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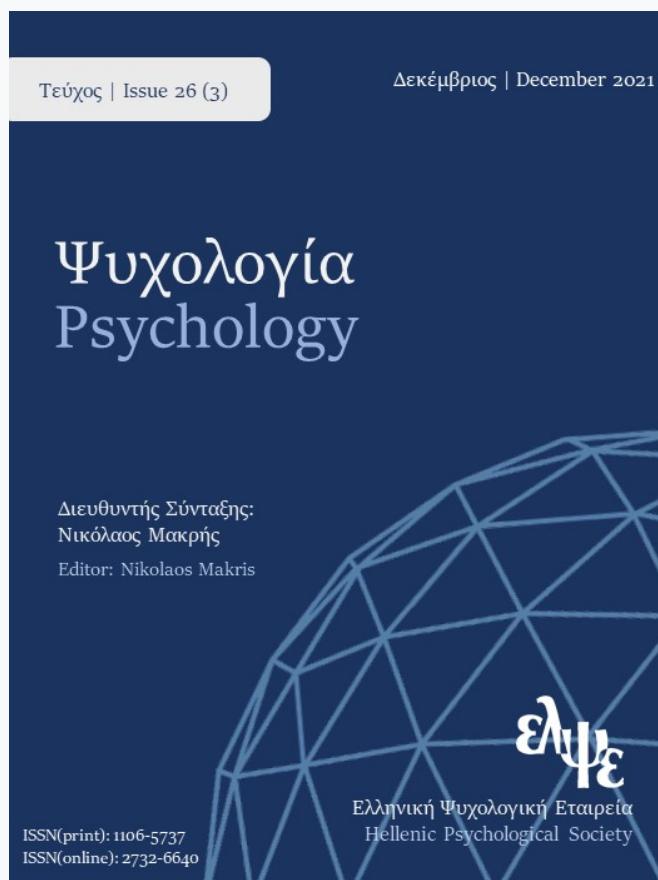
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Psycho-discursive practices of bystanding and democratic citizenship in 'bullying' and 'violence' discourse: combining the micro- and the macro-level of analysis in lay talk

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the present article was twofold: to analyze the contributions of qualitative methodologies and discursive psychology in the field of bullying studies, as well as to develop an argument to analyze rhetorical practices on bullying/cyberbullying, following the approach of Critical Discursive Social Psychology. In the Greek context there is a body of institutional interventions, as well as non-official interventions endorsed by the civil society. The latter are guided by the framework of inclusion, democratic citizenship and Community Psychology, shedding particular emphasis on integrating social groups. By analyzing these interventions, dilemmas related to humanism or recognizing the engaged members as political subjects could be evident. In the present article, it is analyzed how educators talk about bullying and school violence, by invoking repertoires that may disempower the 'victim'/child, through humanistic discourse, but on the other hand, may criticize the use of disempowering practices of bystanding. In the main analysis of the present article, it seems that the constructions reflecting the non-potentiality of critical agency of the victim intersect with repertoires reflecting democracy and autonomy, reflecting dilemmas of liberalism. As it is discussed, the contribution of Critical Discursive Social Psychology concerns the potential to trace flexible ways in which social agents create or disempower the spaces of critical agency in the school community, without ignoring the ideological limitations in lay talk.

Introduction

Public attention, media discourse, and academic research surrounding bullying at school was triggered after 1970s, and particularly after 1990s, in the context of human rights' recognition. Within this framework, aspects of children's rights such as safe education and protection against violence and injury have been widely debated (Koo, 2007; Ringrose & Renold, 2010; Smith, 2000). Only in the last few years this issue has been discussed in Greece within the framework of democratic citizenship and inclusion in the school community (Zambeta et al., 2016; see also interventions by civil society during the last years – with a particular emphasis on the goals of inclusion and advocacy[1]). In line with other countries' education policy strategy, Greek policies focus upon the right of children to be protected against physical and mental violence, and to ensure their human dignity (Zambeta et al., 2016). The first endeavors in this area in psychology and social psychology had their roots in aggression studies (Olweus, 1994), conceptualizing this behavioral manifestation as a facet of aggression – incorporating intentionality, repetition and power imbalance in the perpetration of this behavior (Vaillancourt

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[1] Indicatively, recent interventions have been conducted by the independent authority Children's Ombudsman, shedding emphasis on citizen's rights; or, by civil society acts undertaking the advocacy of social groups' rights; e.g., Color Youth Athens; Orlando LGBT+ Athens.

et al., 2008). Therefore, an academic emphasis had fallen upon individual factors, situational factors, and social-cognitive processes underlying this behavioral manifestation (e.g. Dooley et al., 2009; Hong & Espelage, 2012).

With regards to bullying studies, there has been only recently an increasing tendency to apply methodological approaches, drawing epistemologically on social constructionism (e.g., interpretative phenomenological analysis, narrative analysis, discursive psychology). Each of these methodologies moves beyond the mainstream psychological lines and offers opportunities to highlight participants' experiences/narratives/orientations, as well as to integrate critical elements to address social and political issues. These methodologies have a common theoretical ground, as they are interested in similar aspects (e.g. identity construction), as well as in the potential functions of invoking particular discursive resources. Along these lines, some critical endeavors have also paid attention to the intersection of discursive constructions with critical social theory (Augoustinos, 2017; Langdridge, 2017; Murray, 2017). The integrative methodological approach, offered by Critical Discursive Social Psychology (CDSP) could shed light on how the micro-context of everyday interaction is informed by the available ideological dilemmas of liberal democracy, as well as other available macro-discourses informing school violence discourse. In contrast to existing critical research, shedding light on reified ideologies, CDSP could shed light on how social actors themselves could contribute, through their flexible discursive interaction, to create spaces of inclusion/exclusion, as well as the potentiality of agency in their lay discourse.

The majority of research on bullying, following a psychological or social psychological research framework, has defined this concept as a perceived behavioral manifestation, including intentional, repetitive aggression, endorsed by an individual or a group of individuals towards another person that is relatively less powerful, compared to the perpetrator(s) (Swearer et al., 2010). Extant research has further suggested that bullying can be manifested as *physical* (e.g. hitting, kicking, damages of property), *verbal* (e.g. teasing, threats), and *indirect, social,* or *relational* (e.g. spreading rumors, social exclusion) (e.g. Owens et al., 2000; Slonje & Smith, 2008). Another crucial aspect of youth conflicts, raising concern in the last years, due to the rising use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), is cyberbullying. In psychological research, cyberbullying has been conceptualized as a manifestation including intentional and repetitive attacks, enacted by an individual or a group of individuals, via ICT, towards a less powerful person (Smith et al., 2008). Psychological studies have pursued an endeavor to define the criteria to categorize a behavior as bullying/cyberbullying, and come to a consensual definition (Olweus & Limber, 2018). In terms of cyberbullying, these categorization criteria have been challenged by existing psychological research, considering the distinct features of digital environment (e.g. anonymity, lack of non-verbal cues, the quality that the information could be easily spread, low opportunities for direct feedback, lack of parental and teacher supervision, target's delayed emotional responses) (see Erdur-Baker, 2010; Dehue, 2013; Perren et al., 2012; Slonje et al., 2013).

