Criteria of citizenship and social inclusion in immigrants’ discourse in Greece.

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Abstract

Naturalization criteria play an important role in who can be accepted as a member of a national polity. In the political and social sciences often a distinction is drawn between the right of blood- jus sanguinis- and the right of soil-jus soli- as guiding principles for naturalization. This distinction corresponds to the two different types of nationalism and national belonging identified by Kohn (1945, 1955) namely “ethnic” nationalism and “civic” nationalism. In social psychology this distinction has been used to examine which type of national belonging is more often associated to prejudice against immigrants and their exclusion. Recently approaches informed by social constructionism and discourse analysis examine how citizenship and the exclusion of immigrants are articulated in talk and what interactional goals seem to serve in each occasion. In this paper we examine how immigrants in Greece construct naturalization criteria in talk and how these may relate to the inclusion or exclusion of immigrants. Participants were 25 immigrants who participated in an interview on the current situation in Greece and the new naturalization law. Analyzing the interviews using Rhetorical Psychology, Ideological Dilemmas and Discursive Psychology we argue that participants by ridiculing citizenship criteria they legitimated their own presence within Greece. At the same time, they seemed to exclude other immigrant groups using discourses of legality/illegality. A possible reason for this dilemma, we maintain, is the diverse ideological background of the notion of citizenship, which allows its mobilization towards different ends.

Key words: Migration, naturalization criteria, social exclusion, Discourse Analysis.
Introduction

Citizenship became one of the prominent research topics in social psychology only recently. This delay, in comparison to the preoccupation of other sciences in the study of citizenship, seems rather bizarre especially if we take into account that the issue of citizenship relates to central concerns of socio-psychological science such as intergroup relations, groups boundaries, prejudice and discrimination (Condor, 2011a)\(^1\). Research has mainly focused on how different understandings of national belonging may relate to the exclusion or inclusion of immigrants to a national polity. A quantitative strand has examined how different conceptions of national identities (mainly ethnic or civic) may relate to prejudice against immigrants and to opposition to multiculturalism (Heath & Tilley, 2005; Meeus, Duriez, Vanbeselaere & Boen, 2010; Pehrson & Green, 2010; Pehrson, Vignoles & Brown, 2009; Reeskens & Hooghe, 2010; Reijerse, Van Acker, Vanbeselaere, Phalet & Duriez, 2013; Rothi, Lyons & Chryssochoou, 2005; Yogeeswaran, Dasguta & Gomez, 2012). Recently, approaches that draw on various traditions of discourse analysis have attempted to shed light on how participants themselves construct civic participation and how boundaries are build up in discourse in the course of verbal interaction. In this paper, following Billig’s seminal work on Rhetorical Psychology and the related Ideological Dilemmas argument, combined with Discursive Psychology, we examine how immigrants living in Greece construct citizenship criteria in an interview context on migration and citizenship in Greece.

In the social sciences the distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism introduced by Kohn (1945, 1955) has been consistently in use for many decades. The

\(^1\) Of course it can be argued that the increased interest in citizenship within socio-psychological research is due to funding opportunities that have risen in EU in relation to the specific research topic.
distinction, that draws upon the division between French and German nationalism which are informed by the philosophy of Enlightenment and German Romanticism respectively (Brubaker, 1992; Connor, 1993; Kohn, 1945, 1955; Pearton 1996), has been widely used, among other things, in order to typify countries that have followed one of the two paths of nationalism (Greenfeld, 1992; Kohn, 1945; 1955). The two types of national attachment are also linked to different approaches to citizenship and also to citizenship criteria: the civic version, often considered to be related to the *jus solis* criterion of citizenship, maintains that people who live within the boundaries of the nation could become its citizens; according to ethnic variant of nationalism citizenship depended upon the origin, culture or the bloodline of the person, which is named in legal terms *jus sanguinis* (Brubaker, 1992). Following this line of reasoning, the inclusion or exclusion of immigrants to a host society seems to be contingent upon which definition of the nation had prominence both in terms of legal citizenship criteria and in terms of lay understandings of national identities and national attachment. Koning (2011; see also Levanon & Lewin-Epstein, 2010) in a comparative study of naturalization criteria between 26 countries argues that the more to the ethnic end the definition of citizenship is the stricter the criteria for the inclusion of immigrants to the host country are. Researchers have also placed emphasis on the attitudes towards immigrants and how they may relate to ethnic or civic conceptions of citizenship of members of the host society. In general, the closer members of a host society are to an ethnic definition of national identity the more negative the attitudes towards immigrants they exhibit (Heath & Tilley, 2005; Meeus, Duriez, Vanbeselaere & Boen, 2010; Pehrson & Green, 2010; Pehrson, Vignoles & Brown, 2009; Reeskens & Hooghe, 2010; Rothi, Lyons & Chryssochoou, 2005;

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2 The intrinsic link between the notion of citizenship and nationalism has been argued by Sindic (2011) who claims that participation to a polity requires the identification with a certain community and this role nowadays is played by national identities better than any possible alternative.
It has been also found that while civic conceptions of national identity are positively correlated to multiculturalism, ethnic and cultural conceptions are negatively correlated to multiculturalism and positively correlated to negative attitudes towards immigrants (Reijerse, Van Acker, Vanbeselaere, Phalet & Duriez, 2013).

