the U.K. for studies at the age of 22.	London
Female	Greek	She has lived in Greece (Athens) since she was born. She has had a restaurant in the historical centre of Athens for 15 years.	Athens
Male	Greek	He has lived in the U.K. for 25 years. He was born in Greece and came to the UK for work at the age of 32.	London
Male	Greek	He lives in Greece. His origin is from Crete, where he spent all of his summers as a child.	Athens
Male	Greek	He lives in Greece. His father and grandfather had the restaurant which he has owned for 15 years now.	Athens
Male	Greek	He had been working at the restaurant as a waiter since he was a teenager. Five years ago he decided (with his wife) to take over the restaurant.	Rafina

Male	Greek	He lives in Greece. His father and grandfather had a restaurant next to the one which he has owned for 8 years now.	Athens
Male	Greek	He has lived in the U.K. for more than 20 years. He came to the U.K. from Greece when he was 18 to study and then he started the restaurant with his father.	Oxford
Male	British- Cypriot	He has lived in the U.K. since he was born. He is the 3rd generation of a Greek Cypriot family.	London
Male	Greek	Lives in Greece. His origin is from the rural area of Greece, where he produces his own wine.	Athens
Male	Greek	Living in the U.K. for 4 years. Initially he came for studies and then he decided to open his restaurant.	London
Male	Greek	He came to the U.K. for studies then he went back home to work in marketing. Due to the financial crisis, 4 years ago, he decided to come to the U.K. and work in the catering sector.	London
Male	Greek - Lebanese	He used to live in the rural area of Greece and he worked in a restaurant for 3 years. The last 3 years he has been living in the U.K.	Newcastle
Male	English - Greek	He lives in the U.K. He is 2nd generation Greek.	Newcastle

Male	Australian - Greek	He was a manager in Australia at Greek ethnic restaurants and café. He moved to the U.K. in his early '40s so as to open his own restaurant. His brother was already here.	Newcastle
Male	English	He lives in the U.K. He used to live in Greece as a child till his late 30s.	Newcastle
Male	British-French	He has lived in the U.K. since he was born.	London
Male	Greek	Lives in Greece. He is the manager of a restaurant in a hotel. His origin is from the rural area of Greece where he wants to return and start his own business.	Rafina

Consumers			
Gender	**Ethnicity**	**Bio**	**Has been in Greece**
Female	Greek	She is 27 years old. She works in Greece in a Market research company. She spent 1 year in the U.K. for her Masters.	YES
Female	British	She is 42 years old. She is a finance officer.	YES
Male	British	He is 30 years old. He lives in England but he has also lived in Japan for a while. He is an undergraduate programme secretary.	YES
Male	Greek	He is 26 years old. He is a PhD candidate. He has been living in the U.K. for 4 years now but he was living in Crete before.	YES
Female	Greek	She is 40 years old. She is a Senior lecturer. She has been living in the U.K. for 10 years now but she lived in the U.S.A. for a while.	YES
Male	Italian	He is thirty (30) years old. He works in digital advertising. He also has a food blog. He has been living in London for fifteen (15) months.	NO
Female	Italian	She is thirty one (31) years old. She works in an advertising company. She has a food blog. She has been living in London for the last year.	NO
Male	Greek	He is 27 years old. He is a Masters student. He has been in the U.K. for 9 months.	YES

Male	Greek	He is 25 years old. He is a Masters student. He has been in the U.K. for one year approximately.	YES
Female	American - Greek descent	She is 42 years old. She was raised in the U.S.A. She lives in Switzerland now. She works for the United Nations organisation. She has been to the U.K. more than 10 times.	YES
Female	British	She is 36. She is a lecturer at the University.	YES
Female	Greek Cypriot	She is 25 years old. She is an architect. She has been living in the U.K. for eight years.	YES
Male	English	His dad is Greek. He lives in the U.K. He is a lecturer at the University. He is 35, married with a daughter.	YES
Male	Greek	He lives in the U.K. He is 25 years old. He is working in the Finance and Marketing sectors.	YES
Male	British	He is 27 years old. He works in social services.	YES
Female	Greek	She is 26 years old. She spent 1 year in the U.K. for her Masters. She now lives in Bratislava, where she works for IBM.	YES
Female	Greek Cypriot	She is 24 years old. She is a student. She has been in the U.K. for 4 years now.	NO
Male	Greek	He has been living in the UK for three years. He is 25 years old. He works as a software engineer.	YES

Male	Greek	He is 39 years old. He is a musician. He was studying in the U.K. and working between 2001-2004. He worked as a waiter for the first year at a Greek ethnic restaurant and then as a musician.	YES
Female	British	Her dad is half Armenian. She has lived in England her whole life. She is 27 years old. She is a PhD student.	YES
Male	British	He is 24 years old. He is an estate agent.	YES
Female	British-Pakistani	She is 28 years old. She works for a big IT firm as a manager consultant on technology. She also runs a food website, where she does a lot of reviews about restaurants in London.	NO
Male	Greek	He is 43 years old. He is a doctor. He has been living in the UK for 25 years. He visits Greece every year.	YES

4.7 Interview guides (In-depth and Cultural Interviewing)

The interview, as a research method, is exactly what it has been named: an "inter view" with the respondent. By using qualitative interviews it was possible to obtain an understanding of respondents' experiences, identity, personal opinions and interests (Kvale, 1996). Specifically, in the research, the interviews were conducted with Greek ethnic restaurant owners so as to collect information about the menus and the originality of the dishes, as well as their quality. Moreover, restaurateurs' perceptions were explored about authentic food and how these have been shaped by their identities, values and experiences. The communication methods used for their restaurants were also examined. Apart from the restaurateurs' perceptions, consumers were interviewed in order for the author to explore if they hold common views about authenticity, quality and promotional aspects. Moreover, the identity influence upon these perceptions was explored and also consumers' values and experiences.

Interviews employed open questioning techniques driven by the objectives of the study (see Section 1.3). The semi-structured interview guide contained two question areas: 1) perceptual questions relating to participant-defined constituents of an authentic ethnic restaurant; and 2) procedural questions to understand how authenticity and quality are manifested within the restaurant service and also how and if they could boost the popularity of an ethnic restaurant. The interview guides can be found in the Appendix 2 and 3.

The focus in the interviews was on the norms, values, controversial issues and the understandings of behaviour of ethnic restaurant owners and consumers. These match the objectives of the cultural type of interviews (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). The research therefore attempted to understand why restaurant owners choose specific menus and communication methods and how participants judge authenticity and quality.

More specifically, the interview questions were in accordance with the objectives of the study (see Section 1.3):

(f objective) Investigate the participants' identities
Restaurant owners
Maybe we could begin by discussing how you came to be in the restaurant business and managing this specific restaurant. What is the link between you and the restaurant identity? How do you see yourself contributing to a particular culture?
Consumers
To begin, please tell me a little about yourself (ethnicity, age, etc…).
(a objective) Conceptualisation of the authenticity and quality terms
Restaurant owners
In your opinion, is your menu original Mediterranean, Greek, Cretan or something else? Restaurant owners from the UK said: "Why should we buy a Greek lamb? One of the best in the world comes from Wales, next to us. Do you agree?" Should the ingredients be Greek for authentic dishes? What compromises do you have to make?
Consumers
I would like to begin by exploring your experiences of restaurant X. When you think of restaurant X what comes to mind? Who do you expect to eat / accompany you in an ideal Greek restaurant (locals, tourists…)?

(c objective) Factors that determine an ethnic restaurant's authenticity
Restaurant owners
How do customers judge the restaurant? What are the comments which you hear? *Probing: quality, authenticity, price?* How do you interact with your existing customers? How do you get any feedback?
Consumers
The last time you visited restaurant X, what were your experiences? How did you decide from the menu?
(d objective) Investigation of authenticity and quality perceptions by restaurateurs and how these relate to consumers
Restaurant owners
How do you get your restaurant recipes? On your menu, you have X [e.g. moussaka, Dolmades, kolokythokeftedes]. What makes authentic moussaka, Dolmades etc. What ingredients do you use? Origin? What type of people eat at the restaurant (locals, tourists…)? What makes a restaurant touristic (price, location,etc…)?
Consumers
Do you conceive of the restaurant as Greek? If yes, what makes it Greek? If no, why do you not consider it to be a Greek restaurant?
(g objective) How identities affect food choices and construct meanings
Restaurant owners
Would you please talk through your restaurant's current menu? Did you choose the restaurant's menu yourself? Describe the process of how you choose a menu.

Do customers from the Mediterranean/Greece judge your restaurants differently?
Consumers
When you think of a Greek restaurant what comes to mind? Who do you expect to eat / accompany you in an ideal situation at a Greek restaurant (locals, tourists…)?
(b objective) Promotional methods for ethnic restaurants
Restaurant owners
Do you make any special deals? How do you communicate them? How do you interact with your existing customers? How do you get any feedback? How do you attract new customers? What social media, if any, do you use? What are your plans as a restaurant owner so as to attract new customers for the next five years?
Consumers
How did you first come to go to restaurant X? *Probing: How close should a person be (word of mouth) so as to influence you?* Did you inform other people that you had been to restaurant X? Why? How? Did you give the restaurant feedback? If so in what form (personal, social media etc.) and why? Do you prefer restaurants which have special deals? How do you know about them?

As noted above, theoretical sampling was chosen for collecting data. First, suitable Greek ethnic restaurants in the U.K. were identified, drawing on options identified from social media and personal networks. Concerning the consumers who were chosen for an interview, they had dined at one of the restaurant-interviewees' establishments so they could express their opinion about and experience with them.

The next location of the restaurant owners and consumers' interviews was in Greece, the origin of the ethnic restaurants. As the author possesses dual Greek and British nationality and speaks both languages, she was ideally placed to undertake the interviewing process. As has been noted: "Having the same racial and cultural background as the researched is usually advantageous in fieldwork" (Li, 2008, p. 108). Additionally, the comparison with the origin elicited insightful findings concerning authenticity and quality aspects.

Face-to-face rather than telephone interviews were chosen as the aim was to grasp and observe interviewees' reactions, feelings and thoughts directly during the discussion. Face-to-face interviews also tend to elicit longer answers. Lengthier answers reveal deeper meanings and a clearer view of the verbal and non-verbal respondents' beliefs and thoughts (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). In this study, where social identity was under examination, the capturing of social action and verbal or non-verbal interaction required participant interviewing (Lofland *et al.*, 2006). These data were not gathered only by the informants speaking but also by the researcher's interpretation during the data analysis (Denscombe, 2010).

Despite the value of interviews to the research, there are some limitations to acknowledge. The author had to contact first the potential participants and if they agreed to have an interview with her, then a specific day and slot was arranged. However, many refused to participate as they were busy with running their restaurants or they were afraid to share information about their businesses. Another obstacle which was often faced are the "echoes" of an interview (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). When the recorder is off the respondents tend to talk more freely about themselves and their "sensitive" issues. What comes next, after the end of the recording of an interview, is as important as the on-the record interview. At that point it is suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008) that notes be written. As they argue, the researcher should be sensitive to the non-verbal as well as the verbal answers of the respondents. The author's notes for the current study can be found in the Appendix 1. These notes were written before the beginning

of the recording or after, when the author was chatting with the restaurateurs and consumers.

In addition, as it has been noticed (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), there are people who agree initially to be interviewed but then say little. The author was therefore prepared to interact with the respondents so as to understand their perceptions on the researched topic (Silverman, 2006). Covering gaps of silence in the conversation was possible by moving the conversation forward or by using the projective technique. For instance, by posing probing questions, participants were encouraged to talk and not to be brief in their answers (Atik and Ozdamar Ertekin, 2013). Another practical solution was to request more detailed answers so as to recall more memories from the person being interviewed.

Furthermore, during the whole process the aim was for the interviewee to feel comfortable (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). By using these techniques the answers came effortlessly and resulted in more fruitful results without wasting time. On top of that, the projective technique (Tantiseneepong *et al.*, 2012; Atik and Ozdamar Ertekin, 2013; Vidal *et al.*, 2013) was chosen for presenting to the participants two menus of existing Greek ethnic restaurants so as to be a stimulus for the beginning of a conversation during the interviews (see Section 4.8). For example, the menus included hummus as an option for the restaurant's customers. Naturally, participants discussed it as it is a dish which can be found in Greek ethnic restaurants located in the U.K. but not in Greece. What was revealed at the end of each interview is that hummus is a controversial dish and is quite often perceived as inauthentic and part of the inevitable adaptation of ethnic restaurants located abroad. Clearly, by using these methods the author managed to grasp consumers' and restaurant owners' values in relation to food, including the most controversial issues and deep aspects.

4.8 Projective technique (Word association)

Interviews may not always be sufficient for data collection as participants often struggle to give direct answers about their motivations, feelings or behaviour (Donoghue, 2010; Vidal *et al.*, 2013). As a solution it is suggested to combine more methods for data collection (Zahle, 2012; Atik and

Ozdamar Ertekin, 2013), such as the projective technique and observation during the interviews. Visual methods have been used for studying identity aspects as this technique triggers respondents to give more information about the studied domain than they would do if they were verbally asked in a traditional interview (Harper, 2002; Clark-IbaNez, 2004; Van Auken *et al.*, 2010; Johnson *et al.*, 2011; Mount and Andrée, 2013). In traditional interviews it is possible "*people say that they are doing one thing but in reality they are doing something else*" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 29) therefore, using the projective technique could be a beneficial choice for the study.

The projective technique sought to undercover views of authenticity within the menu construction process and the role of identity within the food choices; these are defined as real-life situations (Jorgensen, 1989; Bar-Tal, 2004; Denscombe, 2010). What is more, the projective technique uncovered perceptions of the participants by revealing their views without focusing narrowly on single attributes (Tantiseneepong *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, the technique provided greater insight into the participants' views by overcoming their fear of being characterised as irrational or naive (Donoghue, 2010; Tantiseneepong *et al.*, 2012; Vidal *et al.*, 2013). More specifically, the association technique (Ares *et al.*, 2008; Guerrero *et al.*, 2010; Vidal *et al.*, 2013) was chosen as menus were presented to participants. The participants were asked to talk freely and to give their opinion about them as if they were customers. This method has the advantage of not influencing the participants as it is unstructured and therefore a wide range of answers, words and meanings can be chosen as a response (Vidal *et al.,* 2013).

Specifically, two menus from real Greek ethnic restaurants were chosen to be presented to interviewees (see Appendix 4 and 5). These two restaurants were visited by the author so as to have a personal experience of them. The two restaurant owners who serve Menu 1 and Menu 2 participated in data collection and so interviews with them were conducted. Menu 1 had Greek names for the recipes. Moreover, it did not have prices. The Greek ethnic restaurant which serves Menu 1 is located in Oxford, U.K.

Menu 2 had 'twisted' the original recipes into more globalised food but, and offered low prices for its dishes. The Greek ethnic restaurant which serves Menu 2 is located in Newcastle, U.K. As a consequence, the comparison of menus 1 and 2 was expected to provide fresh insights about the perceptions of authentic Greek food, quality and prices. The menus were purposively chosen as a projective device to stimulate discussion and so the author asked the participants to talk freely about the two menus and posed open questions.

To the restaurateurs the question was: "Could you please read through the current menus of two restaurants in the UK and express your opinion about them? You may talk freely".

To the consumers the question was similar: "Could you please read through the current menus of two restaurants in the UK and talk freely about them?"

If the author was asked to be more specific, then the following three questions were posed: "What comes to mind"?

"What type of restaurant do you perceive it to be? Why is this"?

"What would you expect to experience"?

After coding, a Matrix query was chosen for the data analysis to depict which of the two menus consumers would choose. This process was needed in order to test which quality conventions category of restaurant is preferred. The matrix coding for consumers was run by having in its row the node: Consumers, which of the 2 menus, and as columns the attributes: gender, country of origin and menu choice. Saturation was achieved after 18 consumers.

To conclude, the combination of interviews and the projective technique was beneficial so as to illuminate the perspectives of authenticity, quality, food choices, promotional strategies and identity aspects. As a consequence, the study suggests which factors attract consumers to visit a restaurant and also the most efficient and applicable communication methods for ethnic restaurants.

4.9 Inductive reasoning

The research was guided by inductive reasoning in order to develop a middle-range theory about restaurateurs' and consumers' perceptions of authenticity and quality via the lens of their identity. This seeks to understand and also predict the consumers' reactions to contemporary marketing promotional methods of ethnic restaurants.

Following data collection, new themes emerged and were identified as new codes. These codes were depicted as nodes in the NVIVO 10 program after the second round of analysis. This coding, was structured according to the inductive reasoning of Grounded Theory.

The research was based on Charmaz's suggestion for "inductive inference" (Charmaz, 2011; Charmaz, 2013), which is an iterative process of not only gathering but also comparing data with data, sources with sources, or even data with sources. "Induction" is the logical inference of many different situations with incomplete information that goes from observation to a hypothesis (Aliseda, 2006). Induction leads to the formation of a hypothesis about data, to investigate why specific actions and interactions are happening so as to propose general laws from particular instances. Therefore, the process that was followed involved: gathering data; coding, categorising and identifying hypothetical propositions about the data; testing the hypotheses through constant comparison and data refutation; integrating the concepts and comparing with existing theoretical frameworks identified in the literature.

4.10 Data analysis (coding stages and NVIVO)

Consumer and restaurateur interviews were conducted then audio-recorded and later transcribed. Field notes were also taken before, during and after the interviews to support the transcriptions. Data analysis was done line-by-line as close coding suggests (Glaser, 1978). This procedure helps the researcher to identify potential gaps and also to generalise from particular instances, as codes lead the researcher to conceptualise beyond the field of study (Goulding, 2002). This inductive reasoning was adopted from grounded theory (Charmaz, 2010) as it is one of its basic concepts.

The procedure followed was to study the phenomena and then to create the first group of coding. The responses were grouped into major themes, based on similarities and common views or phenomena, as qualitative analysis and constant comparison suggest (Glaser, 1965; Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Atik and Ozdamar Ertekin, 2013). NVIVO 10 was used to facilitate data storage, coding, categorization, comparison, memo-writing and data retrieval (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013) in an iterative process (Charmaz, 2011). Therefore the whole data analysis process was completed with the use of the NVIVO 10 program.

Initially the analysis proceeded on the basis of free coding, created for similarly emergent themes from the participants' answers during the interviews or the application of the projective technique (Vidal *et al.*, 2013). An example of free coding was the node: "participant's identity", from which a child node derived soon afterwards: the "ethnicity" node. On a second level, more specific nodes were created based on core terms of the existing literature and from the interpretation of the data. In the previous example of the "ethnicity" node, one new node was created: "situational ethnicity".

Picture 1: NVIVO capture – Child nodes
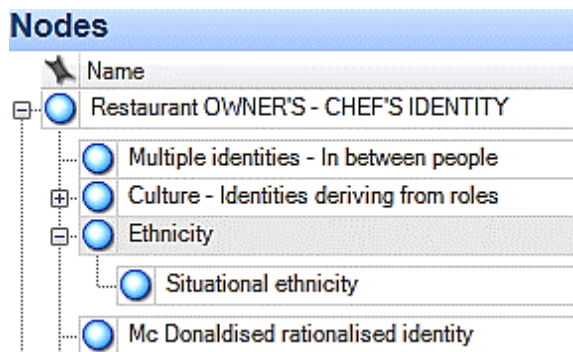
Sometimes, the interpretation of the data could lead to more than one node deriving from the same phrase-answer. For instance, during one interview a restaurant owner replied about the ideal staff: "…The staff side, because we live in a foreign country... Foreign country... Because we do not live in Greece... I would love to have everybody Greek (laughter) but...". His nationality is British and Greek. However, it seems that he conceives himself to be more Greek as he feels that he lives in a foreign country. As a result, this phrase could be coded multiple times as it carries a number of

meanings: 1) restaurant owner's identity, 2) multiple identities-in between, 3) restaurant and food authenticity (restaurant owner's perceptions), 4) adaptation - compromises between market imperatives and authenticity.

As far as the initial coding is concerned, it incorporated the core terms of the research, which are the authenticity, quality and identity. These terms were analysed in the theoretical framework Chapter 1 (Section 1.5.3).

Additionally, general nodes were created during this phase so as to grasp the basic concepts for further and more detailed analysis.

Picture 2: NVIVO capture – general nodes

Simultaneously, due to the new data, the literature review was expanded and more specific terms were included as child nodes. This iterative process of moving back and forth from data to theory was expected and recommended by Charmaz (2011). For example, initially a node about identity was created. However, identity is a broad aspect and as a consequence child nodes emerged from it, such as: ethnicity, multiple identities or identities deriving from roles. Then, further coding resulted in more specific nodes, as for example ethnicity led to the creation of the sub group of situational ethnicity.

Picture 3: NVIVO capture - more specific nodes
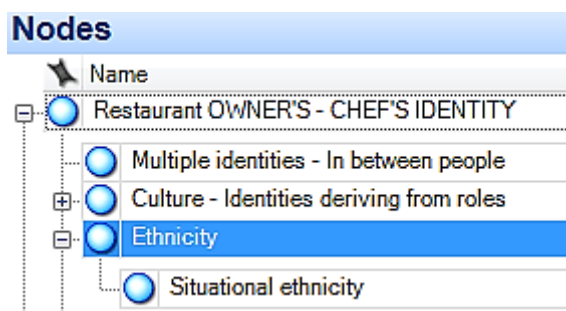
The research questions and existing theories were also included as nodes in NVIVO.

Picture 4: NVIVO capture - research questions and theories
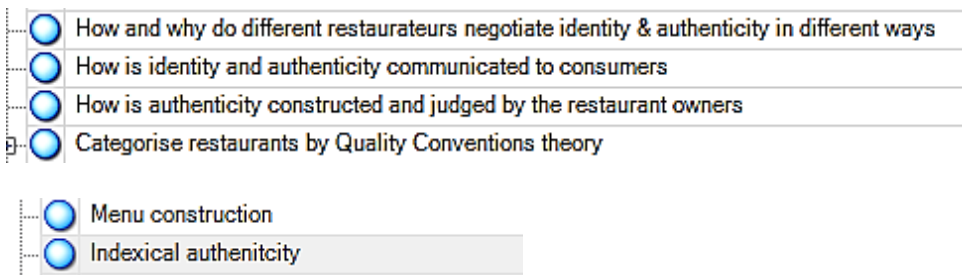
At the end, the initial nodes were grouped as collections of nodes resulting to new (emerged) meanings of the core terms. More specifically, in order to investigate the meaning of authenticity for consumers, a group of nodes was created including the following initial nodes:

Picture 5: NVIVO capture - Collection of nodes
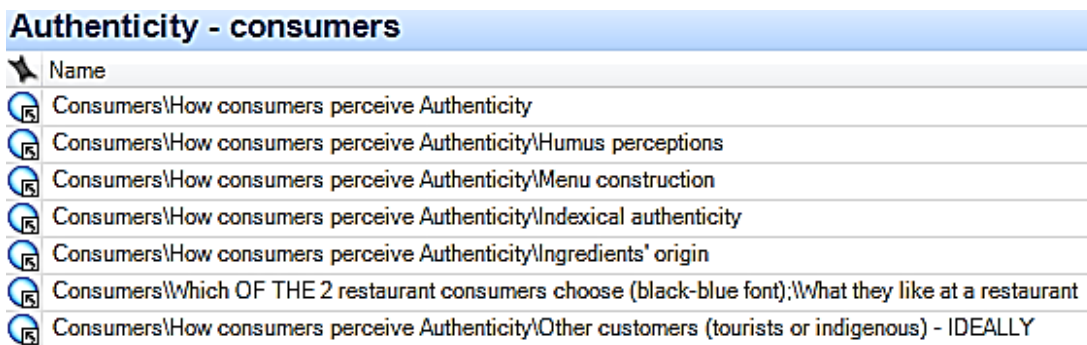
After sorting the nodes, a second level of coding was undertaken, which is more explanatory and inferential. These patterns were either based on similar themes and relationships or were emergent constructs, as Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest. Therefore, they served the purpose of the study to build a conceptual framework around authenticity, quality and identity concepts and to reveal interactions with the network of actors.

As was noticed at this stage, authenticity is judged from specific aspects, such as the recipes, the menu, the ingredients' origin, etc.

Similarly, in order to categorise the restaurants (according to Quality Conventions Theory and the restaurateurs' perceptions) a set of initial nodes was grouped.

Picture 6: NVIVO capture - QCT set (restaurateurs)

Categorise restaurants (Quality conventions theory)

	Name
	Consumers' identity - ethnicity (restaurant owner's view)
	Touristic restaurant-term\Tourist percentage
	Restaurant OWNER'S - CHEF'S IDENTITY\Culture - Identities deriving from roles
	Restaurant and food authenticity (restaurant owner's perceptions)\\Word of mouth
	Success reasons
	Restaurant's identity
	Restaurant and food authenticity (restaurant owner's perceptions)\Adaptation - Compromises between market imperatives and authenticity

The categorisation of restaurants was based on customers' identity, the chefs' identity, the restaurants' identity, etc.

Identity aspects of the restaurateurs were compared with the restaurants' identity/type of cuisine. This concept emerged in order to investigate if the owner's identity affects the restaurant's identity and quality.

Picture 7: NVIVO capture - Restaurateurs' vs. restaurants' identity

Restaurant owners' identity in relation

	Name
	Restaurant OWNER'S - CHEF'S IDENTITY
	Restaurant's identity
	Restaurant as a person
	set identity

Concerning consumer views about the categorization of restaurants (according to the Quality Conventions Theory) the interviews illustrated how a restaurant is judged by its menu, price, ingredients' origin, word of mouth, etc.

Picture 8: NVIVO capture - QCT set (restaurateurs)

CONSUMERS Q.C.T.

	Name
	Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity
	Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Menu construction
	Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Price
	Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Adaptation (customers or the restaurant;)
	Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Indexical authenticity
	Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Ingredients' origin
	Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Other customers (tourists or indigenous) - IDEALLY
	Consumers\Categorise restaurants Q.T.C. (price, authenticity, touristic or innovation)
	Consumers\Marketing (Groupon, special deals)\\Word of mouth
	Consumers\Marketing (Groupon, special deals)
	Nostalgia & ethnic restaurant choice (decoration, price, QCT)

Moreover, the identity aspects of consumers were compared with the restaurateurs' experience-interaction with them.

Picture 9: NVIVO capture - Restaurateurs' vs. consumers' identity

How consumers judge the authenticity according to their identity

Name
Consumers' identity - ethnicity (restaurant owner's view)
Restaurant and food authenticity (restaurant owner's perceptions)\Customer feedback
Restaurant and food authenticity (restaurant owner's perceptions)\Customer feedback\Greeks' comments - IDENTITY
Consumers\Greeks vs. other ethnicities (perceptions)

As identified from the interview analysis, the identity, previous experiences, holiday memories and nostalgia affect the opinion of a consumer about a restaurant.

Especially, if these consumers had been on holiday in the origin of the ethnic restaurant they will be typically, more critical about authenticity aspects. For this reason, a collection of nodes was created in order to investigate the issue further.

Picture 10: NVIVO capture - consumers' experiences (holiday)

If they have been on holiday in Greece they judge differentl

Name
Consumers\Greeks vs. other ethnicities (perceptions)\Nostalgia (holiday, memories)
Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Indexical authenticity
Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Ingredients' origin
Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Adaptation (customers or the restaurant;)

The research questions were re-structured in order to be more specific and to illustrate the core meanings of the research. This was because it seemed to the author that some research questions were not answered in depth by the existing sets of nodes. For this reason, four new collections of nodes were created in order to address the relative questions:

1) How do restaurateurs perceive authenticity and quality? (d objective)

Set of nodes:

Restaurant and food authenticity (restaurant owner's perceptions)

Hummus perceptions

London Comments for Menus

Athens comments for menus

Culture - Identities deriving from roles

Recipes' origin - Identity (1st generation immigrant or 2nd generation)

Ingredients' origin

2) How do consumers perceive authenticity and quality? (d objective)

Set of nodes:

Traditional communication methods

Reasons for success

Social media

Word of mouth

Promotional methods

Culture - Identities deriving from roles

3) What identities do ethnic restaurant owners adopt? (f objective)

Set of nodes:

Restaurant owner's identity – Chef's identity

Restaurant's identity

Culture - Identities deriving from roles

Ethnicity

Situational ethnicity

McDonaldised rationalised identity

Multiple identities - In between people

Role model restaurant

Adaptation - Compromises between market imperatives and authenticity

Previous business-restaurants

4) How and what identities affect consumers' food choices? (f objective)

Set of nodes:

Consumers\Greeks vs. other ethnicities (perceptions)\Nostalgia (holiday, memories)

Indexical authenticity

Ingredients' origin

Adaptation (customers or the restaurant)

5) Does identity influence authenticity perceptions? (a and g objectives)

Set of nodes:

Restaurant owner's identity – Chef's identity

Restaurant's identity

Culture - Identities deriving from roles

Ethnicity

Situational ethnicity

"McDonaldised" rationalised identity

Multiple identities - In between people

Role model restaurant

Adaptation - Compromises between market imperatives and authenticity

Restaurant and food authenticity (restaurant owner's perceptions)

Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity

Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Hummus perceptions

Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Menu construction

Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Indexical authenticity

Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Ingredients' origin

Consumers\Which of the 2 restaurant consumers choose (black-blue font);\What they like at a restaurant

Consumers\How consumers perceive Authenticity\Other customers (tourists or indigenous) – Ideally

6) What are the influential factors for the consumers when choosing a restaurant to dine in? (c objective)

Set of nodes:

Consumers\Which of the 2 restaurant consumers choose (black-blue font);

How consumers choose a restaurant

What they like at a restaurant

Give feedback

Nostalgia & ethnic restaurant choice (decoration, price, QCT)

7) What affects the restaurateurs' decisions about constructing a menu and choosing recipes? (g objective)

Set of nodes (displayed in NVIVO 10 program):
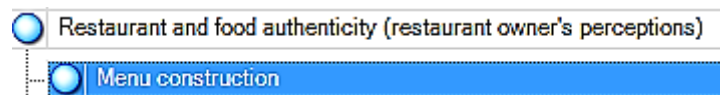
8) How consumers interact with the ethnic restaurants' applied promotional methods?