Regarding the conceptualization of bullying, CDSP proposes the examination of categories, as actively constructed and negotiated through discourse, and it simultaneously analyzes the functions that these categories may serve in the local context, as well as at a social and political level (Hopkins & Reicher, 2014; Gibson, 2011a). In particular, CDSP examines (a) the cases in which bullying/cyberbullying and intimidation practices are recognized/accepted, or justified in social agents' discourse, as a means to handle social actors' accountability in the interactive context; (b) how available social knowledge surrounding bullying/cyberbullying, as well the contradictions of liberal democracy, inform the construction of multiple self- and other- positionings, within specific social, political, historical, and technologically-mediated contexts.

Overall, the aims of the present paper are:
1. to review the available qualitative and critical approaches applied in the field of bullying/cyberbullying studies;

2. to outline CDSP's contributions to existing research, by shedding light on its potential to capture dilemmatic aspects in lay discourse; this goal is approached through the use of the analysis of self- and other- positioning– and by examining how the psycho-discursive practice of 'bystanding' is related to the concept of democratic citizenship in education (Levinson, 2011; in Greece; Pechtelides, 2012; Pechtelides & Stamou, 2014; Zambeta et al., 2017).

Qualitative approaches on bullying and cyberbullying research

A strand of research have utilized qualitative methods to examine various aspects of bullying such as traditional bullying (e.g., Athanasiades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010; Hopkins et al., 2013; Rosen et al., 2017), indirect aggression (e.g., Owens et al., 2000), relational aggression (e.g., Mishna, Wiener, & Pepler, 2008; Pronk & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2010), bias-based bullying (Mishna et al., 2009), and cyber-bullying (e.g., Cassidy et al., 2012; Mishna et al., 2009; Spears et al., 2009). Although researchers within this domain acknowledge the insights offered by quantitative research, they argue that qualitative methodologies are better fitted to capture the complexities involved in bullying as well as the multifaceted processes involved in it (Athanasiades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010; Bibou-Nakou et al., 2013; Mishna et al., 2009; Spears et al., 2009; Tenenbaum et al., 2011). In contrast to quantitative research, which employs mainly data gathering methods such as questionnaires and experiments, the aforementioned research uses mainly semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and to a lesser extent, written narratives, or internet posts to certain internet sites or services. The methodologies adopted to analyze the data also present a big variety of different traditions, including Grounded Theory (e.g., Cassidy et al., 2012; Mishna et al., 2009; Tenenbaum et al., 2011; Thornberg, 2010; Thornberg, & Knutsen, 2011), Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Athanasiades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010; Pronk & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2010), Thematic Analysis (Hopkins et al., 2013; Rosen et al., 2017; Spears et al., 2009), and narrative analysis (Karlsson & Evaldsson, 2011; Svahn & Karlsson, 2017).

Despite the different methodological commitments of each methodology, the aforementioned qualitative approaches share some common methodological principles: 1. They lay emphasis on people's own understanding, rather than examining the degree of acceptance of ready-made sentences as in Likert-scale questionnaires 2. They follow mostly a bottom-up approach, where theory is built from the data. Within this framework, data is not used to falsify or provide proof for existing theoretical assumptions. The contributions of qualitative methodologies, as well as their subtle differences, are discussed further below.

Grounded Theory, an often-used method in bullying/cyberbullying studies, tries to unravel the meanings that emerge from the data, to categorize them accordingly and to produce data in a bottom-up approach. This methodology pays attention to a great extent on the meaning rather than on the form of the data. It has though the potential to capture the social processes and participants' interactions. However, Grounded Theory does not usually examine the situated way in which social agents manage their accountability (Willig, 2013). Recent research following this methodology has unfolded the different phases which the process of victimization incorporates, capturing the variance in participant reports; it seems that this process involves initial verbal attacks, stigmatizing and exclusion, the internalization of the victimization process from the part of the victim (adopting the 'victim image'), and then the exit process of this positioning (Thornberg et al., 2013). Hence, in this line of research, the positioning is conceptualized as a process within which the victim could be engaged or disengaged.

As far as IPA is concerned, this methodology lays emphasis on people's own experiences and sense making, while simultaneously acknowledging that researchers cannot have a direct and unmediated path to individual experience. From IPA's perspective, researchers' account of people's experience will always involve some kind of interpretation (Langdridge, 2008, 2017). Although this analysis focuses on the content of people's discourse, more recently researchers have started to appreciate that the form of discourse may also carry important

information for studying people's lives, following the suggestions of discourse analysis (Langdridge, 2017). Nonetheless, existing IPA research has not paid much attention on how participants attend to accountability concerns in relation to bullying. Indicatively, along the line of social psychological studies examining bystanding (Levine, 2010), an analysis following IPA has analyzed bystanders' lived experiences on bullying concerning: the potentials and the limitations of their language use, the moral obligation to support the others, the transforming social connections and hierarchies, as well as the psychological consequences of experiencing that incident (Hutchinson, 2012).

With regards to thematic analysis, this method examines the patterns of meaning that emerge from the datasets. As a method, it does not adhere to a certain epistemological stance, leaving room for researchers from different epistemological backgrounds to make use of it (e.g. critical realists, social constructionists) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). With regard to research studying the category of school violence, most studies (e.g., Hopkins et al., 2013; Rosen et al., 2017; Spears et al., 2009) try to examine the different patterns that emerge from the data, at the expense of examining the production of data as talk-in-interaction. Usually, within this work, accountability management concerning the micro-level of verbal exchange is something that is beyond the scope of the researcher. Indicatively, an analysis following the methodology of thematic analysis has defined the factors that increase the potential of maintaining power imbalance in covert aggression (i.e., behaviors provoking harm to social status through manipulation), and the factors that could protect against power imbalance, with friends holding a significant role as a supportive network (Nelson et al., 2018). This methodology has the potential to highlight the transformative aspects of friendship networking and bystanding, however, not on how social actors open spaces or limit them.