Despite the eminence of this distinction serious criticisms have been yielded over the years. Theorists have argued that the distinction between ethnic and civic nationalisms is problematic on political terms: it is often used to justify and exonerate the Western (civic) type of nationalism, while at the same time it denounces the Eastern (ethnic) variant of nationalism (McCrone, 1998). In this way the nationalism of the West is presented as less aggressive and benign compared to its Oriental aggressive and brutal counterpart (Billig, 1995; van Dijk, 1992). In addition, it is often stated that this distinction seems over-simplistic and rather inflexible. Ethnic and civic elements of national identities may actually co-exist within the same nation (Medrano & Koenig, 2005). Moreover, whether ethnic or civic criteria may be used for the inclusion or exclusion of immigrants to a nation may not be something fixed and stable but could depend upon the premises of current political debates. Even in the emblematic countries of ethnic and civic nationalisms, namely France and Germany, different policies have been implemented in relation to the integration of immigrants, depending on current political arguments and historical developments (Joppke, 2003; Medrano & Koenig, 2005). Another argument sustains that civic nationalism can be quite oppressive and intolerant towards minorities when it is considered that the cultural expression of minorities may undermine the principles of the civic nation-state (Ariely, 2011; Brown, 1999; Lægaard, 2007). Accepting the logic behind these criticisms theorists have suggested that instead of treating civic and
ethnic nationalisms as different and exclusive forms of national belonging, a conceptualization of a continuum that ranges between ‘pure’ ethnic and ‘pure’ civic national attachment maybe a more fruitful approach (Koning, 2011).

**A qualitative approach to citizenship**

Another approach to citizenship within social psychology aims to uncover the ways in which social actors themselves construct notions of citizenship and participation to a national polity within the course of verbal interaction. This approach following “the turn to language” within social psychology emphasizes that citizenship is not an abstract category, a form of cognitive schema, but it is mobilized in everyday encounters to perform interactional tasks for the participants in different social contexts. A lacuna in research is noticed (e.g. Condor & Gibson, 2007) regarding how ordinary actors may orient towards specific political processes, arguing that qualitative methods can play an important role in unraveling the connection between people’s understanding of civic notions and political action. Haste (2004) made the case that the various discourse analytic approaches are appropriate means to examine the issue of citizenship identity since they allow the study of contradictions in discourse as well as how particular political values and beliefs function in certain contexts. Gibson (2009), analyzing posts from an internet forum, showed how the repertoire of the effortful citizen was mobilized to hold the individuals accountable for being unemployed or to constitute the state responsible for safeguarding claimants by assessing their effort to find a job. In so doing, the social actors constructed the state as responsible for governing individual psychology. Another blooming research line within discourse analysis pays attention to the different ways in which participants construct citizenship and to the different ways in which boundaries are set in discourse between citizen, foreigner and alien. On occasions immigrants seemed to
be treated as responsible for the unemployment of nationals constructing the latter’s unemployment as something irrespective of their own will (Gibson, 2011). Other researchers have focused on how people justified discrimination against new travelers by constructing them as not fulfilling their citizenship obligations (Barnes, Auburn & Lea, 2004). In the UK participants treated exclusion based on racial or cultural criteria from the national polity as problematic, while at the same time nationals were considered to have more rights to cultural expression and greater rights of residency (Gibson & Hamilton, 2011). Similarly, although multiculturalism was celebrated in political discourse as a vital element of British culture, the role of the immigrants in shaping British culture and way of life was overlooked (Condor, 2011b). Some researchers paid attention on the discourses of citizenship mobilized either by immigrant Muslims or by resident Muslims who live in the West and often face the consequences of the War on Terror. Hopkins & Blackwood (2011) focused on how categorization of British Muslims as Muslims downplayed their British civic identity laying emphasis on an identity that they would not have invoked.

Interestingly, there is not much research on how immigrants construct citizenship status and their inclusion or exclusion from the national polity. Research on immigrant discourses, among other things, has examined how they account for the existence or absence of their ethnic identity (Verkuyten & de Wolf, 2002), how they deal with the stigma of being different on various dimensions (racial, foreign, emigrant), (Kadianaki, 2014) and how they deal with the double pressure (or dilemma) of having to adapt, on the one hand, and to retain their cultural identity, on the other (Archakis & Tsakona, in press). One exception is the study of Andreouli and Howarth (2013) which demonstrated the interplay between institutional discourses on “earned citizenship” and the ones mobilized by immigrants themselves. Institutional
discourses may impose a certain understanding on how people conceive their own immigrant identities (Andreouli & Howarth, 2013). Finally and importantly for our own argument, an analysis of the British citizenship tests reveals the different and potentially dilemmatic elements of citizenship implied in the test: a common set of values – which bares the questions whose values have prominence in a certain context – a common superordinate British identity – which ignores the fact that Britishness can be mobilised towards different ends in different contexts – and a set of technical skills – the attainment of which can be evaluated ignoring the fact that this is a test of technical knowledge which does not assess whether this knowledge is endorsed. Yet the test assumes that identity and the endorsement of these values and technical knowledge are the key criteria for integration (Gray & Griffin, 2013). The above research line draws attention on the highly contextual nature of the civic arguments mobilized in discourse. Rather than constituting abstract notions, they are occasioned in certain arguments aiming at achieving local interactional goals for the speaker. At the same time though, these arguments are constructed by the ideological premises, such as liberalism (Billig, Condor, Edwards, Gane, Middleton & Radley, 1988; Gibson, 2011), that form the backbone of commonsense of most (Western) societies. Therefore, discourse analytic research can illustrate the conflicting nature of the ideological resources people mobilize, in certain contexts. Most importantly, these constructions should not be considered abstract understandings of political events. Rather, different, and often contradictory, constructions of categories may be used to support different political actions (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001), and, thus, paying attention to people’s discourse is important for understanding political action and participation on the one hand, and policy-making on the other.
In Greece, scant attention has been paid to the ways in which immigrants themselves construct citizenship and their participation to the national polity. Existing research has paid attention to the way the ethnic Greek majority members construct the inclusion or exclusion of minorities and immigrants from the national polity (e.g. Xenitidou, 2010; Figgou & Condor, 2007; Sapountzis, 2013), on the way media discourse may present immigrants’ civic integration (Tzanelli, 2006), and on parliamentary discourse on naturalization legislation in Greece (Figgou, 2015). In this paper, we focus on the ways in which long residing immigrants who do not have Greek citizenship status construct citizenship criteria in an interview context on civic participation and migration. Immigrants own construction of citizenship are quite important regarding how they position themselves within a host society (e.g. Andreouli & Howarth, 2013) Hence this research aims to contribute towards the mapping of possible asymmetries between Greek ethnic majority discourses on citizenship and those of immigrants, to enhance socio-psychological knowledge on minority integration and to be used by policy makers who aim to promote minority civic integration. Specifically, our aim is two-folded: to examine how participants account for the citizenship criteria imposed by the Greek state and, secondly, the way they construct other immigrant groups and their lack of civic status.