Which are the best promotional methods for an ethnic restaurant, based on the consumers' and restaurateurs' perceptions? (b objective)

Set of nodes (displayed in NVIVO 10 program):
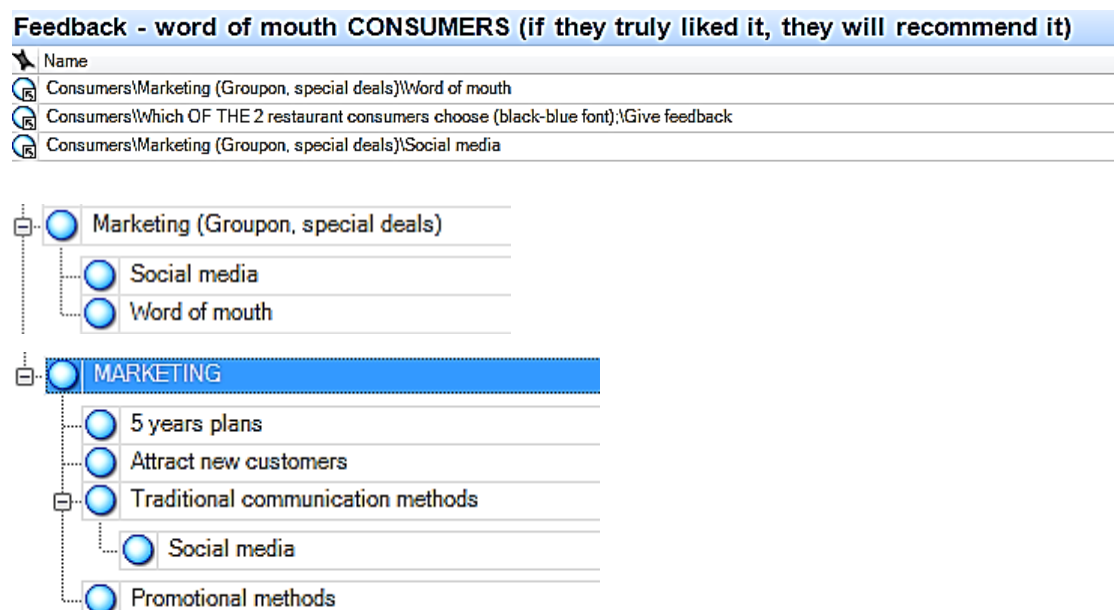
Finally, the last coding phase included word frequency queries, coding queries and also compound queries, which were visualised as cluster analyses, word clouds or tree maps with the use of NVIVO 10 (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). The coding queries were chosen so as to visualise the results, to identify mechanisms beyond sheer associations (Richards, 1999; Bringer *et al.,* 2004). The queries depicted the perceptions of the actors about authenticity and quality concepts and also their interactions within the network of consumers and restaurateurs. This network could depict consumers' food choices and restaurateurs' decisions for their restaurants such as the menu construction, the decoration of the restaurant or the staff choice.

To sum up, the coding process included the initial coding, a free coding for the answers given during the interviews, based on existing literature and also on themes emerging as noticed by the author. Then, these common themes were grouped into nodes sets, where core sentences were highlighted, giving the perceptions of the participants about the investigated aspects.

Table 4.2: Example of coding restaurateurs' vs. consumers' authenticity and quality perceptions

Phase	*Initial phase (free coding)*	*Grouping nodes (similarities-common themes): Creating nodes sets*	*Last phase of coding: visualise the results (NVIVO queries)*
Actions	Restaurant owner of K (perceptions about authenticity and quality) V consumer of K rest (perceptions about authenticity and quality) Ka consumer of K rest (perceptions about authenticity and quality)	Run Group query NVIVO 10 (Scope: the two consumers and the restaurant Range: Specific node-authenticity and quality)	See Figure 4.2

The last phase of coding was to visualise these sets of nodes either on word clouds or tree maps. Finally, tree maps and word clouds were analysed again by excluding irrelevant words or by again grouping similar answers. Visualisation of the coding had benefited the author to rethink about the coding from a different angle and also to illustrate the links between the results and the coding. Visualisation of the results enabled also the author to integrate them into a conceptual understanding about authenticity, quality and identity. An example of the coding process is depicted below (Figure 4.2). Authenticity and quality perceptions of restaurant owners vs. consumers were compared and analysed in nodes and node sets. The author managed to interview the restaurant owners and the consumers of specific Greek ethnic restaurants in order to investigate both sides. In the findings Chapters the current thesis presents how the owners constructed

their restaurant, how they communicate quality and authenticity meanings and, on the other side, how their consumers perceive them and how they choose a restaurant to dine in. The purpose of doing so was to grasp and analyse the whole picture of the dining sector and to propose in the end an illustration of the restaurateurs' and consumers' communication system, based on their perceptions, expectations and Marketing strategies.

Figure 4.2: Example of group coding query: intersection of restaurateurs' and consumers perceptions

Group Query

Sources

Consumer

B

Restaurateur

B

Restaurateur

A

Consumer

A

Nodes

How are authenticity and quality constructed for restaurateurs?

How do consumers perceive authenticity and quality?

To sum up, the first step of the analysis was the initial coding, then the grouping of similar themes of the nodes and finally the visualisation of the results. Examples of the visualisations are the tree map and also the tag cloud.

Tree map
Source: NVIVO 10

Tag cloud
Source: NVIVO 10

However, the author decided to conduct a second analysis for the word cloud and the tree map, as some words seem irrelevant or similar words could be combined under a common viewpoint/filter. For this reason, the author highlighted the words which she decided to keep as relevant to the research (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Example of final coding on tree map, where relevant words boxes are shaded in red
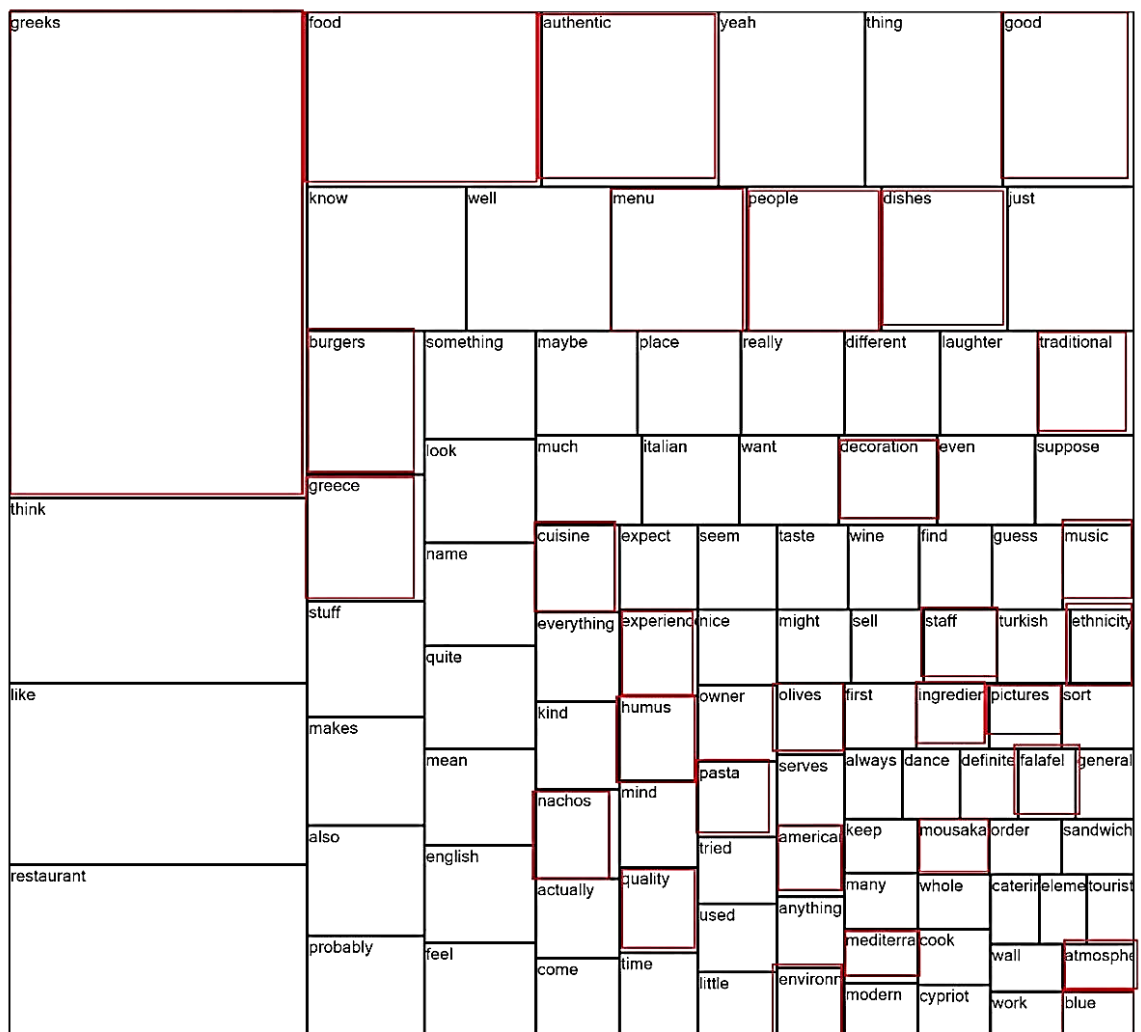
The findings of the above data analysis will be presented in Chapters 5-7.

4.11 Respondent validation

4.11.1 Constant comparison

As it is suggested by grounded theory, data collection ends when theoretical saturation is reached (see Section 4.7). In the meantime, constant comparison of data has been applied as a method of respondent validation in order to validate the findings (Glaser, 1965). By using this method researchers seek to provide valid and accurate findings about the lived experiences of individuals which cannot be depicted in numerical values by applying quantitative research methods (Morgan, 1993; Hewitt-Taylor, 2001; Ridolfo and Schoua-Glusberg, 2011).

Glaser and Strauss (1965) proposed constant comparison (CC) as a validation method in order to generalise and to be consistent with inductive reasoning (Ridolfo and Schoua-Glusberg, 2011). As grounded theory suggests, a theoretical framework may emerge from the data rather than hypotheses and for this reason CC is about constant comparison of data which fit in the same emerging categories in order to outline the commonalities and differences between them (Green, 1998; Ridolfo and Schoua-Glusberg, 2011). Based on this method, we may consider differences and similarities of the data and to identify diversity as well as similarity based on purposefully selected cases which are closely related (e.g. per region) (Flick, 2014). In this case, answers of Greek consumers who dine in Greek ethnic restaurants in the U.K. were compared with consumers of a variety of ethnicities who had dined in Greek ethnic restaurants in the U.K., as these can be seen in Section 4.10- coding stages. Moreover, the author while coding followed Glaser's advice to compare new data with previous data within the same category and then consider how categories integrate and which characteristics portray them (Glaser, 1965).

The cycle of combining old with new material was repeated several times during the purposeful approach of CC (Boeije, 2002). From Boeije's approach of the CC, ten different types of purposeful comparison evolved for the current study accompanied with the author's interpretation about the social phenomena:

1. Comparison within a single restaurateur's interview.

Initially the comparison took place within one interview with a restaurateur. This has been part of the open coding and as a consequence a line by line analysis followed for every passage of the interview. The purpose of this comparison was to propose categories as nodes for further analysis.

2. Comparison between interviews within the same ethnic identity group of restaurateurs.

At this phase the comparison was between interviews of participants of the same ethnic identity group. As the study focuses on perceptions of lived experiences the comparison provided fruitful insights about participants with the same identity and lived experiences to investigate whether they share similar perceptions about their experiences. At this point, the comparison took into account relevant terminology of existing literature and compared the findings with it. Relevant answers of common themes were grouped due to their similarity and then new groups of nodes were structured.

3. Comparison of interviews from different ethnic groups of restaurateurs.

As it has been stated, the purpose of the current study is to investigate lived experiences and therefore participants of a variety of identities were compared in order to explore their perceptions and experiences about Greek ethnic food. The purpose was not to create new nodes but rather to deepen insights about already existing themes, nodes and terminology.

4. Comparison of interviews from different regions of restaurateurs.

Restaurateurs were also compared by location of their establishment to investigate the different perceptions of authenticity and quality at a national and international level. Their perceptions and experiences therefore were compared about Greek ethnic food in the U.K. and in Greece. Again the purpose of doing so was to deepen insights about the already existing themes, nodes and terminology in order to add to existing literature in the future.

5. Comparison of new categories with old categories for restaurateurs and creating child nodes where needed.

During the CC new categories emerged some of which were part of existing ones while others were completely new. In the first case child nodes were created emerging from already existing categories and literature. In the second case new nodes were created and contain the new information which had not been coded before, nor studied in the existing literature.

6. Comparison within a single consumer's interview.

Comparison in this case evolved within one consumer's interview. This was the second part of open coding and as a consequence a line by line analysis followed for every passage of the interview. The purpose of this comparison was to propose categories as nodes for further analysis.

7. Comparison between interviews within the same ethnic identity group of consumers.

As the study focuses on perceptions of lived experiences the comparison provided fruitful insights about participants with the same identity to investigate whether they share similar perceptions about authenticity and quality. At this point, the comparison took into account relevant terminology of existing literature and compared the findings with it. Due to this it was possible to group together similar answers and to structure later a set of nodes.

8. Comparison of interviews from different ethnic groups of consumers.

All interviewed consumers in this case had to have dined in an Greek ethnic restaurant within the U.K. In addition, most of them had dined in restaurants for which the owners had been interviewed previously.

9. Comparison of new categories with old categories for consumers and creating child nodes where needed.

This follows the procedures outlined in Step 5 but was for consumers rather than restaurateurs.

10. Comparing consumers' interviews with restaurateurs' per (nodes) category.

The final stage was the most complex of all as it focused on comparing two sides of the same experience. Restaurateurs and their consumers were

interviewed to study their perceptions about the same food and to illustrate their communication method. This has been beneficial for depicting a communication pattern and a definition about authenticity and identity in relation to ethnic food.

4.11.2 Event: presenting the findings to practitioners and consumers

A second form of validation took the form of respondent validation. For this purpose, an event was organised during which four restaurant owners participated (of a variety of restaurants' themes) and twelve consumers (of a variety of ethnicities) (see Appendix 6).

The event was organised at Newcastle University (11th July 2016) in order to present the findings of the current thesis, during which restaurateurs and consumers participated. The participants were the consumers and restaurateurs who were interviewed and also restaurateurs of ethnic restaurants of a different ethnicity rather than Greek.

The purpose of inviting the interviewed participants and restaurateurs was to grasp their perceptions about the findings and receive their feedback as part of an assessment of the validity of the research findings. Respondent validation (Malshe and Sohi, 2009; Silverman, 2011) is about retracing the data from which findings emerged and to get a validation about the findings. For this purpose, participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire about the research findings and to express their opinion about whether their perceptions coincided with the findings presented.

Turning to the event, the findings of the current research were presented and also questions posed to five groups of consumers and restaurateurs. At the end of the event, a feedback form was distributed and then analysed in NVIVO in order to depict the perceptions of the consumers and restaurant owners. The feedback indicated that all of the consumers and all of the restaurant owners argued that the findings were interesting, truthful and applicable. Following the presentation of findings, most of the restaurateurs indicated that they wanted to make changes to their restaurants and consumers wished to reconsider their food choices and also how they choose an ethnic restaurant.

4.12 Ethical issues

The ethical obligations of the researcher to respondents are a crucial issue, which should not be neglected at any stage of the research process. Interviewees' anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed. Participation was based on informed consent. Participants before the beginning of the interview read the information sheet, which included all the details of the research, such as research objectives, the confidentiality of the study and the researchers' contact details. Secondly, participants signed consent forms in order to approve their cooperation officially.

Permission for recording was asked before the beginning of the interview (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). As Corbin & Strauss (2008) suggest, respondents were reminded that the records would be destroyed after the completion of the PhD and that data would only be used for research purposes.

4.13 Summary

This Chapter has detailed the selection of a qualitative approach and its justification by focusing on deep, phenomenological aspects and also cultural perspectives concerning authentic dining experiences and the influence of identities. Data were gathered by conducting in depth interviews and also by applying the projective technique, structured around two menus of ethnic restaurants. A theoretical sampling approach was undertaken. In the current study, the chosen sample was decided by taking into consideration the research questions. Specifically, n=19 (11 and 8 interviews in the UK and Greece respectively) restaurant owners of Greek themed restaurants were chosen for data collection and also n=23 consumers, who have dined in Greek themed restaurants located in the U.K. and Greece. The identities and the location of the participants varied. Finally, data gathering ended when no new categories or relevant themes emerged. This phase has been defined as "saturation" (Bisogni *et al.*, 2002; Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Flick, 2014). The software used for the qualitative analysis was the NVivo10 (Richards, 1999). The next Chapter presents the findings related to authenticity.

Chapter 5 : Restaurateurs' understandings of authenticity

5.1 Introduction

The first Section of the findings concerns the investigation of restaurant owners' perceptions of authenticity, quality and identity aspects within the ethnic dining sector. As there is a limited understanding of the meaning of authenticity from the perspective of "producers", the following Section (5.2) aims to address this gap by examining the meanings of authenticity amongst restaurateurs serving mainly Greek food, located in both the UK and Greece, using a qualitative interpretive approach based upon data generated through in-depth interviews. The 5.3 Section moves further as it outlines which factors influence the construction of authenticity meanings for the restaurateurs. Examples of these factors are the source of the recipes or the origin of the ingredients. Finally, the 5.4 Section summarises restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity and in particular about indexical or existential types of authenticity.

5.2 Restaurateurs' authenticity perceptions

The producers of authenticity, the restaurateurs, participated in the current research so as to share their perceptions about authenticity. The parameters according to which authenticity is judged are analysed below. Based on the current research about perceptions of authenticity there will also be an investigation as to whether these perceptions influence menu construction. This research is linked to the first research question: what affects the decisions of the ethnic restaurant owners when constructing their menus and choosing their recipes?

The (Greek) origin is the most important association with food authenticity as it seems that authenticity is defined primarily on national lines. Tradition and the menu are the second most important factors for a restaurant to be judged as authentic. Specifically, ethnicity and origin can be seen in all the restaurateurs' answers about authenticity. Besides these parameters, authenticity is also judged according to the: menu construction, tradition, ingredients, staff ethnicity, music, decoration and the entertainment.

Menu construction

The menu for most of the ethnic restaurant owners should not move away from tradition. In fact, some restaurateurs perceive their restaurant as an institution through which they can change customers' mentality. However, restaurateurs whose customers are unfamiliar with the culture of the restaurant (e.g. tourists) tend to listen to their comments and make relevant alterations to the recipes.

When customers are unfamiliar with the culture of the restaurant (e.g. tourists) the restaurant owner tends to alter recipes:

"... Well 90% are tourists… Whatever we were asked for, we tried to include, it adding our style too but always trying to meet peoples' needs..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... We don't have that many Greeks that come into our restaurant. We have about 15%... it's not the kind of customer we wanted... the main thing that we wanted to do is step away slightly from the traditional "taverna" style… twisting the dishes into a more modern, more high-end cuisine… So, the whole concept of my restaurant is to... (and this is my life mission) is to change the perception that people have of Greek food..." (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

Some of the restaurateurs construct menus according to customers' demand.

"... I slightly alter certain things so... to fit the market... People are very health conscious so... my restaurant is let's say 95% Greek. The reason it's not 100% Greek is... over time, I have had to adapt dishes or had to adapt bits

and pieces which are not necessarily Greek… If a customer requires... Not requires but asks, for example... tabbouleh... which is actually an Arab salad, we make it, we make kilos of it but, is not Greek but, people like it, so we put it on the menu. We have hummus, which is not Greek, we have falafels... Trying to keep customers happy..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Some of the restaurant owners feel obliged to respect traditional recipes and to please customers of the same ethnicity.

"We have a book… it was printed in 1960 at Kavala and it's got some amazing recipes. We kind of use that as an inspiration... To give you an example of what we do: something very traditional is pastitsio in Greece. So, we said… let's do it in a way... So, we found chilopites (instead of pasta), very Greek, made with milk... Minced meat… You can find it everywhere, let's do something different, so we took a beef cheek that we cook for 18 hours at 66 degrees. And then you just touch it with the spoon and it falls apart... (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Tradition (recipes from previous generations and not influenced by other nations)

Restaurateurs typically conceive of a recipe as authentic if it can be recalled from their childhood memories. If a dish was cooked by the parents or the grandparents of the restaurateurs then, to them, it is authentic. Moreover, it is about locality and regional recipes rather than nationality.

"... So, the Cretan is our stricter judge, their comments we take very seriously. On a second level, we judge the Greek customers... I think the issue is that everyone is comparing with his mother. I don't know how that

sounds… We are a family oriented race. Luckily or unfortunately" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... I learn a lot of these things from tradition, my father, my aunties, my grandmother.... The family comes from Sifnos and... certain dishes are quite specific to Sifnos even... they are quite specific to other islands as well..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Traditional cooking (slow cooking technique, cooking from scratch).

The Greek way of cooking differs from the fast-food way of eating. The restaurant owners believe that keeping cooking procedures traditional results in authentic dishes for their customers.

"… So, in order to prepare something from scratch like a sauce, an individual sauce for a dish, you need staff, you need time... So, I think the big chain companies have it prepacked and already done for them... That is a bit touristy, you can call that touristy. But, we have kleftiko here. We put it on this morning and it is going to be ready at 7 in the evening…" (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

"… The inspiration is from my great grandmother and my taste memory. I don't believe in big deviations, I don't like modifications. I wish to follow; I wish to approach the original and not to modify it all from the beginning…" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"… The authenticity of a Cretan dish concerning tradition is based firstly on the ingredients... Moreover, the way of cooking. We, for instance, use 3-4 ways of cooking which are the main ways of cooking in Crete…" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

On the other hand, those restaurateurs who believe in existential authenticity[2] see food in an eclectic way or decide to take short cuts because they are more market (tourist) oriented:

"... *twisting the dishes into a more modern, more high-end cuisine...*" (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Some restaurants have adapted their recipes not only to the market demand but also profit-wise.

- *" What was the procedure of deciding your menu?*

- *Our chef's experience. Whatever exists at a good cost, supply and demand."* (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"… We try to use local producers. First of all, cost-wise because it is too expensive to import everything from Greece..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.)

Hummus and other controversial dishes (adaptation to the global market)

A food that cannot be found in the country of origin is perceived by the interviewed restaurateurs as inauthentic. At the same time, more than one country might contest the origins of a dish and therefore its origin and authenticity is controversial. Dishes like these were chosen as a prompt within the interviews, so as to discuss these controversial issues and to investigate perceptions of authenticity further.

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[2] Existential authenticity: This relies on experiences and perceptions rather than the actual objects. Additionally, it is structured upon the modern human need for hedonistic fun and eclecticism of lived experiences. Therefore, this type of authenticity is subjectively driven during the human quest for fun and pleasure through consumption. In other words, it is about those who chase enjoyable illusions and therefore inauthenticity could be welcomed.

Specifically, interviewees discussed hummus, which can be found in most of the Greek ethnic restaurants in the U.K. but not in Greece. In fact, hummus can be found in several other countries within the Mediterranean area and most of these countries contest its origin. Therefore, two menus of Greek ethnic restaurants which included hummus were presented to participants. Then, interviewees were asked to comment freely about them.

Apart from hummus, other controversial dishes exist. For example, one of the two chosen menus also has burgers, a more globalised choice and not of Greek origin. As a matter of fact, it is often noticed that Greek ethnic restaurants include globalised food choices such as burgers and nachos on their menus. A discussion about these choices generated insights about authenticity perceptions and culinary culture.

"...Hummus should not exist. It isn't Greek. Let's start from there (laughter)..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... So, we have a few dishes that slightly refer to Turkey or to the Ottoman Empire. Firstly, they are dishes that you can find in Greece, unlike "hummus" which you can't find in Greece... So, we would never ever have "halloumi" or "hummus"... We have like loukoumades, which is a Turkish dish, but it is one of the most dominant desserts in Greece..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

"... I don't think falafel or tabbouleh or hummus have anything to do with Greece..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

"...This? Hummus, tzatziki, taramasalata. No, it's touristy, nonsense..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

It seems that the restaurateurs who did not believe in indexical authenticity were desperate to generate profits and as a consequence they moved away from authentic choices as they adapted their menu to please everyone's taste:

"Vegetarian mousaka out of the question! No such thing! It is an invention done in England. Just putting feta in the dish trying to call it Greek..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

"... I don't like Indian cuisine very much, so I don't go to Indian cuisine. So, I don't expect to go to an Indian restaurant and for them to have a burger, just because I don't like Indian... So, why would I go to a Greek restaurant for something that is not Greek?.." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Ingredients from the origin with or without PDO/PGI designation (e.g. oil, olives, herbs, feta, etc.)

Some of the restaurateurs believe that the ingredients which they import from Greece make their restaurant Greek. Mediterranean cuisine has been linked since ancient times with herbs such as oregano and thyme or with olives and olive oil. Restaurant owners feel obliged to continue using herbs, olive oil and olives in order to remain close to tradition.

"… The ingredients play a huge part, I only use Greek herbs: (rigani) oregano and stuff like that... these are all from Greece…" (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

"… We try to use Greek oil, olives are from Greece, and peppers are from Greece. Whatever else we can get. Even oregano sometimes we get..." (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

"We included the traditional… And of course, depending on the season of Crete always, right? The ingredients are very important..." (Female, restaurant owner, Greece).

Wine from the origin

Wine has accompanied food consumption over the centuries. Some of the restaurateurs argue that if food has to be from Greece so has the wine:

"... Because the menu is what describes a restaurant, the availability of Greek beers and Greek wine. What is not available in every other restaurant in the UK..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

"... I only work with Greek wines. I mainly work with bulk wine, but since there are some people who want bottled wine I also have 2-3 varieties, always Greek... Because we have thousands of wines in Greece of a great quality and the restaurant's quality has no need for foreign wines..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... We were trying to find a way of promoting the wine which we were producing in our vineyards in Nemea... So, we started as a café-bistro wine bar..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

The staff

Restaurateurs loyal to authentic Greek hospitality wish to provide a friendly service. Staff can be a symbol of authenticity both for foreign customers and for customers of the same ethnicity as well. It is believed that chefs of the same ethnicity as the restaurant's identity know how to cook authentically. Similarly for the waiters, those who have the same ethnicity as the restaurant are believed to make more authentic suggestions and to support the restaurant's menu.

Greek hospitality and a friendly service to the customers:

"… You have to offer a family like style… It must be family like, a cool place even for a couple, for friends and for a family" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

Chefs of the same ethnicity as the restaurant's identity know how to cook authentically:

"- Do you believe that a chef could be of a foreign nationality and work in a Greek restaurant?

- (Laughter) As an assistant, yes. At least for me. Because he wouldn't have the experience I have and he wouldn't know what I know" (Female, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... The person who cooks and makes the recipes must certainly be Greek. Some ideas come through his DNA, if he knows how to cook they just come out. A foreigner will create it differently..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

Similarly for the waiters, if they have the same ethnicity as the restaurant they are believed to support the restaurant's image better:

"... Greek staff, Greek speaking staff help a lot in building that, and obviously building a reputation with the customers as well... A lot of Greek customers come in here, they feel more as if they are at home when there is Greek speaking staff and I think that is actually a massive part of what we have here and what we have to continue..." (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

Music

Restaurateurs believe that music attracts consumers to dine in a restaurant as it creates a more pleasant dining experience.

"… We have chosen to play Cretan music in our restaurants, so as to avoid total silence. Or not to hear the noise from talking. That particular type of Cretan music is to be matched with the restaurant's identity, which is Cretan… European or foreign music doesn't match the restaurant's profile that we wish to present…" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

However, music is also a nostalgia trigger both for customers and restaurateurs as it connects the dining experience with holiday memories or home.

"... We have the music... Well, you know, most of our customers have already been in Greece but for some who have not, yeah we promote Greece. We promote the country and the culture. For example, "Zorbas" is playing now, so... (laughter)" (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Many restaurateurs stressed that Greek music is played also for them in order to feel closer to home:

"… The Greek music, we play it first of all for us…" (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Decoration / Atmosphere

In addition to their food, some of the restaurateurs seek to promote their identity through the decoration of their restaurant. As far as Greek ethnic restaurants are concerned, the colours of blue and white are traditionally chosen because they resemble the Greek islands and flag. This feeling of nostalgia according to their beliefs attracts customers.

"… We have live music… We also have decoration: some Greek plates on the walls and also some Greek advertisements on the walls, ION (=traditional Greek chocolate)..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

"- Do you think there is any relation between the restaurant's image and your social one?

- There surely is. If I was an Arabian for instance the Pharaoh would be here." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Traditional entertainment (e.g. smashing plates, traditional dancing)

Some Greek restaurants offer traditional live music and dance in order to please their customers and attract new ones. To name one attraction there is the smashing of the plates or the sirtaki dance. Such "*eatertainment*", as it is named (Mkono, 2013, p. 359), includes food and entertainment as they are perceived to be highly attractive for the customers.