Finally, a strand of qualitative research coming from sociology, has implemented narrative analysis that is informed by social constructionism (Karlsson & Evaldsson, 2011; Svahn & Karlsson, 2017). Within this approach, narratives are conceptualized as talk-in-interaction and emphasis is also laid on the micro-management of talk, an aspect that has been not systematically examined by research applying narrative approaches. The main focus is on the way in which participants position each other within their narratives, in the role of the participant in violent incidents, as well as in how this is accomplished in talk. Positioning of the others and not of the self remains the central focus of this methodology. In the same line, there is some research following interdisciplinary and post-structural approaches, which analyzes contradictory discourses around female friendship, social networks and online conflicts, shedding light on youth own accounts on their relationships; this research criticizes the study of genders as essential categories in bullying and cyberbullying discourse, related to repertoires of the 'victimized girl' (e.g., Ging & O' Higgins Norman, 2016); it further highlights the ways in which repertoires undermining the seriousness of cyberbullying and online conflicts may re-produce 'heteronormativity' discourses (Marwick & boyd, 2014); shedding though less light on lay participants' concerns.

What we consider to be the primary contribution of these qualitative approaches is the emphasis on people's own understanding of the phenomenon of bullying, the basic argument being that the complexity of the phenomenon requires methodologies that do not confine people's answers through closed questions. Nonetheless, the analysis usually ends with the presentation of the different categories that the data yields[2] and an explanation of its content. Analytic approaches such as discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) and discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992) argue that language is also action oriented: it does not only construct different versions of the world, but it is also used to do things within the local interactional context. As a result, what previous qualitative research may have put aside is an examination of what social actors may actually **do** when they mobilize discourses on bullying and violence. In particular, emphasis is laid on the ways

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[2] There are few exceptions to be found, like the article by Athanasiades and Deliyanni-Kouimtzis (2010), who follow a social constructionist perspective to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, and the social constructionist approach to narrative analysis (e.g. Karlsson & Evaldsson, 2011; Svahn & Karlsson, 2017).

in which participants manage their accountability, and what this may reveal about the normative concerns that may inform the specific socio-cultural context.

Discursive psychology and its contribution to the study of bullying

Discursive psychology is based mainly on the epistemology of social constructionism and on the research traditions of Conversation Analysis and Ethnomethodology (Potter, 1996). One of the primary concerns of discursive psychology is the way psychological notions are used by lay social actors. Within this tradition, it is argued that discourse is both constructive and constitutive: people actively construct versions of events, of psychological dispositions, human groups etc. out of pre-existing linguistic materials. These materials, though, do not determine the meaning of what is being said, since people will use them flexibly to construct their versions of events according to what they are trying to achieve. It pays attention to the sequential and consequential use of talk, which is considered a form of social action and not just as merely a descriptive tool. In other words, discourse is considered as a social practice, with the analysis focusing on the function of what people say. Accountability is considered as a basic concern for participants in verbal interaction. People have to present what they say as justified, rational, without personal motives. This is so because, when people construct their social world, they face a dilemma of stake: they have an interest to present the world in a specific way, but on the other hand, they have to demonstrate that this is done not because of personal interest (Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996). To manage this dilemma, it is argued that people will mobilize a variety of rhetorical techniques, with the analysis primary focus on how participants mobilize them, as well as on which functions they may serve. In discursive psychology, the focus is on the micro-context of the verbal exchange, looking on how participants seem to interpret, sequence by sequence, what the other members say and try to achieve in the exchange, while at the same time, they produce their own turns. Nevertheless, discursive theory tends to overemphasize the micro-analysis of discourse, paying attention to the local interactional context, and not to the wider socio-cultural milieu that informs the discourse of participants[3]. This is mainly done because discursive psychologists, following CA, do not want to impose their own categorizations and assumptions on people's discourse. However, researchers argue that in this way DP fails to answer the question, where do these linguistic resources and shared meanings come from (Gibson, 2015).

The last few years Critical Discursive Social Psychology has emerged as a new approach aiming to combine both micro and macro concerns. It started with a broadly cited article by Wetherell (1998), who sought to combine micro and macro analysis; this approach was followed by researchers who were looking for a space between "the twin perils of interactional and ideological determinism" (Gibson, 2011b, p. 11). The article was basically a reply to Schegloff (1997), who argued against (critical) analysis that goes beyond the text and examines discourse as a mean to unravel unequal power relations and so forth. What he proposed instead was a close examination of people's own orientations and a prioritization of what people themselves bring into verbal interaction. He argued that the inferences analysts draw from people's discourse are basically an imposition of analytic categories that may not be people's own concern. Schegloff argued that discourse analytic approaches should give prominence to the fine-grained analysis of talk-in-interaction, thus paying attention to the micro-level of analysis. Wetherell (1998) in her reply, sustained that the basic analytic question that is posed by CA and DP, why this? Why now? cannot be answered solely by examining endogenous reasons within the text. For Wetherell, what makes a specific rhetorical move successful is something that is embedded within the wider socio-cultural milieu that informs the common sense of participants. In this way, she also problematized the distinction between the micro- and macro- approaches, offering a new approach which studies the micro-management of discourse combined

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[3] Of course, it has to be stressed that the discursive work on bullying mentioned above takes the wider socio-cultural framework into account.

with a post-structuralist view that examines the role of the wider societal context. This approach accepts the principles of discursive psychology, looking on how accountability is managed within the micro-level of local interaction, while at the same time, it pays attention to more distal functions of discourse. It pinpoints on what kind of subject positions are created through discourse, while at the same time, following the thesis of Ideological Dilemmas (Billig et al., 1988), it examines the different and potentially conflictual ideological assumptions people share, which may give rise to dilemmas. The latter approach may allow researchers to examine how psycho-discursive practices and multiple self- and other- positionings are invoked in local rhetorical contexts, and how they are used as resources by participants. In addition, in the present study, issues of agency and the right of choice are seen as used in everyday interaction to achieve multiple ends – among other progressive and empowering ends. As it is analyzed, in the present paper, the dilemmatic aspects and the psychodiscursive use of 'bystanding practices' as a social psychological tool are analyzed in lay actors' discourse.

Bystanding practices, discursive and rhetorical psychology: Applying a psycho-discursive approach to the study of 'bystanding'

As social-cognitive research has attested, bullying as well as cyberbullying take place with an audience presence. Bystanders pertain to individuals witnessing bullying/cyberbullying incidents, with the latter having the potential to intervene in such incidents. Bystanding practices are related to witnessing bullying and cyberbullying incidents, with the choice either to participate or not. The state of bystanding has been further related in the field of social psychology to experience feelings of anxiety and insecurity (Polanin et al., 2012). Within this context, it is further suggested that peer-related interventions may be more effective compared to direct interventions of adults.