**Background to the study**

Greece became a destination for immigrants during the last 20-25 years. The collapse of the communist regimes in the Balkans and Eastern Europe led to a continuously increasing number of immigrants, while more recently new immigrants from Asia and Africa started to arrive in Greece. It was estimated that in 2010 around 1.300.000 immigrants lived in Greece (Triandafyllidou, 2010) with almost 390.000 of them being undocumented (Maroukis, 2012). It has to be stressed that their reception
proved quite challenging for the Greek state which had an outdated migration law (Anagnostou, 2011). An ethnic conceptualization of Greek national identity seemed to play a pivotal role in the way immigrants were received within the Greek society (Triandafyllidou & Veikou, 2002). People from the former Soviet Republics who were considered to be of Greek ethnic origin were given the opportunity to naturalize making use of a favorable procedure adopted by the Greek state. Ironically the same procedure did not apply for immigrants of Greek ethnic descent from Albania (Anagnostou, 2011). It is thought that the naturalization policy adopted was heavily depended upon the jus sanguinis principle (right of blood) which makes it very difficult for immigrants to acquire Greek citizenship (Christopoulos, 2012; Tsitselikis, 2005). This has led to an alarming problem since a large proportion of the Greek population does not have full citizenship rights.

In March 2010, the newly elected PASOK government in Greece passed a legislation which contained provisions for the acquisition of Greek citizenship by first and second generation immigrants and introduced elements of jus soli (including double jus soli and jus domicili-education for the children of migrants) to temper the absolute domination of the jus sanguinis. Yet the law proved short-lived as in February 2011 the supreme administrative court in Greece (State Council) ruled that it was unconstitutional because it allowed the naturalization of second generation immigrants without examining whether they share bonds to the Greek nation. The formal announcement of the decision was made in February 2013 while, in the meantime, a mandate by the Ministry of Interior had been sent to all municipalities (in November 2012) requesting that all procedures according to 3838/2010 are suspended until further notice. The interviews for the research on which this paper draws took place after this suspension (December 2012 – January 2014). After the formal
announcement the previous law was back in use (3284/2004), which according to a study by Koning (2011) was one of the strictest among other 26 European countries owing to its ‘ethnicness’.

In May 2015, the newly elected government of SYRIZA, submitted a revision to the code of citizenship which associated citizenship acquisition for the children of immigrants to education in the form of schooling as a type of proof (enrolment in the first grade of primary school on for children born in Greece; successful completion of nine grades or six grades in secondary education for the children of immigrants not born in Greece). The revision received sufficient support to be passed in parliament in June 2015 and is considered ‘in operation’ since July 2015 (Law 4342/2015).

**Method**

**Site of research and participants.**

The present research took place in Thessaloniki the second biggest city in Greece, with a population of over one million people. It is estimated that 7% of that number consists of immigrants and co-ethnics. Most of them originate from the former Soviet Republics (Katsavounidou & Kourti, 2008), which makes Thessaloniki a unique case since in the most parts of Greece and overall the biggest immigrant population is the Albanians, followed by co-ethnics and immigrants from the former Soviet Republics.

Participants were fifty (50) indigenous (N=25) and migrants (N=25). For the purposes of this paper only the interviews with non-indigenous are considered. Their country of origin varied: Most of the came from Albania (N=16), while five came from Georgia (N=5), and one from each of the following countries, Afghanistan, Iran,
Ukraine, Romania. Fifteen of them were women and 9 of them were men. Their age spanned from 18 to 52 years and the average age was 36 years. The majority worked as unskilled workers, but some of them (N=6) had (or were in the process of acquiring) a university degree, while some had completed vocational training (N=4), one person was a doctor, one was a nurse and one was self-employed offering translation services. It has to be stressed that most of our participants were documented in Greece but did not have Greek citizenship. They were mainly selected by approaching health and public services, education and parent groups, as well as services, organizations and professions where socialisation between indigenous and non-indigenous residents of Thessaloniki was expected, such as construction, tourism and hospitality, food, service and recreation industry and domestic work; and then further snowballing techniques were employed. Most of the interviews were conducted at coffee shops after working hours or in the houses of the participants. Since most immigrants in Greece are unskilled workers their background could be considered low class.

**Procedure**

Interviews, both group interviews (N=10) and individual interviews (N=24), were employed to co-construct the data with the participants. The decision to use both group and individual interviews was taken so that data could represent naturally occurring talk which enables more in-depth discussion, acknowledging though that inter-subjectivity and multi-subjectivity may co-exist. All interviews were conducted by the second author. Participants were asked about their daily activities, whether the crisis had affected their lives, migration, what it means to be a citizen, how they evaluate the measures the Greek state takes in relation to migration, etc. The data was transcribed using a simplified form of the Jeffersonian transcription system (Jefferson,
Initially the interviews were analyzed for content in order to discern the themes or interpretative repertoires that seemed to run through the data. Interpretative repertoires are culturally shared patterns of talk that are used to construct events, actions and other phenomena. Often they are organized around certain linguistic features or metaphors (Potter & Litton, 1985; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). This was a first step to the analysis of the data. At this stage, we identified the different repertoires participants used in order to account for the citizenship criteria imposed by the Greek state. In most instances participants resisted, negated or even ridiculed the imposed criteria. We also tried to identify interpretative repertoires relating to the integration of other immigrant groups.