"... I would say we are probably only half a restaurant, the other half is a night spot… People come from all around London and beyond, all around the UK and Europe, because we are well-known for what we do, in terms of live music, live music venue until 3:30 in the morning, bouzoukia you know… Only part of what we do is food and certainly a lot of massive drink and party..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Table 5.1 summarizes, the factors according to which authenticity is judged by the restaurant owners. By using the NVIVO10 program, the 100 most common data-answers for defining authenticity can be found in the tree map (Table 5.1). This query was based on the author's nodes and included the 100 most common words which were more than three letters. Then, a

second analysis was applied by circling the most relevant words in red. Moreover, when similar words were depicted these were merged into one category, for example, dishes, recipes and food are named as the menu factor.

This tree-map query process was chosen as a confirmation of the author's interpretations regarding the meanings of authenticity and how these are perceived by restaurateurs. According to the results, some factors are more significant than others and as a consequence they are in larger boxes. The following factors are in order of importance order: ethnicity, ingredients, menu, PDO products (e.g. feta, oil, etc), chef and the taste.

Table 5.1: Tree map of the 100 most common words about authenticity.

greek	restaurant	food	think	yes	traditional	lot	make
		want	example	way	meat	something	dish	one
	people	good	find	get	put	come	even	course	emm
greece	recipes	just	recipe	now	much	years	really	else	restau	see
			custom	feta	many	take	cause	kind	need	είναι
	well	use	differen	music	oil	authe	yeah	come	taste	best	cooki
like		let		first	old	beef	fish	produ	wo	actua	back
	ingredients		crete	quality	trying	cuisin	part	create	oma	inter	keep
know		things	try	nou	chef	fresh	eat	got	used	belie	lond
menu	dishes	also	και	everyth	nothing	made	right	never	always	med	mod
							must	thing	anythi		

To conclude, the research question about which factors restauranteurs take into consideration to define authenticity has been answered. These factors are: the ethnicity of the staff, the menu, the traditional recipes, the ingredients' origin, the wine's origin, the decoration of the restaurant, the music, the traditional entertainment and the traditional way of cooking.

Figure 5.1: Restaurateurs' authenticity perceptions
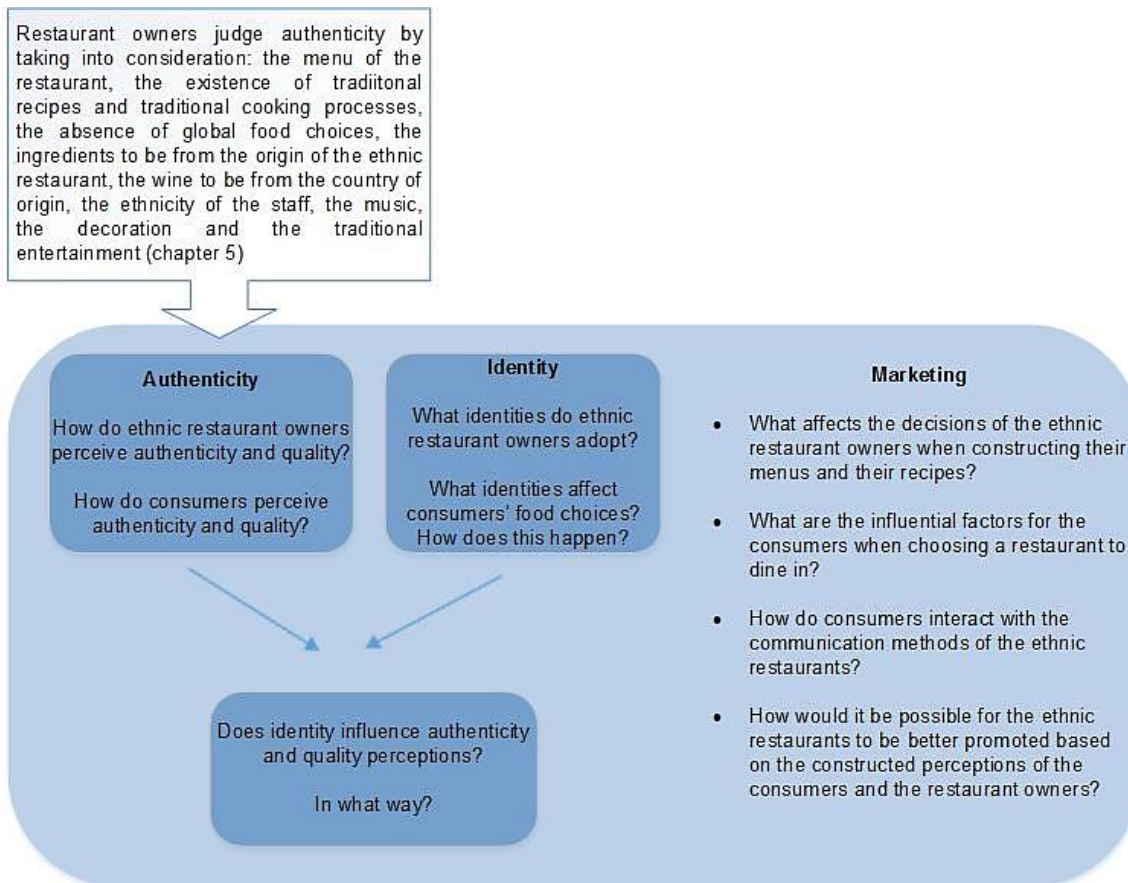
Further analysis reveals that as far as authenticity is concerned, the two mutually exclusive categories which emerged from the data are indexical and existential authenticity. This exclusivity relies on perceptions about either evoking nostalgia for the country of origin and recalling traditional recipes or fulfilling the need for eclecticism and hedonistic fun. In more detail, indexical authenticity is defined as an original product which cannot be copied and remains stable over the years. An authentic product is a traditional product, linked with culture, and therefore it cannot be copied, nor transformed, it is the real thing. In contrast, existential authenticity takes into consideration a need for hedonistic fun and shared experiences and the eclecticism of lived experiences.

Indexical authenticity

For restaurants the ethnicity of the owners is Greek or their customers are mainly locals and loyal. Indexical authenticity flourishes as such people are familiar with Greek culture.

"… Our customers have to think: 'Oh, my God I feel like I am in Greece' ". (Female, Greek restaurateur)[3].

"… In other words, the tastes that you find either in Greece or in Cyprus..." (Female, Greek restaurateur)[4].

"… If the ingredients can be found in Crete and the seasonality of the raw materials. This means, if those ingredients can be found during this season. Moreover, the way of production concerning cooking. We, for instance, use 3-4 ways of cooking, which are the main ways of cooking in Crete… Without being folk style as Crete is a place that is continually evolving as everyone knows… and not a memory that we have since the '50s, the '60s, the '70s, etc…" (Male, Greek restaurateur)[5].

"… I learnt a lot of these things from tradition, my father, my aunties, my grandmother, etc... Like the mousaka, I make it how my grandmother used to make it, she was from Athens, I haven't added anything in the recipe.

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[3] She lives in Greece. She spent some years in Crete as a child. By having Greek and Cretan identity, she judges authenticity with the origin.

[4] She lives in the U.K. She was born in Greece and came to the U.K. for studies at the age of 22. By having a Greek identity, she judges authenticity with the origin.

[5] He lives in the U.K. He was born in Greece and came to the UK to work at the age of 32. He insisted on not having the interview in English as his English is not particularly good.

Maybe... I use less oil, but... Nothing too dramatic. So... yeah, it's... I would say close to authentic Greek food..." (Male, Greek restaurateur)[6].

Existential authenticity

Restaurateurs who are less familiar with Greek culture tend to embrace existential authenticity. When it comes to ethnic restaurants specifically, people tend to believe not only in what they taste but also in what they see; ethnic costumes, the decoration and the roles of the cooks and waiters may define an ethnic restaurant as authentic or not. Therefore, authenticity for a restaurant is much broader than the food aspects, it is the total experience. This experience has shifted from tradition and the country of origin to a more modern approach to decoration and service. For the same reason, ingredients do not have to be from the country of origin but rather of good quality regardless of where they come from.

"... we haven't decorated the building in a traditional Greek style, I think we try to move away from the taverna image that a lot of the UK has about Greek restaurants, you know... Olive trees and... We have olive trees on the terrace as well, but it's sort of moving away from that typically white washed walls that you get in many of the restaurants in London... Greek lamb, for example, some of the best lamb in the world is right here, comes from Wales, comes from... just on our doorstep, so why would we buy things like that?" (Male, British restaurateur)[7].

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[6]He lives in the U.K. He came to the U.K. from Greece when he was 18 to study and then he started the restaurant with his father.

[7] He lives in the U.K. He is the 3rd generation of a Greek Cypriot family. He perceives authenticity as not only in what he and his customers taste, but in what they see as well. His own perception about authenticity is also viewed in an eclectic way.

Restaurateurs who hold meanings of eclecticism relate to existential authenticity.

"... And having pleasure from food when they taste it..." (Male, French-British restaurateur)[8].

Those restaurateurs who tend to adapt their menus to the consumers' expectations or those who have culturally naïve consumers tend to perceive authenticity as existential.

- "So you are mainly focusing on tourism?

- Mainly yes… We work with locals in winter. In summer we don't have locals. Just think that 10 Greeks and 50 foreigners will eat… For example, if you wrote let's say kebab, we wrote traditional kebab, the matter is how you express it. And in general to include more chicken dishes because this is an item which a foreigner will eat more easily than any other kind of meat..." (Male, Greek restaurateur)[9].

"... we had tried to create some original Greek dishes, but with vegetarian options also. So that is how you do the creation of the menu, but you are still locked on to some of the traditional dishes that you have got to have" (Male, British restaurateur)[10].

Therefore, the research question about how authenticity is constructed for the restaurateurs has been clarified and relies on certain aspects such as

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[8] He lives in the U.K. Ethnic food is for him a quest for fun and pleasure.

[9] He lives in Greece. He got involved due to the love he had for cooking. This was not what he had studied. Existential authenticity here is perceived as a "pseudo-event", restauranteurs prefering to write traditional kebab instead of kebab and focus more on how they express it rather than the originality.

[10] He lives in the U.K. He perceives authenticity as Existential due to the fact that he is offering a menu according to his consumers' demand and that is by altering-transforming the originality of the recipes.

the menu, the origin of the ingredients, the ethnicity of the staff, etc. What is more, restaurateurs perceive authenticity either as indexical or existential according to their identities. The influence of identity upon the authenticity concept will be analysed in the following Section.

Figure 5.2: Restaurateurs' identities in relation with authenticity
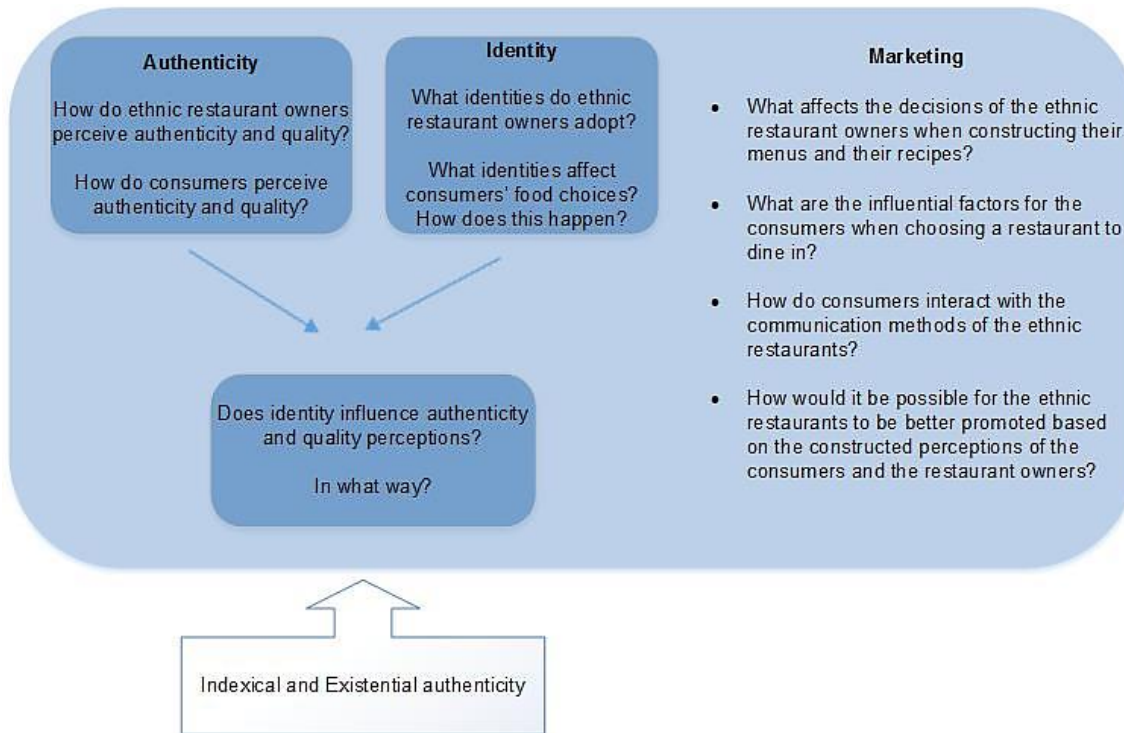
5.3 Factors influencing the construction of authenticity

This Section considers the question regarding which identities ethnic restaurant owners adopt and which seem to influence their authenticity perceptions and decisions about how to run their businesses. Based on qualitative research methods, Table 5.2 has been constructed to depict the restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity. This Table could be used a) by researchers to judge authenticity concepts from a theoretical perspective and b) by restaurateurs who may promote their restaurants more efficiently based on their customers' identity and expectations. In more details, the Table presents the factors according to which indexical or existential authenticity are constructed. For instance, as the origin of the ingredients is one factor to judge authenticity then, PDO products are a sign of indexical authenticity and non-PDO products are a sign of existential authenticity.

Identity however is the filter through which restaurateurs are judging authenticity. And so, a restaurateur with Greek heritage is willing to use PDO products as ingredients for the restaurant's dishes resulting to construct indexical meanings of authenticity.

Identities and cultural familiarity

Identity is about the group which we believe we belong to rather than the one where we actually belong. Greek restaurateurs who have lived in the U.K. for decades still perceive themselves as Greeks who are in a foreign country.

"… the staff side, because we live in a foreign country... Foreign country... Because we do not live in Greece... I would love to have everybody Greek (laughter) but…" (Male, restaurateur, U.K.)[11]

Their ethnic restaurant is a spot for the Greek community and they like to be surrounded by fellow Greeks.

"… how important we are as an institution to the Greek community in the UK… we are such a massive part of the community here. A lot of my friends, who are of course Greek, you know, they talk so highly about the place and that makes me so proud, to be part of something which is so great… It's the place that brings people together, it's where Greeks come to be together, to remind them of home… and we are really the only institution to have such longevity" (Male, restaurateur, U.K.)

The evaluation of data revealed differences between restaurateurs who run a restaurant that was predominantly based upon indexical cues and those who prioritise the requirements of consumers which leads them to follow an existential notion of authenticity. Table 5.2 summarises the personal characteristics of these two types of restaurateur. For example, existentially authentic restaurants are managed by restaurateurs whose Greek heritage and familiarity with Greek culture is distant and/or whose customers are mainly tourists. They generally take a market oriented approach to their

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[11] The restaurateur has been living in the U.K. for more than twenty (20) years. He has a British wife and two children. However, he still perceives himself as Greek who lives in a foreign country.

restaurant, adapting to customers' tastes and deviating from solely Greek 'traditional' dishes. Indexical authentic restaurants have closer associations with Greek culture and place a greater emphasis on authenticity via the sourcing and use of traditional recipes.

Table 5.2: The authenticity Matrix for restaurant owners

Criteria	Indexical authenticity	Existential authenticity
Description of the restaurant	Concept derives from a specific origin (e.g. Greek, Cretan)	Something general (e.g. touristy, Mediterranean)
Source of the recipes	From a specific origin (from memory, from relatives, from traditional cookbooks)	Not from a specific origin (Internet, standard recipes)
Origin of the ingredients	PDO products, imported products from the origin	Ingredients from a different origin, not PDO
Type of targeted customers	Locals, loyal customers	Tourists, non-regulars
Reason for dining in the restaurant	To taste authentic food, to feel closer to home, to be reminded of holiday memories	To elicit a different/new experience or to share the experience afterwards

The owner's/manager's role	Targeting profits but also an ambassador of the cuisine/country	Focus on profits
Other restaurants as "role models"	A restaurant from the origin, a traditional restaurant	Fusion cuisine, sometimes "fine dining" restaurant

The findings indicate that the identity of the restaurateurs is the most influential factor in conceiving authenticity as indexical or existential (Figure 5.3). A person who perceives authenticity as indexical seems to be influenced by a social discourse and also has *a priori* expectations and stereotypes. That person feels close to the country of origin of the restaurant's theme, the country's traditions and so he perceives himself/herself to be the country's ambassador for customers. On the other hand, persons unfamiliar with the culinary culture of the restaurant's theme tend to define authenticity as existential. They provide a unique experience to their customers, a more "fine dining" rather than traditional and also the most important aspect for them is the restaurant's profits than promoting the country of the restaurant.

Figure 5.3: The identity "lens" for constructing authenticity meanings
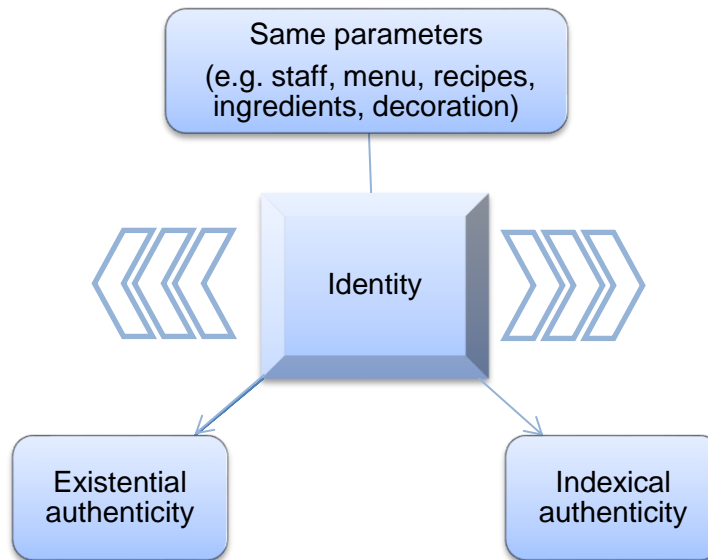
A contribution is Table 5.2, which suggests that if a restaurateur is asked to describe his/her restaurant, to name the source of the recipes, to reveal the origin of the ingredients, etc. we are able to grasp his/her perception of indexical or existential authenticity. Similarly, restaurateurs could define their perceptions about authenticity and to test if they are similar to their customers' perceptions.

Hence, the research question about what identities ethnic restaurant owners adopt in order to construct authenticity meanings has been answered and is summarised in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: The influence of identity on the construction of authenticity meanings for restaurant owners

Examples of restaurateurs who perceive authenticity as indexical:			
IDENTITY			**AUTHENTICITY**
Gender	**Ethnicity**	**Bio**	**Authenticity comments**
Female	Greek	She lives in Greece. As a child she spent some years in Crete, where she was raised by her grandfather.	By having Greek and especially Cretan identity, she judges authenticity through a comparison with her perceptions of stereotypical Cretan cuisine.
Female	Greek	She has lived in the U.K. for 10 years. She was born in Greece and came to the U.K. for studies at the age of 22.	By having Greek identity, she judges authenticity with own experience of the origin.
Male	Greek	He has lived in the U.K. for 25 years. He was born in Greece and came to the UK for work at the age of 32.	Greek identity remains strong for him and he insisted on the interview being conducted in Greek.

IDENTITY			AUTHENTICITY
Gender	**Ethnicity**	**Bio**	**Authenticity comments**
Male	Greek	He lives in Greece. His origin is from Crete, where he spent all of his summers as a child.	By having Greek and especially Cretan identity, he judges authenticity according to his own experiences from the origin (Crete).
Male	Greek	He has lived in the U.K. for 20 years. He came to the U.K. from Greece when he was 18 to study and then he started the restaurant with his father.	By having Greek identity, he judges authenticity in relation to his own experiences from the origin.

Examples of restaurateurs who perceive authenticity as existential:			
IDENTITY			**AUTHENTICITY**
Gender	**Ethnicity**	**Bio**	**Authenticity comments**
Male	British- Cypriot	He has lived in the U.K. since he was born. He is the 3rd generation of a Greek Cypriot family.	He judges authenticity not only in what he and his customers taste, but in what they see as well. He also has his own perception about authenticity in an eclectic way.
Male	British-French	He has lived in the U.K. since he was born.	He defines authenticity as a quest for fun and pleasure during the consumption.
Male	Greek	He lives in Greece.	He judges authenticity as a pseudo-event, he prefers to write on the menu "traditional kebab" instead of "kebab" and focuses more on how it is expressed rather than the originality of the dish. Most of his customers are tourists.

	IDENTITY		AUTHENTICITY
Gender	**Ethnicity**	**Bio**	**Authenticity comments**
Male	Greek	He lives in Greece. His origin is from the rural area of Greece.	He judges authenticity to emerge from the experiences of his customers. Therefore, there is a clear interaction between the world and his customers' identity. Most of his customers are tourists.
Male	English	He lives in the U.K. He is a 2nd generation Greek.	He has only visited Greece as a tourist twice. His menu does not rely on tradition and originality; he chose recipes from the Internet.
Male	English	He lives in the U.K.	He offers a menu according to consumers' demand. He also transformed the original dishes to vegetarian (in contrast to indexical authenticity).

5.4 Summary

This Chapter has set out the authenticity perceptions according to producers of the concept, the restaurant owners. Theoretical saturation was achieved with n=19 interviews with restaurant owners (11 and 8 interviews in the UK and Greece respectively) with the findings suggesting that authenticity is constructed on national lines as most of the participants compared their restaurants and menus with the country of origin. Following this, several factors are taken into consideration when authenticity is judged by the restaurateurs: the menu, recipes, ingredients, wine's origin, PDO products (such as the feta and the olive oil), the ethnicity of the chef, decoration of the restaurant, music, traditional entertainment and traditional way of cooking. However, these factors are more important to restaurateurs with the same identity as the restaurant's theme rather than to restaurateurs who are unfamiliar with the restaurant's culinary culture. Therefore, participants' identity influences their authenticity perceptions, driving them to be either indexical or existential (Figure 5.3).

Restaurateurs who are familiar with the restaurant's culinary culture have *a priori* expectations of and stereotypes for a restaurant and its food, whereas restaurateurs unfamiliar with the restaurant's culture are driven by the need of profitability and in few cases of eclecticism as well. These two mutually exclusive categories of authenticity emerged from the data and revealed that indexical authenticity is about traditional restaurants or products which seem to be similar to those of the country of origin, whereas existential authenticity is about enjoyable moments and experiences.

As far as the main contribution is concerned, the authenticity matrix (Table 5.2) has been constructed to judge restaurateurs' perceptions about indexical or existential authenticity. Similarly, restaurant owners can test whether their perceptions about authenticity match with their customers' authenticity perceptions and expectations.

Having reported restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity and identity aspects, the next Chapter investigates the consumers' point of view.

Chapter 6 : Consumers' constructions of authenticity, food choice and promotional methods

6.1 Introduction

Consumers' perceptions about authenticity, quality and identity aspects are investigated following the previous Chapter about restaurateurs' authenticity perceptions. Based on qualitative research methods, this study aims to grasp consumers' expectations of an ethnic restaurant and also suggests how to promote these businesses effectively. In order to do so, a comparison of restaurateurs' and consumers' beliefs is beneficial to clarify misconceptions and false methods of promoting and running a restaurant business. The comparison will be analysed in the next Chapter (Chapter 7).

Concerning the current Chapter, the first Section 6.2 focuses on consumers' perceptions about authenticity and also which parameters are taken into consideration when they judge authenticity. Section 6.3 presents the influential factors according to which consumers choose an ethnic restaurant to dine in. In the same Section it is investigated how and in what way identities affect consumer food choice and also construct authenticity meanings, such as indexical or existential authenticity. Hence, the research considers how consumers perceive authenticity and which factors influence consumers' restaurant choice. Finally, the key points of the Chapter are summarised in the final Section (6.4) and these are about the parameters which consumers are taking into consideration to judge food authenticity and also the influential factors of this constructed authenticity.

6.2 Consumers' authenticity perceptions

Content analysis reveals that consumers judge authenticity based on specific parameters, namely: the ethnicity of the staff, the menu, use of traditional recipes, the ingredients' origin, decoration of the restaurant and music.

Food and menu

Consumers described their dining experiences in ethnic restaurants in the U.K. and also assessed authenticity. For example, they perceive a

restaurant as authentic if the menu was written in Greek or the dishes had Greek names. They typically want to select from dishes that can be found in the (Greek) origin and not in any other country.

"… No, not really (authentic). It had a mixture of other food as well. Some (dishes) were reminiscent of Lebanese, some were Cypriot, some were Greek. It was pretty much mixed…" (Female, Cypriot consumer).

"… (The restaurant is authentic because) every single dish is clearly a traditional dish. The name is written sometimes in a way that a non-Greek speaker can pronounce it. It sounds more like the original name..." (Male, Greek consumer).

"… (Having) Greek names on the dishes, like spanakopita and so on… looks very Greek…." (Male, Italian consumer).

Tradition

Tradition is linked with authenticity and it seems to be paramount for people who hold Greek identity dear. Such consumers expect to be served food which reminds them of home and traditional recipes from their antecedents

"… (That restaurant) is definitely not a traditional authentic Greek restaurant. It's more a Greek with an international element to eat. I don't like it…" (Female, Greek consumer).

. In contrast, consumers with a different national background are more flexible as they are happy to taste recipes with a modern twist.

"… Greek culture like you know food and just having a great time with friends and also the food itself is quite Greek even if it is modern. It is still Greek food…" (Female, British-Pakistani consumer).

Hummus and other controversial dishes (adaptation to the market)

A food that cannot be found in the country of origin is often perceived as inauthentic. At the same time, more than one country might lay claim to the origins of that dish and therefore such dishes are quite controversial regarding their origin and their authenticity. Especially for consumers who cherish a Greek identity or for non-Greek consumers who have lived in

Greece these aspects are quite controversial and so the dishes seem to them inauthentic.

Similarly to the restaurateurs, consumers were asked to comment about hummus, a dish which can be found in most Greek ethnic restaurants in the U.K. but not in Greece. They also discussed other globalised food choices (e.g. burgers and nachos) as they are included on some Greek ethnic restaurants' menus. The process of commencing a discussion was to present two menus of actual Greek ethnic restaurants which both had hummus and one of which had burgers. Then, consumers were asked to comment freely.

"… whenever I see something like that I think it is not an authentic Greek restaurant because it does not use the Greek recipe that we use but names that appeal more to non-Greeks, because they do know hummus. But, you go to Greece and you ask for hummus in a restaurant and they probably do not know what it is. So, if it were me I wouldn't use hummus or falafel…" (Male, Greek consumer).

"… it has tzatziki, taramasalata. I do recognise Greek dishes but I do recognise some other dishes that to be honest might be a Turkish restaurant like hummus, falafel, that's Arab as well. It is a mixture so, I am not sure if this could be a Greek restaurant…" (Female, Cypriot consumer).

"… (Authentic) while having burgers and nachos? Well, no, I don't think so (laughter)…" (Female, Greek consumer).

"… I don't see the point of having pasta or burgers. If I want to have pasta I go to an Italian place, if I want to have burgers I go to burger place… It kind of pisses me off to be honest with you, the fact of being a little bit of everything... The question is: "What type of cuisine is this"?.. I really don't get this concept…" (Female, Greek consumer).

"… I guess that the Greek burgers might be a different choice with haloumi and tzatziki. That would be of a different burger to try…" (Female, British consumer).

"… they have chicken wings, which is just food for English people (laughter)… They have burger... It looks like they mix Greek food. Mediterranean food and then something for the English people (laughter)... more adjusted to the UK taste…" (Female, Italian consumer).

Consumers who have a different identity seem to be more flexible and willing to try more internationalised food even if they know it is not part of the original ethnic cuisine.

- *Do you like it when you see burgers or nachos in a Greek restaurant?*
- *I don't mind…"* (Female, British consumer).

"… you would not be really disappointed with things like burgers, nachos and things like that. You would be pretty satisfied if you order them…" (Male, British consumer).

Ingredients and P.D.O. products (e.g. feta)

Greek consumers know what to expect from each recipe and also seem to have constructed their expectations *a priori*, based on their memories. Consumers of a different identity do not know the recipes in great detail and as a consequence they are unaware of all of the typical ingredients.

"… they have a Greek name which might not necessarily mean a lot to you but they have got a list of the ingredients so it means more to you after that. So, yeah it looks more traditionally Greek to me…" (Male, British consumer).

"… I liked it… They have tried to keep the original ingredients there but they played around with the rest. You know, kind of a very minimalistic and very I guess, giving a London touch…" (Female, British-Pakistani consumer).

"… I think (what makes a restaurant authentic) it's mainly the dishes, the ingredients and the taste…" (Female, Greek consumer).

"… in a restaurant that is an ethnic restaurant I think it's important to have some ingredients that do come from the original country. Not because that

sells authenticity, but because of the flavour. A big example is feta cheese…" (Male, Greek consumer).

Atmosphere / decoration

Atmosphere and decoration are important for consumers. However, it is the Greek consumers who seek authentic recipes and ingredients rather than stereotypically Greek décor. Identity therefore is again an influential factor in forming expectations of authentic experiences.