Although traditional social psychology has captured the negative aspects of the bystanding effect, by shedding emphasis on the lack of it, in cases of emergency (e.g., Rutkowski et al., 1983), more recent endeavors have shown the positive potential of bystanding through collective support. Both third party presence, and group size have been featured as contributing factors to conflict solving, and as a means to impede an aggressive act to be transformed into violence (Levine & Crowther, 2008). This line of research has shown that group processes and intergroup relations could contribute to bystanding efforts, among others, in bullying and cyberbullying incidents. It is argued that the group could be used as a means to support others, but at the same time, to disempower others. Social identity theory argues that, under the presence of other people, individuals may define themselves in terms of this group-shared identity, and in terms of the norms of these identities; thus, under this condition of group-based identification, it is more likely for them to offer help to an in-group member. Hence, it could be argued that out-group helping may, on the one hand, contribute to avoid public accusations of prejudice (or in this case to avoid accusations of accepting the condition of school violence), but at the same time, it could be used as a means to empowerment, as more recent endeavors in social-psychological studies suggest (Levine et al., 2009).

A recent study applying a psycho-discursive approach to social identities has shown the disempowering effect of 'heroic protection discourse' attesting that the children may be responsible for their fathers' violent behavior (Dryden et al., 2010). In the present study, though, we aspire to examine the argument of school violence among adolescents, not only as it functions within the interactional context, but also within the Greek cultural context, bringing to the front dilemmas of liberalism.

The present study analyzes the ways participants use psycho-discursive practices of bystanding, and how they might position themselves or others as bystanders in their accounts. What's more, the social and political implications for children as social agents is considered and discussed.

Democratic citizenship as a liberal ideology and as the context for studying school violence in Greece

Democratic citizenship, under the context of which school violence interventions have been integrated in Greece, has been conceptualized as an aspect of the broader concept of citizenship. To understand democratic citizenship in education, one should at first grasp which are the citizen identities formed within education, as well as which are hegemonic and which counter-hegemonic. Democratic citizenship is one of the most well-established theories under the scope of which school violence have been analyzed in social sciences (Zambeta et al., 2016). However, this concept, integrating ideologies related to humanism, social solidarity, and of recognizing individuals as political subjects, has been far less studied in social psychology and identity studies – since more often official distinctions of citizenship are studied in this field (Andreouli, 2019; Martinussen, 2019). Under the scope of democratic citizenship, members are educated to participate as social citizens and to establish social belonging. As has been indicated, with particular regards to democratic citizenship, this concept may incorporate both authoritarian and democratic aspects. Very often, though, it has been related to democratic aspects, due to its relations to the French Revolution and liberal democratic theory; this conceptualization significantly varies across different cultures (Levinson, 2011). Democratic citizenship may further integrate, except democratic, multicultural aspects. Hence, the distinct aspects of democratic citizenship, including multiculturalism, are taken into account in the present analysis, as well as the ways in which social agents' themselves use concepts such as school violence included in the concept of 'democratic citizenship'. Particularly, in the Greek context, and within the context of the Greek crisis, as traditional forms of solidarity fades, such as the welfare state, civil society arises as an alternative form of solidarity within the context of education (solidarity pertaining here to the bonds being evident in the society; Zambeta & Kolofousi, 2014); with this endeavor being also evident in the Greek context, and particularly in the case of school violence (Zambeta et al., 2016). In Greece, in the recent years there in an arising line of research in youth studies, analyzing the functioning of democratic governance in youth as a means for inclusion (Pechtelides, 2012; Zambeta et al., 2017). Within this line of analysis, there are also concerns regarding the intersection of discourses of autonomy, individuality, and how they could be empowered, on the one hand, as well as the necessity of the child to be self-regulated, as a limiting discourse, on the other hand (Pechtelides & Stamou, 2016).

Although there is an arising line of research highlighting the neoliberal aspects of everyday interaction, incorporating practices such as the weakening social state, and the legitimation of 'blaming' practices of particular social categories or groups, disseminated in social discourse in different contexts and in educational contexts, social psychological research has highlighted that this emphasis on neoliberal aspects of discourse may leave behind other important hierarchies, based on liberal ideologies and everyday thinking (Bozatzis, 2016). In social psychology, it has been argued that there are multiple hierarchies and intergroup relations that could be captured among youth population, and interpreting their in-between conflicts, moving beyond hierarchical relations based on gender/race/class, as endorsed by feminist theory (Hopkins, 1994). Post-structural feminist research, on the one hand, which has more often been used in the area of conflict studies, has argued that in the case of school violence discourse, issues of race and gender tend to be underrepresented (Ringrose & Renold, 2010); on the other hand, recent social psychological research and rhetorical psychology pinpoints that counternarratives may be invoked and used – moving beyond the conceptualization and the limitations of neoliberal subjectivities (Wetherell, 2008).

In this transformative scene, where liberal and neoliberal ideologies may co-exist in lay actors' accounts, the (re)construction of self and of the other in violence discourse, and in particular in the case of bullying and cyberbullying discursive interaction, remains a subject of interest in social psychology (Gibson, 2018). The

present study sheds light in the use of the dilemmatic aspects of liberalism in lay discourse – as well as in its social and political implications.

Methodology and analysis of the data

The research was conducted with 41 secondary school educators (teaching in junior high school and senior high school) in a town of Northern Greece, participating in 11 focus groups. Their work experience was ranging from 9 – 25 years. The research methodology was purposeful, as the participants were selected with the criterion to be willing to contribute in the discussion concerning school violence issues, and to come from different schools, with variant socio-cultural backgrounds (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007). Within the discursive interaction on issues of school violence, there is a broader question arising, concerning: which kind of citizenship identities and political agency are formed, and which are the alternative social-political narratives within this discourse (see Levinson, 2011). In general, the potentiality of alternative narratives is an arising issue of concern in the field of social psychology – however, in the present analysis, this condition is not related to structural relations and neoliberal ideals, but to potentiality of alternative action in the context of liberalism.

Hence, in the present analysis, the following research question arises:
How is the psycho-discursive practice of 'bystanding' arise in lay talk – and how it is related to the available macro-discourses of democratic citizenship?

The present study aspires to capture two levels of analysis regarding the rhetorical use of bystanding practices and inclusion in the context of bullying/violence talk among educators: the micro- and the macro-context of talk. For the purposes of the present analysis, discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992), rhetorical psychology (Billig, 1987) and discursive social psychological tools shedding more light on the function of ideology in everyday interaction (Wetherell, 1998) are used. To analyze the use of identities in everyday talk, the present analysis studies the use of psycho-discursive practices. Psycho-discursive practices constitute an alternative research tool to analyze subjectivities. Social psychological research attests that the analytical tool of subjectivities may limit their scope only on the constitution of neoliberal ideologies in discourse, and not on the potential flexibility of rhetorical resources in everyday talk (Wetherell, 2008). In CDSP, participants' identities are seen as flexible and multiple – and accountability management practices are used to deal with troubled identities.

