

*Argiris Archakis**

CRITICAL NOTES ON THE GREEK HOMOGENIZING NATIONAL DISCOURSE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE POST-NATIONAL DISCOURSE

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I elaborate on specific tools provided by Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) for exposing and critiquing the hypocrisy of the ‘humanitarian/antiracist values’ of the Greek national discourse. In particular, I focus on the interplay between the macro- and micro-levels of discourse and I apply Reisigl and Wodak’s (2001) concept of critique to reveal inconsistencies often masked by manipulative hegemonic discourse. I also explore the concept of prospective critique based on alternative, antagonistic discourses aiming to improve communication. Drawing on Fairclough’s (1992) and Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) frameworks, I examine how antagonism between discourses challenges taken-for-granted assumptions. In this context, I review my research on the asymmetric representation of migrant and majority populations in Greek national discourse. Moreover, I propose post-national discourse as a means of critiquing the Greek national discourse, exposing the constructed and purportedly humanitarian character of its homogeneity and questioning its acceptance. Finally, I argue that this critique can inform educational approaches that destabilize homogeneous worldviews and promote cultural and linguistic hybridity, fostering more equitable interactions between migrant and majority populations.

Keywords: *(post-)national discourse, prospective critique, humanitarian/antiracist discourse*

*Professor of Discourse Analysis and Sociolinguistics, Department of Philology, University of Patras, Greece, email: archakis@upatras.gr

ΚΡΙΤΙΚΕΣ ΠΑΡΑΤΗΡΗΣΕΙΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΝ ΕΘΝΙΚΟ
ΟΜΟΓΕΝΟΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΟ ΛΟΓΟ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ ΜΕΣΑ
ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΠΡΙΣΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΤΑ-ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΛΟΓΟΥ

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Στην παρούσα μελέτη, επεξεργάζομαι συγκεκριμένα αναλυτικά εργαλεία από τις Κριτικές Σπουδές Λόγου (*Critical Discourse Studies*) προκειμένου να αποκαλύψω και να ασκήσω κριτική στην υποκρισία των «ανθρωπιστικών/αντιρατσιστικών αξιών» του ελληνικού εθνικού λόγου. Συγκεκριμένα, εστιάζω στην αλληλεπίδραση μεταξύ του μακρο- και μικρο-επιπέδου του λόγου (*discourse*) και εφαρμόζω την έννοια της κριτικής (*critique*) όπως την ορίζουν οι Reisigl και Wodak (2001), με σκοπό να αποκαλύψω ασυνέπειες που συχνά συγκαλύπτονται από τον (δια)χειριστικό ηγεμονικό λόγο. Παράλληλα, αξιολογώ την έννοια της προοπτικής κριτικής (*prospective critique*), η οποία βασίζεται σε λόγους εναλλακτικούς και ανταγωνιστικούς προς τον κυρίαρχο, με στόχο τη βελτίωση των όρων της επικοινωνίας. Αξιοποιώντας τις θεωρητικές προσεγγίσεις των Fairclough (1992) και Laclau & Mouffe (1985), εξετάζω πώς ο ανταγωνισμός μεταξύ λόγων (*discourses*) οδηγεί στην αμφισβήτηση καθιερωμένων παραδοχών που θεωρούνται αυτονόητες. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, επιχειρώ μια σύντομη ανασκόπηση της πρόσφατης έρευνάς μου σχετικά με την ασύμμετρη αναπαράσταση των μεταναστευτικού και πλειονοτικού πληθυσμού από τον ελληνικό εθνικό λόγο. Επιπλέον, εισάγω την έννοια του μετα-εθνικού λόγου ως ένα μέσο κριτικής προς τον ελληνικό εθνικό λόγο. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, ο μετα-εθνικός λόγος αναδεικνύει τον κατασκευασμένο και δήθεν ανθρωπιστικό χαρακτήρα της ομοιογένειας που προωθεί ο εθνικός λόγος και, επιπλέον, θέτει υπό αμφισβήτηση την αποδοχή του. Τέλος, υποστηρίζω ότι αυτή η κριτική μπορεί να πλαισιώσει εκπαιδευτικές προσεγγίσεις που αποδομούν ομοιογενείς αντιλήψεις για τον κόσμο και προάγουν την πολιτισμική και γλωσσική υβριδικότητα στο πλαίσιο ισότιμων αλληλεπιδράσεων μεταξύ μεταναστευτικού και πλειονοτικού πληθυσμού.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: (μετα-)εθνικός λόγος, προοπτική κριτική, ανθρωπιστικός/αντιρατσιστικός λόγος

*Καθηγητής Ανάλυσης Λόγου και Κοινωνιογλωσσολογίας, Τμήμα Φιλολογίας, Πανεπιστήμιο Πατρών.

1. CHOOSING CRITICAL DISCOURSE STUDIES AS A MEANS OF CRITIQUE

The movements of migrant populations towards Europe and, in particular, towards Greece have brought to the limelight migrants' cultural, religious, linguistic and other differences from the majority population.¹ Thus, questions such as the following could arise in public discourse: How do we approach migrants and their differences? Do we wish to get rid of them? Or do we wish to include them in our everyday lives? And if yes, how? Do we just wish to "permit" migrants to live as marginal and vulnerable groups within our national territory? Or do we wish to come into contact and interaction with them through blending our own ways of being, behaving and speaking with theirs?

The answers to these questions and the way we deal with the different, often undervalued identities of the "foreign Others" are closely related to reflections connected with the humanitarian, supposedly antiracist and inclusive discourse which has emerged after the atrocities of the II World War. Paradoxically, humanitarian discourse has been combined with national discourse and its homogenizing effects, mainly by defending the rights not of every human being regardless of their origins and identities, but of the national citizens, at least in the European national states and in the western world (see Chouliaraki, 2013; Douzinas, 2011; Panagaki et al., 2025). In this light, we could additionally consider the following questions: To what extent are humanitarian and antiracist values, that are opposed to race segregation and discrimination as well as to the denigration of different cultures, well intended and indeed have such effects? Is humanitarian discourse just a mask, a camouflage, that covers up the persistent goal of national discourse, i.e. the achievement of homogenization within the national territories via the eradication and/or assimilation of differences of the "foreign others"?

Considering the above remarks and questions and engaging in a process of self-reflection, I have to admit that my impetus for doing Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) research during the last 15 years or so, is related to my commitment to critique the hypocrisy of the "humanitarian/antiracist

1. Following Mirón and Inda (2000, p. 96), both migrant and majority populations are "always a hybrid, gendered, sexualized, and class-oriented construct". However, for the purposes of this paper, I assume that, generally speaking, migrants are less privileged and tend to occupy a lower social and economic position compared to majority populations — with numerous exceptions, of course.

values” of national discourse. During the last 35 years, I have watched the mass movement of migrants towards Greece from various countries both within and outside Europe. I am also a member of a collective in Patras, my home-town in Greece, that supports the incoming migrants by teaching them the Greek language, managing their legal affairs, finding (temporary) jobs for them, and providing them with food and clothes. So, I have personally witnessed the unequal status between migrant and majority populations and I have been deeply concerned about this. Moreover, it is quite clear to me that humanitarian values, albeit often invoked, do not mean a lot to migrants and their everyday lives in practice, as the latter continue to be in an inferior social position with almost no access to social goods and privileges.

In the following sections, I argue that although humanitarian/antiracist discourse is, in principle, opposed to racism and social inequalities, due to its coexistence with the hegemonic Greek national discourse, it ends up reproducing inequalities and discrimination while simultaneously offering “immunity to criticism” (Weaver, 2016, p. 63). I therefore attempt to demonstrate how this hypocrisy could be revealed through critique.