"… I am annoyed with the decor... Many Greek restaurants abroad have got stuck in the old times. So, that Zorba the Greek and an amphora and Zeus chasing tourists!.. If I was to give some advice to people who want to open a Greek restaurant abroad it is to abandon all these 60s and 70s themes and concentrate on good quality food. Keep it Greek, keep it authentic, keep it original and keep your restaurant fresh and inviting. Yes, you can have something in the decor that is reminiscent of Greece, but do not overdo it…" (Male, Greek consumer).

"… they tried to bring it in a more Greek style thing but I don't think they totally achieved it. I didn't feel... OK, they had paintings, stuff like that. There was always blue and white in the tables but, to be honest with you I didn't like the decoration at all…" (Male, Greek consumer)

"… I don't like at all Greek restaurants with statues and folk style. Those that we see in the movies. I prefer a nice environment, friendly... Something that gives me the feeling of hospitality. With modern decoration, that's all. And friendly staff…" (Female, Greek consumer).

The previous two Greek consumers visited the same restaurant as the following two British consumers, but they seem to have completely different views:

"… it has a very homely feeling. It has a nice decor… The food was very homely as well. It was homemade, friendly service, they had a nice atmosphere as well…" (Female, British consumer).

"… I think the decoration is the first things you notice definitely…" (Female, British consumer).

Food quality

Quality appears to be a synonym of authenticity for most consumers, regardless their identity.

"… (An authentic restaurant) would probably be (visited by) predominantly Greek people. Because that would indicate that they approve the food. That would heighten my sense of authenticity and of good quality…" (Male, British consumer).

"… (I mostly care about) authenticity and tradition… good quality as well. When it is using Greek words it implies the dish so there are more thoughts about quality and almost an expectation is created. It is a lot more special I suppose…" (Male, British consumer).

"… authenticity for me is part of the quality, you know…" (Female, American - Greek descent consumer).

Taste

Consumers agree that taste is a crucial factor for their food choices and for visiting or revisiting a restaurant. However, those who have Greek identity are harsher with their critiques as they have constructed stronger expectations even before visiting the restaurant. Such consumers have in mind the taste of the dishes in the country of origin. Similarly, consumers of a different identity from the restaurant who have nevertheless visited the country of origin have higher expectations. On the other hand, Non-Greeks also have expectations but less exacting in terms of adherence to traditional recipes.

"… I think the ultimate, the decisive factor is the taste…" (Female, Greek consumer).

"... the only problem is, and I am sure you've noticed this because... The vegetables do not taste like in Greece, it never tastes the same (laughter)... So, that's the one thing. Authenticity is not exactly the same…" (Female, American - Greek descent consumer).

" - Now that you have been to Greece and you have actually tasted the local cuisine do you still conceive of that restaurant as Greek?

- *Yeah, although probably less than when I did at the time... I think the flavours were a lot stronger when we were in Greece… I think if it's Greek food then obviously I would prefer it to be sourced from a traditional Greek source…"* (Male, British consumer).

Staff

The ethnicity of staff plays a more important role for Greek consumers rather than consumers of a different identity. Greeks would like to see Greek speaking staff at the Greek ethnic restaurants.

"… Greek staff is necessary... If it wasn't a traditional restaurant then you could have a ginger head English you know?.. But it wouldn't persuade me…" (Male, Greek consumer).

"… no, I don't think (I care about the ethnicity of the staff or of the chef)… I suppose, it's not Greek, I suppose the comparison would be the "X restaurant", which feels very Turkish and I think all the staff there seem to be very Turkish, so I suppose there you notice the whole experience a bit more. But, no, it doesn't affect how I feel about the food or the atmosphere, anything like that..." (Female, British consumer).

Music and entertainment

The expected type of entertainment varies between consumers who possess the same identity as the restaurant and consumers who are unaware of the culture of the restaurant's origin. Greek consumers or consumers who have been to Greece seem to detest loud music and folklore elements. On the other hand, consumers of a different ethnicity expect to be entertained with loud music and shows.

"… many of the restaurants are tacky. If the customers that you want to attract are the work night outs who want to get drunk and yeah they are more interested in the size of the portion and how loud the Zorbas dance music is played, then, yeah, go for that. But, if you want to run a proper restaurant… go for a clean look and good quality food…" (Male, Greek consumer).

"… the days that we were in Greece, we went to traditional restaurants, we never went to any plates smashing evenings or anything like that… I have

never been to anything like that and they never did anything like that…" (Female, British consumer).

"… one of the things is the plate smashing. I don't know if it's actually a Greek thing but it is certainly one of the things I imagine to be Greek tradition…" (Male, British consumer).

Some of the above factors involved in judging authenticity are more significant than the others and as a consequence they are in larger boxes in the following tree map (Table 6.1). By using the NVIVO10 program, the 100 most common data-answers for defining authenticity are detailed (Table 6.1). This query was based on the author's nodes and included the 100 most common words which were more than three letters. Then, a second analysis was applied by circling in red the most relevant words. When similar words were depicted these were merged into one category, for example: nachos, hummus and burgers are named as globalised food.

This tree-map query process was chosen as a confirmation of the author's interpretations regarding the meanings of authenticity and how these are perceived by the consumers. According to the result, some factors are more significant than others and as a consequence they are in larger boxes. These factors are: ethnicity, menu, traditional recipes, absence of global food, ingredients, decoration, taste and music.

Table 6.1: Tree map of the 100 most common words associated with authenticity

6.3 Factors influencing construction of authenticity

This Section explores whether or not identity influences consumers' authenticity perceptions and what are the influential factors that determine consumers' food choices.

As for the factors which influence a consumer to visit a restaurant it seems that these are their identities and experiences, which could vary per occasion and by age. For instance, their preferences vary depending on the occasion, as they make different choices depending on with who they are dine with or accompanying.

Especially, for Greek consumers or for consumers who have been on holiday in the country of origin, nostalgia and authenticity are major factors in food and restaurant choice. Therefore, similar meanings of authenticity and nostalgia are shared at a regional and national level.

Nostalgia

During the interviews consumers expressed how much they miss their home country and their relatives. Due to these feelings, they tend to find comfort from food linked with family memories and happy moments with friends.

"… because if someone feels nostalgic about flavours that are from home... To go and have a chance to taste it to see if he likes it or not…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.).

"… because people miss their mom's food and home. Especially, if the food is good it's definitely worth trying…" (Female, Cypriot consumer, U.K.).

"…So, in general although I enjoyed it because I have missed Greek food, yet I was not very satisfied with this restaurant…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.).

Similarly, consumers who have been on holiday in the country of origin tend to judge authenticity and quality based on their experiences of Greece. In their case they are nostalgic about their happy holiday memories:

"… I always love it. It always makes you feel that you are on holiday…" (Female, British consumer, U.K.).

On the other hand, consumers who have not been on holiday in the country of origin tend to search for new experiences and do not necessarily make traditional food choices:

"… I was looking online for restaurants around and we wanted to try something different and M. came up…" (Female, British-Pakistani consumer).

However, the identities can be divided into a super-national level (Greek or Mediterranean origin) and in an out-group (non-Greek and non-Mediterranean origin). The first type of consumers (national level) compare the food with what their mothers used to cook for them.

"…The menu is more Greek. It includes all the Greek food that a mother can cook in the house..." (Female, Greek consumer)

"… Past experience, both from home cooking but from restaurants in Greece also…" (Female, Greek consumer)

"… there were some things on the menu that I was not so familiar with. And also the spices, the food tasted a bit different… I remember your grandma Eleni, the way that she cooked and it reminded me of how everybody else cooked, so I think it is opinion based... They had strong spices, I don't dislike strong spices, they just look different. The Cypriot Greek reminds me more of Lebanese cuisine, a little more spice…" (Female, American-Greek consumer).

The role of experiences

The second type of consumer (out-group) judge their food experience in comparison with what they experienced during their holiday in Greece. During the interviews these consumers expressed how much they missed their holiday and due to these feelings they tend to find comfort in ethnic food.

"… the music when you first walk in the restaurant… And very friendly reception. Whenever you go to the restaurants in Greece or here, you know, straight at the table, drinks, order, menus. There is no hanging about, straight there. The atmosphere is really good…" (Female, British consumer)

"… there wasn't a sort of burger and chips things in Corfu at all. The similarities are the vegetables, the salads, the pita breads... In Corfu there is a lot more range of different things that I have never heard of here before..." (Female, British consumer)

In fact, after being on holiday in the country of origin they tend to become stricter regarding food quality and authenticity aspects.

"- Did you care about the origin of the ingredients before going on holiday in Greece? Have you thought about it?

- …Yes, since going I think I pay more attention to it…

- So, now you are stricter?

-I would say so, yeah (laughter)…" (Male, British consumer)

Naturally, experiences could change over time. For example, someone who had not been in the country of origin before could visit it for the first time and change their perceptions about a certain food culture. Similarly, it is assumed that the suggested Matrix is quite fluid as perceptions could change under specific circumstances. For example, consumers tend to think about who they will be eating with when choosing a restaurant or if there is a national festival or a special occasion.

"… It was the Greek celebration of meat on the grill, we call it "Tsiknopempti". So, we were expecting to have a big eating occasion… If I just go with one more person I will just have my main dish and maybe a salad, so it depends on the occasion…" (Male, Greek consumer).

"… I would hope there are other Greeks there because that tells me that's a good restaurant (laughter). Just like when you go for Chinese food, you look for Chinese people… It depends on if I am by myself or if people can afford whatever they want…" (Female, American-Greek consumer).

"… The one in Oxford, I used to like it but my dad said that the staff in the kitchen weren't Greek. And that upset him…" (Male, British-Greek consumer)

"… I remember thinking: "This is way overpriced" so, I did go during my first year and then it wasn't until my third year that I used to live right next to it

that I would consider getting takeaways from it…" (Female, Greek-Cypriot consumer).

The restaurant owner

Consumers were asked to describe the ideal restaurant owner and what they would expect from him/her. Their answers revealed that they expect restaurant owners to be friendly and of the same ethnicity as the restaurant's theme. Consumers also like interacting with an owner and being made to feel welcome. Again, identity aspects seem to be highly influential.

"… The owner is Greek. Also being Italian I am used to Mediterranean food let's say. So, I can recognise how different Mediterranean food is from English food…" (Male, Italian consumer).

"… You go in and you get pictures of Anthony Quinn and the filming but it's done in a tasteful way… Even if there was a bit of tackiness there, the food was superb and the owner is such an open character, there is such a warming welcome that you forget everything else…" (Male, Greek consumer).

"… The owner, who was very welcoming and very friendly… Also the way he approaches the customers is not the English way…" (Female, Italian consumer).

"… The owner in the end treated us with a plate of different cakes, as a thank you from the restaurant. That was really nice, you don't find it often. That was pretty Greek. You don't find that elsewhere…" (Female, Cypriot consumer).

Identities

For consumers who have the same ethnicity as the restaurant's theme it seems that they perceive authenticity as indexical and they are also stricter with their judgements as they have *a priori* expectations and stereotypes. Similarly, consumers who have been on holiday in the country of origin or who belong to a supernational level (e.g. Mediterranean) tend to share the same views about authenticity. On the other hand, consumers unfamiliar with the culture of the restaurant tend to define authenticity as existential.

Hence, the research question about what identities consumers adopt is addressed.

The following authenticity classification (Table 6.2) suggests that if a consumer is asked to describe an authentic restaurant, the source of its recipes, the origin of the ingredients, etc. we may be able to grasp her/his perception about authenticity.

Therefore, as the process of defining authenticity is undertaken through the lens of a person's identity, the author identified relevant parameters, which are judged by the identity and lead to the definition of authenticity as indexical or existential (Table 6.2). These parameters can be the source of the recipes, the origin of the ingredients and so on.

Table 6.2: Authenticity classification

	Indexical authenticity	Existential authenticity
Description of the restaurant	Something from a specific origin (e.g. Greek, Cretan)	Without a specific identity (e.g. touristy, tacky)
Source of the recipes	From a specific origin (from memory, from relatives, from traditional cookbooks)	Not from a specific origin (Internet, standard recipes)
Origin of the ingredients	P.D.O. products, imported products from the origin	Ingredients from a different origin, not P.D.O.
Type of customers	Linked to origin	Tourists, non-regulars
Reason for dining in the restaurant	To taste authentic food, to feel closer to home, to be reminded of holiday memories	For a different/new experience or to share the experience afterwards
The owner's/manager's role	Warm, friendly and welcoming person, open character, who also has the same ethnicity as the restaurant's theme	Targeting profits, possibly not of the same ethnicity as the restaurant's theme

Turning to the research question about the influence of consumers' identity on authenticity perceptions we may say that this is highly influential as it constructs indexical or existential authenticity meanings.

As has been analysed in Chapter 5 and in the current Chapter (role of experiences) identities are not stable constructions but fluid due to their evolution according to the occasion and experiences. Regarding location, regional consumers are defined as those living in Athens, national refers to Greece and supernational to a group of relevant countries such as the Mediterranean or Europe. Those who do not belong in any of these categories are the "outsiders", members of the out-group. All the above are presented in the consumers' identity Matrix.

Table 6.3: The consumers' identity Matrix

		Fluid, depending on experiences or occasion			
REGIONAL	**NATIONAL**	**SUPERNATIONAL**		**OUT-GROUP**	
Consumers who live in Athens	Greek consumers	Cypriot or Mediterranean consumers		British consumers	
		Have been on holiday in Greece	Haven't been on holiday in Greece	Have been on holiday in Greece	Haven't been on holiday in Greece

Identity is about the group which we believe we belong to rather than the ones where we actually belong. Even if Greek consumers live in the U.K. they perceive themselves to be on Greek territory when they visit a Greek ethnic restaurant and so they name every other consumer as a foreigner. To conclude, the identity of the consumers and their authenticity perceptions seem to be the strongest influences on ethnic restaurant and food choice.

6.4 Summary

This Chapter reported consumers' expectations about ethnic restaurants and perceptions about authenticity. The author interviewed n=23 consumers of a variety of identities and locations to explore the influence of identities and national lines on authenticity perceptions.

Consumers revealed their expectations about restaurant owners and these are largely based on their identities. Most of the Greek consumers or consumers who have been on holiday in Greece replied that restaurant owners should be friendly and of the same ethnicity as the restaurant's theme. Moreover, consumers' identities seem to be highly influential how authenticity is judged. For Greek consumers or for consumers who have been on holiday in the country of origin nostalgia is a major factor in food and restaurant choice. Consumers of different ethnicities choose a restaurant for a new dining experience, driven by eclecticism or pursuit of pleasure. These mutually exclusive identities lead to mutually exclusive authenticity perceptions: indexical and existential authenticity respectively. However, identities seem to be rather fluid, influenced by occasions, experiences and other factors. Hence, a Matrix was constructed (Section 6.3) to depict how these evolve. The previous problematic and vague definition of authenticity in relation to quality and identities has now been clarified.

Consumers judge authenticity through the lens of their identities, but based on specific factors, such as the menu, recipes, ingredients (e.g. feta, oil, etc), decoration, taste, the ethnicity of the staff in ethnic restaurants, music and entertainment. The research questions about how consumers perceive authenticity have been addressed.

As this Chapter investigated consumers' perceptions about authenticity and food choice in relation to their identities, the next Chapter connects consumers and restaurateurs in one network by depicting and proposing a communication model for both.

Chapter 7 : A socially constructed network based on restaurateurs' and consumers' identities, authenticity perceptions and quality conventions: the intersection between the actors

7.1 Introduction

After analysing both sides separately (consumers and restaurateurs) the intersection of these two is discussed to explore whether and how these two meet. This Chapter combines the perceptions of both sides and illustrates the constructed network, which is structured on word of mouth, expectations and perceptions about authenticity and quality. Figure 7.1 below indicates the scope of this Chapter, which is to correlate the restaurateurs' and consumers' perceptions.

Figure 7.1: Correlation of findings
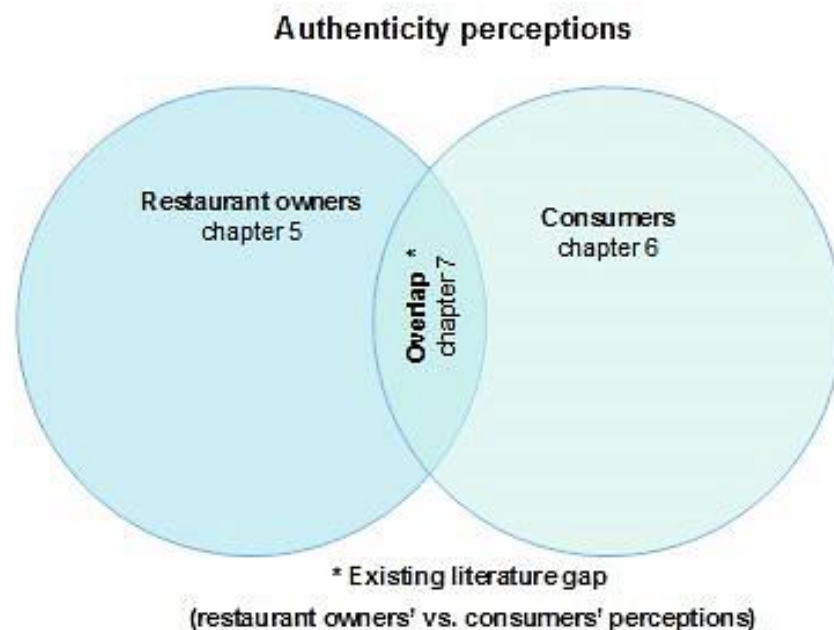
After the investigation of restaurateurs' perceptions and their decisions about menu construction in Chapter 5 and also by taking into consideration the findings of Chapter 6 about consumers' view about authenticity aspects and food choices, the current Chapter explores their mutual opinions and constructed meanings about the ideal ethnic restaurant, about authenticity aspects and about quality.

This Chapter, like the previous ones, is based on Grounded theory qualitative techniques and interviews. Additionally, the projective technique has been chosen in order to test where these two views meet and what are the influential factors that determine their opinions about ethnic restaurants. The projective technique revealed viewpoints about recipes, menu construction, ingredients, restaurant decoration, expectations and identity influences. Under these circumstances, the most efficient promotional method is investigated and previous restaurateurs' perceptions and practices are put to the test.

Apart from these findings, authenticity perceptions of both consumers and restaurant owners are analysed in the second part of the Chapter. The third part of the current Chapter suggests restaurant categorisation based on Quality Conventions Theory. In order to depict the expectations of both sides and to propose the most efficient promotional method based on these expectations and their constructed authenticity and quality meanings, new models are constructed.

The fourth section of this Chapter will propose a network of restaurateurs and consumers and how these two communicate and interact. The most attractive strategy for the consumers will be suggested in order to keep them loyal, to revisit the restaurants and to communicate their experience to other consumers as well.

7.2 Authenticity findings by applying the projective technique

So as to answer the research question about what affects the decisions of the ethnic restaurant owners to construct their menus the projective technique was chosen.

During the interviews the projective technique was chosen (see Section 4.8) in order to investigate the perceptions of the restaurateurs and the consumers concerning authenticity, identity and promotional aspects. Most of them seem to prefer menu 1 (see Appendix 4) rather than menu 2 (see Appendix 5).

All of the restaurant owners agreed that menu 2 (see Appendix 5) lacks a Greek or any specific identity. As a consequence, the participants perceive

the restaurateur of menu 2 (see Appendix 5) as someone who is trying to please all customers by offering a mix of everything without respecting tradition or authenticity. They all believe that this restaurant does not offer anything to the culture as it is not honest with its identity as Greek.

Similarly, consumers agreed that menu 2 is not authentic according to their own standards and that the restaurateur is aiming to please all customers by offering them a "globalised" cuisine which is lacking identity and (perhaps) quality. Moreover, consumers expect to see Greek words for the food names on the menus. Additionally, consumers feel that menu 2 is adapted to the British culture rather than keeping its identity. However, many of them like the blue and white colour combination, which reminds them of Greece.

Both sides focused on specific dishes of the menu which caused them frustration and disappointment.

" …I'm fed up..." (Female, restaurant owner, Greece)

"…Sorry, not impressed…" (Male, Greek consumer, lives in the U.K.)

Those dishes which both sides talked about are the burgers, the sandwiches, the nachos and the bruschetta. As a matter of fact, an Italian consumer mentioned that the bruschetta is mis-spelled on the menu.

Moreover, both sides highlight the lack of a clear ethnicity and identity.

"… There's no identity, it's a little of everything..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece)

"… Goodness me! Is that presented as a Greek restaurant?.." (Male, Greek consumer)

"… The dishes do not seem particularly Greek at all to me…" (Male, British consumer)

Naturally, restaurant owners are giving advice to the restaurant owner of the menu as if he was sitting in front of them and trying also to think of the reasons why the menu has been structured this way.

"… What happens is that a restaurant adapts let's say to the customers, but you want the customers to adapt to you, in a way…" (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.)

"… He tries to attract as much people as he can. Poor fella!.." (Male, restaurant owner, UK)

"… I think they are doing this for attracting the most of people…" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece)

"…Couldn't he have a Greek wine?" (Female, restaurant owner, Greece)

Consumers, on the other hand, commented that they do not find it appealing and that they would not visit the restaurant.

"… I don't think they have anything that appeals to me..." (Male, Greek consumer, lives in the U.K.)

"… I probably wouldn't go and just have a burger that I could have in any pub in England…" (Female, British consumer)

Concerning menu 1 (see Appendix 4) the restaurant owners commented that they perceive it as more authentic than menu 2 (see Appendix 5) and therefore they would prefer dining there. However, in recent years, restaurateurs in Greece seem to have made more compromises concerning authenticity aspects. As they explained, they are doing so due to the financial crisis. Most of them are afraid that they won't survive if they don't please the masses. The identity also seems to influence much the restaurant's menu as dishes are chosen according to the demand and the restaurateurs' perceptions.

From the consumer's side, menu 1 is also preferred to menu 2. All of the consumers felt that it was more authentic and for this reason they do not care much about the prices or its layout. Because of this, it can be concluded that authenticity and a clear identity are more powerful influential factors than price or menu design.

To summarise, two menus were projected to restaurant owners and consumers. Based on their feedback about the two menus, it can be concluded that the best promotional method for ethnic restaurants is to be authentic and to keep a clear identity.

Table 7.1: Discussing menu 1 (Intersection of consumers' and restaurateurs' authenticity perceptions)

Restaurant owners' comments	Consumers' comments
- Mint? Spearmint? That's peculiar. Tzatziki doesn't normally have these… Falafel, neither is this (Greek), Tabbouleh neither is this (Greek). Male, Greece - There are some offered things which are not Greek… If I went to a Greek restaurant in England I would only want Greek meals… It's obvious that you are looking for the profit, you don't care… Male, Greece - There wasn't any need to include falafel or anything else… But if this is what they had requested then they did right, because what matters is that a business is a business and must survive. Male, Greece - Hummus, tzatziki, taramasalad. No it's touristy, nonsense. Male, Greece - I have nothing against mousaka but... The foreigner who will come and see these is like living on the islands in the 70's. Male, Greece - Cheese pie and falafel the interesting part is that they are on the mains… They focus on tabouleh, which is not ours, falafel, which is Lebanese. Male, Greece - One is fast-food cheap and the other one is some pounds a head... Their concept is their concept, if it works well for them and that's the most important. I think the first menu (3) shocked me more than this one (1). Male, U.K. - I think it's got a mixture of Greek food and non-Greek food, so it's a bit confusing for me. Male, U.K. - This menu is very Greek. More Greek than ours… I believe that this is from a good restaurant. I like this. Male, U.K.	- It has a much better variety, like all the dishes are almost originally Greek dishes… Although I cannot see any prices to compare... The layout is very simple. If you just focus on the menu, it's much more attractive. Male, Greek - Well, that menu is not that fancy… It seems that it could be more traditional than the other one... Better quality and here it's only Greek food. Female, Greek - I don't like the note at the end which says please order at the counter because if it is a Greek restaurant we usually do not order at the counter. Male, Greek - This definitely looks like I would say traditional food… The only thing is tabouleh and falafel, which are not... I think I would have gone for this one (black font) just because it tells me that it is more traditional. Female, Cypriot - A variety of traditional dishes instead of pasta and burgers… I would like to try this one (menu 1). It does come across as more authentic. Female, British - I always try and pronounce what I am seeing. Pa-pou-tsakia. I think you would get a better quality of food in that restaurant (with Greek names). Female, British - They have a Greek name… It looks more traditionally Greek to me. I suppose a more authentically Greek meal. (I expect) authenticity and tradition. Just based on the menu. Good quality as well. Male, British - Even if it was a bit more expensive, it is tastier and the experience is better, so I would go for the black one. Female, Italian

Table 7.2: Discussing menu 2 (Intersection of consumers' and restaurateurs' authenticity perceptions)

Restaurant owners' comments	Consumers' comments
- A little Italian, a little Mexican, a little American, a little Greek… I'm fed up with this mousaka!.. We don't have burgers here (laughter)... Club sandwich? Sorry Elena but this isn't… a Greek menu? Female, Greece	- The burgers and sandwich is something that is not part of a Greek restaurant and it's something that I wouldn't expect to find on the menu… A Greek pitta wrap for 5.90 is... You expect to find it in Greece for two euros. Sorry, not impressed. Male, Greek, lives in the U.K.
- Oh, there's a lot of hummus there (in the U.K.)… And a lot of mousaka… There's no identity, it's a little of everything... The gastronomy is certainly not highlighted. Male, Greece	- But, I don't consider it to be a specific ethnic cuisine let's say, just a regular place to go for coffee or wine, just a quick drink… I don't think they have anything that appeal to me... Male, Greek, lives in the U.K.
- They are trying to combine everything… We don't have nachos in Greece… I think they are doing this for attracting the most of people… Male, Greece	- Halloumi? That's Cypriot. Anyway... Bruschetta is Italian. Nachos!!?! Goodness me! Is that presented as a Greek restaurant?.. That one has a deal! So, yeah that's fast food. Male, Greek, lives in Greece
- It's a mix of everything. That's what it is. I don't think it has an identity… Male, Greece	- The dishes do not seem particularly Greek at all to me… Nothing too special… I don't expect the quality to be really good. Male, British
- Could I also see the wine list? Here we are, Australian, African, Italian. You are not a Greek restaurant after all! Couldn't he have a Greek wine? Female, Greece	- I think for lunch you don't eat that kind of thing when I was in Greece… I probably wouldn't go and just have a burger that I could have in any pub in England… Female, British
- So, here you have got Greek and then you've got an Italian dish and nachos, which is Spanish, and chicken wings, which aren't Greek, onion rings, which are American… What happens is that a restaurant adapts let's say to the customers but, you want the customers to adapt to you, in a way. Male, U.K.	- It's not a very authentic restaurant by the look on the menu, because it doesn't really say anything in Greek. Everything is in English... Burgers, which are quite English, American... They have got something for everybody. So, it's not very authentic to me. Female, British
- Burgers? Out of the question! Pasta Bolognese out of the question… We can't call it traditional. Nachos? No way! Bruschetta, no way!.. He tries to attract as many people as he can. Poor fella!.. Trying to attract as many people as you can. Male, U.K.	- It looks Greek, I mean the blue and the white… It doesn't look authentic, like nachos, you know what I mean? (I expect) white walls that sort of thing… Tend to be decorated as you would imagine that it is in Greece and Cyprus. Male, British
	- Wow! Burgers we don't usually have such a thing. So, it seems quite internationalised… Female, Cypriot, lives in the U.K.
	- Not authentically Greek but a British place with kind of Greek food. A Greek food adapted to the British taste probably. Male, Italian, lives in the U.K.
	- I saw bruschetta mis-spelled (laughter). Female, Italian, lives in the U.K.

A comparison of consumers' and restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity resulted in one main difference to be about decoration and atmosphere. Consumers perceive decoration and atmosphere as an important indicator of authenticity (see section 6.2), in contrast to restaurateurs, who seldom mentioned these factors (see section 5.2). In particular, for consumers of a Greek identity decor has to be a reminiscent of Greece but, not tacky. As a result, consumers expect to see pictures of Greece and the colours blue and white, which are the colours of the Greek flag.

"… I would like it to have some Greek decoration, something that reminds me of Greece. Maybe some Greek pictures on the wall with white colour, which represents Greece, along with some Greek music that would create a whole atmosphere and a Greek aspect…" (Male, Greek consumer)

Consumer of non-Greek ethnicity and who have not been in Greece do not make a comparison of the UK based restaurant's decoration vs. the restaurants located in Greece. This type of consumers judge according to their own standards what they see like, the decoration and what they experience like, the service.

"… it has a nice decor. We were down in the basement area and the decor of the place was very nice... Friendly service, they had a nice atmosphere as well…" (Female, British consumer)

As a result, consumers' identity is what influences their food and restaurant judgments. Apart from the decoration of the restaurant, the ethnicity of the owner and the choice of traditional dishes are taken into consideration by Greek consumers when they judge the authenticity of a Greek ethnic restaurant.

"… it had only Greek dishes with Greek ingredients… it had Greek elements like the drawings on the wall... So, it had many elements that seemed authentic, but for me it was mainly the fact that it was run by Greeks and the dishes were Greek…" (Female, Greek consumer)

On the contrary, consumers of a different identity than the restaurant's theme consider only the food taste or the atmosphere to choose a

restaurant to dine in. They do not judge authenticity aspects by relying on the ethnicity of the staff nor the origin of the recipes.