Analysis

In the analysis of the present article, the use of bystanding is analyzed as a psycho-discursive practice, provided either by students or by other members of school community, in its micro-context of its use. In parallel, ideological dilemmas implicated in the constructions of school violence and bullying, and the relation of this concept to macro-functions of the 'democratic citizenship' is discussed.

Positioning peers as bystanders

Bystanding by peers as a positive and transformative effort

Extract 1. If someone expresses his/her support towards the 'victim', the others may support him/her as well...

Focus group X

W3: Yes. However it happens, if... if you talk to everyone, it is possible to change their attitude.

W1: Yes, the psychology of the masses. Yes.

K: To become more suppor...?

W3: If someone, at least a child, takes the side of the weak child, let's say that afterwards.. the others will come ((and support him/her)) slowly as well. Namely they may apologize...

K: M::mh.. So, someone should make a start?

W3: Yes. It has happened to me, you know.

W2: I think so (W3: Yes.) that if there is a chance to talk (W3: Yes.) several children may find the way, possibly not the majority, several children though to::o..

W3: Yes, to stand their feet.

W2: ...to complain for this situation and to show that they are bothered. That if they do not have this opportunity, to talk, they cannot trigger it by themselves. (W3: Yes.) It is difficult.

K: M:mh..

W3: If anything... As for me... it has happened to me now recently... hm, they ((some students)) have targeted their classmate, all the class was against him, by verbal means. And I talked to five – six girls that reacted the most and they didn't listen. A student though that delayed coming at school... she came last let's say from another school, from another town and she says "As a third party can I say... , can I say my opinion?" she says "as a third party?". I say "Talk.." And she sa::ays "hm.. he's right." She says to me "George..", let's say.. "I" she says "as a third party" I can see that. That all are against him without (him) provoking them. From that day, afterwards hm... children's behavior has changed [towards him]...

K: So, she said that in the class that "she is right..."

W3: She said that to five – six hm... friends, like, classmates that reacted the most. Since then, I realized that there is no other issue. With that particular student.

K: With that intervention. And as for the students themselves, when they receive that... have you seen that they try to deal with it? Have they done anything?

W2: The victims, you mean?

W3: Yes.

K: The victims, yes, yes.

W2: Sometimes they talk to their teachers. Or they talk to the school principle (W1: At home..) or to their parents.

W1: Yes, yes. So, then the parents take on the role of the protector in a way not always (.) positive for the child. It depends.

In the present extract, the educator invokes a cultural repertoire attesting that there is a positive potential of bystanders to intervene and empower the student receiving aggression. More specifically, she uses a factual accounting to describe the case of a boy being unfairly treated by his classmates, being though supported by a particular girl, arguing that 'he is right'. The girl's footing is constructed as efficient, i.e. as an objective/rational observer which could contribute to this particular situation. The positive potential of support by the peer group is understood here as a means to develop 'critical agency' and to deal with this situation. The educator constructs her footing as a professional assessing and observing the situation, without necessarily stepping in, to develop the students' group agency to deal with this aggressive attack. The use of the phrase 'to stand their feet' underlines the potential of developing the student's critical agency. Following this argument, the educator further considers parents' protective intervention (i.e. humanistic intervention) – being positioned as protectors of the child, a positioning which is criticized by the educator herself as disempowering for the child itself. In addition, the psycho-discursive practice based on 'heroic protection discourse' endorsed by the side of the parents is criticized (Dryden et al., 2010).

Through a social-psychological lens, the aforementioned categorization open the way to envision alternative forms of social action, within the school community, and thus building the identity of the victim as an active agent – in collaboration to the other students, able to move beyond pre-defined power relations, and develop supportive collectivities to cope with the aggressive attack, instead of being represented as a passive individual (Howarth, 2006). In addition, it penetrates the distinctions between the in-group and the out-group, moving beyond the limits of humanistic support within and beyond the school community.

Positioning educators as bystanders and negotiating agency in discourse

Dilemmas related to autonomy within and out of the school community

Extract 2. This problem cannot be resolved 'within' the school community

Focus group Y

A2: [...] It's not <u>o</u>nly in the school setting (.) For that reason hm... I've got the
objection. We nominate it, we fragment it and we talk about school violence. It's violence anyway. It's s<u>o</u>cial violence. Simply a part of it we come and deal with it, we see it within school walls. It's not though isolated. I mean... there are not hm... some rules, strategies available to deal with school violence. Concretely. You have to deal with violence that exists within that, within **those children**, since we talk about children, the students more comprehensively. More comprehensively.
W2: And outdoors. At the park [this could be the case].
A2: For that reason, hm... if here, for any reason, even with repression (.) hm with... threat... 'You know you have to be quiet, otherwise I will expel you'. Nice, he is afraid and he won't do what his instinct wants to do. He will go out and [he will do it.]
W2: [He will do it.]
K: Mh...
A2: Did you understand me? It's not supposed to limit something in this place and since I limit it here, it will be eliminated.
W2: °It is resolved.°
A2: You can tell that we find the best way, we make it and it is proximately eliminated. Hm school bullying. It will be OUT-of-school bullying. Because somehow this phenomenon should be eased off. If it doesn't ease off here, it will be eased off somewhere else.
So, the point is not its elimination but its m<u>a</u>nagement. The fact that it ex<u>i</u>sts, it exists as bullying in general, let it go the school ((implying here the *concept* the mediator used as well as its connotations for the attribution of blaming to the educators)), forget it. The fact that it exists as a phenomenon. Of course, it's a social phenomenon (.) and that we try to find the ways to deal with it. There? We can discuss. Which are these ways? What does the school community do for that? What has been done over the last years systematically?

At this point, the educator A2 invokes an interpretative repertoire, arguing that school violence is 'social'. Based on this argument, he explains that aggression is related not only to the school setting, but is also connected with the 'out'-school setting, an argument used as a means of accountability management. The educator constructs at this point a strong view (Billig, 1989) – using extreme accountability management practices – an argument being shared by the whole group as a common perspective in the discussion (Condor, 2006; Condor, Figgou, Abell, Gibson, & Stevenson, 2006). By invoking a strong argumentation line, it is argued that the category of violence should not be interrelated to the school setting, but instead the discussion of the management of this

behavioral aspect could take place at school; the latter discussion though raises issues of autonomy. It is possible here that the question of the moderator could be perceived as an attribution of blaming to the participants themselves (Edwards & Potter, 1992). Rhetorical psychology highlights the central meaning of the negotiation of categories, i.e. here the negotiation of category of 'social violence', as a preferable conceptualization, compared to other conceptualizations. Dilemmas of liberalism, interrelated to the necessity of 'autonomy' of the students at the school setting are also evident in the present extract.