**Analytic Method**

After that stage discourse analytic techniques were employed to analyze the data. As discourse, following Potter & Wetherell (1987), we define every instance of spoken interaction, formal and informal, including written texts. More specifically in this paper we draw upon the principles of Rhetorical Psychology as outlined by Billig (1987) examining the common themes participants invoked and the argumentative lines formulated. According to Billig the ‘reading’ of the socio-cultural context is a necessary condition to understand the arguments mobilized. Not only in the sense that they are developed in the specific social milieu but also in the sense that arguments are used to attack counter-arguments that may not be present. The second discourse analytic tradition that informs the present analysis and is closely related to the first one is the thesis of Ideological Dilemmas (Billig, et al., 1988). According to this argument, ideologies provide to people contrary themes that given the occasion can collide and pose dilemmas to social actors. Social actors though are not considered as puppets in the hands of ideology: they use flexibly the ideological premises to
construct their own arguments. For the authors of this thesis the liberal ideology of the
Enlightenment with its contrary themes plays a crucial role in our understanding of
the social milieu. It is argued that the emphasis on the role of the citizen and civil
rights and the boundaries imposed between nation-states excluding, thus, citizen from
alien has given birth to the dilemma of prejudice. Other researchers have
demonstrated how values of liberal individualism were mixed with values of
communitarianism and active citizenship in a discussion on political participation and
citizenship (Condor & Gibson. 2007). These approaches pay attention to the notion of
ideology not as an abstract system but in the way it is instantiated in peoples’
discourse in the course of verbal interaction. In our analysis, this approach proved
fruitful in examining the contradictions in immigrants’ talk regarding citizenship
criteria and accounting for the ideological premises that allow the emergence of these
contradictions. Nevertheless, Billig (1987; Billig et al, 1988) did not provide a
systematic methodological account of how to analyze discourse since he preferred
intellectual scholarship to strict methodology (Billig, 1988).

The third discourse analytic tradition this paper draws on is discursive
psychology (DP). DP is a tradition (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996) that looks
at issues of stake in accounting and fact construction. It pays close attention to the
local interactional context and to the ways in which people may use various rhetorical
techniques to achieve different discursive goals. Thus, the action orientation of
discourse is emphasized: people use various techniques to do things in talk (Lester,
2014). This approach stresses that we should look at peoples’ own orientations. In
other words, analytic categories imported by the analyst are dismissed as imposing a
certain reading upon the data that the participants may not have necessarily shared.
We find the detailed turn-to-turn analysis of people’s discourse along with the action
orientation of language as particularly useful for our analysis. Specifically, part of the analysis focused on the rhetorical techniques mobilized by participants in order to dismiss citizenship criteria, or to argue against the integration of other immigrant groups. Recent developments on discursive psychology, namely Critical Discursive Social Psychology, have sought to combine the micro-social analysis with more macro-social concerns (e.g. Bozatzis, 2009; Byford & Tileagă, in press; Edley, 2001; Gibson, 2011; Sapountzis & Vikka, 2015; Wetherell, 1998), bridging the gap between micro and macro analysis. We take this on board by focusing on the actions performed in discourse, participants own orientations but also examining the ideological/cultural resources (glossed as interpretative repertoires or common themes) participants draw upon when they construct their opinions (Edley. 2001; Wetherell, 1998).

The combination of different discourse analytic approaches opens new avenues in relation to the phenomena under investigation and to the arguments that can be put forward. Ideological Dilemmas and Rhetorical Psychology allow us to pay attention to the way participants use ideologically contradictory resources in relation to citizenship, and to pinpoint the contradictory element of citizenship participants draw upon. Discursive Psychology on the other hand can demonstrate how these resources of citizenship can be mobilized in verbal interaction in order to perform various rhetorical local tasks for the speaker.

On this occasion, we focus on how immigrants seem to trivialize or even ridicule the citizenship criteria legislated by the Greek state, legitimating their own position within Greece. However, on other instances, when they talked about migration in general, they drew on discourses of legality and illegality to render the claims of entry of other immigrant groups as illegitimate.
Results

The topic of citizenship criteria imposed by the Greek state, quite understandably, proved an important issue for immigrants. Most of them disapproved the existence of the specific criteria, or even opposed any criteria for naturalization, when they discussed the new naturalization law, implicitly thus touching the issue of their own positioning within the Greek society. Before the following extract, the participant, a young woman of 22 years, originally from Albania who is unemployed was commenting on the fact that due to the crisis many Greek people migrate abroad. In the extracts I stands for interviewer and P for participant.

Extract 1

I: Now in relation to the people that have come here (.). OK? Eh:: some believe that when you come to Greece (.). you have to go through some procedures in order to:: become Greek (.). I mean to: evaluate whether you are Greek enough. What:: do you think that this is a good idea? (.).