"… no, I don't think (I care about the ethnicity of the staff or of the chef)… I don't think it affects how I feel about the food as long as it tastes good and has a good quality… No, it doesn't affect how I feel about the food or the atmosphere, anything like that..." (Female, British consumer)

To summarise, consumers and restaurant owners perceive authenticity as a crucial factor in food choice. However, they judge authenticity according to their identity. Apart from the atmosphere and decoration both consumers and restaurant owners judge authenticity based on the menu, the origin of the ingredients, the traditional recipes and the music. As for their identity influence, there are some differences concerning the ethnicity of the staff and the originality of the menu. According to the findings, the identity of the consumers and the restaurateurs are the influential factor for conceiving the authenticity as indexical or existential (see Tables 5.2 and 6.2). People unfamiliar with the culture and the restaurant's theme tend to define authenticity as existential.

7.3 Quality Conventions

7.3.1 Quality conventions for ethnic restaurants

Concerning the question about how quality is perceived by restaurant owners and consumers, this Section investigates the meaning based on Quality Conventions theory (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991; Renard, 2003; Kirwan, 2006; Baird, 2008; Ponte, 2009; Ponte and Sturgeon, 2013; Climent-López *et al.*, 2014; Gibbon and Riisgaard, 2014). Quality conventions are studied within the ethnic restaurants context for the first time.

Inspirational category

An inspirational restaurant attracts consumers who are in search of an eclectic, unique and new experience:

"…I think it is a really good restaurant, it is different Greek it's not typical Greek if you want something different, I think you go to M. and try the experience there…" (Female, British-Pakistani consumer).

"… I think maybe that's an issue with Greek restaurants abroad. They have been stuck with the taverna style for too long..." (Female, Greek consumer who has lived in several countries for 20 years, now living in the UK)

Similarly, the restaurant owner twisted the dishes in a more modern way so as to attract this type of consumer:

"… The main thing that we wanted to do is step away slightly from the "taverna" style... Keep very true to the Greek taste, but twisting the dishes into a more modern, more high-end cuisine…" (Male, British-French restaurant owner of the M. restaurant, U.K.)

Market category

Apart from restaurant M., consumers of Greek ethnic restaurant K. and its owner were interviewed as well. Restaurant K., according to the Quality Conventions theory, belongs to the Market category and as a consequence its quality is judged based on price aspects. However, this restaurant is not highly recommended by its customers as they perceive it to be lacking in authenticity.

"… I probably wouldn't go (again) and just have a burger that I could have in any pub… It is more of a mix I suppose between more traditional and say something like nachos, which is not associated with Greek restaurants..." (Female, British consumer)

"… It is like showing you what it would be like if you were a Greek restaurant rather than making it a Greek restaurant… I just thought for the amount I paid it is good…" (Male, British consumer)

"… to introduce more traditional things but with elements more British-American sort of cuisine… I suppose, it's not Greek…" (Female, British consumer)

As expected, the owner describes his restaurant as belonging to the Market category by emphasizing profits and the lack of original recipes. As a matter

of fact, most of the recipes were found on the Internet. Apart from this, he is targeting to satisfy any consumer needs without sustaining the culinary culture and tradition.

"… we make the burgers… we put oregano and a few things in there that sort of gives that kind of Mediterranean bite… Say for example you have a table of six, five of them may be perfectly happy to eat Greek food and try something new but there is always one "Oh, I don't know... I'll just have a burger". So, you also have to think with a business mind as well... the first restaurant menu... I took it from the internet… mainly internet to be honest with you… " (Male, restaurant owner of K.)

Moreover, the restaurant's customers are mainly tourists while Greeks tend not to appreciate the restaurant's quality much. The owner is willing to please the majority of the customers by neglecting the authenticity as he has only been in the country of origin as a tourist.

"…We tried to keep as close as possible, BUT we have to sway sometimes towards like... the majority here... tourists... will come here... There is always going to be harsh critics from Greece… they say: "Yeah, this is not as good as that one" when you go to Greece... you lived there, I have been... Obviously, we dealt with a couple of English chefs who did not know what I was talking about…" (Male, restaurant owner of K.)

This chapter adds also to the existing theory a new order of worth which emerged by investigating the intersection between quality and authenticity. According to the data, these two meanings are highly connected in both consumers' and restaurateurs' minds and so a new approach to the meanings is suggested.

Domestic category

Ethnic restaurants which belong to the Domestic category respect tradition and propose a traditional menu with names in Greek as it can be found in the country of origin.

"… a variety of traditional dishes instead of pasta and burgers…" (Female, British consumer)

"… I always try and pronounce what I am seeing. Pa-pou-tsakia. I think you would get a better quality of food in that restaurant (with Greek names)..."

(Female, British consumer)

"... I learnt a lot of these things from tradition, my father, my aunties, my grandmother...." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.)

Food is of good quality and so the ingredients are from the country of origin.

"… The ingredients play huge part, I only use Greek herbs: (rigani) oregano and stuff like that... these are all from Greece…" (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

"… It looks more traditionally Greek to me. I suppose a more authentically Greek meal. Good quality as well..."

(Male, British consumer)

Moreover, Domestic restaurants are perceived by consumers as authentic.

"… it does come across as more authentic..." (Female, British consumer)

"… (I expect) authenticity and tradition based on the menu..." (Male, British consumer)

7.3.2 Intersection of authenticity and quality

As has been stated in the literature (Section 2.4) the existing quality convention categories are set out based on consumer perceptions. However, the current thesis has studied the intersection of authenticity meanings and quality conventions from the point of view of both consumers and restaurateurs (see Chapters 5, 6 and Sections 7.2, 7.3.1). Comparative analysis of these cues revealed differences in the restaurateurs' emphases on and interpretation of these cues which was grounded in their relationship with their culture and consumers.

Table 7.3: Typology of Authenticity and links with Quality conventions

Authenticity	Pragmatic iconicity	Ancestral indexicality	Innovative iconicity
Restaurant's identity	Flexible and pragmatic, determined by target consumer, affordable	Tradition focused	High-end, trendy
Actors' identity	Global	Greek	'Outward looking' Greek
Menu	Multiple origins, globalized	Staple, Greek household recipes	Fusion cuisine, trendy
Ingredient focus	Dinner expectations	Greek in origin	Quality
Chef	Any nationality	Greek (1st, 2nd generation)	Greek (2nd, 3rd generation)
Staff	Any nationality	Greek	Greek or knowledgeable about food
Décor	Touristy, sometimes tacky	Folklore, friendly	High-aesthetic, modern
Quality convention	Market	Domestic	Inspirational

Pragmatic iconicity

Pragmatic iconicity refers to where authenticity perceptions of the target diners are met (consumer focus; construction of menu resides with the consumer). The factors on which this type of authenticity rely are: convenience and mutual satisfaction of a set of food standards.

"… During weekdays it was half price so it was quite cheap. It is not far from where I live..." (Male, Italian consumer, U.K.).

This type of authenticity is consumer oriented (or in other words, Market oriented) and does not stem from the country of origin or tradition. We may say that this type of authenticity is flexible and adaptive.

"... Well 90% are tourists. There are also locals, but unfortunately the area is characterised as touristy, so others don't easily come… Whatever we were asked for, we tried to include it adding our style too but always trying to meet peoples' needs..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... I slightly alter certain things to fit the market... My restaurant is let's say 95% Greek. The reason it's not 100% Greek is... over time, I have had to adapt dishes or had to adapt bits and pieces which are not necessarily Greek… If a customer requires... Not requires but asks, for example... tabbouleh... which is actually an Arabic salad, we make it, we make kilos of it but, is not Greek but, people like it so, we put it on the menu. We have hummus, which is not Greek, we have falafels... Trying to keep customers happy..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Therefore, similarly with the Market quality convention, restaurateurs focus on profits and adapt their businesses on how to please their consumers in a way which will not necessary sustain the culinary culture and traditional recipes but rather to be adapted to consumers' requests.

Ancestral indexicality

Ancestral indexicality refers to where authenticity convention is based upon recipes provided by ancestors or previous generations (traditional, historic, construction of previous generations). The factors upon which the authenticity meaning is structured are: honesty, nostalgia, social ties, uniqueness, proud and friendly restaurateurs.

Ancestral indexicality is typified by personal (domestic) connections to the recipes and dishes cooked by parents and grandparents. These recipes and the cooking techniques are faithfully reproduced to provide the diner with a taste experience that mirrors these recipes which were created by previous generations. In any case, this type of authenticity relies on memory and so it means that restaurateurs who have been in the country of origin propose a menu which will resemble with the dishes they had when they were in the country of origin.

"… The (menu) inspiration is from my great grandmother and my taste memory. I don't like modifications. I wish to follow the original and not to modify it all from the beginning…" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... The family comes from Sifnos and... certain dishes are quite specific to Sifnos even... they are quite specific to other islands as well..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.).

Customers who have been to the country of origin tend to prefer the Domestic type of ethnic restaurants. This is because the ancestral indexicality relies on nostalgia and memory.

- *"… the music when you first walk in the restaurant. I always love it. It always makes you feel that you are on holiday. And very very friendly reception…"*

- *Is it because you miss holiday?*

- *It is definitely, yes. I think everybody is the same. I go to a lot of Turkish restaurants now and I want to see the Turkish lights, the shish pipe there so, yeah..."* (Female, English consumer who has been on holiday in Greece and Turkey describes her experience in a Greek ethnic restaurant located in the U.K.)

Similarly, consumers who have the same ethnicity as the restaurant tend to prefer the Domestic type of ethnic restaurants. They also compare the ethnic restaurants with those in their home country as they are seeking originality.

- *" Do you believe that nostalgia was the motivation factor of visiting that restaurant?*

- *"Definitely. It was pretty much a few months after I had come to the UK so we were a big group I would say about 15 Cypriot students and I think we all missed home, so I would say it was pretty much a big factor to go out in a familiar place and environment… so, we did feel some kind of connection to home"* (Female, Greek-Cypriot consumer who has been living in the U.K. for 4 years describes her experience in a Greek ethnic restaurant located in the U.K.)

"… the environment first of all was missing a lot the Greek aspect so you wouldn't feel as if you were entering a Greek restaurant… From the menu I was a bit satisfied, it had a couple of Greek dishes but those basic dishes which you expect to find…" (Male, Greek consumer who has been living in the U.K. for 2 years describes his experience in a Greek ethnic restaurant located in the U.K.).

Therefore, ethnic restaurants which propose dishes ancestral indexicaly authentic attract consumers either of the same identity with their theme or consumers who are aware of the restaurant's culinary culture.

"… I would expect a combination of regulars and some tourists. Because if the restaurant has regulars then it means that it provides a good quality of food…" (Male, Greek consumer)

Greek-sourced ingredients, particularly herbs such as oregano and thyme, olives, olive oil and wine, are crucial to the production of traditional, household recipes. For restaurateurs in Greece, the ingredients were seasonal and locally or regionally sourced. For UK based Greek restaurants, the ingredients were imported and nationally sourced.

"… We try to use the Greek oil, olives are from Greece, peppers are from Greece. Whatever else we can get. Even oregano sometimes we get..." (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

"… We included the traditional… And of course, depending on the season of Crete always, right? The ingredients are very important..." (Female, restaurant owner, Greece).

Greek chefs were believed to be crucial to the production of traditional recipes and for UK based chefs, they were first or second generation Greeks. Greek-speaking waiters also supported social ties and nostalgia.

"... The person who cooks and makes the recipes must certainly be Greek. Some ideas come through his DNA, if he knows to cook they just come out. A foreigner will create it differently..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

"... Greek staff, Greek-speaking staff help a lot in building that, and obviously building a reputation with the customers as well... A lot of Greek customers come in here, they feel more as if they are at home when there is Greek-

speaking staff, and I think that is actually a massive part of what we have here and what we have to continue..." (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

The notion of family and social ties is extended to the service provided to customers.

"… You have to offer a family like style… It must be family like, a cool place even for a couple, for friends and for a family" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

Moreover, quality is crucial for consumers who perceive authenticity to be ancestral indexicality. In fact, quality and authenticity are that important to them that they tend to ignore the price factor when it comes to compare prices vs. quality and authenticity.

"… If the quality is better, I wouldn't care if I pay like 5 more pounds, you know what I mean..." (Male, Greek consumer who has lived in the U.K. for 4 years now comments about the ethnic restaurants abroad).

Innovative iconicity

Innovative iconicity where authenticity convention is based upon the chef's interpretation of the essence of cuisine norms, but with a focus on ingredient quality (Greek identity present and future focused; construction of cuisine resides with the chef). This type of authenticity is structured upon: creating trends, attracting consumers with a certain identity, and inspiration.

"… the customers that we have are very wealthy people, they are bankers, traders, marketing, lot of fashion industry, a very trendy crowd…" (Male, British-French restaurant owner, U.K.)

Whereas restaurants characterised as having an 'ancestral indexicality' were rooted in social and familial ancestral ties, the restaurateurs with an 'innovative iconicity' were forward-looking and proposed a modern approach for their restaurant and the Greek cuisine, a fusion cuisine of high-aesthetics and quality. A pride in Greek cuisine was evident and manifested in a desire to bring the cuisine to a wider audience.

"…the main thing that we wanted to do is step away slightly from the traditional "taverna" style… twisting the dishes into a more modern, more

high-end cuisine… So, the whole concept of my restaurant is to, and this is my life mission, is to change the perception that people have of Greek food..." (Male, restaurant owner, UK).

The ethos of traditional Greek slow-cooking techniques was maintained amongst these restaurants; however, ingredients were selected on the basis of perceived freshness and eating quality (rather than Greek origin).

To sum up, the Inspirational restaurants focus on a niche market by innovative techniques and menus, which is a step beyond the tradition of the Greek culinary tradition. These restaurants are preferred by customers who have a more global identity or by customers who follow the trends and a more high-end lifestyle.

"… It is just that people get not to see anything else, they immediately associate Greek cuisine with just taverns, mousaka dish and everything… but at the same time enrich it with some different offerings I think that would be really nice to see…" (Female, Greek consumer who has lived in several countries for more than 20 years, now living in the U.K.)

Intersection points of authenticity and quality

The gathered interviews provided new insights about the integration of quality and authenticity perceptions. Initially, it was noticed that both consumers and restaurateurs consider quality to be synonymous with authenticity and it was that which led to the creation of a new convention, authenticity.

Ancestral indexicality relies on loyalty, security, satisfaction, trusting ties, uniqueness, locality, honesty, respect of tradition, proud and friendly restaurateurs.

"… very very friendly reception. Whenever you go to the restaurants in Greece or here, you know, straight to the table, drinks, order, menus…" (Female, British consumer, U.K.)

"… It's the place that brings people together, it's where Greeks come to be together, to remind them of home…" (Male, British- Cypriot restaurant owner, U.K.)

For ancestral indexicality, consumers and restaurateurs have mutual expectations about quality aspects, social ties and tradition. In more detail, restaurateurs are proud of the service they offer and consumers are feeling proud of the culinary culture of their country of origin.

"… I think we are such a massive part of the community here… they talk so highly about the place and that makes me so proud, to be part of something which is so great... so important to the Greek community…" (Male, British-Cypriot restaurant owner, U.K.)

"… I have one recipe that I want to take off the menu, next month, when I change the menu again... Which is hummus and I want to take it out. I even write on the menu: "Classic Middle Eastern recipe". I write that down, because I want people to know it... that it does not represent my country. I feel very proud of, you know, of me representing recipes and the culture of my country... There is a big demand for that, it is very difficult to take it off..." (Male, Greek restaurant owner, U.K.)

At the same time, ancestral indexicality engenders and fulfils nostalgia for home. Correspondingly, consumers of a different ethnicity feel that they are exploring the culture of the restaurant's country of origin or fulfilling their nostalgia for their holiday at the restaurant's country of origin. More details about the nostalgia aspect can be found in the previous Chapter (Section 6.3).

"… I live abroad and I want to eat something that reminds me of my country and my culture. I was happy with it… But, I would go with English or foreigners... I mean foreigners... With non-Greek friends to show them what my culture is like, the cuisine I was brought up with." (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… I think they have a very traditional Greek look, the hospitality, the waiters are all Greek and I think the whole culture…" (Female, British-Pakistani consumer, U.K.)

"…the taste was quite similar to the food you can find in a Greek restaurant in Greece…" (Female, Greek consumer, U.K.)

Furthermore, as identity has not been studied before in relation to quality and authenticity, the current thesis proposes new insights and adds to the existing literature, especially due to the intersection of producers' and consumers' perceptions. In more detail, restaurateurs and consumers who are tradition focused perceive a restaurant to be of ancestral indexicality authentic by taking into consideration the origin of the ingredients. So that the ingredients used and the recipes' origin act as cues utilized for judging a restaurant's type of authenticity.

"… (I judge authenticity) by the food, the menu, the products… You are supposed to have Greek food…" (Female, Greek consumer, U.K.).

Actors who judge a product as authentic seem to perceive it to be of good quality as well.

"… that would heighten my sense on authentic (food), of good quality…" (Male, British consumer)

"… I would expect it to be more high quality, authentic." (Male, Greek consumer)

If consumers' expectations for tradition (ancestral indexicality authenticity) or unique, trendy and high-quality cuisine (innovative iconicity authenticity) are met by the restaurateurs then, consumers remain loyal to an ethnic restaurant and also recommend it to others.

"… I recommend something that I find really unique…" (Female, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… (I recommended it) because I think this is a very good chance to visit this place to have traditional Greek dishes…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… When I first came in this country I wanted to go there with locals and foreigners and felt almost as a mission to explain things and recommend and trying to introduce my culture to them…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

The existing literature argues that construction of quality meanings take place prior to or during personal interaction (Boltanski and Thevenot, 1999; Kirwan, 2006; Bonne and Verbeke, 2007; Baird, 2008; Evans, 2011; Ponte and Sturgeon, 2013, p. 208; Migliore *et al.*, 2015). However, ethnic

restaurants, as experience goods and service, construct quality meanings after the consumption and personal interaction respectively. Consumers first taste the food and live the whole experience and then judge its quality. In addition, the word of mouth plays a crucial role in the construction of quality meanings. The influence of the word of mouth can be seen after the experience of dining in an ethnic restaurant. Consumers first dine in a restaurant and then recommend it to others.

In the same way, more factors than those suggested by the Domestic and the Regard conventions are taken into consideration in order for both consumers and restaurateurs to construct quality meanings and the authenticity convention. For instance, the restaurants need to have a clear identity, from which may emerge authentic food choices. Apparently locality is not a factor for the authenticity convention, as ethnicity seems to have the leading role when judging the quality in ethnic restaurants. Other factors according to which quality is judged are taste and honesty.

Concerning the pragmatic iconicity, price is an influential factor for its construction. Pragmatic iconicity is about convenience and flexibility rather than tradition focused or trendy restaurants.

"… (From this restaurant I would expect) My food to come! To eat and to pay. That's it! That's all it is. I do not care about the decoration, the staff… I do not expect the same friendly hospitality as I had in Greece…" (Male, British consumer, U.K.)

According to the consumers, price has to be in accordance with the restaurant's identity and food quality. If a restaurant for example has been positioned as Market oriented then, it has to offer convenience and relative low prices.

"… I would expect the restaurant to have prices that are related to the quality of the restaurant… I have noticed prices that gave me a negative impression. A Greek pitta wrap for 5.90 is... You expect to find it in Greece for two euros..." (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

However, price is less influential for the construction of ancestral indexicality or the innovative iconicity.

"… I am not bothered at all. Pay a bit more, if it is nice..." (Male, British consumer, U.K.)

"… I have been told that there was a new place in town which sells souvlaki, even though it was quite expensive, and that's why I went…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… because if they wanted to try some Greek food it is really nice to go there, it's good quality. Even though it's really expensive…" (Female, Greek consumer, U.K.)

Turning to innovative iconicity, this aspect has been the instrument of verification of quality for the Inspirational category. Concerning the findings of the current thesis, most actors argue that they want ethnic restaurants to be traditional. Creativity or innovation might be appreciated under certain circumstances and specific consumers' lifestyles. The Inspirational category is preferred by consumers who are looking for a modern approach to existing dishes and who also conceive of the menu as a step beyond the already existing culinary culture. As a matter of fact, restaurants which present fusion food choices are located in commercial or tourist places, such as London or Monastiraki. It seems that fusion cuisine stems from the lifestyle, the available resources and the location. A multi-cultural environment seems ideal for mixing culinary cultures and in a commercial location the imports of ingredients are more convenient. As is illustrated in Table 7.3, Inspirational restaurants are preferred by customers who have a more global identity or by customers who are not aware of the ethnic culture. These are the customers with personal innovativeness, who are searching for new dining experiences and those who have a more eclectic approach to the dining experience are those who seek for innovative iconicity.

Overall, the market-oriented restaurants are not highly recommended as they are conceived as profit-oriented and not of high quality. The market oriented ethnic restaurants rely on convenience and affordable prices rather than high quality, originality and respect for tradition. On the contrary, domestic ethnic restaurants which respect tradition, sustain social ties with the country of origin are preferred by consumers.

"… all the dishes are almost originally Greek dishes that you expect to find in a lot of Greek restaurants... I would be definitely more interested to try the dishes of menu 1 (black font). Although I cannot see any prices to compare... If you just focus on the core menu, what the dishes are, it's much more attractive (than menu 2)…" (Male, Greek consumer comparing menus 1 and 2) (see Appendix).

"… Even if it is a little more expensive I would go to the black one…" (Male, Italian consumer who lives in London for 3 years is comparing menus 1 and 2) (see Appendix).

During the interviews, consumers were describing their experiences of Greek-themed restaurants. So as to investigate further consumers' perceptions and preferences one menu of the Market category (menu 2) and one menu which seems to be closer to the Domestic category (menu 1) were projected to the consumers. All of the consumers agreed that prefer the Domestic type of ethnic restaurants (menu 1 compared to menu 2)

Consumers are of a variety of identities and locations. Consumers are 11 females and 12 males. With the use of NVIVO a Matrix was constructed which depicts the preference for menu 1, with the black font.

Table 7.4: Matrix coding for consumers' preference of the two projected menus

Sex = Female	Sex = Male	Country of Birth = Greece	Country of Birth = Mediterranean country	Country of Birth = Non-MED, non- UK	Country of Birth = U.K.	Menu preference 1 or 2 = 1	Menu preference 1 or 2 = 2
11	12	10	4	2	7	23	0

Authenticity convention and the identity factor

According to the gathered data, both consumers' and restaurant owners' quality perceptions rely on their identity to construct authenticity conventions linked with quality conventions. These factors are filtered by the identity of the consumers and the restaurant owners:

- Identity of the restaurant

"… is this from a Greek restaurant?... I believe that this particular restaurant does not have an identity…" (Male, Greek restaurant owner, Greece)

"… what kind of a restaurant is this?... There's no identity, it's a little of everything… The gastronomy is certainly not highlighted… It's wrong if he wants to present it as Greek…" (Male, Greek restaurant owner, Greece)

"… Is it a restaurant or?... Well ok it's a little bulky, it's a mix of everything. That's what it is. I don't think it has an identity…" (Male, Greek restaurant owner, Greece)

- Identity of the restaurateur

As it has been stated in Section 5.3 restaurateurs' identity defines their authenticity perceptions. For example, restaurateurs with not a Greek heritage and familiarity with Greek culture cannot perceive authenticity as ancestral indexical. These restaurateurs can be of any ethnicity who target profits and generally take a market oriented approach to their restaurant, adapting to customers' tastes and deviating from solely Greek 'traditional' dishes. On the contrary, ancestral indexical authenticity is perceived by restaurateurs who have closer associations with Greek culture and place a greater emphasis on authenticity via the sourcing and use of traditional recipes. Finally, innovative iconicity is perceived by restaurateurs who are targeting high-end, trendy consumers and their restaurants have the same outward-looking Greek character.

- Identity of the consumers

Similarly, identity influences consumers' perceptions about authenticity (see Section 6.3). Consumers of the same identity with the restaurant's theme perceive authenticity as ancestral indexicality and so their judgments rely

on making comparisons with their ancestors' way of cooking or with the tastes they have in their memory. And so consumers of a different identity with the restaurant's theme but who have visited the country of origin and know the traditional recipes judge according to what they were eating in the country of origin and perceive authenticity as indexical. Out-group consumers can be of any identity and do not have strong links with the country of origin of the restaurant's theme and so they perceive authenticity as pragmatic iconicity. Finally, as restaurateurs of high-end and trendy Greek ethnic restaurants described their customers these are "very wealthy people and a very trendy crowd" who are looking outward for a high-end and trendy restaurant which is offering fusion, modern cuisine and a restaurant of high aesthetic and quality.

To conclude, based on the current research, the perceived authenticity and quality depend highly on the restaurant owners' perceptions and identity. On top of this subjectivity, Greek restaurants lack an official authentication and as a consequence their quality and authenticity relies on personal views and concepts. These personal views of the restaurateurs lead to the construction of the menu and the restaurant's image. However, based on the current research, a Greek ethnic restaurant abroad is perceived as authentic by taking into consideration specific factors, such as the origin of the ingredients or the ethnicity of the staff.

7.4 Social network of restaurant owners and consumers: their communication and the word of mouth

This section addresses the research question about how restaurateurs and consumers communicate and interact within their constructed network.

The constructed communication network of restaurateurs and consumers will be described based on ANT, but this needs to be combined with other theories in order to illustrate what comes with and after that (Walsham, 1997). Two theories are used to support ANT: Social identity theory (see Section 2.5 and 2.6) and Quality Conventions theory (QCT) (see Sections 2.4 and 7.3). From the current study it emerged that both consumers and restaurant owners judge the quality of restaurants according to their perceptions. These perceptions are highly influenced by the person's

identity; identity is the filter through which (pragmatic iconicity, ancestral indexicality or innovative iconicity) authenticity perceptions are constructed (Section 7.3.2). This process leads to the classification of a restaurant as Market oriented, Domestic oriented or Inspirational (Section 7.3.1).

Establishing a social network based on the word of mouth

A network is constructed by restaurateurs who establish a restaurant and consumers who communicate their opinions about a restaurant's quality and authenticity. In fact, symbolic interactionism (Section 4.5) and social identity (Sections 2.5 and 2.6) highlight the active role of humans in shaping society through their communications and interactions. Moreover, based on consumer culture theory (Section 2.7), consumers are seekers and makers of identities during and after consumption. Similarly, social identity theory (Sections 2.5 and 2.6) suggests that actors possess identities which are shaped by the society and *vice versa,* actors seem to influence the society. Their comments about food are transmitted to other actors via the word of mouth (WOM) or the e-word of mouth (eWOM) and as a consequence constructed meanings and identities emerge.

"… the word of mouth works here. It is very important Elena. I can see it this year with the renewal of customers: "oh we heard, oh we saw" (Female, restaurant owner, Greece)

"… the new customers during the first years that X was in operation were coming due to the word of mouth, it was the advertisement which was done from our already existing customers' recommendations…" (Male, restaurant *owner, Greece)*

"… We've got our PR company, social media and then it all comes down to the word of mouth... if you've got word of mouth it is the best marketing..." (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.)

"… I don't pay for advertising, I have stopped completely now for four years. It's all... The majority of it is word of mouth. Almost all of it is word of mouth actually... Social media is word of mouth, but it's slightly more disguised and hidden…" (Male, restaurant owner, U.K.)

"… Look, in the beginning word of mouth helps but nowadays in 2015 internet is necessary… A client will bring another client if he feels delighted, it's a fact…" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece)

"… there is an audience which looks at the social media, mainly the youngsters. Middle aged and higher don't use the social media, for them you must focus the advertisement on the word of mouth..." (Male, restaurant owner, Greece)

This communication circle is perpetual and it also sets the foundations of a social network and social groups to be established. As a matter of fact, this constructed network was expected to be built based on ANT (see Section 1.5.3 and 2.9) and social identity theory (see Section 2.5). At the same time, interaction among actors was expected, based on the Regard convention and the Domestic convention (Section 2.4).

The network is a non-hierarchical network which is constituted by heterogeneous populations as it is structured by actors of different ethnicities (Greeks, non-Greeks or mixed ethnicities), ages (actors in their 20s, 30s, etc.) and occupations (restaurant owners, consumers) who nevertheless have in common the fact that they have heard about ethnic Greek restaurants or have an opinion about them as they have visited them. The reason why the network is non-hierarchical is because there is a lack of a leader to determine other actors' actions; on the contrary, all the actors have power to influence others via word of mouth or electronic word of mouth. If a reasonably close friend of an actor suggests a place to dine in, then it is highly possible his/her suggestion will be heard and acted on.

Actors within this network shared their opinions with the author during the interviews conducted and what they revealed was how they have been communicating their experiences of dining in ethnic restaurants. Their suggestions, most of the time, include ethnic restaurants which they conceive of as authentic and therefore of a good quality. This perception takes us back to the Quality Conventions theory findings, which suggests that the Domestic category of ethnic restaurants is highly recommended.

"… (This restaurant isn't authentic) because it serves English food as well... I think that the feedback I have read about this restaurant suggests that if it was more exclusively Greek, authentically, Greek people would like it more…" (Male, Greek consumer).

"… So, if the meal is really good I then tell people..." (Male, British - 2nd generation Greek consumer, U.K.)

As suggested in Section 7.3.2, the transmitted message within the actor network is about ancestral indexicality authenticity and good quality (Domestic category), which are the most important factors in choosing an ethnic restaurant rather than innovation (Inspirational category) or affordable prices (Market category).

When consumers choose a restaurant to dine in for the first time they tend to listen to recommendations from WOM rather than any other medium and they also share their opinions via the WOM.

"… When it comes to the restaurants most of the times in general I prefer to listen to opinions from other people that have already tried it… I would also like to share my knowledge, so I let them know how it was to eat there..." (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… Usually I ask somebody who lives there... So, where I don't know anybody, then I would look at Trip Advisor or Yell or something like that…" (Female, American-Greek consumer, U.K.)

Consumers of a variety of identities agreed that they are more influenced by word of mouth rather than social media or any other type of advertising. Word of mouth seems to influence them and they influence others in turn by suggesting places to dine as they find the word of mouth to be more honest and personal.