I begin by outlining key concepts central to my CDS approach, namely: a) the interplay between the macro- and the micro-levels of analysis and b) the concept of *discourse* belonging to the macro-level of analysis. Following this, I introduce my understanding of the concept of *critique* which mainly draws upon Reisigl and Wodak’s (2001) three related aspects of social critique. These aspects of critique are combined with the micro- and macro- level (see above) and are implemented in the analysis of the data. As my understanding of critique also pays particular attention to the antagonism between hegemonic and counter discourses at the macro-level, I delve into Fairclough’s (1992) model for CDS as well as into Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) approach to the critique of the taken-for-granted.

Building on this theoretical foundation, I elaborate on two previous studies of mine (see Archakis, 2014; 2016; Archakis et al., 2023) to show how my understanding of critique could be applied to data analysis. I begin by presenting the macro-level of the studies reported here, namely the racio-national homogenizing discourse and its overlap with the humanitarian/antiracist discourse, by employing Krzyżanowski’s (2020a; 2020b) concept of *borderline discourse*.

The analysis then shifts to the micro-level, where I examine specific datasets to identify inconsistencies within discourse. Thus, I illustrate how such inconsistencies can perform critique towards the hegemonic Greek

borderline discourse (in the macro-level) by revealing the manipulative character of its racio-national and humanitarian/antiracist assumptions and their homogenizing implications. Subsequently, I introduce the notion of post-national discourse, which as a counter discourse critiques the hegemonic Greek racio-national discourse at the macro-level.

Finally, I summarize the main points of my study and draw my final conclusions by briefly referring to the potential utilization of my analyses in educational projects.

2. THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE MACRO- AND THE MICRO-LEVELS OF ANALYSIS AND THE CONCEPT OF DISCOURSE

The theoretical framework of this study is Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), which investigates how discourse contributes to reproducing social inequalities including racism, among other things (see van Dijk 2005; 2008). As Forchtner (2011, p. 1) puts it, “[i]t is the role of discourse in the (re)production of unjustified discrimination and inequalities, the way discourses obscure (...) such power relations, which forms the common interest of CDA”. As mentioned earlier, one of the most important CDS principles pertains to the relationship between the macro-level involving the dominant discourses, i.e. the ways in which social reality is organized and represented (Fairclough, 2003), and the micro-level involving the various (linguistic, discursive, semiotic, etc.) positionings of individuals towards the discourses of the macro-level (van Dijk, 2008, pp. 85-89). The interplay between the macro- and the micro-level has been capitalized on by various studies within CDS. van Dijk (2008, p. 87) notes that “[l]anguage use, discourse, verbal interaction, and communication belong to the microlevel of the social order. Power, dominance, and inequality between social groups are typically terms that belong to a macrolevel of analysis”.

Discourse is a key concept in CDS originating in the Foucauldian tradition (e.g. Foucault, 1972; 1980). It refers to meaning fixations on the basis of which aspects of social reality are represented through a certain perspective (Fairclough, 2003, p. 124), or to “socially accepted associations among ways of using language, of thinking, valuing, acting and interacting, in the ‘right’ places and at the ‘right’ times with the ‘right’ objects” (Gee, 1999, p.26; see also Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pp. 25-26, 143). In this sense, the term can be used in English (among other languages) as a countable noun and appear in plural

as *discourses* or *Discourses* (with capital D) to mark the distinction from the uncountable noun discourse referring to the linguistic uses or texts included in the former (Gee, 1999).

Discourses neither passively represent nor reflect social reality (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 3, 39). Drawing on Moschonas' (2005, pp. 196 ff) performative approach, it could be suggested that discourses construct a social reality which, consequently, cannot be perceived or signified without them (Moschonas, 2005, pp. 196, 198, 199; see also Austin, 1962; Searle, 1976). By constructing the reality they represent, discourses bring together assumptions, value judgments, and social hierarchies, thus proposing "different ways of structuring areas of knowledge and social practice" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 3; see also Johnstone, 2002; Cooke and Simpson, 2012; Stamou, 2014; van Dijk, 2021). In addition, Fairclough (2003, p. 124) talks about discourses as being "projective, imaginaries, [and] representing possible worlds" (see also Fairclough, 1992, p. 3). As he aptly remarks, "[p]articular aspects of the world may be represented differently, so we are generally in the position of having to consider the relationship between different discourses. Different discourses are different perspectives on the world" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 124).

This distinction among discourses becomes adequately clear when opposing discourses coexist and attempt different or antagonistic constructions, representations and perceptions of aspects of social reality (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 143). For example, we make a distinction between the discourse of heteronormativity and that of homosexuality, between the discourse of formal/traditional education and that of critical education, and, in the present context, between the national discourse and the post-national discourse as well as between racist discourse and humanitarian/antiracist discourse (for the above discussion on discourses, see Archakis, 2020, pp. 28-33; Archakis & Tsakona, 2024, pp. 3-5).

Both the interplay between the macro- and the micro-levels and the concept of discourse will be implemented in the analyses provided. In the following section, I will elaborate on critique.

3. UNDERSTANDING CRITIQUE

Following Foucault (1997, p. 31), I approach critique as the attitude "to not to want to be governed". Foucault explains his position by pointing out that a critical attitude means "not accepting as true (...) what an authority tells you is true, or at least not accepting it because an authority tells you that

it is true". From this perspective, critique cannot but be socially situated, historically anchored and political (see Gounari, 2020, p. 11). Bearing this assumption in mind, in what follows, I will attempt to elaborate on my understanding of critique by following Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) three interrelated aspects of *social critique*, Fairclough's (1992) model for CDS (see section 2) as well as Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) approach to the *critique of the taken-for-granted*.

According to Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) approach, the social critique pursued by critical discourse studies could involve three interrelated aspects (see also Forchtner, 2011, pp. 3, 10-11):

1. *text immanent critique* aiming at discovering text-internal logical contradictions and inconsistencies;
2. *sociodiagnostic critique* aiming at demystifying the manipulative character of discursive practices;
3. *prospective critique* aiming at the improvement of communication and, in general, the transformation of the social structures.

In the analytical sections, I will apply the first two aspects of critique proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (2001) by analyzing two sets of data from separate studies I have conducted in the Greek context. I will focus both on the text-internal inconsistencies in the micro-level, i.e. on logically opposing standpoints, and on the fact that these inconsistencies are concealed, making them less discernible due to the manipulative and distorted character of the hegemonic discourse in the macro-level. This manipulative combination of discourses in the macro-level will be even more precisely revealed when the comparison between antagonistic discourses is directly linked to the third aspect of critique proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (2001), i.e. the *prospective critique*, which aims to improve communication and transform social structures.

In the remaining of the current section, I will elaborate on the third aspect of critique, i.e. on how the antagonistic critical comparison between discourses operates, based on Fairclough's (1992) approach and also on how antagonism illustrates the way critique is performed according to Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) approach to the critique of the taken-for-granted.

I begin the discussion by drawing on the relationship between discursive practices and social practices in Fairclough's (1992) model. Discursive practices refer to the production and reception of texts that take place in the light of available discourses aligned (or not) with a broad

and dominant discourse,² attached to powerful institutions, as e.g. is the national discourse of a nation state (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pp. 74, 142). When discourses are used and function in “*conventional* ways”, “the stability of the dominant order of discourse and thereby the dominant social order” is perpetuated (op.cit., p. 73). In Krzyżanowski’s (2020a, p. 439) words, “the discarding or silencing of non-dominant discourses allows the gradual naturalization of dominant discursive positions”. However, when different and antagonistic discourses are “combined in new and complex ways”, then we are in a process of “socio-cultural change” (op.cit.). This means that when discursive practices draw on discourses that are not aligned with the dominant discourse of an institution, they attempt socio-cultural change (see Fairclough, 1992, pp. 200 ff).