P: Eh first of all “at least the Albanians I know” (.). > most of them that came to Greece especially when they opened up the borders< were young fellows mainly guys >that came alone< in order to:: make some money and go back (.). to start a family let’s say (.). >on the other hand though there were families that came here just like my family< we did not have eh:: let me explain myself we did have ”we were not rich of course” but we did not have (.). we were not short of food >like they were short of food some people in Albania let’s say (.). my father had a job my mother had a job < quite simply because a civil war broke out in Albania that’s when we came and >they had two young children< they were looking for a way to (.). to (.). >ensure they had a better future< (.). so they took their whole family and we came here. (.). Well
compulsorily the children that grow up here will be hellinized ° if I may use that expression° and basically if they want them to (. ) in any society you may find yourself you have to: °you do not have to but short of happens in its own right° if you want to integrate to the society I mean and you want to stay here >you have to adopt some elements of that society< (. ) >Now I do not know< to whom do you refer saying that they will be evaluated.

I: For example the Greeks we said we were discussing that now that they leave for Germany: (. ) Australia: (. ) England: (. ) should they go through similar procedures in order to: judge whether they are Australian:s or Germans or English enough?

P: >No to judge I do not think that someone should be judged on whether° I do not think that:° in your everyday life with when you intermingle with a person matters whether you are Greek or American or Albanian enough. I think that all people one way or the other >they should be judged simply< for the things they know to do for the things they have to offer >and for those they they offer to a society< I do not think that how ((much)) Greek you are or how ((much)) Italian ((inaudible))

The interviewer poses a question regarding whether the participant considers appropriate to conduct tests in order to assess the “Greekness” of the immigrants in Greece. In this way the interviewer constructs the citizenship test in terms of an evaluation of whether the immigrants have adopted the Greek (national) identity. The participant provides a narrative of the immigration from Albania to Greece juxtaposing her personal story and that of other families to that of young single male Albanians who came to Greece to work and then return to Albania. Two different

3 In qualitative interviews it is considered that the data are co-constructed by both the researcher and the participant. In this instance a macro-social concern is introduced by the interviewer (see also Kadianaki, 2014). Other researchers have focuses on how racist discourse can be an interactional achievement (Condor, 2006; Howarth, 2009).
representations of immigrants are constructed: the first one involves the “opportunistic” Albanians who wanted to make some savings to take them back to Albania and the other one involves the family man who wanted to protect his family from the civil war that broke out in Albania. What is also implied through this construction is that the first category of Albanian immigrants moved out voluntarily, while the second one moved out due to necessity, albeit not economic necessity. These two competing representations of immigrants as “opportunist” and often involved in crime, on the one hand, or as peaceful family men (sic.), on the other, and their opposition is quite widespread in the Greek discourse on migration (Figgou, Sapountzis, Bozatzis, Gardikiotis & Pantazis, 2011; Pratsinis, 2014; Xenitidou & Kokkali, forthcoming). What the participant seems to achieve through this contradiction is to legitimize her own presence to the Greek society in relation to other immigrant co-patriots.

The participant then continues her argument claiming that cultural adaptation is something that happens anyway when you migrate in another country. This is accomplished by the use of the word “compulsorily”, systematic vagueness (“in any society”, Edwards & Potter, 1992) and by presenting it as an automatic procedure (“you do not have to but short of happens in its own right”). This adaptation is presented contingent to the extent that a migrant wishes to stay in a society and involves adopting elements of the Greek culture or as the participant herself articulates if they get “hellinized”. The interviewer then poses the question whether Greek people who migrate should also go through some assessment of their cultural adaptation. This question allows the participant to move away from the issue of Albanian migration to Greece and to present her point as a general opinion about migration. She rejects any attempt to evaluate the cultural adaptation of a person
claiming that people should be judged upon what they know and upon what they offer to a society. In contrast to her previous turn the participant argues that any form of assessment should not necessarily involve the adoption of elements of the host culture, but on whether immigrants can contribute to the host country. The way immigrants function within a society is prioritized over the adoption of any cultural elements of the host country or over the acquisition of formal knowledge about the host country.

In the above extract the participant drew a distinction between herself who left Albania for humanitarian reasons and her co-patriots who moved to Greece for opportunistic reasons. In talking about her own example, “hellenization” is a given while in talking about Greeks and immigrants in general she seemed to consider that everyday functionality and what immigrants offer to a society should be given valence over any other formal knowledge of the host country in assessing immigrants’ adaptation.

In the following extract the participant, a woman of 22 years from Albania who works in the tourism industry, argues that language should not be a criterion for the adaptation of immigrants. Before the following extract she has been commenting on the Greeks who emigrate due to the crisis.

Extract 2

I: eh: in relation to what you have been saying (.) in relation to the people that go somewhere (.) just like what we are saying now I mean in relation to the people that come to Greece some people think that: when: (.) eh someone comes to Greece eh: should take test or to evaluate in any case whether he/she is Greek enough.
P: Tests you mean the language and: (.) writing and all this? You refer to the written text test and oral obviously. Yes. (laughter)) I think it is completely racist. Why? Because I have met many Greeks in my life and even today I have such (.) people who I love very much (.) who speak: not even half the Greek that I can speak. They do not know even half of the words that I know in Greek for example. This does not mean that he is less Greek (.) and it does not make me more Greek than he is. He is simply a man who hasn’t studied in his life and did not get educated.

I: Eh: the Greeks that now probably leave and go: (.) I don’t know to England: Germany: Australia:=

P:=Yes.

I:[Eh:::

P:[I have friends that left too.

I: [Should they go through similar procedures in these countries?= 

P: =Yes yes. (.) They should study and they should be educated and I have friends the one left for the Netherlands (.) the other is in Germany right now (.) Frankfurt (.) they do not have a clue of: a: (.) the one in Dutch and the other in German respectively right? They had no clue of the language etc etc. And yet they must learn the language because otherwise you can’t: (.) co-exist you cannot carry on with your life normally (.) you will have problems all the time (.) you will have things that stop you obstacles ahead of you (.) the language is a basic communication too:1..