"… What influences me more so as to visit a restaurant for the first time is the word of mouth…" (Male, British consumer, U.K.)

"… Probably word of mouth I think. I rely more on that than social media… On reasonably close friends... (Male, British consumer, U.K.)

"… I think first is the word of mouth and second is the social media. I don't think I go for social media, though…" (Male, Greek consumer, Greece)

However, the word of mouth should be from a close friend who most of the times are expected by consumers to have the same taste. In particular, actors who belong to the same social group are influenced more strongly by members of that group.

"… I think it depends in what word of mouth it is. So, if it comes from a person that I trust, that I know he has a similar taste to me then I trust him more..." (Female, Italian consumer, U.K.)

"… I heard that it was really nice and a friend of mine said that we should go there, so…" (Female, Greek consumer, U.K.)

Consumers also expect that their friends have the same taste on food with them and so they are highly influenced by their recommendations rather than from anyone else's feedback. This was expected as social identity theory suggests that participants of the same social group share common values, taste and have a similar social background.

"… By far the strongest is recommendations of friends who like good food and have similar tastes. I had been to restaurants that had good comments in social media and got disappointed and vice versa. Poor comments, poor ratings and I went there and I was like wow!.." (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… So, the word of mouth first and the social media second…" (Female, British consumer, U.K.)

"… It was suggested by a friend of mine… I trust more the word of mouth rather than the social media… I also inform others via the word of mouth…" (Male, Greek, U.K.)

Apart from friends' recommendations, consumers are influenced by online feedback of friends of friends. Consumers feel closer to friends of friends rather than to a completely unknown eWOM.

"… On Facebook you can see friends of friends going there, so it may not be necessarily as a direct person recommendation. The other thing I do like

is, I know it is really trendy, to put pictures of the food..." (Female, British consumer, U.K.)

"- I usually tend to discuss my experience with friends of mine. Like: I have been there, I liked it or didn't like this choice". So, I usually discuss that and a number of times we go either because I have suggested it to them or I visit a place like that because they have suggested it to me.

- Do you inform your British friends or your Greek friends?

- Mostly the Greeks because they will appreciate it more... It is more common that my Greek friends will visit it first because they like it more..." (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… My friends more because I know their standards, what they want to eat so it's better for me…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

As noted above, authenticity and nostalgia seem to affect actors of the same ethnicity as the restaurant or actors who have been on holiday in the origin (see Section 6.2):

"… I think Cypriot students or Greek students coming to the UK they kind of miss home…" (Female, Cypriot consumer, U.K.)

"… I informed other people via the word of mouth in case they had the same need as me of eating souvlaki…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

"… Because my friends want to eat Greek food and I think this is a very good chance to visit this place to have traditional Greek dishes…" (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

Concerning the question about why actors inform others about their dining experience in an ethnic restaurant the answers are divided into two categories: Either because of nostalgia or because of the good quality and authenticity (the Domestic category). Nostalgia in particular seems to be a driving factor for actors with the same identity as the restaurant's theme.

"… Just because I enjoyed it. It is a funny restaurant, the food is very good so I just let people know about it basically…" (Male, British consumer, U.K.)

*"… I just think it is good. If somewhere is good, it is good to spread the word…" (*Male, British consumer, U.K.)

"… I like to be informed if it's something good. So, if... Why? That's what friends do!.." (Male, Greek consumer, U.K.)

Concerning the feedback from consumers, they do not wish to express their opinion if it is a negative one. They tend not to revisit the restaurant without explaining the reasons to the restaurant owners. On the other hand, if they like a restaurant they inform other people or write about it on social media.

"… So, if the meal is REALLY good I then tell people…" (Male, British consumer)

"… I thought that he knew what he was doing so even if I said something it wouldn't really change anything…" (Female, Cypriot consumer)

"… To be honest, if I don't like something I am shy, I don't want to say that I didn't like it… But, in case I like something I express my opinion…" (Female, Greek consumer)

"… I mean that's a Greek thing. A British person if he goes somewhere and he doesn't like the food he will say it. In Greece we don't do that it's probably a Greek thing…" (Male, Greek consumer)

Turning to the NVIVO 10 program tree map relating to WOM, queries revealed the following depiction (Table 7.5). As can be seen, actors conceive of the word of mouth as something which concerns friends or people while the basic theme in our case is the good quality of food and the (Greek) origin. They are more influenced by WOM from close friends. Based on these findings, ethnic restaurants have to be categorised as *experience goods* rather than *search goods*. In keeping with this, the existing literature (Nelson, 1970) suggests that word of mouth is more effective for experience goods than for search goods.

Table 7.5: Tree map of the 100 most common consumers' answers-words about WOM (NVIVO).
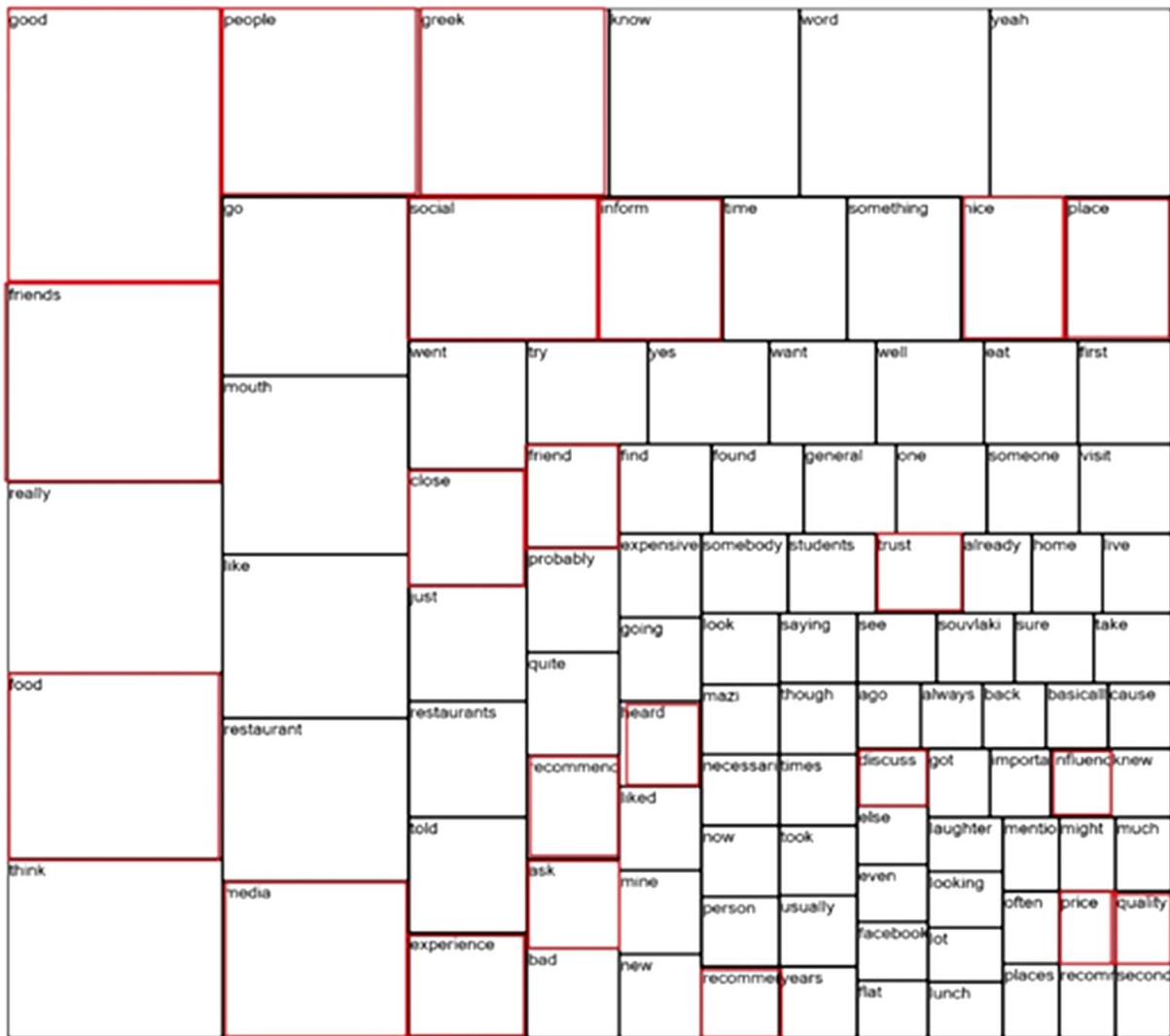
The above described process of (symbolic) interaction between restaurant owners and consumers is depicted in the following Quality Actor Word of mouth (Q.A.W.) network (Figure 7.2). According to ANT (see Section 2.9) humans and non-humans communicate within a network. Based on the interviews conducted for the current thesis, the actors of the ethnic restaurants' network are: consumers, restaurant owners, food blogs, TripAdvisor, web alias, the country of origin, the country where the ethnic restaurants are established. In more detail, actors can be culturally naïve about the restaurant's culinary culture, or they could have visited the place of origin, or they might have the same nationality as the restaurant's theme. Actors communicate via word of mouth or e-word of mouth. WOM is depicted as a solid line and the e-word of mouth is depicted as a dash line. Those social groups which visited the restaurant influenced by any form of interaction are A, B, C, D, X, Y and Z. The restaurant is in the middle of the network, where the actors are gathered, and is depicted as a red circle.

Figure 7.2: The Q.A.W. network, a segment of the ethnic restaurants Social Network
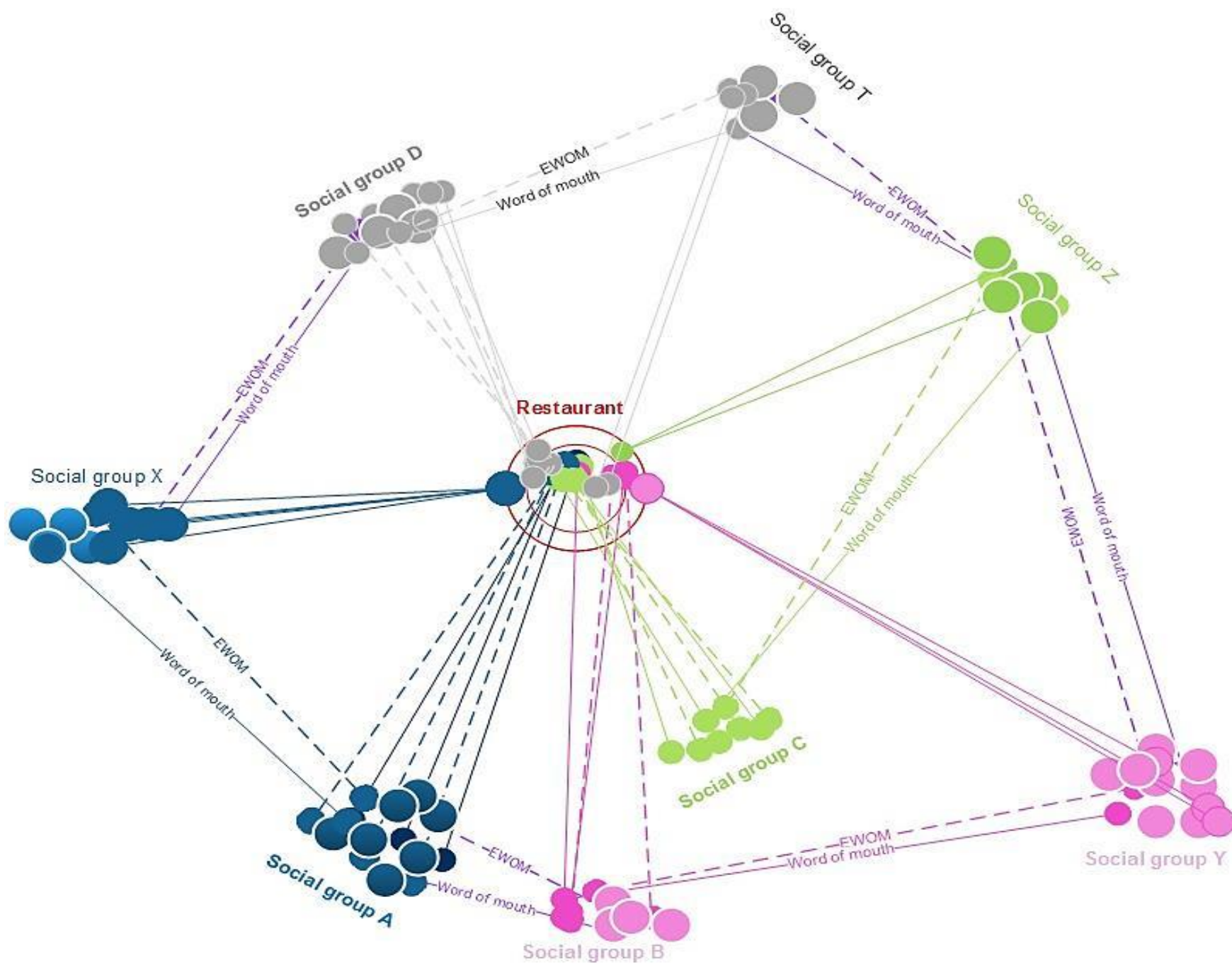
SYMBOLS		
Communication within groups (WOM)		Solid line: several colours (blue, pink, green and grey)
E-communication within groups (eWOM)		Dashed line: several colours (blue, pink, green and grey)
Social groups visited the restaurant after the interaction/communication with other groups		A, B, C, D, X, Y, Z, T (see colours below as indicators of identity)
Actors who received the message (via word of mouth or eWOM) but did not visit the restaurant		Circles without any line connection
Actors who received the message (via word of mouth or eWOM) and visited the restaurant		Circles with a line connection
Consumers who share the same identity as the restaurant's theme (e.g. Greeks, Cypriots)		Blue and pink circles
Culturally naïve consumers		Grey circles
Consumers who have been to the place of origin (e.g. tourists)		Green circles

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A summary of the study's proposed framework about the ethnic restaurants network is outlined in Figure 7.3

Figure 7.3: Framework of ethnic restaurants
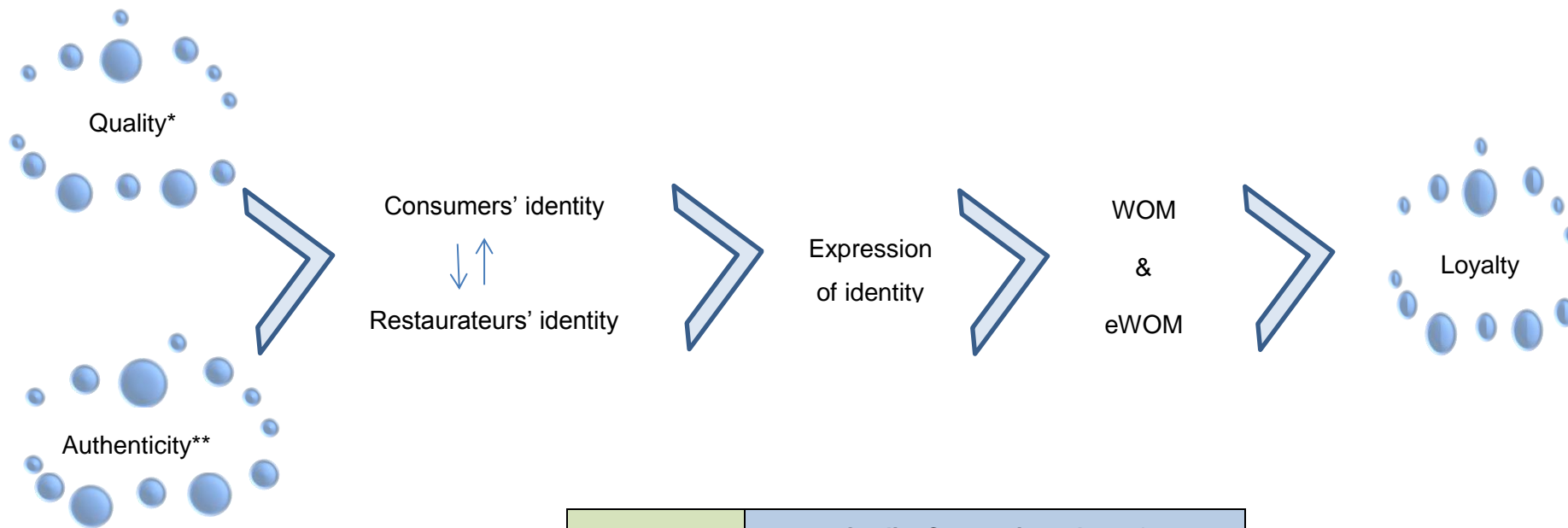
	Quality Conventions theory*		
	Market	**Domestic**	**Inspirational**
Authenticity**	Pragmatic iconicity	Ancestral indexicality	Innovative iconicity

Identities play a highly influential role in visiting a restaurant. For instance, Greek consumers visit ethnic Greek restaurants in the UK if the ingredients are from Greece and they refrain from visiting restaurants where the ingredients are non-Greek. Therefore, a disassociation has been noticed for ethnic restaurants which are not using authentic ingredients.

"… Oh, the taste (of feta cheese) is obvious. If you know your cheese you know the moment you see it and then when you put it in your mouth, there is no doubt. Quite often, if I know the people who own the place I say: Come on guys, what is this?.." (Male, Greek consumer).

"… Capers must always be from Andros and not from Turkey. Can you understand? We must not cheat, it always has to be original…" (Male, restaurant owner, Greece).

In this case, the Greek consumer is B and the Greek ingredient/product, like feta cheese is A, they both meet at an ethnic restaurant which has Greek products/ingredients, such as feta cheese (C). However, if an ethnic restaurant does not have Greek ingredients/products like feta cheese (E) but another non-Greek product/ingredient, like a non PDO white cheese (D), then this restaurant (E) is disassociated from the consumer (B).

Figure 7.4: Interessement (ANT) Greek ingredients/products vs. non-Greek
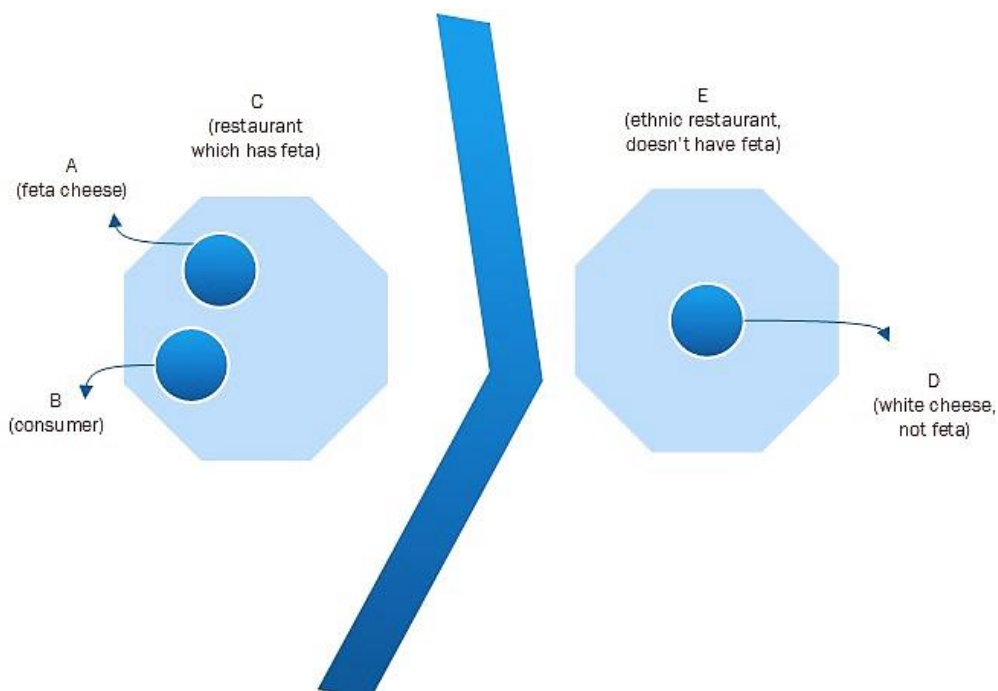
7.4.2 Word of mouth vs. identity

Finally, there have been noticed cases where a restaurant is stuck between two categories of conventions. If a restaurant does not have a clear identity it is not being promoted via word of mouth (see also Section 7.4). If a restaurant does not belong to a specific conventions category (Table 7.3), it is unlikely to be suggested by its customers.

For example, the following restaurant owner is aiming to please all of his customers (tourists, non-locals, foreigners, etc.) and for this reason the identity of the restaurant is not clear. For example, the restaurant is offering two menus, which may result in confusing its customers as they might believe that the identity of the restaurant is not clear.

"... ***We have two menus, the creative and the traditional****... The "traditional" menu was chosen by tradition!.. And the evolution of the Cretan cuisine for so many years. The "creative" one was chosen by the chefs' team that we have in collaboration with the manager, me..."* (Male, restaurant owner, Greece)

Naturally, this restaurant is stuck between the Domestic and the Inspirational category. As a consequence, customers of this restaurant do not highly recommend it.

"… The recent years we have attracted new customers ***from actions that we do*** *for our new menus via the social media, the instagram, the facebook, etc…"* (Male, restaurant owner, Greece)

Another Greek-Cypriot restaurant owner in London comments:

"…We actually look at the restaurant as a ***Mediterranean restaurant with a Greek twist****… have something which is Mediterranean inspired with a Greek twist… That is what we try to do, add a Greek element to certain dishes, but of course we also have the very Greek dishes as well, Greek specialities… We can't have just Greek speaking staff in a restaurant you know...* ***of this size****... but, it certainly does help…"* (=Inspirational category)

"…Which I think is something we have really the need to listen to. It's all about ***listening to the customers****…"* (=Market oriented category)

"…a lot of Russians come, a lot of Balkan people come…" (=Market oriented category).

As can be expected, this restaurant is stuck between the Market and the Inspirational category (Table 7.3). As a consequence, this restaurant is not being recommended by its customers.

*"… It's whether or not we can turn the Greeks around a little bit short of... make it a little bit more... more... what's the word? **Just widespread, spread the word more among themselves**, not that it really needs it, but I think it would be a little bit nice if the Greeks said the same kind words as the non-Greeks did…"*

Therefore, it is suggested a restaurant to be positioned clearly in one of the authenticity conventions: i) 'ancestral indexicality', ii) 'innovative iconicity' and iii) 'pragmatic iconicity', which are identified and summarised in Section 7.3.2.

To summarise, the research question about how consumers interact with the ethnic restaurants and how the reputation of the ethnic restaurants is communicated is addressed as actors communicate via word of mouth within a constructed network which relies on quality and authenticity conventions.

Table 7.6: Restaurateurs' and consumers' communication system
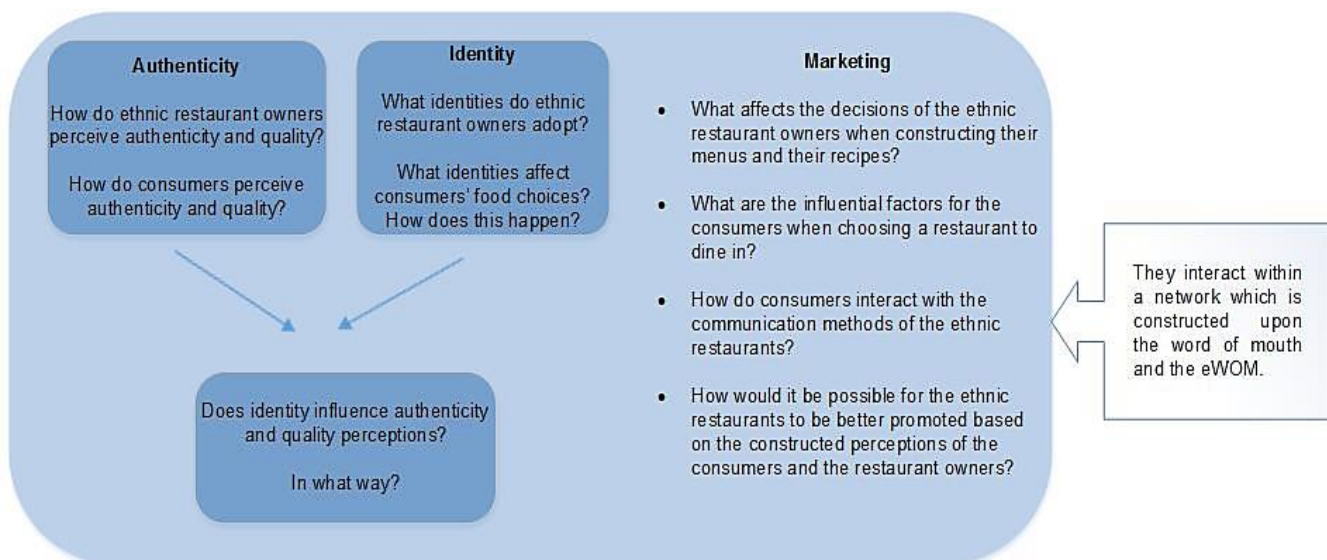
7.5 Summary

This Chapter analyses consumers' and restaurateurs' viewpoints about ethnic restaurants' quality and authenticity conventions. This revealed that ethnic restaurants should have a clear identity and reflect authenticity, an effective positioning strategy. When saying "authentic restaurant" both sides translate it by taking into consideration certain cues: the menu, the ingredients origin, the decoration of the restaurant, the ethnicity of the chef and staff (Table 7.3.1). This Chapter has proposed specific factors to be considered so as to judge the authenticity of a Greek ethnic restaurant, which lead to the construction of three types of authenticity: pragmatic iconicity, ancestral indexicality and innovative iconicity.

Authenticity perceptions for ethnic restaurants rely a great deal on their consumers' and owners' identity. According to the findings, actors are constructing authenticity and quality meanings based on their identity. Based on previous Chapters about restaurateurs' and consumers' perceptions of authenticity (Chapter 5), this Chapter also outlined their views on quality by taking into consideration if the consumer is a tourist or a local, a Greek or a non-Greek and if the restaurateur respects the culinary culture. These combinations of identities lead to the categorisation of a restaurant as Market, Domestic or Inspirational oriented (Table 7.3.1). Being in one category is the first step of success, though, as in this way a restaurant has a clear identity (Section 7.4.2). However, the most recommended restaurants by the consumers seem to be the Domestic ethnic restaurants linked to a form of authenticity: ancestral indexicality.

The constructed network of restaurateurs and consumers is strongly based on word of mouth or electronic word of mouth, as depicted in a network (see Figure 7.2). Moreover, the current study proposes a framework for ethnic restaurants and how they can attract consumers based on quality and authenticity conventions (Figure 7.3).

The next chapter considers these findings in relation to the existing literature.

Chapter 8 : Discussion

8.1 Introduction

Existing research has investigated consumers' perceptions about authenticity and quality by applying quantitative research methods and by highlighting the need for future qualitative research (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Brown, 2013; Rickly-Boyd, 2013). Prior literature (Zeng *et al.*, 2012) has also highlighted the need to explore the perceptions of restaurateurs of a different ethnicity, which has not been studied before (Kim and Jang, 2016). Moreover, previous studies with the same context identified the need for future studies to be cross-national (Lu *et al.*, 2015). To this end, the present study collected qualitative data from both consumers and restaurateurs in a cross-national setting.

This Chapter compares the extant literature with the findings presented in the previous Chapters. The next section considers restaurateurs' identity in relation to authenticity and quality aspects and the next section is about the consumers' identity in relation to the same aspects. This is followed by a discussion of the quality conventions of them both and how these construct a whole network based on word of mouth.

This network is explained by applying the actor-network theory as this has been outlined from the data collected in semi-structured interviews with both consumers and restaurateurs. As a matter of fact, this research investigates not only consumers' perceptions but also the perceptions of the authenticity and quality "producers": the restaurateurs. Hence, the aim was to explore whether the views of these two interest groups (restaurateurs and consumers) can be bridged and thus to propose a network where the communication methods of these groups are analysed and depicted (Chapter 7).

8.2 Quality and authenticity conventions of restaurant owners and consumers within the communication network of ethnic restaurants

The constructed ethnic restaurants network is based on perceptions and identities where the main actors are the ethnic restaurant owners, who produce meanings according to their identities, and secondly the consumers, who receive the given concepts and meanings and then transmit these to other consumers. Following this concept, the thesis focused on the restaurateurs' perceptions and constructed meanings of authenticity and quality as both concepts are fluid and not pre-fixed (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Beverland, 2005; Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Mkono, 2013). With regard to restaurant owners' authenticity perceptions, it seems that restaurateurs judge a restaurant as authentic by taking into consideration the following factors (in importance order): the ingredients' origin, the wine's origin, the traditional recipes, the menu, the ethnicity of the staff, the traditional way of cooking, the traditional entertainment, the decoration of the restaurant and the music (see Section 5.2). As a matter of fact prior literature called for a definition of authenticity with more detailed and specific attributes (Reisinger and Steiner, 2006) therefore, the above findings have expanded our understanding about authenticity perceptions by setting a more elicit definition, including these aspects that define an authentic ethnic restaurant.

Especially in the ethnic food sector, Greek restaurateurs tend to judge the food authenticity according to indexical authenticity rather than other types, while actors of a different identity (non-Greek restaurateurs or consumers who have not been to Greece) tend to believe in existential authenticity. With reference to identities, a Matrix was constructed to depict for how these authenticity perceptions evolve influenced by experiences or occasions the first time (see Section 5.3).