We should, however, bear in mind that socio-cultural change is not easy to occur, given that different and antagonistic discourses do not exist on equal terms with each other. One of them usually manages to become dominant, even if not to an absolute degree. Gramsci’s (1971) concept of *hegemony* is enlightening here, as it involves dominance on the basis of “alliances and the generation of consent” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 58). Thus, different discourses may compete with a central, hegemonic discourse which dominates as consensually accepted and naturalized. In such cases, evoking and entextualizing discourses which oppose the hegemonic one (and which may have been marginalized) constitutes a social practice of critique, threatening to denaturalize the central hegemonic discourse by disclosing its hegemony and challenging its consensual acceptance (see also Archakis & Tsakona, 2024, pp. 4-5).

From the perspective of social constructionism, Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) approach to the critique of the taken-for-granted could shed more light on the way antagonism between discourses takes place and on how antagonism could function as critique towards hegemonic discourse. In particular, Laclau and Mouffe (1985 as discussed in Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 190) maintain that

[t]wo discourses can collide in an antagonistic relationship to one another when they try to define the same terrain in conflicting ways. Antagonisms are dissolved through hegemony, whereby the one discourse conquers the terrain and appears as the objective reality; the objective being that which

2. The Foucauldian term *order of discourse* could also be employed here (see Fairclough, 1992, pp. 43, 68-69; Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, pp. 72).

has become taken-for-granted, that which we forget is contingent. The taken-for-granted emerges, then, when alternatives are pushed out of our vision (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 190).

In this context, we could approach *critique* as a process of “denaturalization of the taken-for-granted understandings of reality” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 185), namely as the process of denoting that “the entities which we see as objective and natural are, in reality, contingent combinations of elements which could always have been articulated differently” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 186). The critique of the taken-for-granted also seems to be relevant to the concept of *disinvention* proposed by Makoni and Pennycook (2007), which refers to “rethinking understandings” (op.cit., p. 17), offering “alternative ways of understanding” (op.cit., p. 29) and “opportunities for social intervention and counter-practices” (op.cit., p. 27). In sum, Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) discourse theory is “ideology³ critique in the sense that it aims to expose contingency and deconstruct objectivity” without, however, offering “any ideology-free truth” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 186).

4. MACRO-LEVEL AT PLAY: THE SHAPING OF THE GREEK RACIO -NATIONAL DISCOURSE

In this section, I elaborate on the macro-level of my studies reported here. In the first subsection, I discuss how the racio-national discourse emerges and under what circumstances it intersects with the humanitarian/antiracist discourse. In the second subsection, my discussion becomes more specific focusing on how the Greek racio-national discourse is shaped within a humanitarian/antiracist framework.

3. The term “ideology” has been given many interpretations within the framework of Marxist and post-Marxist thought. My understanding of ideology in this extract (and throughout this paper) primarily draws on a more general conceptualization proposed by van Dijk (1998, p. 126) who defines it as “the ‘axiomatic’ basis of the shared social representations of a group and its members”. More specifically, he points out that ideologies are “socially shared mental representations (...) [(partly) controlling] social practices (...) by which they are constructed (van Dijk, 1998, p. 9).

4.1. The Combination Of Racio-National Discourse With Humanitarian/Antiracist Discourse

First, I would like to point out that, in general, the national homogenizing discourse attempts to delimit the nation-state and present it as a pure entity with internal (linguo-cultural and historical) coherence within its state borders (Canagarajah, 2017). Such coherence, however, is never easy or achievable, because nondominant groups, like migrants, may disrupt it by not aligning with the dominant sociocultural ideologies. In such cases, national discourse takes the form of racist discourse and, in order to prevent potential ‘mixing’ of populations, cultures, and languages, it exercises pressure on resisting minorities and migrant populations either to align with national ideals or to abandon the nation-state. In this sense, racio-national discourse is “constituted by social practices of discrimination [...] and relationships of power abuse by dominant groups, organizations, and institutions” (van Dijk, 2008, p. 103; see also van Dijk, 1992).

Given that in the context of a nation-state one single culture, one language, and specific “common” values are usually considered acceptable, racio-national discourse achieves homogeneity by giving privileges and advantages, that is, economic and political power as well as access to resources, only to those who consent to its linguacultural directives while excluding the Others (see Golash-Boza, 2016, p. 133). Thus, racio-national discourse turns out to be one of the most efficient means for the achievement of national homogenization since it intends to eradicate or assimilate the (linguistic, cultural and other) difference of the Other through discrimination and denigration (Christopoulos, 2004, p. 346). As Gounari (2022a, p. 43) argues, drawing on Marcuse’s (1964) thought, national homogenization stems from the racist “one-dimensionality” that “produces one-dimensional thought and behavior and is carried by and embodied in one-dimensional discourse”.

However, we should bear in mind that in the western world, the humanitarian and antiracist values of tolerance and acceptance of difference are in wide social circulation (van Dijk, 1992, pp. 95-97). In particular, antiracism is opposed to “biological racism” and “many other forms of discriminatory discourse” (Bonnett, 2000, pp. 177-178). Antiracism could be understood as “any theory and/or practice (whether political or personal) that seeks to challenge, reduce, or eliminate manifestations of racism in society” (O’Brien, 2009, p. 501). Thus, antiracist discourse seeks to change patterns of privilege and power relations, on the basis of humanitarian

values which have emerged from within social movements during at least the past three centuries. These movements have opposed slavery and race segregation in North and South America, antisemitism and Nazism in Europe, Apartheid in South Africa, and European colonialism all over the world, and have defended human and civil rights for minorities (van Dijk, 2021; Maeso, 2015, p. 63). After World War II, and especially in the 1960s, the old world racial order, including white supremacy, was severely challenged by anticolonialism, anti-Apartheid, world-wide revulsion at Fascism, the US civil rights movement, etc. (Winant, 2002, p. 100; Chouliaraki, 2013; see also Archakis and Tsakona, 2024, p. 8). Particular emphasis has been placed on human dignity which became a term “integral to the development of humanitarian law and to the development of various constitutional legal frameworks during the 20th century” (Squire, 2017, p. 526).

Nevertheless, racio-national discourse still manages to become accepted, normalized and, most importantly, hegemonic despite the wide circulation of humanitarian and antiracist discourse (see Krzyżanowski, 2020a, p. 436; Krzyżanowski et al., 2023, pp. 3, 14). Krzyżanowski (2020b) introduces the concept of *borderline discourse* which “serves as evidence of a modified value system” (op.cit., p. 519). He thus underlines

the change in attitudes around once deviant positions –in our case very obvious racism– which are now being normalised by effectively being “clad” in acceptable, civil discourses helping to, inter alia, rationalise racism or even create arguments about its apparent moral virtues (op.cit., p. 519).

Through *borderline discourse*, racist attitudes and positionings (of both exclusion and assimilation) could be introduced, recontextualized in various media texts (op.cit., pp. 505, 524), and finally be “married with seemingly civil and apparently politically correct language and argumentation” (op.cit., pp. 503, 509). As we shall see later, racio-national discourse adopts many humanitarian and antiracist views and, functioning as a *borderline discourse*, ‘flipsides’ them in favor of arguments of national homogenization (see Krzyżanowski & Krzyżanowska, 2022, p. 805). Thus, racio-national discourse gradually becomes commonsensical, normalized and hegemonic.

In sum, racio-national discourse gradually “becomes an assumed ‘given’”, a ‘new normal’ (Krzyżanowski & Krzyżanowska, 2022, p. 814), “spreading exclusionary views [...] under the guise of civil-like ‘objective opinions’” (Krzyżanowski & Ledin, 2017, p. 12). It is at this point that

the critique towards racio-national discourse with humanitarian/antiracist framing becomes relevant. As Krzyżanowski and Krzyżanowska (2022, p. 815) suggest, this “new normal” “requires an ongoing deconstruction from the point of view of its deployment as a tool that creates affordances for processes that facilitate (...) politics of exclusion”.