The interviewer asks a similar question as in the previous extract arguing that “some” people want to assess whether immigrants are Greek enough. Again, the issue of citizenship testing is posed in terms of a national identity the immigrants are supposed
to adopt in the host country. The participant starts her account by rhetorically asking whether the question refers to the Greek citizenship testing and especially the assessment of fluency on the Greek language. With the use of laughter and the extreme case formulation (“completely racist”, Pomerantz, 1986) she builds the illegitimacy of the language test. Two further extreme case formulations (“many Greeks”, “love very much”) are used by the participant who in this way presents herself as having good relations with members of the host country, to disclaim what she is about to say. These people are presented as having an inferior knowledge of the Greek language compared to her. Nevertheless, this does not deny, according to the participant, their Greek national psyche. In this way, national categories are essentialized since membership depends on the existence of an innate national essence. Hence, language is presented as a technical knowledge, which is the result of education and is dissociated from issues of national identity and group belonging.

In the rest of the extract there is a significant slippage from the construction of language as a technical knowledge to the construction of language as a communicative tool that is important for your everyday life that helps you overcome your daily challenges to a host society. Of course, the rhetorical context is shuffled: the interviewer poses a question about whether Greek people abroad should go through similar testing. In that regard, their adaptation is constructed to depend heavily on the knowledge of the language of the host society, the language they have to study, not in the form of abstract knowledge but in the form of an everyday tool of communication.

The following extract is from a group interview with three people, two from Albania aged 50 and 52 years and one from Georgia who is 42. They are all construction
workers. Before this extract the participants were talking about the criteria of national identity and who is entitled to call himself/herself Greek. At this stage the interviewer posed a question about whether there should be criteria for citizenship among immigrants. The main contribution (P3) is from the person from Georgia.

Extract 3

P3: A grandma who is eighty years old (.) she cannot speak Greek to speak her mind (.) what does this mean? <her whole life> she had considered herself and she had fought for that >to be and remain a Greek a Pontian< she came here for the first time she has to go through a citizenship test?

(...)

P3: DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY?

P2: Is it for the language?

P3: >You have to know the language you have to know the history<.

I: It is for the language=

P3= [They are illiterate.

P2: [These were (.) these were

P3: [A grandfather is illiterate he does not know anything what can he tell you about history. Our people (.) >excuse me I use “our people” I mean the Pontians< (.) <since I was little>

P2: [ Don’t apologize you are ((inaudible)).

P3: [<since I was little> I remember the stories they used to tell us (.) they do not know the other ((official)) history (.) they know a story how how they were sent away from there how they came from Turkey how they slaughtered them >they know that
story they don’t know the other one< if they if the:y ask them [a question “Do you know what this is?”

P2: [Excuse me (identifying information) this is how it is (.) I know this for years it is like this=

P3: =This grandmother (.) WHAT CAN SHE TELL ((THEM)) NOW?

The first participant is a Pontian from the former Soviet Republics. For the purposes of the present analysis the reader has to bear in mind that these immigrants were considered to be of Greek ethnic descent and had more benefits in comparison to other immigrant groups. Some of them naturalized and for the majority of them their legal status was guaranteed. He starts the extract with the vivid image (Wooffitt, 1992) of an eighty-year-old woman who cannot speak Greek. Her national identity is presented as highly contested and difficult to claim within a hostile environment. As a result, the participant invokes popular representations of Greek history of Greek people being persecuted and turned to refugees abandoning their homeland which is in Turkey. This sympathetic image of an old woman who has fought to keep her Greek identity is juxtaposed to the requirements of a citizenship test that may ask for fluency in Greek or knowledge of Greek history. This argument is further worked later on when the speaker uses the construction of an illiterate old man who does not know the official history but knows the stories of how they were turned to refugees.

The sympathetic images of older people who had fought hard to maintain their Pontian Greek national identity as well as the fact that they lack education and thus knowledge helps render the citizenship criteria legislated by the Greek state as absurd. In this manner, national identities are essentialised. It is something that people carry in them through their lived experience and participation to the national polity cannot
be assessed on the basis of knowledge of the language or the official history that are portrayed just as technical knowledge that does not have necessarily to do with the existence of a national consciousness.

The following extract is from the same interview. At this stage the question the participants were commenting on was about the way the Greek State deals with migration.

**Extract 4**

P3: Takis spoke his mind (. ) my opinion is this (. ) >it does not concern me what the politicians did< just like Takis said we are from various places and you see that we agree in almost everything. We he is (. ) from from another ((place)) I am from another ((place)) he is from another ((place)) (. ) but we almost speak about the same issue and we agreed in almost everything. This is my opinion. The dirty cloth has to pass from the washing machine. The country has to pass (. ) to wash well (. ) these are all wrong that they did (. ) that we know why they did them (. ) my opinion is they have to clean <the historical country that we love>. Whoever it is if the person does not come here like we came to have a family to live with dignity he has to go. (. ) Not and 85-90% to go these that are here and ruin everything for us e::h say that I am racist >I don’t care< all of them to go to clean to wash our cloth to: put it to: dry to wear it well. That’s it. All of them have to go (. ) my opinion right. Say that I am a kid from Golden Dawn. They have to go. >I don’t care for them that say the Pakistanis and the others< let them go to their country they have a big country=

P2:= We are talking

P3:= Ten times bigger than Greece and they have a good climate there let them go there. This is what I say.
The participant starts by building consensus among the other participants who participate in the same interview. He uses a metaphor of dirty clothes to speak about migration and to claim that dealing with migration is like cleaning the country. This metaphor is widely used by the Golden Dawn party members. Here the criteria upon which people should be allowed to enter and live in Greece are quite different. Starting a family and living with dignity are seen as prerequisites for staying in Greece. What is omitted is also quite important. In Greece the image of the family man who is an immigrant struggling to provide for his family is juxtaposed in Greek popular discourse to the image of the trouble-making, delinquent immigrant (Figgou, Sapountzis, Bozatzis, Gardikiotis & Pantazis, 2011; Pratsinakis, 2014; Xenitidou & Kokkali, forthcoming). In this way two distinct groups of immigrants are constructed: One with no legitimate claims to remain in Greece and one that has legitimacy to stay in Greece.