However, identities may evolve over time as needs change. Both Social Identity theory and Consumer Culture theory suggest that identities are constructed through consumption. Each and every actor within the network holds an identity which evolves over time and experiences. Additionally, as

Consumer Culture theory suggests, identities could be constructed based on consumption (Ahuvia et al., 2006; Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Belk, 1988; Berger, 2013; Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2008; Dittmar, 2007; Englis et al., 1994; Thompson et al., 2013; Wattanasuwan, 2005). At the same time, consumption is based on need fulfillment. Therefore, it may be concluded that identities evolve over time as identity is not a stable construction but rather it is fluid and perpetually evolving (Wattanasuwan, 2005; Dittmar, 2007; Fonseca, 2008). As a matter of fact, identity can influence authenticity perceptions and authenticity can structure identity.

What remains stable though is for a restaurant to have a clear identity (see Section 7.4.2). This is possible if a restaurant explicitly belongs to one of the three existing categories of quality conventions (Table 7.3). The questions posed during the interviews were gathered and simplified by the author in order to be easily understood by restaurant owners. These simplified questions can be beneficial for practitioners, as the current research is aiming to be understood and applicable to practitioners. Hence, the purpose of the following Table is for restaurateurs or restaurant managers to be able to identify which category their restaurant belongs to in order to promote their businesses efficiently and also to be aware of their customers' expectations and identities.

Table 8.1: The identity questions which may categorise a restaurant in a certain Quality Conventions Category

• How would you describe your restaurant (meat, fish, touristy, convenient, traditional, high-end, trendy etc.)?
• Would you see the restaurant as Mediterranean, Greek, Cretan, or something else?
• Describe the process of how you choose a menu (e.g. memories, chef, etc.)
• How did you get your restaurant's recipes? (e.g. Internet, relatives, memories, etc.)

> • On your menu, you have X traditional dish [e.g. mousaka, dolmades]. What makes an authentic mousaka, dolmades etc?
>
> • What ingredients are you using? Origin?
>
> • Do you see yourself as contributing to a particular culture? How is that?
>
> • What type of people eat in your restaurant (locals, tourists…)?
>
> • Did you have any restaurant as a "role model" when you started? Where is it located?
>
> • What compromises did/do you have to make?

Similarly to existing literature, the current thesis also supports the view that consumers desire authentic businesses, brands, places and experiences (Kadirov *et al.*, 2013; Schallehn *et al.*, 2014; Lu *et al.*, 2015). Based on the existing literature, the factors which are taken into consideration by the consumers so as to judge the authenticity of an ethnic restaurant are the menu of a restaurant, the decoration, the atmospherics, the use of traditional recipes, the taste, the food quality, the service, the music, the costumes or even the ethnicity of the employees (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Jensen and Hansen, 2007; Wood and Lego Muñoz, 2007; Ryu *et al.*, 2008; Lego Muñoz and Wood, 2009; Tsai and Lu, 2012; Zeng *et al.*, 2012; Kim and Jang, 2016). Apart from the service, the price, the authentic decoration of an ethnic restaurant, the most crucial factor for attracting consumers into an ethnic restaurant seems to be the taste (Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007).

However, the current research argues that consumers are taking into consideration more aspects than these so as to define the authenticity, such as the recipes should be from antecedents (ancestral indexicality), the ingredients should be from the origin, the decoration should be traditional and not tacky, the ethnicity of the staff should be the same as the restaurant (see Sections 6.2 and 7.3.2). In the case of pragmatic iconicity, authenticity relies on consumer perceptions about authenticity and convenience (Section 7.3.2). The innovative iconicity relies on trends and fusion cuisine

and is again consumer oriented as this type of authenticity is perceived only by consumers of a high-end lifestyle. Finally, all these types of authenticity are communicated mostly by word of mouth among consumers who seek for ethnic restaurant to dine in (Section 7.4).

As fas as authenticity perceptions are concerned, these are personal and elastic for the consumers and ethnic food has a different meaning for each person (Tregear *et al.*, 1998; Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004; Peterson, 2005; Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007). The current thesis goes a step beyond and proposes that consumers construct authenticity meanings influenced by their identity (Sections 5.3 and 7.3.2).

In any case, the authenticity and quality concept is beneficial for the ethnic restaurants as it enhances consumers' influx due to their perception of linking authenticity with quality. This finding is also supported by the existing literature (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004; Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Lu *et al.*, 2015; Kim and Jang, 2016). With reference to existing literature about actors who share the same identity as the restaurant's theme (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Kim and Jang, 2016), the findings of the current research support the suggestion that these actors are stricter with their judgements about the authenticity of ethnic restaurants, and also they perceive the ethnic restaurants as less authentic in comparison with culturally naïve actors. Those actors who are stricter judges construct their own social groups as they share the same belief: they have knowledge about a specific culinary culture and its traditional recipes. Therefore, the current thesis is on the same page with existing literature which argues that ethnic identity may construct lifestyles and affect food choice as it empowers the feeling of belonging to social groups (Fischler, 1988; Laroche *et al.*, 2005; Cooks, 2009; Hough, 2011; Stead *et al.*, 2011; Jackson *et al.*, 2013; Timothy and Ron, 2013).

Concerning the quality concept, existing literature suggests specific influential factors according to which consumers judge quality, such as the reliability, the responsiveness, the access, courtesy, the security, the credibility, the communication and understanding of the customer (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985). The current study revealed similar findings, but

it also proposes more factors specifically about the restaurant sector. In more detail, consumers perceive a restaurant to be of high quality based on the taste and the ingredients of its dishes, the hospitality of the restaurant owner, the decoration of the restaurant and all the other factors of authenticity (Section 6.2). This is because consumers seem to perceive authenticity as synonymous with quality (see Section 6.2). Similarly to previous literature, the current study proposes that consumers who perceive an ethnic restaurant as authentic and of high quality recommend it to others and particularly to other consumers who share the same ethnicity (Han and Ryu, 2012; Lu *et al.*, 2013).

Likewise, the current thesis adds to previous findings (Ebster and Guist, 2005) that authenticity is less important for culturally naïve customers rather than experienced customers. As was argued in Section 6, Greek consumers or consumers who have been on holiday in the country of origin judge authenticity more strictly and dining in an authentic restaurant is so crucial to them that they even overlook its prices. Instead, consumers of different ethnicities choose a restaurant for a new dining experience, driven by eclecticism or pursuit of pleasure (Section 7.3.1). These mutually exclusive identities lead to mutually exclusive authenticity perceptions: indexical and existential authenticity respectively.

The current study proposes that the relations and communication among actors enable them to judge and categorise the restaurants based on their perceptions of quality and authenticity. As a matter of fact, one promotional method cannot fit all products and businesses (Phillipov, 2016), therefore, ethnic restaurants could be studied by category, based on quality conventions in correlation with the relevant authenticity perceptions (Section 7.3.2). Similarly to existing literature, the current thesis supports the view that quality is so important to the consumers that they may ignore the price factor while they choose an ethnic restaurant to dine in (Renard, 2003; Ponte, 2009; Climent-López *et al.*, 2014).

Quality and authenticity perceptions rely a great deal on personal interaction and a social network. In other words, word of mouth and electronic word of mouth enable the actors to construct identities and to communicate their

perceptions about authenticity and quality, which attract or repel other consumers from ethnic restaurants (Chapter 7). Based on the current study's findings (Section 7.4), ethnic restaurants which belong to the Domestic quality conventions are conceived of as experience service rather than search goods. And so, word of mouth is used more for experience service than for the search goods. On the contrary, previous research proposed that consumers rely more on word of mouth for experience goods than search goods (Nelson, 1970; Migliore *et al.*, 2015).

Existing literature also supports the view that consumers who perceive restaurants as authentic and of high quality spread the word especially among consumers with whom they share the same ethnicity (Smith, 1996; Han and Ryu, 2012; Lu *et al.*, 2013). This process could be done via the word of mouth, or the eWOM as both the current thesis (Chapter 7 and Figure 7.3) and prior literature have argued (Longart, 2010; Lu *et al.*, 2013). However, according to the findings, WOM is the most influential communication method. Second is the online feedback (eWOM) of friends of friends as consumers feel closer to friends of friends rather than to a completely unknown eWOM. The least influential communication method is the eWOM from unknown consumers.

8.3 Summary

To sum up, the current thesis has depicted the communication network among restaurateurs and consumers for the very first time. This network is structured upon the word of mouth and the authenticity and quality perceptions which are the key factors. Authenticity is perceived as synonymous with quality, and this perception also appears to be relative because it functions in conjunction with perspective. While this is acceptable, as it does not directly affect the cuisine's authenticity, it has the potential to alter the perception of it, to the point where its origins are lost. A question might arise about whether authenticity is relative as well because if the identity changes then this is what we experience as the new authentic. Here, it is important to note that every ethnic cuisine is relative to its environment. So whatever happens outside of it might distort people's perceptions, but when people come into contact with it, they will experience

its authenticity because of the core of it is functionality and originality rather than eclecticism. In conclusion, as long as innovative iconicity remains complementary to ancestral indexicality authenticity, the result can only be beneficial. However, the opposite is not functional and will eventually be experienced as a bad remix of a song we all loved.

Figure 8.1 summarises the above discussion of findings in relation to the existing literature.

Figure 8.1: Discussion of findings in relation to existing literature

EXISTING LITERATURE	SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES / ADDINGS
▪ Consumers and restaurateurs are connected with formal and informal relationships (Murdoch and Miele, 1999) ▪ ANT: theory of translation (Callon, 1984; Law, 1992; Fox, 2000) ▪ "*Interessement*" (Callon, 1984, p. 63) ▪ Quality does not have a solid and pre-fixed meaning for consumers (Babakus and Boller, 1992; Ilbery and Kneafsey, 2000; Fotopoulos and Krystallis, 2003; Kirwan, 2006; Ponte, 2009; Allaire, 2010; Climent-López *et al.*, 2014; Migliore *et al.*, 2015) ▪ Authenticity meaning is vague and evolving (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Beverland, 2005; Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Mkono, 2013), a more detailed definition is required (Reisinger and Steiner, 2006). ▪ Consumers take certain factors to judge the authenticity of an ethnic restaurant into consideration (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Jensen and Hansen, 2007; Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007; Wood and Lego Muñoz, 2007; Ryu *et al.*, 2008; Lego Muñoz and Wood, 2009; Tsai and Lu, 2012; Zeng *et al.*, 2012; Kim and Jang, 2016). ▪ Authenticity meanings for consumers are subjective and elastic (Tregear *et al.*, 1998; Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004; Peterson, 2005; Sukalakamala and Boyce, 2007) ▪ Quality meanings for consumers rely on specific factors so as to be constructed and judged (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985) ▪ Authenticity is less important to culturally naïve customers rather than experienced customers (Ebster and Guist, 2005)	▪ Consumers who perceive restaurants as authentic and of good quality are recommending them to those who have the same ethnicity (Smith, 1996; Han and Ryu, 2012; Lu *et al.*, 2013). This is done via the word of mouth or eWOM (chapter 7) and (Longart, 2010; Lu *et al.*, 2013) ▪ Quality is so important to the consumers that they may ignore the price factor while they choose an ethnic restaurant to dine in (chapters 7.2 and 7.3.2) and (Renard, 2003; Ponte, 2009; Climent-López *et al.*, 2014) ▪ Consumers desire authentic businesses, brands and experiences (chapter 6.2) and (Kadirov *et al.*, 2013; Schallehn *et al.*, 2014; Lu *et al.*, 2015) ▪ Authenticity and quality concepts are beneficial for ethnic restaurants' consumers influx (chapters 6 and 7) and (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004; Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Lu *et al.*, 2015; Kim and Jang, 2016) ▪ Actors who share the same identity with the restaurant's theme are stricter judgers about the restaurant's authenticity (chapters 5 and 6) and (Ebster and Guist, 2005; Kim and Jang, 2016) ▪ Ethnic identity may construct lifestyles and affect food choice (chapters 5.3 and 6.3) and (Fischler, 1988; Laroche *et al.*, 2005; Cooks, 2009; Hough, 2011; Stead *et al.*, 2011; Jackson *et al.*, 2013; Timothy and Ron, 2013)	▪ Quality for ethnic restaurants has been defined: consumers' and restaurateurs' perceptions (chapter 7.3.2) ▪ Quality meanings for "producers": restaurateurs (chapter 7.3.1 and 7.3.2) ▪ Quality relies on more aspects than previous research suggested and is highly linked with authenticity perceptions(chapter 7.3.2) ▪ The influence of identity upon construction of quality meanings (chapter 7.3.2) ▪ Ethnic restaurants' authenticity and quality meanings are transmitted via WOM and eWOM among actors (chapter 7.4) ▪ Authentic food is perceived to be of good quality (chapter 7.3) ▪ Restaurateurs define an ethnic restaurant as authentic by taking into consideration specific factors with some being more important than others (chapter 5.2) ▪ Authenticity meanings are constructed upon the influence of the restaurateurs' identity, experiences and occasions (chapters 5.2 and 5.3) ▪ More aspects are taken into consideration by the consumers in order to define the authenticity and they are mostly influenced by the word of mouth so as to choose an ethnic restaurant to dine in (chapters 6.2 and 7.4) ▪ Consumers construct authenticity meanings upon the influence of their identity and these are either Indexical or Existential (chapter 6.3) ▪ Consumers of the same ethnicity as the restaurant's theme or consumers who have been on holiday in the origin of the restaurant's theme are stricter judges of the restaurant's authenticity and the concept is crucial to them. On the other hand, consumers of a different identity choose ethnic restaurants with other criteria (chapters 6 and 7.3)

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Chapter 9 : Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

The conclusion summarises the key points of the current thesis. It begins with the key findings in relation to the study's objectives. These are the restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity and quality which are studied for the first time in relation to the consumers' perceptions. The current study explored also the influence of the word of mouth and the eWOM and how these two construct a network of consumers and restaurateurs, which is established within the ethnic restaurants context. Another aspect which has been studied is the influence of identity on constructing authenticity and quality meanings for both consumers and restaurateurs. Section 9.3 discusses the theoretical implications of the study. Apart from the theoretical implications, there are implications for practitioners as well, which are presented in section 9.4. These include suggestions for restaurateurs regarding effective promotional methods. Authenticity and quality perceptions can aid them to better engage with their customers while also respecting their culinary culture. Finally, the Chapter ends by outlining the limitations of the current study and suggestions for further research (section 9.5).

9.2 Summary of key findings related to research objectives

This thesis presents a conceptualisation of the term authenticity drawing on the perceptions of the "producers" of authenticity, the restaurant owners (**research objective a**). As far as the ethnic food sector is concerned, culturally aware restaurateurs tend to judge food authenticity according to ancestral indexicality authenticity (Section 7.3.2). However, restaurateurs who are not conscious of the culinary culture of the restaurant or restaurateurs who are market oriented believe in pragmatic iconicity authenticity. The identity of the participants is the influencing factor for conceiving the authenticity (Sections 5.3 & 6.3 and Tables 5.2, 5.3 & 6.2).

As a matter of fact, through the lens of the participants' identity, specific aspects are judged in order to define a restaurant's authenticity, to name a

few of them: the recipes should be from antecedents, the ingredients should be from the origin, the decoration should be traditional without "screaming it", the ethnicity of the staff should be the same as the restaurant (**research objective g**). A contribution is, therefore, the authenticity matrixes (Tables 5.2 and 6.2), which suggests that specific questions should be posed to grasp a person's perception of authenticity (**research objective d**).

The current thesis suggests that restaurateurs' perceptions about authenticity rely on their identity (Section 7.3.2) and specific questions could be posed (Table 8.1) to depict their authenticity and quality conventions (**research objective f**). With reference to identities, a matrix has been constructed (Table 6.3) to depict how these evolve in response to experiences or occasions for the first time. The previous problematic and vague definition of authenticity in relation to quality has now been better articulated and customised. Based on quality conventions theory, a new convention is proposed: the authenticity convention (Section 7.3.2) (**research objective d**). Regarding the cues on which quality and authenticity meanings are constructed, these are: the menu, the origin of the ingredients, the ethnicity of the chef and the staff and also the decoration of the restaurant. As the current thesis suggests, the factors (Sections 5, 6 and 7) according to which authenticity and quality are judged set the foundations for determining authentic Greek cuisine. Following that, an official authentication certificate has been proposed (Section 7.5) for nominating the authentic Greek ethnic restaurants located abroad.

According to the findings, ethnic restaurants can be promoted more efficiently by having a clear identity (Section 7.4.2) and authentic menus as their reputation will rely on word of mouth or e-word of mouth (**research objective c**). Another contribution is the construction of the Q.A.W. network (Figure 7.2), which illustrates the process of authenticity conceptions by bridging the consumers' and producers' perceptions for the first time and how these are transmitted within a cross-national setting (**research objective e**). Restaurateurs' and consumers' perceptions regarding authenticity and promotional methods of ethnic restaurants seem to correlate at certain points. This study suggests that an effective promotion

depends on establishing and keeping a clear identity for the ethnic restaurant (Sections 6.2, 7.2 and 7.4.2). By doing so their restaurants will be perceived by consumers as part of the Domestic convention category and as ancestral indexicality authentic (Sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2). As a consequence, it will be highly recommended by them as word of mouth seems to be the most efficient promotional method (Section 7.4 and Figure 7.3) (**research objective b**).

9.3 Theoretical Implications

The thesis contributes to the literature on authenticity by demonstrating how ethnic identities shape the salience of conceptualisations of authenticity and quality. Both consumers and restaurateurs judge an ethnic restaurant's authenticity and quality by taking certain factors into consideration. Therefore, we might say that authenticity and quality meanings rely on certain aspects for both parties. Apart from the integration of authenticity and quality conventions, a contribution has been made to the equity theory by outlining consumers' prior expectations for ethnic restaurants.

To begin with the relationships between authenticity and quality conventions, which were previously underdeveloped in the literature, these have been now explored. The current study enriches the existing literature about quality conventions by studying the ethnic restaurants' context and by providing insights into the perceptions of both consumers and "producers" of quality meanings. According to prior literature quality is not a solid and pre-fixed construction but a result of social interaction among individuals who have expectations highly influenced by their cultures (Babakus and Boller, 1992; Ilbery and Kneafsey, 2000; Fotopoulos and Krystallis, 2003; Kirwan, 2006; Ponte, 2009; Allaire, 2010; Climent-López *et al.*, 2014; Migliore *et al.*, 2015). Clearly, a definition of quality in the context of authentic ethnic restaurants has been missing both from the consumers' and restaurateurs' side. For these reasons, a new convention has been proposed: the authenticity (Section 7.3.2). This was expected as QCT welcomes potential new conventions (Lamont and Thévenot, 2000; Murdoch *et al.*, 2000; Kirwan, 2006).

The integration of authenticity convention with quality conventions emerged mainly because the current study has explored restaurateurs' perceptions and not only consumers', as previous literature did. Furthermore, as identity has not been studied before in relation to quality and authenticity, the current thesis proposes that authenticity is highly linked with quality and that identity has an influence upon the construction of quality perceptions of both consumers and restaurateurs (Section 7.3.2). As identity has not been studied before in relation to quality and authenticity, the new category proposes new insights and adds to existing literature, especially due to the intersection of producers' and consumers' perceptions.

In more detail, certain cues define an ethnic restaurant as Market oriented, Domestic or Institutional from which categories authenticity and quality meanings emerge. These cues are the menu, the origin of the ingredients, the ethnicity of the chef and the staff and also the decoration of the restaurant (Section 7.3.1). Based on these cues, consumers and restaurateurs perceive a market oriented restaurant to be pragmatic iconicity authentic, a domestic ethnic restaurant to be ancestral indexicality authentic and an institutional ethnic restaurant to be innovative iconicity authentic (Section 7.3.2).

Actors who judge a product as authentic perceive it to be of good quality as well and so, there has been a correlation between authenticity and quality. In fact, according to equity theory, consumers have expectations before visiting an ethnic restaurant (Susskind, 2002; Ryu *et al*., 2008; Han and Ryu, 2012) and so prior expectations about quality and authenticity are structured. In more details, according to the findings (see Figure 7.3), consumers expect from a Domestic restaurant to serve similar food with what consumers' ancestors used to cook, from an ethnic restaurant which belongs to the Inspirational category consumers expect to experience an eclectic approach to ethnic food and finally, consumers from a Market-oriented restaurant expect affordable prices for their food, convenience and quick service. If these expectations for quality and authenticity are fulfilled, they tend to remain loyal to it and also to recommend it to others via the word of mouth or eWOM (Section 7.4 and Figures 7.2 & 7.3).

Word of mouth or eWOM were shown to be the medium of transmitting social and symbolic meanings about food, quality and authenticity. As a matter of fact, upon these mediums a whole network of restaurateurs and consumers has been structured and it is depicted in Section 7,4 (Figure 7.2). In more details, this ethnic restaurant network is depicted for the first time and represents the communication among consumers and restaurateurs. Drawing on Actor Network Theory (ANT), the thesis highlights how judgements of quality are informed by identities and are transmitted via word of mouth or eWOM.

In more details, the present study suggested a network which is constructed by restaurateurs' and consumers' perceptions. The research design has been based on Grounded Theory and more specifically constructivism, Charmaz's approach, a theorising fieldwork (Section 4.5). Charmaz's approach to Grounded theory suggests first a literature review followed by an understanding of existing theories and then the data collection. The research design included existing theories in relation to the research aims and objectives, such as Actor-Network theory, to depict and analyse the constructed network of ethnic restaurant owners and consumers. The author proposed a research design (Section 1.4) and a theoretical concept of the research (Section 1.5.3) by combining and relating existing theories to add valuable findings to previous literature and existing theories.

In particular, the thesis outlined how Social Identity Theory and Consumer Culture Theory are connected, as both suggest that identities are constructed through consumption (Ahuvia et al., 2006; Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Berger, 2013; Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2008; Dittmar, 2007; Englis et al., 1994; Thompson et al., 2013; Wattanasuwan, 2005). At the same time, each and every actor within the investigated network holds an identity which evolves over time and experiences. Consumer culture theory proposes that identities may be constructed based on consumption and, as consumption is based on needs fulfilment, identities may evolve over time. These identities are communicated within a network as Actor-network theory suggests and as a natural consequence, authenticity and quality meanings are constructed.

The previous problematic and vague definition of authenticity in relation to quality and identities has now become rather specific and customised and the producers' perceptions have been determined by adding fresh insights to the literature. One of these is the combination of social theories (e.g. social identity theory) and theories of practice (e.g. quality conventions). Both social identity theory and consumer culture theory tend to ignore the autonomy of the individual and the existence of new technologies (Warde, 2014). Nevertheless, both Actor Network Theory and quality conventions theory take into consideration technologies, mass production and material forces, which makes the bridging of these theories a thought-provoking insight into constructed preferences, perceptions and meanings. For this reason, the current thesis combined the social theories with theories of practice. Theories of practice have been focused on specific research areas such as climate change, sustainability and environmental degradation (Spaargaren, 2011; Shove *et al.*, 2012; Warde, 2014). Instead, the current study is adding to the theories of practice by focusing on food aspects and relevant constructed meanings. This bonding of another framework with a practice theory has also been requested by existing literature (Warde, 2014) and especially for the consumption research area.

ANT suggests that social meanings are constantly formed, which means that new connections are expected to be illustrated by new research in a variety of domains such as food, fashion and politics (Latour, 1999). ANT is about describing the relationships but further investigation can be supported by other social theories (Walsham, 1997). This has been one of the purposes of the current thesis. Prior literature had predicted that consumers and restaurateurs were connected cross-nationally with formal and informal relationships (Murdoch and Miele, 1999). However, it was the current thesis which depicted these relationships as a network and proposed that meanings emerge and are constructed based on this network (Section 7.4). The current thesis also depicts in detail who the actors of the social network are (Section 7.4) by adding to the existing theory, which proposes that a social network is made up of heterogeneous materials (Law, 1992; Latour, 1996). ANT is also known as the theory of translation (Callon, 1984; Law, 1992; Fox, 2000) and on that basis the thesis proposes that actors establish

the ethnic restaurant network by translating meanings of authenticity and quality (Chapter 7). Likewise, this study is adding *"interessement"* to the ANT (Callon, 1984, p. 63) for the ethnic restaurants context (Section 7.4.1). In particular, consumers' disassociation has been identified from ethnic restaurants which are not using ingredients from the restaurants' country of origin.

Part of the theoretical implications of the current thesis have been presented in two conference papers:

- Chatzopoulou E., Gorton M. and Kuznesof S. (2016) Defining food authenticity: An efficient promotion for ethnic restaurants. In: European Academy and Management (EURAM) annual conference. Paris, France.
- Chatzopoulou E., Gorton M. and Kuznesof S. (2016) Quality conventions theory and the communication of authenticity: evidence from Greek restaurants in the UK and Greece. In: Academy of Marketing conference. Newcastle, U.K.

9.4 Practical implications

Restaurateurs can be benefited by the current study's findings as these indicate how they could better engage with their customers. This could be achieved by relying on effective promotional methods, authenticity and quality perceptions and also respecting the culinary culture (Chapter 7). The study has found that the most efficient promotional method is word of mouth, a medium which transmits the reputation messages of prime quality and authentic restaurants between consumers (Section 7.4). Apart from the word of mouth, consumers are influenced on a second basis by the e-WOM. If consumers do not have any recommendations from friends then, they will rely on e-WOM about choosing an ethnic restaurant to dine in. For this reasons, restaurateurs need to have presence on social media and aim for positive online feedback from their customers.

Moreover, restaurateurs are able now to judge their restaurant's authenticity and quality if they reply to ten (10) identity questions (Table 8.1), which will enable them to position their restaurant within the market based on certain

criteria (see Table 5.2) and their customers' perceptions (see Table 6.2). Concerning consumers' and restaurateurs' perceptions about what makes an ethnic restaurant authentic these rely on the atmosphere and decoration of the restaurant, the menu, the origin of the ingredients, the traditional recipes and the music. Apart from the authenticity and identity concepts, quality is perceived as synonymous with authenticity hence, quality should not be neglected by ethnic restaurants.

Ethnic restaurants will be benefited also if they are clearly positioned as Market, Domestic or Inspirational (Section 7.3.1). Market oriented ethnic restaurants rely on convenience and affordable prices, Inspirational on high-end cuisine, high-aesthetics and modernity and finally the Domestic ones on tradition, sustaining social ties with the country of origin and fulfilling consumers' nostalgia. However, the highest level of word of mouth is for the Domestic ethnic restaurants. Consumers tend to be more loyal on these type of restaurants and recommend them via the word of mouth or the eWOM.

Ethnic-themed restaurants are also informal but powerful ambassadors for a country's culture. Certification or official authentication could help protect and promote these assets for cultural and financial benefits. A restaurant's authenticity depends highly on the restaurant owners' perceptions, as Greek restaurants lack an official authentication (Section 7.5). In this case, the current study sets the ground to propose to the Greek government how to establish a certificate of authenticity for the Greek ethnic restaurants located abroad. The authenticity parameters which could be taken into consideration are analysed in Sections 5.3, 6.3 and 7.2. In more details, the theme of the Greek ethnic restaurants abroad should be purely Greek and not described as Mediterranean or anything else. The source of the recipes has to be from the Greek origin and to be known to the restaurateurs by their ancestors, Greek relatives or Greek cookbooks. The origin of the ingredients has to be from Greece and also including PDO products will add extra value to the restaurant's perceived authenticity. Moreover, the music has to be Greek and also the decoration and the atmosphere to resemble of restaurants located in Greece. Finally, the restaurant owner has to be

friendly and welcoming but also being Greek himself/herself is perceived by consumers as an indication of authenticity.

Turning to tourism influx and cultural sustainability, ethnic-themed restaurants seem to be a country's ambassadors and presenters of its culture (Section 1.5.2.2) and they are the second most influential representative of a foreign culture after the mass media (Wood and Lego Munoz, 2007). Hence, ethnic restaurants' authenticity should be protected and promoted for cultural and financial benefits for the country of origin. What is more, existing literature suggests that marketing has to promote food by presenting "authentic" foods more attractively and making them desirable (Lees, 1994; Roberts, 1994; Tregear *et al.*, 1998; Garcia-Closas *et al.*, 2006; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006; Guillou, 2010). However, both Greece and the U.K. have medium culinary self-consciousness (DeSoucey, 2010), which suggests that both countries need to promote their authentic culinary tradition more effectively.

The Greek identity could be strengthened through authentic food consumption for the populations of a second (or later) generation living abroad. This proposal is based on consumer culture theory (Section 2.7), which suggests that identities are constructed through consumption and that food is perceived to be the most influential factor in ethnic identity (Section 2.6).