In light of this discussion, I will argue that CDS could perform a deconstructive critique of the ‘new normal’ in the Greek context by identifying text-internal inconsistencies, often invisible due to the manipulative effects of the hegemonic Greek racio-national discourse, and, most importantly, by fostering the emergence of an antagonistic and oppositional *post-national* discourse.

4.2. The Greek Racio -National Discourse With Its Humanitarian/ Antiracist Framing

During 1990-2020, Greece has received migrants from different countries, both inside and outside Europe. Up to 2010, the majority of them came from Albania. Migrants in general faced a xenophobic and racio-national discourse. Majority’s intense desire to see migrants excluded from the national body was realized through a long list of racial policies that caused serious problems to migrants’ everyday lives in the domains of employment, healthcare, religious practices, education etc. Such xenophobic and racist attitudes were also expressed in the 2015 national parliamentary elections. At that time, a considerable part of the Greek population, almost 7% of the electorate, voted for the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn, that became the third largest political party in the Greek parliament. Essentially, a large part of the Greek population voted in favor of a far-right party with an extreme nationalist and anti-migration agenda (see Archakis, 2020, pp. 115-128).

The Greek xenophobic and racist attitudes are also expressed in Greek education, where, despite the increased number of migrants living in Greece, their heritage languages are excluded and the dominance of the Greek language is absolute both as a teaching subject and as the only language of instruction. Children coming from migrant communities are exposed exclusively to the Greek-speaking curriculum *as if* Greek was their native language, while their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds remain disregarded in their education (Kiliari, 2005). In other words, these students are (in)directly forced by the dominant racio-national discourse and language education policy to assimilate by learning the

Greek language, embracing the Greek culture and abandoning their own linguacultural traits (see Archakis, 2014, p. 301).

On the other hand, a significant number of institutional and social movements and organisations have been mobilized to support migrants in various ways such as providing food, legal and healthcare support and language courses (see Teloni & Mantanika, 2015, pp. 194-196).⁴ At the same time, the recent antiracist law No. 4285/2014 is meant to reinforce and complement the previous one (Law No. 927/1979). Both of them are based on decisions of the United Nations (1966) and the Council of the European Union (2008) (see Assimakopoulos, 2020, p. 178). They stipulate criminal sanctions against actions that incite discrimination, hate speech, and violence against individuals or groups based on their racial, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc. Despite the various problems present in the Greek anti-racist laws, in relation to their formulations and to how they have been implemented, they showcase an effort to support equality between majority and minority-migrant populations and to protect the latter's rights. From this perspective, they could be conceived as an attempt to align the democratic public life in Greece with humanitarian and anti-racist discourses (see Gazakis et al., 2014; Fountedaki, 2016; see also Archakis et al., 2023, p. 59). However, these laws quite often turn out to be only a “progressive cover-up” and are scarcely ever implemented in an efficient way so as to really protect and support migrants' rights (Boutoulousi, 2002, p. 56). I would therefore suggest that the Greek national discourse is constituted as a racio-national discourse with a humanitarian/antiracist framing.

5. THE INTERPLAY OF MICRO- AND MACRO- LEVEL OF ANALYSIS AS CRITIQUE TOWARDS THE HEGEMONIC GREEK BORDERLINE DISCOURSE

In this section, I explore the first two aspects of critique proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (2001) in my analysis of two sets of data. I will focus both on the micro-level, in particular, on the text-internal contradictions, i.e. on logically opposing standpoints; and on the macro level, in particular, on the

4. We could also refer here to various (inter)national initiatives that, based on the movement of political correctness, condemn the use of the Greek term *λαθρομετανάστης* (meaning “illegal migrant”) and instead propose alternative terms that avoid racist connotations (see Stamatini et al., 2021).

fact that these inconsistencies are covered up and, thus, they are not easily discernible due to the manipulative character of the hegemonic Greek borderline discourse consisting of both humanitarian and racio-national assumptions. The manipulative Greek national borderline discourse is the main object of critique as this promotes the goal of homogenization and prevents the development of “inclusive and, egalitarian” social relations, as Forchtner (2011, p. 8) puts it, drawing on Habermas (1996) thought.

5.1. Applying Text Immanent Critique to the Micro-Level Of Analysis: Tracing Inconsistencies of the “I am not a racist, but...” Type

In this section, I examine the first set of data coming from the research project *TRACE: Tracing racism in antiracist discourse* (see Trace Project, 2023; Archakis & Tsakona, 2024). In this project, we have attempted to show how racism, being covert and liquid (see Tsakona et al., 2020; Archakis, 2022a) manages to infiltrate texts that are programmatically defined as opposed to racist views. Thus, they could be paraphrased using the disclaimer “I am not a racist, but...” (see Archakis & Tsakona, 2024). Employing CDS tools (see Boukala & Stamou, 2020), we came to the conclusion that in the Greek antiracist corpus that we compiled, migrants are consistently discriminated against, when compared to majority groups and, generally speaking, they are represented either as posing a risk or as being at risk (Archakis et al., 2023; Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017).

Migrants’ representation as posing a risk, i.e. a threat, an invasion, an infection (literal or metaphorical/cultural), is less common in our antiracist corpus. This may not come as a surprise, since such representations bear explicit connotations of exclusion, which is the most overt form of racism that is not quite expected in antiracist texts. However, the fact that racist exclusion is found/identified in antiracist texts, is probably due to the gradual normalization of far-right discourse that takes place during the last decades throughout Europe (see e.g. Krzyżanowski, 2020b).

Migrants’ representation as being at risk, i.e. as people being vulnerable and suffering at many levels of everyday life is particularly common in the antiracist texts of our corpus. Our analyses (see Archakis et al., 2023; Archakis & Tsakona, 2024) show that migrants are often represented in a dehumanizing way, with very limited agency, never in high status positions in the social hierarchy, as weak, vulnerable and suffering people, willing to accept the paternalistic help of the powerful majority people, and as

willing to accept the value system of the dominant majority, to internalize it and to become fully assimilated to the majority society.

These representations are illustrated in the following three examples from sources ideologically aligned with the Greek antiracist laws and respective antiracist discourses. Let us begin with examples (1) and (2):

(1) Οι άνθρωποι αυτοί βρίσκονται σε τρομερή ανάγκη για να διακινδυνεύουν τη ζωή τους και τη ζωή των παιδιών τους. Είναι τρομαγμένοι και φοβερά ταλαιπωρημένοι, με εμφανή σημάδια κακοποίησης από το ταξίδι και τις συνθήκες παραμονής τους στη Λιβύη. [Γιατροί Χωρίς Σύνορα: Εμπειρίες διάσωσης προσφύγων και μεταναστών, 25.02.2017, www.ert.gr]

These people are in great need when they risk their lives and their children's lives. They are scared and extremely exhausted with apparent signs of abuse from the journey and the living conditions in Libya [Doctors without borders: Experiences of refugee and migrant rescues, 25.02.2017, www.ert.gr]

(2) Με θλίψη παρακολουθούμε ανήλικα προσφυγόπουλα να στοχοποιούνται ως φταίχτες των προβλημάτων μας, ξεχνώντας ότι είναι κατατρεγμένα ανήλικα παιδιά που ξεριζώθηκαν από τον τόπο τους χάνοντας οικογένεια, σπίτι – πατρίδα λόγω των πολέμων που διεξάγονται. [Ένωση Συλλόγων Γονέων Περάματος: Να υποδεχτούμε και να αγκαλιάσουμε τα προσφυγόπουλα, 17.01.2017, <https://www.alfavita.gr>]

We sadly watch underage refugee children being targeted as the culprits of our problems, forgetting that they are persecuted minors, uprooted from their place, losing family, home - homeland, due to the wars being waged. [Association of Parents of Perama: Let's welcome and embrace refugee children, 17.01.2017, <https://www.alfavita.gr>]

In these examples, via appreciative modality (Stamou, 2014, p. 174; see also Halliday, 1994) and, in particular, via emotionally charged vocabulary: *in great need, are scared and extremely exhausted with apparent signs of abuse* (example 1); *persecuted minors, uprooted from their place* (example 2), migrants are represented as “impoverished, miserable war victims, who need the help [of majority people], thus (possibly) evoking emotions of sympathy, compassion, and solidarity to the audience” (Karachaliou et al., 2024, p. 53).