However, at that point, the context of this particular interaction should be taken into account. The expressions of strong views within that setting could potentially be related to the school setting in which the interaction takes place. Participants refer to **'these' children**, implying a particular group of people, who attend a school where the majority of students holds a low social class status. This understanding is shared by the mediator and the participants in the discussion. These students are also described in different parts of the discussion as 'uninterested children', and as children who prefer to work instead of studying. Hence, envisioning an alternative narrative, where violence could be resolved is not viewed as an alternative option, with no flexibility to creating spaces of critical agency being possible. The non-potentiality of fulfilling alternative forms of agency have been analyzed in other research areas in Greece; indicatively, in Kesisoglou, Figgou, & Dikaiou, 2016; and in the case of friendships and interpersonal relationships; Martinussen, Wetherell, & Braun, 2020).

Essentializing social categories in the representation of the 'victim'

Extract 3. The weak victim - not being able to support herself

Focus group Z

Before the following extract, the participant has mentioned a recent case of aggressive behavior targeting a girl, with a Pomak background[4]. As the educator argued, this girl was victimized by a group of five girls. As it is further described in the above extract, this girl wanted to attend the class, while the other girls preferred to discuss on other issues; thus, constituting 'the outsider' in the class.

K: Mh.. So you see these forms as the most...?
W1: In the junior high school there is also physical aggression to a certain degree. In high school, I don't think so.
W2: In the senior high school, there is not. If you ask me, I believe that the inhibitions of the primary school children are minimal. I mean (.) there... they can hit, they can pull the others' hair, they will push the others, they can kick the others. Hm... in the junior high school and in the senior high school I think they pla... they choose verbal means to attack. And as you asked for – for the traits of the bully and the victim in the previous hm... I have experienced incidents hm.. that bullies were often hm.. (.) Very::y... people.. the girls, in other words, that I can tell they had a lot of confidence, hm... they were people engaged in companies, they had their back on girls that surrounded them. Hm... and of course when they talked exclusively to them.. they were the... palely, the chamo- the chamomiles (implicating here humple).. modest girls who respectfully apologized for their actions. Regardless when they mean it or not. The point is what they brought out of them.. (.) hm... and on the other hand the – the victim was a quiet hm.. child, coming from the minority group. Hm.. from another social class, I' d say, the parents live in a secluded village ((in another point of the discussion, the participant mentioned that this girl lived in a Pomak village)).. Hm... she hasn't the same

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[4] Pomaks are a Slav-speaking Muslim population residing in the mountainous areas of Thrace. They form part of the Muslim minority of Thrace, the only officially recognised minority in Greece. Due to their low educational attainment, as well as their low socio-economic status, they are considered as one of the most deprived groups in Greece (Mavrommatis, 2008).

potentials because the issue is that I cannot lose class (.) that there is so much ado in the class, when they ((these girls)) annoy me. Because, I cannot attend the tutorial. While all my classmates can fill out their gaps in tutorials. While I do not have it. That potential. So… she was a little bit vulnerable hm… more vulnerable to some stuff.

At that point, the participant mentions a case of physical aggression being developed among a group of five girls and a particular girl. The identity of the girl which earlier in the discussion was described as a girl with a Pomak background, at this point, is interrelated to particular psychological traits (being humple, quiet girl), through the use of a psychological accounting (Sapountzis & Vikka, 2015). Previous research with Pomak population has also pinpointed that this minority population may be represented with the use of essentialized characteristics, and in particular as more submissive and kind (Figgou, 2013). The aforementioned construction of the girl is being used here to underline the unfair treatment of this girl by the majority group, hence positioning the educator as effective in her role to assess, and later on intervene and step into this situation through the school principal. At the same time, though, she positions the victimized girl as lacking 'critical agency', through the cultural repertoire of the 'weak victim', hence, disempowering her own strength to react.

In this way, no potential counternarratives of the external intervention are available – to empower the development of the critical agency of the victim as a means to cope with the situation. On the other hand, the group of girls is represented in the above extract as adopting two different behavioral expressions, under the presence or the absence of the teaching staff; pertaining here either to respectful girls, or on the other hand as a group of people manifesting very intense means of attacking. In another point of the discussion, the same participant criticizes the aggressive behavior of this girl, drawing on a repertoire supporting that they have to be sensitive towards the other girls, especially the vulnerable ones – hence, essentializing this gender category. Existing critical discursive social research has indeed highlighted the representation of the femininities, by the use of the cultural repertoire of the victimized and disempowered woman/girl (Maki, 2014).

Concluding remarks

The development of theoretical frameworks and research on bullying has been quite prominent during the last years. The combination of discursive psychology with post-structuralist theory, as initially advocated by Wetherell (1998), opens new avenues for examining how these historically/socially developed subjectivities are articulated in situ in talk. Within this framework, discourses on bullying are examined as serving the management of accountability in different social situations and one of the focal points becomes the functions of the different constructions. Since Critical Discursive Social Psychology accepts that the linguistic resources, or interpretative repertoires might be antithetical, as the Ideological Dilemmas thesis stresses (Billig et al., 1988), researchers can emphasize the way different interpretative repertoires and subject positions collide within people's discourse. In this way, we can examine how use of bystanding practices are rhetorically used to achieve micro-social ends, but also to examine at a more distal level what are the potential consequences of their use. In conclusion, CDSP provides us with eclectic psycho-discursive tools to expand our perspective beyond intra-psychic or visible social behavior, as psychological research would suggest; instead, attention is turned towards the ways in which social knowledge surrounding bullying is flexibly used in everyday interactions to negotiate social agents' subject positions.

The last years qualitative approaches have been applied to studies of violence and bullying, thus offering a more in-depth understanding of participants' experiences. In this way, youth experiences are studied from-the-ground, shedding particular emphasis on the potentiality building supportive networking to deal with victimization experiences. In institutional settings, as in macro-texts in the Greek setting, the discussion is centered around issues of democratic governance, democratic citizenship and inclusion of social groups at school,

as well as on how different discourses are available in these macro-texts. In addition, recent endeavors in the Greek context, and in other settings, analyzing the discourse of civil society, have analyzed the dilemmatic aspects concerning humanism and the necessity to provide support by recognizing the social beings as political subjects. Following CDSP's argument, it is supported that in everyday talk, the reification of discourses and of social categories may not shed light on multiple rhetorical dilemmas and flexible participants' positionings. Regarding bystanding, an ideological dilemma, evident in social actors' accounts in the present study, concerns the possible ways bystanders could step into the situation without limiting children's critical agency and their right to choose whether they could react in case of experiencing victimization. The latter, in the present discussion, are positioned as rational, negotiable and effective, but on the other hand, they position students in ways disempowering their critical agency. Hence, analyzing participants' interaction through the scope of dilemmas of liberalism and their rhetorical dilemmas could shed emphasis on their multiple concerns and potentialities of action in the school community, creating flexible ways of everyday action.