It is interesting that the participant towards the end of the interview is invoking admissions of racism to ask for the repatriation of Pakistani immigrants who are used as the prototypical “bad” immigrant, and are constructed as the ones that destroy the reputation of immigrants in general. In contrast to the previous extract from the same interview in this one the national psyche is not summoned in order to justify or render accountable the presence of immigrants in the Greek society. The presence of the immigrants in Greece is judged upon their everyday function within the Greek society.

Before the following extract the interviewer asked the participant, a woman of 22 years old from Georgia (unemployed at the time the interview took place), whether immigrants would have to prove their affiliation to the Greek state. The participant developed an argument saying that any criteria set for acquiring Greek citizenship
would actually prevent some immigrants from entering Greece and therefore from having a better chance in life. The interviewer then asked whether Greeks who emigrate should also have to go through citizenship tests.

**Extract 5**

I: Do you think they should take similar eh:: tests? To go through similar procedures?

P: No (.) No. I do not agree with this.

I:Mmm.

P: I do not agree at all. As I explained it doesn’t mean tha::at if I know Greek history or: (. ) culture or >all all these< that I am Greek. Just like me when I came here (. ) I didn’t know anything about Greece (. ) of course I was young (. ) >my parents for example who came here together didn’t know much about Greece they knew that the light is on all day and you can have it on day and night (. ) you turn on the water tub and the water always runs it is not for a specific time period< and the toilet for example is not outside i::n in the backyard it is inside the house. (. ) That is what we knew about Greece we did not know anything more and nevertheless we came here and now if you tell us “go back to Georgia” we will tell you “ >anywhere you like not back to Georgia leave us here we intent to stay permanently here<”.

The participant states her disagreement to any citizenship test arguing that knowing the Greek history or culture is not a necessary prerequisite to develop a link to a country. The criteria for citizenship such as knowing the history or the culture of a country are contrasted to a three-part list of basic human needs, namely water, electricity and hygiene. With this comparison, as in the previous extract any citizenship criteria are trivialized when they are put together to some basic human
needs. In the end of the extract she mobilizes direct speech to sketch a hypothetical dialogue between an indigenous person and her family. To the hypothetical demand of repatriation her answer again orients to the hardships they may face back in Georgia ("anywhere you like not back to Georgia") and also to their intention to stay in Greece permanently.

The following extract is from the same interview. At this stage the interviewer had posed a question for the police operations against undocumented migration.

**Extract 6**

P: A long time ago (.) now it is called Xenios Zeus > back then it was called “sweeping” operation< I remember. (…) eh:: I believe that again I may sound monotonous bu::t it is something that again takes place just to keep up appearances. I was watching the news >you will tell me< you take under consideration a serious source ((ironic)) (. ) TV (. ) >they went to some apartments they rounded up fifteen Pakistanis from a small studio for example< (. ) they had them locked up for a couple of days and the third day they were back there. Eh::h you do something just to keep up appearances. Take him >you see that he is illegal that he cannot stay here you see that he never had any documentation< (. ) send him back. Send him back (. ) why are you keeping him here (. ) what’s the reason? I do not know if this is true >but a grandpa who was in Germany for many years told me< a Greek guy from work (. ) when I had a job. He said “we the Greeks when we were going to Germany (. ) we were going by train for example (. ) when we got off the train they were expecting us” he says “something like twenty Germans in a row? You had to pass through each one in turn. The one looked at your teeth (. ) the other at your papers (. ) the other at I do not know what (. ) you had to be totally healthy (. ) not to be a convict or the like at your country (. ) >you had to have you had to have you had to have<”. In Greece this
is not the case (. ) and suddenly after they had collared everybody (. ) they try to short them out but >they do not do that<. (. ) I don’t know do you? Where they rounded them up did they sent them back? (. ) are they still there?

In this extract, we would like to focus on two different aspects. Firstly, through the comparison to the past German migration policy and the present Greek migration policy, the Greek state is constructed as inefficient and disorganized. As a result, part of the blame for the illegal migration falls on the shoulders of the Greek state. This discourse seems to draw upon common representations of orientalism and occidentalism that researchers argue that inform social actors in Greece (Bozatzis, 2009). Secondly, the Pakistanis are used again as the prototypical “bad” immigrant. In contrast to the previous extract deportation is presented here as the only solution to the “problem”. No humanitarian reasons are invoked to back their presence in Greece. The sole criterion which is used to construct them as “illegal” immigrants is not their criminal behavior but the fact that they lack any official documentation. This discourse was quite widespread at the time not only in lay discourse but also in parliamentary debates concerning the previous naturalization law (Figgou, 2015).

Discussion

This paper tried to demonstrate the dilemmatic aspects of citizenship as articulated by immigrants who live in Greece. Both the economic crisis that torments Greece and the rise of the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party has put immigrants in Greece in a very precarious position. In addition, the Greek state proved quite reluctant to adopt a modern naturalization policy for immigrants that would facilitate their integration to Greece (Anagnostou, 2011).
In the extracts presented above the participants trivialized citizenship criteria in various ways: by arguing that immigrants’ adaptation should be judged upon their daily life routine; arguing that history and language testing cannot assess the “true” national psyche of part of the immigrants; finally, it was also argued that citizenship testing excludes immigrants from some basic humanitarian needs.