Similarly, the vast majority of the texts included in the antiracist corpus compiled and analyzed, contain traces of racism, since their seemingly

humanitarian and antiracist framing coexist with racist representations of migrants. As I mentioned above, migrants are represented either as posing a risk or, mainly, as being at risk, i.e. as being vulnerable, suffering (see examples 1 and 2) and thus ready to become assimilated by losing their own cultural, linguistic, religious and other characteristics.

The goal of assimilation is explicitly promoted in extracts like the one in example (3), where, although there is reference to learning Greek as an L2, there is no reference to refugees' and migrants' heritage languages. In other words, the promotion of linguistic assimilation is overtly perceived as the most important goal to be attained:

(3) Εδώ και πολλά χρόνια λειτουργούν στην Αθήνα σχολεία διδασκαλίας της ελληνικής γλώσσας. Στόχος είναι οι πρόσφυγες και οι μετανάστες να μάθουν την ελληνική γλώσσα για να μπορέσουν να ενταχθούν ομαλά στην κοινωνία, να επικοινωνήσουν, να διαχειρίζονται υποθέσεις νομικής φύσεως και να καταγγέλλουν φαινόμενα ρατσιστικής βίας εις βάρος τους. [Μαθαίνοντας την αλφαβήτα της αλληλεγγύης, 24.04.2016, www.kar.org.gr]

For many years now, schools teaching Greek [as an L2] operate in Athens. Their goal is to teach refugees and migrants the Greek language so they will be able to smoothly integrate in society, to communicate, to manage [their] legal affairs and to report incidents of racist violence against them. [Learning the alphabet of solidarity, 24.04.2016, www.kar.org.gr]

In example 3, via the circumstantial elements of purpose (Halliday, 1994, p. 153) (*in order to be able to smoothly integrate in society, communicate, manage legal affairs, report phenomena of racist violence against them*), learning Greek appears as a prerequisite for the “integration” or, more accurately, the assimilation of migrants and refugees in the Greek society (Karachaliou et al., 2024, p. 61).

Relevant analyses pinpoint text-internal inconsistencies in the micro-level (as indicated in examples 1-3) and, thus, disclose the manipulative character of antiracist discourse in the macro-level (Archakis & Tsakona, 2024). Thus, in Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) terms, such analyses critique the hypocrisy of the humanitarian/antiracist discourse which is combined with the racio-national discourse serving the same homogenizing goal. These issues will be further discussed in section (5.3).

5.2. Applying Text Immanent Critique to the Micro-Level of Analysis: Tracing Inconsistencies of the “I Am Adjusting Myself, But...” Type

In this section, I move on to the discussion of my second set of data including narrative school essays written by migrant students living in Greece. I investigate the ways they describe the racist behaviors they suffered and, thus, the homogenizing pressures they experienced (see Archakis, 2014; 2022b). To this end, a useful distinction that could be applied is between *legitimizing identities* and *resistance identities* (Castells, 2010, p. 8). Legitimizing identities are constructed by migrants who yield to pressures for linguistic, cultural and social assimilation, while resistance identities are constructed by migrants trying to survive as members of marginal ethnic groups within a nation-state, challenging its social conventions, norms and hierarchies.

Post-colonial studies move beyond such binary distinctions and towards the complex and hybrid ways through which people from different cultural and social backgrounds manage to construct resistance identities against homogenizing impositions. Bhabha (1994/2004) argues that when people from different origins and hierarchical statuses, such as majority and migrant people, come into contact, they create a “cultural hybridity” (op.cit., p. 5), “an in-between reality” (op.cit., p. 19) that “unsettles any simplistic polarities or binarisms” (op.cit., p. 76). This conceptualization of hybridity helps us understand the complicated ways resistance identities and practices can actually be constructed vis-a-vis homogenizing impositions (see Archakis, 2018, pp. 5-6).

In Greece, despite the xenophobic and racist reception of migrants, some migrant students dare to follow an alternative way through constructing hybrid identities of resistance. Elsewhere, I have shown (see Archakis, 2014; 2022b) how some migrant students seem to construct hybrid identities via several versions of the disclaimer *I am adjusting myself, but....* This disclaimer could be analyzed as a recontextualization of the disclaimer *I am not a racist, but....* Migrant students attempt to both comply with assimilationist pressures so as to legitimize themselves as members of the host community, and resist such pressures by highlighting aspects of their own migrant experiences. The following examples⁵ are illustrative (see Archakis, 2014, pp. 304-5):

5. The Greek extracts from migrant students’ essays maintain the original, sometimes unconventional spelling, punctuation and structure.

(4) (...) ειχα συνηθισει πλεον την δευτερη μου πατριδα (...) παρ' ολ αυτά όμως ποτε δεν ξεχναω τις δυσκολες μερες που περασα στην αρχή.

I had at last gotten used to my second homeland [i.e. Greece], *nevertheless I never forget the difficult days I had at the beginning.*

(5) (...) η Ελλάδα είναι μια χώρα που μου δίνει ευκαιρία κ' αληθινά την αγαπάω πολύ (...) παρόλο που οι βασικές μου αναμνήσεις είναι πικρές (...)

(...) Greece is a country that gives me opportunity and honestly I really love it (...) *even though my main memories are bitter* (...).

According to my analysis, the second part of these disclaimers (marked in italics) constitutes a resistance initiative “from below”, i.e. from the migrant students. Their decision to refer to their hardship and sufferings unveil what majority people should not have done from a humanitarian perspective. Thus, they damage the face of the majority members (see Brown and Levinson, 1987) and critique them. However, this critique is not easily discernible because the hegemonic racio-national discourse, expressed in the first parts of the disclaimers, attempts to downplay migrants’ humanitarian/antiracist resistance which normally is not expected in the Greek national context.

My analysis of this set of data identifies text-internal inconsistencies in the micro-level (as indicated in examples 4 and 5) and, in particular, covert and implied resistance initiatives by migrant students that critique majority people’s behaviors. Thus, my analysis discloses the manipulative character of racio-national discourse which, by promoting homogenization as expressed in the first part of the disclaimers, attempts to downplay migrants’ humanitarian/antiracist resistance. Following Reisigl and Wodak’s (2001) approach, my analysis critiques the homogenizing goals of racio-national discourse by bringing to the fore migrants’ hybrid resistance identities. I will return to this discussion in the following section.

5.3. The Macro-Level of Sociodiagnostic Critique: Disclosing the Manipulative Character of the Hegemonic Greek National Discourse

In this section, I delve into the findings presented in the previous sections, where text-internal inconsistencies have been identified, thus leading to the demystification of the manipulative character of the hegemonic

Greek borderline discourse. In what follows, I elaborate on how my critical analyses in the micro-level could function as critique towards the hegemonic Greek borderline discourse, i.e. the Greek racio-national discourse with its humanitarian/antiracist overtones, as discussed earlier, that pursues national homogenization, preventing the development of “inclusive and egalitarian” social relations (Forchtner, 2011, p. 8).

In the first dataset, inconsistencies have been identified between, the antiracist framing of the texts, which is either explicitly stated or inferred by the medium and sociopolitical context of publication, and, the racist goal of migrants’ assimilation and, less often, exclusion. These inconsistencies are not always easy to trace due to the manipulative effects of the humanitarian/antiracist discourse as it circulates in various media (see Krzyżanowski & Ledin, 2017; Krzyżanowski, 2020b). Thus, the antiracist and humanitarian framing of these texts prevents readers from realizing that migrants are represented in inferior positions, i.e. mainly as passive and vulnerable individuals ready to accept the help from powerful majority people and, by implication, ready to comply with the homogenizing expectations of the national majority.