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Appendix

Extracts (in Greek)

Απόσπασμα 1.

Σ3: Ναι. Όμως έχει συμβεί να… αν τους μιλήσεις, αν μιλήσεις σε όλους, έχει συμβεί να αλλάξουνε…. στάση.

Σ1: Ναι, ψυχολογία της μάζας. Ναι.

Κ: Να γίνουν πιο υποστη…;

Σ3: Αν κάποιος έστω και ένας πάρει το μέρος του αδύναμου ας πούμε μετά… θα ρθούνε σιγά - σιγά και οι άλλοι. Δηλαδή μπορεί να ζητήσουν και συγγνώμη::η…

Κ: Μ::μχ. Οπότε κάποιος να κάνει την αρχή;

Σ3: Ναι. Εμένα μου έχει συμβεί ας πούμε.

Σ2: Εγώ νομίζω (Σ3: Ναι.) ότι αν δοθεί::ι η ευκαιρία για κουβέντα (Σ3: Ναι.) βρίσκουν την ευκαιρία αρκετά παιδιά, ίσως όχι η πλειοψηφία, αρκετά παιδιά όμως να::α…

Σ3: Ναι, να διαμαρτυρηθούν.

Σ2: ...να διαμαρτυρηθούν για την κατάσταση και να δείξουν ότι τους ενοχλεί. Όταν δεν δίνεται όμως αυτή η ευκαιρία, για κουβέντα, μόνα τους δεν θα την προκαλέσουν. (Σ3: Ναι.) Δύσκολο.

Κ: Μ::μχ.

Σ3: Ίσα – ίσα. Εμένα μου 'τυχε τώρα πρόσφατα ε είχαν βάλει έτσι στόχο έναν συμμαθητή όλη η τάξη ήταν εναντίον του, με τα λόγια. Και::ι μίλησα σε πέντε – έξι κορίτσια που αντιδρούσαν περισσότερο και::ι δεν άκουγαν αυτές. Μία όμως μαθήτρια η οποία ήρθε και καθυστερημένα στο σχολείο, ήρθε τελευταία ας πούμε από άλλο σχολείο, από άλλη πόλη λέει «εγώ ως τρίτη να πω..., να πω τη γνώμη μου;», λέει «ως τρίτη;» Λέω πες. Μου λέει::ι ε::ε «έχει δίκιο» μου λέει ο::ο «...Γιώργος» ας πούμε. «Έχει δίκιο.» Ε::ε «Γιατί;». «Γιατί όλοι είναι εναντίον του.» «Εγώ», λέει, «...ως τρίτη αυτό βλέπω. Ότι όλοι είναι εναντίον του και χωρίς να κάνει κάτι. Δεν τους ενοχλεί πια. Όλη η τάξη όμως είναι εναντίον του.» Από εκείνη την ημέρα μετά ε::ε άλλαξε η συμπεριφορά των παιδιών, [απέναντί του].

Κ: [Οπότε] το είπε μες την τάξη::η [αυτό το... «έχει δίκιο»].

Σ3: [Το είπε στις] πέντε – έξι ε φίλες της ας πούμε συμμαθήτριες που αντιδρούσαν περισσότερο. Από τότε είδα ότι δεν δημιουργήθηκε άλλο θέμα. Με τον συγκεκριμένο μαθητή.

Κ: Με την παρέμβαση. Και οι ίδιοι οι μαθητές που το δέχονται αυτό πώς έχετε δει ότι προσπάθησαν να το διαχειριστούνε; Έχουν κάνει, κάτι;

Σ2: Τα θύματα εννοείς;

Σ3: Ναι.

Κ: Τα θύματα, ναι, ναι.

Σ2: Κάποιες φορές μπορεί να έχουνε μιλήσει σε έναν καθηγητή. Ή να παν να μιλήσουν στη διευθύντρια (Σ1: Στο σπίτι.), ή να μιλήσουν στους γονείς τους.

Σ1: Ναι, ναι. Οπότε μετά αναλαμβάνουν οι γονείς οι οποίοι αναλαμβάνουν τον ρόλο του προστάτη με κάποιον τρόπο όχι πάντα (.) θετικό για το παιδί. Ανάλογα.

Απόσπασμα 2.

Α2: [...] Δεν είναι όμως μόνο στο σχολικό περιβάλλον (.) Για αυτό ε::ε εγώ έχω την ένσταση. Το ονομάζουμε, το κατατεμαχίζουμε και μιλάμε για σχολική βία. Είναι βία έτσι και αλλιώς. Είναι κοινωνική βία. Απλώς ένα κομμάτι της ερχόμαστε και το αντιμετωπίζουμε, το βλέπουμε εντός των σχολικών τειχών. Δεν είναι όμως μεμονωμένο. Δηλαδή δεν υπάρχουν κάποιοι ε::ε κανόνες, στρατηγικές όπου θα αντιμετωπίσεις τη σχολική βία. Συγκεκριμένα. Πρέπει να αντιμετωπίσεις τη βία που υπάρχει μέσα σε αυτό, σε αυτά τα παιδιά, αφού μιλάμε για παιδιά, τους μαθητές ε::ε συνολικότερα. Συνολικότερα.

Γ2: Και έξω. Στο πάρκο [θα ισχύσει κάτι τέτοιο].

Α2: [Για αυτό και] ε εάν εδώ με οποιονδήποτε λόγο ακόμα και με καταστολή (.) ε με::ε απειλή.. «Ξέρεις να είσαι ήσυχος γιατί θα σε αποβάλλω.» Ωραία, φοβάται δεν κάνει αυτό που το ένστικτό του θέλει να κάνει. Θα βγει έξω και [θα το κάνει.]

Γ2: [Θα το κάνει.]

Κ: Μ::μχ.

Α2: Με κατάλαβες; ↑Δεν πρόκειται κάτι εγώ να το περιορίσω εδώ πέρα και επειδή το περιόρισα εδώ εξαλείφθηκε.