Figure 9.1: Suggested promotional methods for ethnic restaurants
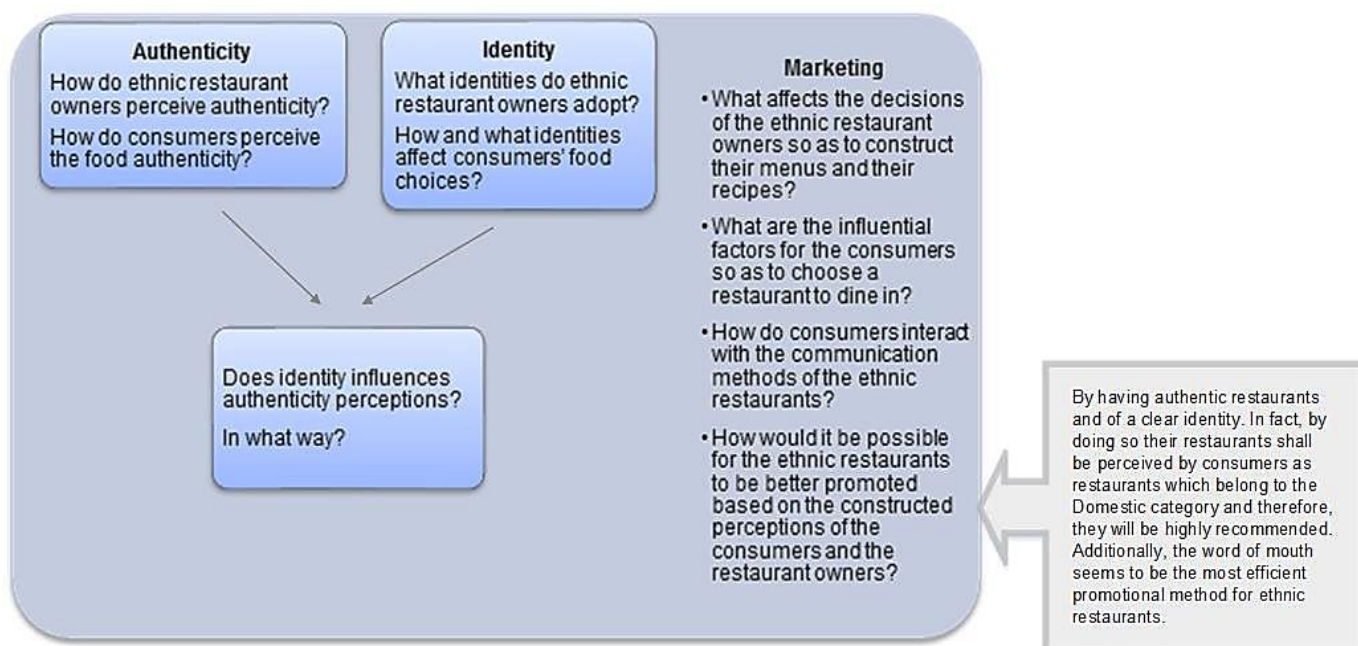
The current thesis' findings have been presented during a validation event to the ethnic restaurant owners and consumers who participated in the study (see Section 4.11.2 and Appendix 6). The reason behind this action has been to confirm the findings by relying on feedback from the study's participants. This way, potential gaps, faults or possibe misunderstandings would be fulfilled and corrected. The feedback which the author received during the event suggested that the findings were interesting, truthful and applicable. In fact, restaurateurs stressed that they were willing to make changes to their restaurants according to the current study's suggestions for authenticity and quality.

9.5 Limitations and further research

This Chapter has outlined the limitations of the current thesis and it now addresses potential further research. Although the current thesis has aimed to explore in-depth meanings about food, such as the quality or the authenticity, several important aspects need to be addressed in further research. Further research should consider unexplored domains relative to the subject of the thesis and at the same time suggest fruitful future research domains about authenticity, quality and other.

This study collected data from Greek ethnic restaurants in the U.K. and Greece to investigate quality, authenticity and identity aspects. The data were analysed using qualitative methods. Future studies could assess how authenticity is constructed and judged for Greek ethnic restaurants located in different parts of the world to explore whether similar meanings about authenticity and quality are constructed. What is more, a comparison of ethnic food between countries with similar food traditions and habits to those of Greece would be beneficial, especially with those countries which Greeks tend to feel animosity towards, such as Turkey.

Equally, a comparison would be beneficial with ethnic restaurants of different ethnicities resulting in a more globalised definition of authenticity and quality. In this case, the identity concept will be studied more widely and in a global context. Based on what has been explored by the current study and the limitations addressed, for further research it would be worthwhile to include data from more Mediterranean countries, such as Italy. As a matter

of fact, Italian consumers who were interviewed seem to share common views with the Greeks about the culinary culture and diet. Apart from that, a comparison could enable the researchers to explore the meanings of authenticity, quality and identity further in a multi-cultural setting.

Furthermore, multiple identities (Butler, 1990; Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Settles, 2004) could be investigated in future research so as to test propositions relating to social identity theory and consumer culture. More specifically, the investigation could be about restaurant owners who hold multiple identities, as the question remains about how these interact and which identity becomes dominant in constructing a menu. Similarly, consumers with multiple identities could be studied to understand how the identities interact in food choice.

Apart from the multiple identities, an exploration of Greek consumers who comment about ethnic restaurants on social media vs. non-Greek consumers who provide feedback on social media about the same ethnic restaurants would be beneficial. It would be worthy to investigate how these identities affect the eWOM and if consumers communicate differently aspects like authenticity and quality for ethnic restaurants. Moreover, a survey could test which social group of the two has more influence upon potential consumers of ethnic restaurants.

As qualitative research methods were applied, a small number of restaurateurs were studied. This is expected, as qualitative research studies the phenomena in depth so that the research findings are discrete to the contexts and conditions identified in relation to these data, and although possessing some generalisability, they are nevertheless based on a small volume of data which requires some caution in interpretation. Thus, future research could employ quantitative research methods to test the efficiency of the suggested promotional methods for the ethnic restaurants.

As the current study is part of a PhD thesis, it was not possible for the researcher to re-interview the participants over time. Longitudinal research could be conducted to understand how notions of authenticity and quality change over time with the influence of identity. This would help better undercover the relationships between authenticity, quality and identity.

As far as the translation of the interviews is concerned, the author translated them from Greek to English. The author is fluent in both languages and is a bi-cultural researcher. However, some subtlety may have been lost during the translation process. In future, a team of bilingual Greek-British researchers could provide more accurate translations and also a separate, simultaneous analysis by the team could produce more insightful and definite findings.

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Appendix

1. Author's notes during the interviews with restaurateurs

LONDON – initial coding - notes

	R. G. (1st generation)	O. (1st generation)	M. (1st generation)	A. (1st generation)	E. (3rd generation)	S. (2nd generation)
NOTES	Since 1998, many stores in London. Several owners so far.	4 months restaurant, just won a Michelin star	2.5 years old. The best new restaurant, international, best Greek distinctions. Owners: young couple, a French man and a Greek woman. The French male owner did the cocktails himself for the customers, he said: "We, the managers, do everything". They also sell Greek products in the restaurant. Aim: Change the perceptions of the people about Greek cuisine & wine (which they believe are very low). Small portions.	He does not speak fluently, as he admitted. He requested the interview to be conducted in Greek. He offered Greek coffee and loukoumi. He believes, as well, that the customers order food that they already know (like Mazi). He divides as well the customers in old-school and new generation (like Mazi). He asked for the results.	Luxurious Greek restaurant. Really polite owner-manager (Alex, 32 years old, one of the owners). He treated a lot of the dishes. He supports the Greek community. He wants to keep good relations with the other restaurant owners. He was born in the UK. Before, he was a shipping broker just like his godfather. He spent two years in France as a broker. His customers are high-class, like Greek shipping company owners, the Greek Royal family, etc. He wants the results.	His parents were chefs in the USA. They had authentic recipes. He moved to Greece when he was 8 years old. He studied at the "Le Monde". He is a professional chef. He asked to treat me with any drink.
Type of food-menu	Mediterranean, 85% Greek	Modern Greek restaurant- modern techniques, traditional flavours (= tastes that are familiar)	100% Greek restaurant because of the Greek wife. Modern twist. Away from the tavern style to a more modern cuisine.	Mix of Greek and Cypriot food and a bit of Mediterranean. But, basically Greek. The food makes it.	Mediterranean, Greek oriented.	He keeps the menu as authentically Greek as he can. He has a large variety of dishes on the menu.
Touristy	Location	80% locals, 20% tourists. The price, the discounts / promotions, the location. The aim of tourist restaurants is fast food and quick money.	Cheaper restaurant, not good food, great location.			

Who constructed the menu	Previous Chef and the new chef: TV presenter Tonia, well-known chef	Owner (=cooking in London restaurants before & recipes from memories of parents and grandparents) and the Greek chefs of the restaurant. 5 of them had a vote for the menu construction (the chefs and the partners). Big arguments…	Executive Chef: well-known modern Greek chef. He wants to change the perceptions about Greek food. The ideas come from the owners as well and from the head chef. The owners-managers had to taste the dish 4 times for the quality to be consistent all the time. The imagination of the owners was translated by the chef's skills. Team work.	He had recipes from the previous restaurant, from his chefs and memories from his parents.	He does not use the internet, his chef constructed the menu. He changes the menu according to the trends.	He does not use the internet as a source. He knew recipes by working in Greece and from his chef's Greek parents.
Authenticity & Authentic recipes	Greek ingredients, fresh food, Greek staff-chef	"Older" dishes, from Greek rural regions (served in a modern way) and Greek ingredients, but not all of them (e.g. Vegetables, fish should not be imported-vulnerable). Signature things=feta, oil. Cookbooks, but old (e.g. 1960). Indexical, food like in Greece. Greek local producers for most of the ingredients. "The customer must be adapted to your authentic restaurant, not you to the customer".	Stick to the Greek taste. Indexical. Identity could be the decoration of the restaurant, the staff, but most of the times it is food. Food= Greek names, Greek recipes. Greek ingredients? Not only... From the UK: tomatoes, meat, vegetables, fish... Import some ingredients from Greece, like typical ingredients: herbs, olives... Same or better ingredients in the U.K. References: owner's memories and chef's knowledge also popular dishes that the customers will recognise. What the customer requests. Not using the internet as a source. Dishes that you can find in Greece, not hummus. Include only dishes that you can find in Greece, that exist in Greece.	Greek staff, Greek hospitality.	Authenticity can be found in traditional dishes, recalling our grandmothers' recipes. It is not always possible to hire Greek staff, he prefers the Greeks though.	He hires Greek staff. He is strict with the Greek originality of the dishes. He has only Greek wines. He wants to have Greek ingredients.
Create an experience	Greek music and sometimes live music, pictures on the walls - Greek advertisements	The food in the middle of the table, the way the dishes are cooked. Not pictures of Greece, you do not engage the customers like that. The	Concept of the restaurant: high quality food, not pictures of Greece. Have an identity for the restaurant, the Greek identity.	Greek traditional music and live music as well. First of all they play Greek music for themselves.	Apart from the food quality what attracts customers is the live music, the smashing of plates, etc.	He hasn't put up any photos of Greece but he plays Greek music. He said: "If we were in

		experience is the food. The food should be the marketing tool, the wine, etc. The experience should be more modern. Not Greek music all the time. The focus is on the food. The chairs and the tables are traditional, part of the identity of the restaurant. If the restaurant does not have an identity it is something cold.	Not Greek decor, not Greek music, but modern. They give free shots, the service also: they conceive of them both as Greek hospitality. They seek balance: formal and informal.			Greece, we wouldn't have any photos of Greece".
Culture?	Yes, promote Greece	Yes. The London people started to be familiar the last 4-5 years. Before they thought it was only about Kebab. The new restaurants created a trend (5 new restaurants).	Definitely, they believe they have done more than the Greek ambassador in the UK. They promote Greece, the wines, the food companies and they made a cognac Greek brand that now exists in the UK. The old school British are looking for kebabs, things that they recognise. "France doesn't need me. There are a lot of French restaurants in the UK"			
Success	Team job, Greek hospitality and professional job	Ingredients of high quality. Greek hospitality. The ideas of the owner should be passed from the owner to the staff and from the staff to the customers. Hard work and respect for the products. Baby steps and improvements every day. Professional staff. Respect peoples' money. Make good food every day.	The 1st thing is the good food. People order things they recognise: offer classic recipes, but, twisted. Know everything you sell, all the ingredients. Food quality is exceptional and the service is good. Innovation: change the dish a bit but, keep the identity. Clear identity. The 2nd is the atmosphere. The 3rd is the garden and then is innovation.	Due to the previous restaurant's already existing customers, Greek hospitality, smashing plates		

Comments from the customers	"The food is even better than in Greece"	It ranges. The majority (90%) says: "The food is better than in Greece".	Compliments on the food itself, secondly the atmosphere. The magnificent garden as well. "We needed a French guy to create the best Greek restaurant".			
Comments by the Greeks	More are non-Greeks. They say it is not authentic, because they have "foreign" customers=English (multiple identities).	20% are Greeks. They are really critical. They enjoy it, though. But, they have the tendency to suggest: 80 spanakopita recipes at the office from customers.	15% Greeks. Two types of Greeks: old school (they do not want them) and new Greeks (wealthy people, bankers, fashion, etc). The old school is shocked with what they have done to the food, but the new generation accepts it easily.			
Role model	No, because that business is about authenticity and innovation	No, just serve good food.	Combine a few, not copy one. A few Japanese because of the atmosphere and also because you can share, not starters... Those that have created an identity. He admires them, does not copy them. Learn from others.			
Compromises - Discounts	Those are communicated on-line and on the board outside. On-line=facebook.	Not the quality. Not special deals, but a set menu. The PR company will communicate that.	The food cost, he wishes to charge more for a few dishes, but he cannot, people won't buy them. The restaurant decoration also because of the lack of capital. No special deals. He has a lunch menu, he does not communicate that.	Can't touch the quality. Only special deals for events/groups. Even those, he does not communicate them, he mentions them face-to-face.		He does not like Groupon. He does not do any special deals as he believes they do not attract quality customers who would give tips to the staff.
Social media	Facebook, twitter and tripadvisor	Facebook, twitter, Instagram. He prefers Instagram. There is more interaction. Next, twitter: they have a chat with customers. The customers go straight to Instagram, they do not link twitter with Instagram.	Instagram, twitter and facebook. Photos, always updated to those media. Just pics and new dishes. Reply to TripAdvisor only when it is needed.	Word of mouth, not social media	Mainly facebook and he checks comments on TripAdvisor.	He checks the comments on TripAdvisor. He likes facebook and nothing else. He posts "the dish of the day" on facebook.
Feedback?	Facebook, Tripadvisor, website and face-to-face	Face-to-face, the most realistic feedback. The waitresses or the owner. Write down the comments	Tripadvisor, you have to listen to the customers. It is a tool for certain people, not for our customers. They use it so as to	TripAdvisor and asking customers face-to-face.		

		that they hear. Filter Tripadvisor also and sometimes consider it seriously.	complain. Official journalist reviews also: radio, TV, newspaper articles in UK, Greece and generally... Speak to the customers.			
Best promotion	Word of mouth	Word of mouth, the best way to attract new customers and really rewarding.	They became known due to their good PR company. Official journalist reviews also: radio, TV, newspaper articles in UK, Greece and generally...	Word of mouth, not social media	He paid a marketing company, but he was not happy with the result. He believes in the word of mouth more.	He believes in the word of mouth, that is what has worked so far.
Future plans-5 years	Expand in the UK, mainly London	A restaurant talks to you. You communicate with the restaurant and then you make changes. If you make plans, God laughs… In the future there will be something, maybe not a second restaurant of the same concept…	For sure, to open other restaurants. Their life mission: increase Greek awareness and the quality of good Greek food from L.A. to Dubai, but not as a franchise.		He is going to open a store with Greek products close to the restaurant, like a Deli. Whatever he opens he wants to be close to the Elysee.	

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR RESTAURANT MANAGERS / OWNERS

Thank you very much for taking the time to meet me this day. This interview will last about forty five (45) minutes. Please feel free to ask for any clarification if such a need arises, and I will do my best to respond.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

☐ Maybe we could begin, by discussing how you came to be in the restaurant business and managing this specific restaurant?

☐ How would you describe your restaurant (*meat, fish, touristic,etc…*)?

☐ Would you see the restaurant as Mediterranean, Greek, Cretan, or something else? Why? What makes it?

EXPLORING IDENTITY & AUTHENTICITY ASPECTS

☐ Would you please talk through your restaurant current menu?

☐ According to your opinion, is your menu original Mediterranean, Greek, Cretian or something else?

☐ Have you chosen yourself, the restaurant's menu?

☐ Describe the process of how you choose a menu

☐ How do you get your restaurant recipes?

☐ On your menu, you have X [e.g. moussaka, Dolmades, kolokythokeftedes]. What makes an authentic moussaka, Dolmades etc.

☐ What ingredients are you using? Origin?

☐ Restaurant owners from the UK said: "Why should we buy Greek lamb? One of the best in the world comes from the Wales, next to us. Do you agree?" Should the ingredients be Greek for authentic dishes?

☐ Why not **only** Greek wines?

☐ What type of music are you playing at your restaurant?

☐ How do customers judge the restaurant? What are the comments which you hear?

Probing: quality, authenticity, price?

☐ Do those from the Mediterranean/Greece judge it differently?

☐ What is the link between you and the restaurant identity?

☐ What food/recipes do you cook at home?

☐ How do you see yourself contributing to a particular culture?

EXPLORING MARKETING/PROMOTIONAL ASPECTS

☐ What type of people eat at the restaurant (*locals, tourists…*)?

☐ What makes a restaurant touristic (*price, location,etc…*)?

☐ Did you have any restaurant as a "role model" when you started?

☐ What compromises do you have to make?

☐ Do you make any special deals? How do you communicate them?

☐ How do you interact with your existing customers? How do you get any feedback?

☐ How do you attract new customers?

☐ What social media, if any, are you using?

☐ What are your plans as a restaurant owner so as to attract new customers for the next five years?

Thank you for all that valuable information, is there anything else you would like to add before we end?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

FOR CONSUMERS

Thank you very much for taking the time to meet me this day. This interview will last thirty (30) minutes. Please feel free to ask for any clarification if such a need arises, and I will do my best to respond.

GENERAL QUESTION

☐ To begin, please tell me a little about yourself (*ethnicity, age, etc…*)?

EXPLORING IDENTITY & AUTHENTICITY ASPECTS

☐ I would like to begin by exploring your experiences of restaurant X.

☐ When you think of restaurant X what comes to mind?

☐ *Do you conceive the restaurant as Greek?*

☐ *If yes, what makes it Greek? If no, why do you not consider it to be a Greek restaurant?*

(probes: authenticity nodes such as menu, origin of ingredients, ethnicity of owner/chef etc.)

☐ *The last time you visited restaurant X, what were your experiences?*

☐ How did you decide from the menu?

EXPLORING MARKETING/PROMOTIONAL ASPECTS & Q.C.T.

☐ How did you first come to go to restaurant X? Potential probes: word of mouth (by whom?), awards, social media

Probing: How close should a person be (word of mouth) so as to influence you?

☐ *Did you inform other people that you had been to restaurant X?* Why? How?

☐ Did you give the restaurant feedback? If so in what form (personal, social media etc.) and why?

☐ Do you prefer restaurants which have special deals? How do you know about them?

☐ Who do you expect to eat accompany with you in an ideal Greek restaurant (*locals, tourists…*)?

Could you please read through the current menus of two restaurants in the UK?

What comes to mind?
What type of restaurant do you perceive it to be? Why is this?
What would you expect to experience?

Thank you for all that valuable information, is there anything else you would like to add before we end?

4. Menu 1 – Black font (Domestic oriented restaurant)

Starters -Mezedakia

Houmous

Chickpeas with tahini, olive oil, garlic and lemon.

Tzatziki

Greek yoghurt with cucumber, mint and garlic

Taramasalata

Rich natural-cured cod's roe dip

All above are served with warm bread

Olives

Choose your favourite:

Fresh herbs and peppers (green & black), Lemon and dill, Kalamata.

Dolmades

6 Vine leaves stuffed with rice and herbs.

Falafel 3 Fried balls of spiced chickpeas served with houmous.

Tabouleh

Couscous with parsley, red peppers, lemon juice and olive oil.

Chickpea salad

Chickpeas with parsley, peppers, lemon juice, olive oil.

Greek salad

Tomatoes, cucumber, onion, feta cheese, fresh herbs and olive oil.

Spicy red peppers stuffed with feta (slightly spicy) Stuffed with Greek feta & spices.

Mezze Plate

Choice of any four starters from above, served with warm pitta bread.

'Nick's' Soup

Delicious, home made fresh soup of the day served with olives

and warm pitta bread...(The soup is vegan & gluten free unless otherwise specified)

Anchovies Basket of warm pitta bread

Fresh anchovy fillets in olive oil, served with toasted pitta bread

Main Courses

Gigantes Plaki (gluten free)

Greek butter beans in a tomato and herb sauce with carrots and celery, baked in the oven, served with salad & houmous.

Fasolakia Ladera (gluten free)

Fine green beans cooked in tomato, carrots and fresh herbs, served with salad & houmous.

Imam Bayeldi (gluten free)

Aubergine, tomatoes and onion baked slowly with herbs and garlic, served on a bed of rice & salad.

Spanakopitta (vegetarian)

Athenian style:Spinach, Greek feta cheese & fresh herbs in filo pastry, served with houmous & salad.

Tiropitta (vegetarian) Greek feta baked in filo pastry, served with salad & houmous.

Chicken Souvlaki / falafel Souvlaki (wrap)

Large flat bread filled with marinated grilled chicken breast or falafel (veggie option), houmous, tzatziki & salad. Served with olives.

Papoutsakia (gluten free)

Slipper of aubergine stuffed with rice, tomato sauce and herbs, topped with Greek feta cheese, served with tzatziki & salad.

Kotopoulo Lemonato

Chicken breast baked in lemon juice, olive oil & herbs, served with rice, salad & houmous.

Kimadopitta

Lean mince beef in tomato & herbs with a layer of Greek Feta cheese baked in the oven wraped in fillo pastry, served with salad & tzatziki.

Beef Stifado (Gluten free)

Tender beef cooked slowly with red wine, tomato, onions, and bay leaves, served with rice, tzatziki and salad.

Keftedes Fournou (NOT gluten free)

Minced beef and herb meatballs baked in the oven, served with rice, salad and tzatziki.

Spetsofai (NOT gluten free)

Greek Trikala pork sausage, cooked in a wine, red pepper and tomato, served with rice and salad.

Moussaka

Traditional Greek Moussaka – layers of potatoes, aubergine, minced beef and tomato sauce topped with creamy béchamel sauce.

Served with salad & tzatziki.

Please order at the counter. Thank you.

Sides & Starters

Lentil and Tomato Soup **VEG**	£3.90
Olives, Chillies and Feta **VEG**	£3.90
Garlic Bread **VEG** Plain or Cheesy	£2.90
Grilled Halloumi **VEG** Served over a tomato and mixed lettuce leaf salad.	£3.90
Hummus and Tzatziki Dips with Pita Bread **VEG**	£3.90
Bruscetta **VEG** Toasted Ciabatta bread topped with marinated tomato, onion, olive oil, basil and mozzarella.	£3.90
Nachos and Dips **VEG** Spicy, crispy nachos served with guacamole, sour cream, salsa, olives and chillies.	£4.50
Chicken Wings Try our tasty oven baked crispy chicken wings.	£4.50
Side of Onion Rings **VEG**	£2.00
Side of Fries or Potato Wedges **VEG**	£2.00
Dipping Platter Selection of dips served with potato wedges, chicken wings, nachos, onion rings and pita bread. Perfect for sharing.	£6.90

Pasta

Spaghetti Bolognese Just like Mama used to make it!	£5.90
Penne Chicken Feta Tender chicken, peppers, onions and Feta cheese in a red wine and tomato sauce tossed with penne pasta.	£6.90
Pastitsada Traditional Corfu dish. Pasta tossed with stewed beef, shallots and a rich tomato sauce.	£7.50
Penne Mediterranean **VEG** Mediterranean vegetables and a tomato and basil pasta sauce. Served with penne pasta and finished with crumbled Feta cheese. Served with fresh bread.	£5.90

Burgers   £6.90 each

All served with fries

OUR Burger
Succulent beef burger with relish, tomato, onion and mixed lettuce leaves.

BBQ Burger
100% beef burger in a toasted bun with melted cheese, BBQ sauce, tomato and onion rings.

Greek Burger
100% beef burger with grilled Halloumi cheese, Tzatziki, tomato and red onion.

Pulled Pork Burger
Filled with smokey pulled pork, salad and BBQ sauce.

Meze Platter For Two   £19.90

Can't decide? Why not try a selection of our most popular Greek dishes with our Meze Platter. Including Souvlaki, Stifado, Gyros, Yemista, Greek Salad, Moussaka and dips with pita. Only £9.95 per person.

Sandwiches   £4.90 each

All served with your choice of fries or wedges

Club Sandwich
Try our famous triple decker sandwich with bacon, chicken, lettuce, tomato, cheese and mayo.

Chicken Panini
Chicken, red peppers, Feta, mayonnaise and cheese melted in Panini bread.

Mediterranean Melted Panini (VEG)
Panini melted with cheese, Feta, tomato, aubergines and olives.

Prosciutto Panini
Prosciutto ham, chicken breast, tomato, Parmesan, mixed lettuce and Caesar dressing served in a toasted Panini.

Tuna Melt
Tuna, mayo, red onion and cheese melted in a pressed Panini.

Main Dishes

Chicken Souvlaki Chicken skewers coated with our traditional lemon, olive oil, salt and oregano dressing. Served with Greek Salad, fries, pita bread and Tzatziki dip.	£7.50
Beef Stifado Slow cooked tender beef, tomato & shallots in a Greek style stew. Served with Greek salad, rice and bread.	£7.50
Moussaka Layers of potato, aubergine and minced beef topped with creamy Béchamel and oven baked to perfection. Served with Greek salad and bread.	£6.90
Vegetarian Moussaka **VEG** Layers of potato, aubergine, tomato and mixed grilled vegetables topped with Béchamel and oven baked. Served with Greek salad and bread.	£6.90
Pulled Pork Gyros Smokey pulled pork on toasted pita bread with salad and Tzatziki sauce. Served with potato wedges.	£7.50
Yemista **VEG** Roasted peppers stuffed with traditionally seasoned rice and vegetables. Served with a side of Greek salad.	£6.90
Chicken Feta Sizzler Pan fried chicken breast, peppers, onions and Feta cheese served in a tomato based salsa on a sizzling plate. Served with rice, tortilla wraps and dips.	£7.90
Greek Salad (Add chicken to your salad for £1.00) Tomato, lettuce, cucumber, red peppers, onion, Kalamata Olives, Feta cheese and chillies drizzled with Extra Virgin Olive Oil and seasoned with Oregano.	£5.90

Souvlaki Pitta

Greek Pita Wraps   £5.90 each
Add fries for £1.00

Pita bread filled with your choice of either:
- Chicken Souvlaki, Tzatziki, tomato and lettuce.
- Pulled Pork, BBQ sauce, tomato and lettuce.
- Grilled Halloumi, Tzatziki, grilled aubergine, tomato and lettuce. **VEG**
- Greek Salad Pita, stuffed with Greek salad and Tzatziki **VEG**
- Thousand Island Chicken Pita, Slices of hot chicken breast, mixed lettuce, tomato and Thousand Island dressing.

6. Respondent validation: event

To begin with the restaurant owners who participated at the event, the demographics are:

	Sex = Female	Sex = Male	Country of Birth = Greece	Country of Birth = Mediterranean country	Country of Birth = Non-MED	Country of Birth = U.K.
(4) Restaurant owners - event	1	3	1	1	1	1

	Occupation restaurants = Restaurant owner	Occupation restaurants = Restaurant manager	Occupation restaurants = Staff
(4) Restaurant owners - event	3	1	0

Their restaurants' themes are:

	Restaurant's theme = Chinese	Restaurant's theme = Greek	Restaurant's theme = Italian	Restaurant's theme = Indian	Restaurant's theme = East-Mediterranean	Restaurant's theme = Other
(4) Restaurant owners - event	2	1	1	0	0	0

The feedback which restaurateurs provided is as follows:

	Changes at the ethnic restaurant = Make changes to the menu	Changes at the ethnic restaurant = Renovate the restaurant, change decoration	Changes at the ethnic restaurant = Something else, please specify	Changes at the ethnic restaurant = Hire staff of a specific ethnicity	Changes at the ethnic restaurant = Have products from the origin	Changes at the ethnic restaurant = Change the ingredients or the supplier	Changes at the ethnic restaurant = Have a different type of entertainment
(4) Restaurant owners - event	1	1	2	0	0	0	0

	Do you find the results of the research interesting = Yes	Do you find the results of the research interesting = No	Do you find the results of the research applicable = Yes	Do you find the results of the research applicable = No	Do you feel that the current research might have an actual impact on your restaurant = Not at all	Do you feel that the current research might have an actual impact on your restaurant = Yes a little	Do you feel that the current research might have an actual impact on your restaurant = Yes a great deal
(4) Restaurant owners - event	4	0	4	0	0	1	3

Concerning the twelve consumers who participated at the event, the demographics are:

	Country of Birth = Greece	Country of Birth = Mediterranean country	Country of Birth = Non-MED	Country of Birth = U.K.	Age Group = 20-25	Age Group = 26-31	Age Group = 32-38	Age Group = 39-45	Sex = Female	Sex = Male
(12) Consumers - event	1	1	7	3	3	5	2	2	4	8

The feedback which consumers provided is as follows:

	Choose more than one option:					
	Based on the presented findings about the authenticity factors, will you consider now to change your food choices = No	Based on the presented findings about the authenticity factors, will you consider now to change anything about your food choices = Yes, search for more authentic restaurants	Based on the presented findings about the authenticity factors, will you consider now to change anything about your food choices = Yes, check the ethnicity of the staff	Based on the presented findings about the authenticity factors, will you consider now to change anything about your food choices = Yes, check if the products/ingredients are from the origin	Based on the presented findings about the authenticity factors, will you consider now to change anything about your food choices = Yes, have a different type of entertainment	Based on the presented findings about the authenticity factors, will you consider now to change anything at your food choices = Something else
(12) Consumers - event	3	9	2	3	2	1

	Do you find the results of the research interesting = Yes	Do you find the results of the research interesting = No	Do you find the results of the research applicable = Yes	Do you find the results of the research applicable = No	Do you feel that the current research might have an actual impact on you and how you perceive the authenticity and quality = Not at all	Do you feel that the current research might have an actual impact on you and how you perceive the authenticity and quality = Yes a little	Do you feel that the current research might have an actual impact on you and how you perceive the authenticity and quality = Yes much
(12) Consumers - event	12	0	12	0	0	5	6