The critical analysis of this dataset led to the conclusion that, since migrants appear willing to accept humanitarian help by majority people, they could also be ready to abandon their cultural differences and assimilate to dominant national conventions, thus fulfilling majority groups’ expectations. However, these expectations reproduce power relations between the migrants and majority groups (see Panagaki et al., 2025) and are obviously not in line with humanitarian/antiracist values and views. On the contrary, these expectations are racist, because they intend to eradicate the (cultural, linguistic and other) differences of migrant populations, looking forward to their adjustment to the dominant national values and views. As Reisigl and Wodak (2001, p. 33) put it,

[h]ere, the critical [analytic] gaze is directed at exposing (...) contradictions and oppositions (...) between nice [here humanitarian] declarations that have the function of positive political self-presentation and discriminatory administrative exclusionary practices that conflict with these declarations.

Similar inconsistencies have also been identified in the second dataset consisting of migrant students’ narrative school essays. In particular, I have shown that, while some migrant students present themselves as adjusting to national values and views according to majority expectations, they simultaneously disclose their sufferings due to racist behaviors by the

national majority because of migrants' persistent (cultural, linguistic and other) differences. By so doing, they critique the majority.

These inconsistencies once again are not easily noticeable, even for socially- sensitive readers or analysts, due to the manipulative effects of the racio-national discourse. According to the findings of the analysis (see Archakis, 2014; 2022b), due to the homogenizing racio-national discourse, many migrant students have internalized racism and thus construct legitimizing identities. In this context, the fact that some of them complain about their suffering due to their (cultural, linguistic and other) differences, may seem as a commonly attested reaction, given their declaration of adjustment to the national norms. Nevertheless, the analysis shows that, by referring to their suffering and by representing majority people as responsible for it, some migrant students dare to unveil what majority people should not have done from a humanitarian/antiracist perspective. In this way, the analysis brings to the surface the critique by some migrant students to the majority people.

In sum, by pinpointing text-internal inconsistencies, my analyses have shown how the hegemonic Greek borderline discourse operates with various, not easily recognizable, manipulative effects by drawing on both the racio-national and the humanitarian/antiracist discourse: On the one hand, through the manipulative character of the humanitarian/antiracist discourse, national assimilation is promoted. On the other hand, through the manipulative character of the racio-national discourse, the humanitarian/antiracist resistance is downplayed.

6. PROSPECTIVE CRITIQUE AS ANTAGONISM OF DISCOURSES: HEGEMONIC GREEK BORDERLINE DISCOURSE VS POST-NATIONAL DISCOURSE

In this section, I proceed with the third aspect of critique proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (2001), i.e. with *future-related prospective critique* which, in my view, could be based on an alternative *post-national discourse* and aims at the improvement of communication and social relations between majority and migrant populations. Following the discussion of section (3), and by highlighting this alternative and antagonistic post-national discourse, here I attempt to denaturalize and deconstruct the hegemonic and manipulative Greek borderline discourse and, in particular, its main goal which is national homogenization.

As I have argued elsewhere (see Archakis, 2016, 2020), and following Moyer and Rojo (2007, p. 156), migrant populations are among the most powerful forces challenging the national homogenizing discourse. Migration goes hand-in-hand with *globalization from below*, which is also a crucial factor in undermining traditional national boundaries as it implies social, communicative and financial extension of human activities far beyond the narrow local-national level (see Blackledge & Creese, 2009; Stroud & Wee, 2012, p. 37). In this context, languages and cultures, previously considered as pure entities, have gradually started to be perceived as hybrid. The traditional view according to which languages and cultures, as homogeneous entities with historical continuity, are located within national borders is seriously challenged both in theoretical as well as in empirical terms (Heller, 2008, pp. 506, 509–510; Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, pp. 3–4). Sociolinguistic studies have brought to the surface phenomena of linguistic superdiversity (see Vertovec, 2007; Blommaert, 2010): languages and language varieties are no longer viewed as static entities, linked in a unidirectional way with specific stable characteristics (e.g. gender, age, social class, geographical borders). Rather, languages and language varieties are seen as resources on which migrants draw to form their styles and their linguistic and cultural identities in relation to their communicative goals (see Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Stroud & Wee, 2012, p. 39).

On the other hand, modern technology also allows migrants to maintain transnational ties with friends and relatives living in their places of origin (see Blackledge & Creese, 2009; Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 3). Such contacts result in the maintenance of their heritage languages as well as in the exploitation of linguistic features from their languages in the shaping of their styles and identities (see Stroud & Wee, 2012, p. 37). As Cohen (1997, p. 175) suggests, in various parts of the world and mainly in large cosmopolitan capitals, we no longer see homogeneous cultural and linguistic identities, but “an increasing proliferation of subnational and transnational identities that cannot easily be contained in the nation-state system” (cited in Rampton, 2006, p. 7) (for the above remarks, see Archakis, 2016; 2020).

Consequently, the traditional national assumptions of “stability”, strict “boundaries” and “uniformization” in relation to language, culture, morality, ways of being and perceiving the self, seem, at least in some places, to be substituted by “mobility”, “fuzziness” and “multiplicity” (see Heller, 2008, p. 512; Blommaert and Rampton, 2011, pp. 3–4). In

such contexts, a new, post-national discourse has been put forward due to migrant movements (Archakis, 2016; 2020). Migrants often perceive themselves as simultaneously belonging to more than one place and having at their disposal multiple linguistic and cultural resources (see also Blackledge and Creese, 2009, p. 457). Thus, they are able to construct and negotiate different post-national identities as they ‘converse’ with the recently arising post-national, deconstructive discourse.

Drawing on the above remarks, I argue that, by placing emphasis on the currently attested linguistic and cultural superdiversity and indeterminacy, post-national discourse could function as an alternative and antagonistic discourse compared to racio-national discourses, in general, and to the Greek national homogenizing discourse, in particular. Thus, the emergence and circulation of the post-national discourse could be conceived as a social practice that threatens to deconstruct the hegemonic Greek discourse, i.e. as critique that discloses its homogenizing, taken-for-granted assumptions.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND SOME EDUCATIONAL PROPOSALS

As I stated at the very beginning of this paper, my impetus for conducting Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) research stems from my commitment to critiquing the hypocrisy of the ‘humanitarian/antiracist values’ of national discourse. To this end, I reviewed my research on the asymmetrical way in which the hegemonic Greek racio-national discourse represents migrant and majority populations. My main concern was to reflect on the critical component of the CDS approach by demonstrating how it provides appropriate methodological tools for disclosing the homogenizing goals of the hegemonic Greek national discourse, often unnoticed due to its humanitarian/antiracist covering. Thus, I have managed to critique or, using Foucault’s (1997, p. 31) terms, “not to accept as true”, the hypocrisy of the ‘humanitarian values’ of the Greek racio-national discourse which (re)produce inequalities between majority and migrant populations.

The key concepts I relied on in my CDS approach was the interplay between the macro- and the micro-level of analysis and the concept of *discourse*. My specific understanding of *critique* was based on Reisigl and Wodak’s (2001) approach, i.e. on the identification of *text-internal inconsistencies* that are not easily discernible due to the *manipulative character* of the hegemonic discourse. Moreover, from the same approach I also took into account the concept of *future-related prospective critique*, which could be based on an alternative and antagonistic discourse,

and aims at the improvement of communication and, in general, the transformation of the social structures. In relation to this, I also delved into i) the way antagonism between discourses operates (in the framework of Fairclough's 1992 model), and ii) the way antagonism illustrates how critique is performed according to Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) approach to the *critique of the taken-for-granted* (see also Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

I elaborated on the critique component of my critical perspective by analyzing two sets of data from different studies I have conducted in the Greek context, implementing the macro- and the micro-level distinction. In both sets, I identified text-internal inconsistencies that facilitate the promotion of homogenizing racio-national views. I also highlighted the fact that these inconsistencies are not easily identified as they are covered up by the manipulative character of both the humanitarian/antiracist and the racio-national dimensions of the hegemonic Greek borderline discourse. From this perspective, my analyses could be seen as critique towards the goal of national homogenization promoted by the hegemonic Greek national discourse.