Γ2: °Λύθηκε.°

Α2: ↑Πες ότι βρίσκουμε τον καταλληλότερο τρόπο, το καταφέρνουμε και σχεδόν απαλείφεται. Ε ο σχολικός εκφοβισμός. Θα είναι ΕΞΩ-σχολικός εκφοβισμός. Γιατί κάπου αυτό το φαινόμενο πρέπει να εκτονωθεί. Αν δεν εκτονωθεί εδώ θα εκτονωθεί κάπου αλλού. Το θέμα λοιπόν δεν είναι η εξάλειψη αλλά η διαχείριση του. Το ότι υπάρχει, υπάρχει σαν εκφοβισμός γενικότερα, ας το το σχολικός ξέχνα το. Το ότι υπάρχει σαν φαινόμενο. Βεβαιότατα και είναι κοινωνικό φαινόμενο (.) και ότι προσπαθούμε να βρούμε τους τρόπους να το αντιμετωπίσουμε (.) Εκεί; Συζητάμε. Ποιοι είναι αυτοί οι τρόποι; Τι κάνει η σχολική κοινότητα για αυτό; Τι έχει κάνει τα τελευταία χρόνια συγκροτημένα;

Απόσπασμα 3.

Κ: Μ::μχ. Οπότε αυτές τις μορφές βλέπετε πλέον τις πιο...;

Γ1: Στο Γυμνάσιο υπάρχει και σωματική σε έναν βαθμό. Στο Λύκειο δε νομίζω.

Γ2: Στο Λύκειο, όχι. Αν ρωτήσεις εμένα, εγώ ας πούμε πιστεύω ότι (.) οι αναστολές στα παιδιά του δημοτικού ε::εμ είναι μηδαμινές. Δηλαδή (.) εκεί θα χτυπήσουνε, θα τραβήξουν μαλλί, θα σπρώξουν, θα κλωτσήσουν. Ε::εμ στο::ο Γυμνάσιο και στο Λύκειο νομίζω παι... πάνε πιο πολύ σε λεκτικό επίπεδο, φραστικό ε::εμ. Και::ι επειδή ρώτησες για τα::α – για τα χαρακτηριστικά του θύτη και του θύματος στις προηγούμενες ε::ε... που είχα περιστατικά ε::εμ οι θύτες ήτανε συνήθως ε::εμ (.) Πολύ::υ άτομα... τα κορίτσια δηλαδή αυτά που μπορώ να σου πω ήτανε με μεγάλη αυτοπεποίθηση, ε::ε πολύ::υ της παρέας, είχανε ε για πλάτες τους ε::ε τα κορίτσια που::υ τα περιτριγυρνούσανε. Ε::εμ και βέβαια όταν τις μιλήσαμε απομονωμένες ήτανε τα::α... τα χλωμά τα χαμο - χαμομηλάκια, χαμηλών τόνων που ταπεινά ζητήσανε συγγνώμη. Άσχετα το αν την εννοούσαν πραγματικά ή όχι. Το θέμα είναι το τι βγάλαν από μέσα τους (.) ε::ε και απεναντίας το – το θύμα ήταν ένα ήσυχο ε::ε παιδάκι, προερχόμενο από::ο (.) μειονότητα. Ε::εμ από ά::άλλη κοινωνική τάξη θα 'λεγα, ήτανε οι γονείς σε απομονωμένο πομα... πομακοχώρι... Ε::ε δεν είχε τη δυνατότητα γιατί μας έδω... το::ο ε το θέμα της ήταν ότι εγώ δεν μπορώ να χάνω μαθήματα (.) που γίνεται ντόρος μες την τάξη όταν με ενοχλούνε... Γιατί δεν μπορώ να πηγαίνω σε φροντιστήριο να παρακολουθώ. Ενώ αυτές όλες έχουν τη δυνατότητα να συμπληρώσουνε τις – τα κενά τους σε φροντιστήρια. Εγώ δεν έχω. Αυτή την δυνατότητα. Οπότε ήταν λίγο πιο ευάλωτη::η ε::ε σε αυτό και πιο επιρρεπής σε κάποια πράγματα.

Ψυχο-λογοπρακτικές υποστήριξης από τον παρευρισκόμενο και δημοκρατική πολιτειότητα στον λόγο περί του 'εκφοβισμού' και της 'βίας': συνδυάζοντας το μικρο- και το μακρο-επίπεδο ανάλυσης στον λόγο

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το παρόν άρθρο έχει διττό στόχο: την ανάδειξη της συμβολής των ποιοτικών μεθοδολογιών και της λογο-ψυχολογίας στο πεδίο του εκφοβισμού, καθώς και την ανάπτυξη ενός επιχειρήματος για την ανάλυση των ρητορικών περί του εκφοβισμού/κυβερνο-εκφοβισμού, βασισμένου στην προσέγγιση της Κριτικής Κοινωνικής Λογο-ψυχολογίας. Στον ελληνικό χώρο υπάρχει ένα σώμα θεσμικών παρεμβάσεων, αλλά και μη επίσημων παρεμβάσεων από την κοινωνία των πολιτών (civil society), που καθοδηγούνται από τις αρχές της συμπερίληψης, της δημοκρατικής πολιτειότητας και της Ψυχολογίας της Κοινότητας. Ενώ στην περίπτωση των θεσμικών, ή των μη επίσημων παρεμβάσεων, μπορούν να εντοπιστούν ηθικά διλήμματα ανθρωπισμού, ή το πρόταγμα της αναγνώρισης του πολιτικού υποκειμένου στις δράσεις εντός της σχολικής κοινότητας, στο παρόν άρθρο υποστηρίζεται πως τα ρεπερτόρια που χρησιμοποιούνται στον καθημερινό λόγο αντλούν από πολλαπλές και αντιφατικές θέσεις, που μπορεί να ενδυναμώνουν ή να αποδυναμώνουν το πολιτικό υποκείμενο. Στο παρόν άρθρο αναλύεται πώς οι εκπαιδευτικοί μιλούν για τον εκφοβισμό και την σχολική βία, χρησιμοποιώντας ρεπερτόρια που μπορεί να αποδυναμώνουν το παιδί/'θύμα', μέσω της χρήσης του ανθρωπιστικού λόγου, ενώ από την άλλη, μπορεί να ασκούν κριτική στην χρήση αποδυναμωτικών πρακτικών υποστήριξης του 'θύματος'. Στην κυρίως ανάλυση του παρόντος άρθρου αναδεικνύεται πώς οι κατασκευές που αντανακλούν την α-δυνατότητα της κριτικής αυτενέργειας του παιδιού/θύματος διασταυρώνονται με ρεπερτόρια που αφορούν τον εκδημοκρατισμό και την αυτονομία, αντανακλώντας διλημματικές θέσεις του φιλελευθερισμού. Όπως συζητείται στο παρόν άρθρο, η ιδιαίτερη συνεισφορά της Κριτικής Κοινωνικής Λογοψυχολογίας έγκειται στη δυνατότητα να ανιχνεύει τους τρόπους με τους οποίους οι κοινωνικοί δράστες δημιουργούν ή αποδυναμώνουν χώρους κριτικής αυτενέργειας στην σχολική κοινότητα, χωρίς ωστόσο να αγνοεί τους ιδεολογικούς περιορισμούς στον λόγο.