By arguing against citizenship testing, claiming that it cannot capture the true national “psyche” participants on some instances essentialised the Greek national identity. Socio-psychological work on essentialism has tried to unravel the relation between prejudice and essentialism. It is often argued that people who believe in essences stereotype more and have more negative attitudes towards the categories they essentialize (e.g. Haslam, Rothschild & Ernst, 2000; Bastian & Haslam, 2006). Nevertheless, it has also been argued that this may be conditional upon the type of category. When people believed for example that the category “gay people” was due to innate characteristics this actually reduced negative stereotyping (Haslam, Rothschild & Ernst, 2002). Discourse analytic work criticizing the reification of essentialism as an inner psychological process (Figgou, 2013; Hanson-Easey, Augustinos & Moloney, 2014; Kadianaki & Andreouli, in press; Verkuyten, 2003) has paid attention to the local interactional goals that essentialism (and de-essentialism) may play in talk. Verkuyten (2003) argues that his immigrant participants drew on essentialist notions of culture in order to argue against assimilation, but de-essentialised it in an argumentative context of discrimination. Figgou (2013) in a similar vein argues that majority talk about the Pomak minority in Greek Thrace often constructed changes in the group-level identification through time as the outcome of historical exclusion and social influence, side to side with arguments which linked change to particular category essences such as adaptability.
and open-mindedness. In our rhetorical context essentialism allowed our immigrant participants to construct language testing as inefficient, not reflecting the true national psyche, and thus it implicitly called for its rejection.

Although in extracts 3 and 5 participants argued that citizenship testing should be abandoned they both championed deportation for the prototypical “bad” immigrant group, the Pakistanis. Of course, it has to be stressed that participants not only came from Eastern Europe but also the one of the participants in extract 3 is Pontian and thus considered to be of Greek ethnic origin, while the other two participants in extract 3 were documented. At a microsocial level these constructions seemed to serve local interactional aims: constructing citizenship criteria as absurd on the reasons presented above allowed them to account for their lack of citizenship status putting the blame on the Greek state which imposes inadequate criteria or does not attend to the human needs of immigrant groups. However, when the discussion touched upon the issue of migration control, by the use of the “prototypical” bad immigrant participants could demonstrate their allegiance to the Greek nation-state. As a result, while on the one hand participants seemed to rhetorically resist the naturalization procedures adopted by the Greek state, at the same time they mobilized interpretative repertoires of exclusion of immigrants. This reveals the dilemmatic nature of the notion of citizenship since according to theorists (Bloemraad, Korteweg & Yurdakul, 2008) it includes different understandings that can be potentially contradictory. One element of citizenship relates to civil rights and political participation, while another to a sense of belonging to a national community and thus to the exclusion of the non-nationals (see also Sindic, 2011). In other words, notions of liberal citizenship that theorize it as a contract between state and citizen may co-exist with notions of citizenship as an automatic status acquired by birth, and notions
of the satisfaction of basic human needs through the entrance to an economically advanced country may coexist with discourses on the repatriation of foreigners.

These types of arguments are easier to make if an eclectic approach to discourse analysis is followed. The combination of Ideological Dilemmas and Discursive Psychology allows us to combine the micro level of analysis – focusing on the local interactional tasks the use of notions of citizenship may achieve – with the wider macro-social concerns, where different ideological resources of citizenship that form the backdrop of common sense collide. A qualitative approach to the study of citizenship, as the one adopted in this paper, can shade light on the ways in which people negotiate the meaning of citizenship and their identities as citizens. As, hopefully, we demonstrated in this paper, immigrants in our interviews actively resisted and re-negotiated the meaning of citizenship criteria in the course of verbal interaction. Although results from a discourse analytic study are not easy to generalize beyond the immediate rhetorical context, the observed contradictions and dilemmas reveal the contradictory elements participants draw upon and how these are used within the local microsocial context to construct different “worthy” and “unworthy” citizens depending on the task at hand. This also reveals the resources of citizenship, participants seem to share and draw upon, such as the criteria of inclusion and exclusion, the meaning of citizenship as an identity and the various entitlements to act as a citizen.

In their management of the dilemmas presented above participants placed themselves along the (imagined) Greek population that demands stricter immigration control. This also reveals the interplay between majority and minority discourse and between the discourses adopted by policy makers. Previous work has placed emphasis on the way official discourses of earned citizenship (e.g Andreouli & Howarth, 2013)
may shape the way in which immigrants who are in the process of naturalization view their inclusion to the new (for them) UK polity. In our data participants seemed to resist naturalization criteria that led to their exclusion. Certainly, this relates to the local context of the interview and the various accountability concerns raised within it but also to the wider arguments and counter-arguments that are mobilized within the wider cultural milieu.

In spite of the benefits of the adopted methodology, our approach may bear certain shortcoming as well. Besides the discourse analytic take on generalizability, another important shortcoming is that in discourse analysis we analyze the discourse of people who are competent language users. As a result, immigrants who may not be competent language users may be left aside the scope of our attention. This is an important point considering that large populations of refugees from Syria have entered Greece (and still in the process of), posing new challenges on who should be accepted or excluded from entrance. For example, reactions against the acceptance of refugee children in public schools are taking place in Greece indicating the need for further investigation. This also alerts us to the need for ongoing research to bring to light the way people understand citizenship and the issue of inclusion/exclusion from a national polity both at a micro-social and at a macro-social level.

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Appendix A

Transcription Notation

= no discernible gap between utterances
((text)) researcher’s comments
CAPITALS louder speech
‘text’ quieter speech
[ overlapping speech
Text emphasised speech
“text” direct speech
Te::xt extension of preceding vowel
(.) short pause
>text< speeded-up speech
Text* original term used

All other punctuation marks (commas, full stops) can be used based on their regular usage (in both English and Greek language).