Moreover, in order to attempt a prospective critique, I drew attention to the post-national discourse which is opposed to homogenization as it places emphasis on the currently attested linguistic and cultural superdiversity and indeterminacy. Thus, I proposed that the post-national discourse could be perceived as performing critique to the hegemonic Greek national discourse by underlining the contingency of homogeneity and by challenging its consensual acceptance.

I would like to conclude this paper by briefly referring to the potential utilization of the analyses presented here in educational projects, aiming at the improvement of communication and social relations between majority and migrant populations. From this perspective, critique does not function as a means "oriented only to understanding or explaining [society]" (Gounari, 2020, p. 11), but also carries "a sense of possibility for transformation" (Pennycook, 1990, p. 307, cited in Gounari, 2020, p. 9).

In particular, I argue that the critique stemming from the post-national discourse, could be part of educational proposals aiming, on the one hand, at the disinvention and the destabilization of the homogeneous understanding of the world; and, on the other, at prioritizing the hybridity and the mixing of languages and cultures, and thus improving the social interaction between majority and migrant populations on equal and unpredictable terms.

National education –at least in western states– is based on racio-national discourses contributing to the maintenance and reinforcement

of majority students' *privileges*, i.e. the privilege of using the standard national language and the privilege of being familiar with the national culture (Archakis, 2020). If we wish to improve the communication between majority and migrant populations, we would rather introduce post-national discourse in educational settings. Educators have a crucial role to play here, provided that the following conditions are met (possibly among others): i) if they manage to disengage themselves from the assumptions and the directives of the hegemonic racio-national discourse; ii) if they are in the process of unlearning and un-educating themselves from the tenets of the western colonial knowledge (see Gounari, 2022b, p. 14); and iii) if they are committed to a critical literacy approach (see e.g. Janks, 2012) that challenges racio-national, xenophobic discourses. Such educators could use empathy activities in mixed classrooms asking majority students to take the position of a migrant classmate of theirs. As Gounari (2020, p. 13) very aptly points out:

in teaching contexts where students come from privileged groups, educators' work is equally challenging and important. The goal here is to help those students see themselves in the world, acknowledge their privilege, question their assumptions and stereotypes, be able to see the world through the eyes of the oppressed, and ultimately gain a different kind of agency—one that does not exist at the expense of the other.

Within this framework, migrant students' texts, such as the ones analyzed in this paper, could form the basis for empathy activities. The main goal of such activities (alongside other educational practices) would be to challenge the dominant racio-national discourse with (hypocritical) humanitarian overtones, and to promote the post-national discourse instead, where homogeneous normative languages and cultures are neither rewarded nor expected (see Archakis, 2020). Hybridity and the mixing of languages and cultures could therefore be welcome and celebrated. Afterall, migrants' presence in our societies and in our classrooms could help us not only see the world from their own perspective, but to create a new perspective *with* them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to the editors of this Special Issue for their valuable suggestions and to my good friend and colleague Prof. Villy Tsakona for her insightful comments.

REFERENCES

- Archakis, A. (2014). Immigrant voices in students' essay texts: Between assimilation and pride. *Discourse and Society*, 25(3), pp. 297-314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926513519539>
- Archakis, A. (2016). National and post-national discourses and the construction of linguistic identities by students of Albanian origin in Greece. *Multilingua: Journal of Cross-cultural and Interlanguage Communication*, 35(1), pp. 57-83. <https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2014-0055>
- Archakis, A. (2018). The Representations of racism in immigrant students' essays in Greece: The 'hybrid balance' between legitimizing and resistance identities. *Pragmatics*, 28(1), pp. 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.16016.arc>
- Archakis, A. (2020). *From national to post-national discourse: Immigrant identities and critical education* (In Greek). Patakis.
- Archakis, A. (2022a). Tracing racism in antiracist narrative texts online. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 45(7), pp. 1261-1282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1904145>
- Archakis, A. (2022b). The continuum of identities in immigrant students' narratives in Greece. *Narrative Inquiry*, 32(2), pp. 393-423. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.19118.arc>
- Archakis, A. & Tsakona, V. (Eds.) (2024). *Exploring the ambivalence of liquid racism: In between antiracist and racist discourse*. Pragmatics and Beyond New Series. John Benjamins.
- Archakis, A., Karachaliou, R., Tsami, V. & Lazanas, A. (2023). Tracing racism in a corpus of anti-racist texts about refugee and immigrant populations (In Greek). In A. Archakis, R. Karachaliou, & V. Tsakona (Eds.), *Tracing the infiltration of racism in anti-racist discourse: Studies on liquid racism* (In Greek) (pp. 51-125). Pedio.
- Austin J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Clarendon Press.
- Assimakopoulos, S. (2020). Incitement to discriminatory hatred, illocution and perlocution. *Pragmatics and Society*, 11, pp. 177-195. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.18071.ass>
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994/2004). *The location of culture*. Routledge.
- Blackledge, A., & Creese, A. (2009). 'Because tumi bangali': Inventing and disinventing the national in multilingual communities in the UK. *Ethnicities*, 9 (4), pp. 451-476. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687968093456>
- Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.
- Blommaert, J. & Rampton, B. (2011). Language and superdiversity. *Diversities*, 13, pp. 1-20.
- Bonnett, A. (2000). *Anti-racism*. Routledge.
- Boukala, S. & Stamou, A. G. (2020). *Critical discourse analysis: (De)constructing the Greek reality* (In Greek). Nissos.
- Boutoulousi, E. (2002). The multicultural school: Critical approaches and cultural awareness (In Greek). In A. Avdi and A. Chrysafidou (Eds.), *Discovering the wealth of diversity through art: Meeting proceedings of the Comenius and Education without Borders Programs* (In Greek) [28 March-2 April 2001] (pp. 39-88). Pegasus.
- Brown, P. & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.
- Canagarajah, S. (2017). Introduction. The nexus of migration and language: The emergence of a disciplinary space. In S. Canagarajah (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of migration and language* (pp. 1-28). Routledge.
- Castells, M. (2010). *The power of identity* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2013). *The ironic spectator: Solidarity in the age of post-humanitarianism*. Polity Press.

- Chouliraki, L., & Stolic, T. (2017). Rethinking media responsibility in the refugee 'crisis': A visual typology of European news. *Media, Culture and Society*, 39 (8), pp. 1162-1177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443717726>
- Cohen, R. (1997). *Global diasporas: An introduction*. UCL Press.
- Cooke, M., & Simpson, J. (2012). Discourses about linguistic diversity. In M. Martin-Jones, A. Blackledge and A. Creese (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of multilingualism* (pp. 116-130). Routledge.
- Christopoulos, D. (2004). Immigrants in the Greek political community (In Greek). In M. Pavlou and D. Christopoulos (Eds.), *Greece of migration: Social participation, rights and citizenship* (In Greek) (pp. 338-366). Kritiki SA and Minority Groups Research Centre (KEMO).
- Douzinis, C. (2011). The paradoxes of human rights (In Greek). In A. Androusou, & N. Askouni (Eds.), *Cultural diversity and human rights: Challenges for education* (In Greek) (pp. 102-124). Metaichmio.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analyzing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. Routledge.
- Forchtner, B. (2011). Critique, the discourse-historical approach, and the Frankfurt School. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 8(1), pp. 1-14. 10.1080/17405904.2011.533564
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The archeology of knowledge and the discourse on language*. Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*. Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1997). *The politics of truth*. (S. Lotringer & L. Hochroth, Eds.). Semiotext(e).
- Foundadaki, P. (2016). Legal culture and the antiracist law: From the particularity of the USA and the British standard to the Greek perspective (In Greek). *Contemporary Issues (Σύγχρονα Θέματα)*, 132-133, pp. 40-51.
- Gazakis, A., Sirri, D., & Takis, A. (2014). *Racism and discriminations in Greece today*. Heinrich Böll.
- Gee, J. P. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. Routledge.
- Golash-Boza, T. (2016). A critical and comprehensive sociological theory of race and racism. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 2(2), pp. 129-141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/232649216632242>
- Gounari, P. (2020). Introduction to the Special Issue on Critical Pedagogies. *L2 Journal*, 12(2), pp. 3-20. <https://doi.org/10.5070/L212249913>
- Gounari, P. (2022a). *From twitter to Capitol Hill: Far-right authoritarian populist discourses, social media and critical pedagogy*. Critical Media Literacies 10. Brill.
- Gounari, P. (2022b). Critical pedagogy and beyond: An interview with Panayota Gounari. *Cadernos Cimeac*, 12(3), pp. 8-20. <https://doi.org/10.18554/cimeac.v12i3.6622>
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks*. Lawrence and Wishart.
- Habermas, J. (1998). Some further clarifications of the concept of communicative rationality. In M. Cooke (Ed.), *On the pragmatics of communication* (pp. 307-342). MIT Press. (Original work published 1996)
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1994). *An introduction to functional grammar* (2nd ed.). Edward Arnold.
- Heller, M. (2008). Language and the nation-state: Challenges to sociolinguistic theory and practice. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 12(4), pp. 504-524.
- Janks, H. (2012). The importance of critical literacy. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 11(1), pp. 150-163.
- Johnstone, B. 2002. *Discourse analysis*. Blackwell.
- Jørgensen, M., & Phillips, L. (2002). *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. Sage.

- Karachaliou, R., Tsami, V., Lazanas, A., & Archakis, A. (2024). Racist discourses of discrimination and assimilation in an antiracist corpus. In A. Archakis & V. Tsakona (Eds.), *Exploring the ambivalence of liquid racism: In between antiracist and racist discourse* (pp. 41-70). Pragmatics and Beyond New Series. John Benjamins.
- Kiliari, A. (2005). *Multilingualism and language education: A sociolinguistic approach* (In Greek). Vanias.
- Krzyżanowski, M. (2020a). Normalization and the discursive construction of 'new' norms and 'new' normality: Discourse in the paradoxes of populism and neoliberalism. *Social Semiotics*, 30(4), pp. 431-448. 10.1080/10350330.2020.1766193
- Krzyżanowski, M. (2020b). Discursive shifts and the normalisation of racism: Imaginaries of immigration, moral panics and the discourse of contemporary right-wing populism. *Social Semiotics*, 30(4), pp. 503-527. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2020.1766199>
- Krzyżanowski, M., & Krzyżanowska, N. (2022). Narrating the 'new normal' or pre-legitimising media control? COVID-19 and the discursive shifts in the far-right imaginary of 'crisis' as a normalization strategy. *Discourse & Society*, 33(6), pp. 805-818. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926522109542>
- Krzyżanowski, M. & Ledin, L. (2017). Uncivility on the web: Populism in/and the borderline discourses of exclusion. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 16(4), pp. 566-581. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.17028.krz>
- Krzyżanowski, M., Wodak, R., Bradby, H., Gardell, M., Kallis, A., Krzyżanowska, N., Mudde, C., & Rydgren, J. (2023). Discourses and practices of the 'New Normal': Towards an interdisciplinary research agenda on crisis and the normalization of anti- and post-democratic action. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 22(4), pp. 415-437. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.23024.krz>
- Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (1985). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. Verso.
- Maeso, S. R. (2015). 'Civillising' the Roma? The depoliticisation of (anti-)racism Within the Politics of Integration. *Identities*, 22(1), pp. 53-70. 10.1080/1070289X.2014.931234
- Makoni, S., & Pennycook, A. (2007). Disinventing and reconstituting languages. In S. Makoni & A. Pennycook (Eds.), *Disinventing and reconstituting languages* (pp. 1-41). Multilingual Matters.
- Marcuse, H. (1964). *One-dimensional man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society*. Beacon Press.
- Mirón, L. F., & Inda, J. X. (2000). Race as a kind of speech act. *Cultural Studies: A Research Annual*, 5, pp. 85-107.
- Moschonas, S. A. (2005). *Ideology and language* (In Greek). Patakis.
- Moyer, M., & Rojo, L. M. (2007). Language, migration and citizenship: New challenges in the regulation of bilingualism. In M. Heller (Ed.), *Bilingualism: A social approach* (pp. 137-160). Palgrave.
- O'Brien, E. (2009). From antiracism to antiracisms. *Sociology Compass*, 3(3), pp. 501-512. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2009.00206.x>
- Panagaki, N., Archakis, A., & Tsakona, V. (2025). Exploring primary school students' soft hate speech: Evidence from Greek. *Critical Discourse Studies*, pp. 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/017405904.2024.2444651>
- Pennycook, A. (1990). Critical pedagogy and second language education. *System*, 18 (3), pp. 303-314.
- Rampton, B. (2006). *Language in late modernity: Interaction in an urban school*. Cambridge University Press.

- Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2001). *Discourse and discrimination: Rhetoric of racism and antisemitism*. Routledge.
- Searle, J. R. (1976). A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society*, 5(1), pp. 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500006837>
- Squire, V. (2017). Governing migration through death in Europe and the US: Identification, burial and the crisis of modern humanism. *European Journal of International Relations*, 23(3), pp. 513–532. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066116668>
- Stamatinis, N., Archakis, A., & Tsakona, V. (2021). From the illegal migrant-criminal to the illegal migrant-invader: Critical analysis of the semantic change of the Greek term *λαθρο-μετανάστης* ‘illegal migrant’. *Studies in Communication Sciences*, 21(2), pp. 343–360. <https://doi.org/10.24434/j.scoms.2021.02.015>
- Stamou, A. G. (2014). Critical discourse analysis: Studying the ideological role of language (In Greek). In M. Georgalidou, M. Sifianou, & V. Tsakona (Eds.), *Discourse analysis: Theory and applications* (In Greek) (pp. 149–187). Nissos.
- Stroud, C., & Wee, L. (2012). *Style, identity and literacy*. Multilingual Matters.
- Teloni, D. D., & Mantonika, R. (2015). ‘This is a cage for migrants’: The rise of racism and the challenges for social work in the Greek context. *Critical and Radical Social Work*, 3, pp. 189–206. <https://doi.org/10.1332/204986015X14332581741051>
- Trace Project (2023). <https://trace2019.wixsite.com/trace-project?lang=en>
- Tsakona, V., Karachaliou, R., & Archakis, A. (2020). Liquid racism in the Greek anti-racist campaign #StopMindBorders. *Journal of language aggression and conflict*, 8(2), pp. 232–261. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlac.00036.tsa>
- van Dijk, T. A. (1992). Discourse and the denial of racism. *Discourse and Society*, 3 (1), pp. 87–118. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926592003001005>
- van Dijk, T. A. (1998). *Ideology: An interdisciplinary approach*. Sage.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2005). *Racism and discourse in Spain and Latin America*. Discourse approaches to politics, society and culture 14. John Benjamins.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2008). *Discourse and power*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2021). *Antiracist discourse: Theory and history of a macromovement*. Cambridge University Press.
- Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6), pp. 1024–1054. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465>
- Weaver, S. (2016). *The rhetoric of racist humor: US, UK and global race joking*. Routledge.
- Winant, H. (2002). The modern world racial system in transition. In F. Anthias and C. Lloyd (Eds.), *Rethinking anti-racisms: From theory to practice* (pp. 100–110). Routledge.