Which dialect, what literacy?

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1. Preamble

The aim of this paper is to discuss the pedagogical concerns behind the variationist agenda advocated in the Cypriot National Curriculum for Language of 2010 (MoEC 2010). The aim is to explore the various ways in which that curriculum capitalized on the fundamental constructivist assumption that the fostering of competence in a language variety that is extraneous to the speech community, in this case Standard Modern Greek, cannot be achieved in a linguistic vacuum, i.e. without deploying the students' native variety of Greek as linguistic capital, as well as linguistic right. Crucially, that curriculum assumed that more effective language learning and, consequently, higher levels of competence in Standard Greek can be achieved not through mere 'tolerance' of the dialect in the language classroom but through systematic contrastive teaching of the two varieties, as well as through exploration of hybrid forms involving code-switching and code-mixing; such teaching and learning practices were expected to foster high levels of metalinguistic awareness. Secondly, and crucially, the 2010 language curriculum of Cyprus (as well as the 2011 pilot language curriculum of Greece; PS 2011) adopted as its basic premise that the teaching and learning of variation ought to be central to any critical literacy project: if critically literate students are expected to take on the role of the sociolinguist and the discourse analyst and to explore critically all aspects of language use as indexicals of social and cultural identities, but also as tools of meaning-making and the construction of varying world-views, ideologies and power relations, this pedagogical objective can only be achieved through systematic critical exploration of language in use, register, speech-style and their symbolic, social-semiotic import (Halliday 1978). In speech communities such as that of Cyprus, where diglossia is still prevalent, the issues posed by diglossia for literacy learning can be overcome via the proposed pedagogy of critical literacy, which hones the critical understanding and assessment of the contribution of (socio)linguistic variation, variation in vocabulary, grammar and textual structure, to the shaping of various meanings as contextualized, social constructs, as discourses. Furthermore, the 2010 language curriculum implemented aspects of Halliday's systemic-functional grammar (with special emphasis on register as an aggregate of tenor, field and mode) and it conversed critically with extant models of genre literacy (Matsagouras & Tsiplakou 2008; Tsiplakou & Floros 2013; Tsiplakou 2015). In terms of teaching methodology, a dynamic model of literacy learning was proposed whereby students bring to class authentic texts of their own choice and analyze critically their structure and linguistic/stylistic choices and the ways in which these construct identities and ideologies, the ultimate goal being the cognitive and social empowerment of the learners through critical literacy and the honing of their ability to 'converse' meaningfully with their social context. The teaching of variation then aimed at the fostering of critical metalinguistic awareness as a first yet essential step of this pedagogical project.

2. Diglossia and literacy learning

As has been argued extensively in previous work (Tsiplakou 2014; Tsiplakou et al. 2006; Tsiplakou et al. 2016), the present-day Cypriot dialect is in a state of shift, as the local varieties

are undergoing leveling and, concomitantly, a pancyprian *koine* is emerging, which is a prestige variety because of its structurally mixed character, as it displays phonological, morphological and syntactic hybridity in innovative structures that approximate Standard Greek but without fully converging with it (e.g. periphrastic Present and Past Perfect, exceptional clitic placement, etc; Tsiplakou et al. 2016). This does not mean that the diglossic situation has been resolved, but that diglossia exists between the Cypriot *koine* and Standard Modern Greek, which is supposed to be taught systematically at school.

The Republic of Cyprus has always used Greece's curricula and textbooks, which it received *gratis* until recently, with a few exceptions, e.g. in subjects such as Mathematics (Hadjioannou, Tsiplakou & Kappler 2011). Besides serving practical purposes, this practice was also symbolic of national unity with Greece (Ioannidou 2012). Moreover, Cyprus has always followed ubiquitously the Greek education reforms, e.g. the transition from *katharevusa* to *dimotiki* (and back to *katharevusa* during the Greek dictatorship, although there was no dictatorship in Cyprus), the transition from more grammar-centered to more "communicative" and/or "text-centered" approaches to language teaching advocated in the school textbooks *Η Γλώσσα μου* from the 1980s to 2006 as well as in the 1999 National Curriculum (PS 1999) and the Interdisciplinary Unitary Framework for Programs of Studies (IUFPS 2003). The Cypriot education system has always used some additional, locally produced teaching material, such as anthologies of Cypriot literature, in which prose texts are however in Standard Greek and some poems, e.g. by the Cypriot national poets Lipertis and Michailidis, are written in the particular Cypriot poetic register of each poet and are by no means typical of the contemporary form of the spoken dialect. The language teaching methodology informally adopted is, in theory, a form of immersion in Standard Greek (Hadjioannou et al. 2011; Ioannidou 2002, 2009, 2012; Papapavlou 2010; Tsiplakou 2007a, b, 2015; Yiakoumetti 2007, 2015); however, the language of Greek textbooks is not necessarily representative of the standard variety, due to the nature of the texts (pseudo-texts, authentic literary or pseudo-literary texts constructed for teaching purposes) which were frequently linguistically mixed and did not provide any principled way of distinguishing, for example, between dialectal elements from other varieties of Greek in a manner that would make sense to the Cypriot student and facilitate the learning process.

Leaving aside the issue of the target language contained in the Greek textbooks, the linguistic medium of teaching in Cypriot education is necessarily mixed; a large number of ethnographic and quantitative surveys has shown that teachers and students constantly code-switch and code-mix between Cypriot and Standard Greek (Hadjioannou 2009, Ioannidou 2002, 2009, Ioannidou & Sophocleous 2010, Pavlou & Papapavlou 2004, Tsiplakou 2006, 2007a, b, 2015). Interestingly, there is a fairly large gap between teachers' actual language practices and their attitudes on the use of the dialect as a medium of instruction or as a target of instruction. The research findings show considerable ambivalence as regards teachers' beliefs about the usefulness of dialect in teaching. On the one hand, they construct the dialect as an essential part of their venerated national heritage and as a sign of Greek national identity, but on the other hand they express ignorance, embarrassment and even outright refusal when it comes to implementing the dialect in language teaching (data from Tsiplakou 2007b):

(1)   Δεν υπάρχει πια κυπριακή. Το μόνο που έχει απομείνει είναι η προφορά.
    There is no Cypriot dialect any more. All that's left is an accent.

(2)   Έχετε υπόψιν σας, φυσικά, ότι η κυπριακή είναι πλησιέστερη προς τα αρχαία ελληνικά από τα ελληνικά της Ελλάδος.
    You are, no doubt, aware that Cypriot is closer to Ancient Greek than the Greek spoken in Greece.   (school inspector, 65)

(3) Φυσικά εν να μιλήσω κυπριακά στην τάξη, αφού εν ελληνικά. Λέμε στα μωρά να μεν λαλούν «οκνιάρης» αλλά «τεμπέλης». Μα το «τεμπέλης» το καλαμαρίστικο εν τούρκικο, ενώ το «οκνιάρης» το δικό μας είναι αρχαία ελληνικά, «οκνηρός». Δεν είναι πκιο σωστό το «οκνιάρης», αλόπως;
Of course I'll speak Cypriot in class, since it's Greek. We tell the kids not to say "okniaris" ['lazy', Cypriot Greek] but "tebelis" ['lazy', Standard Greek]. But the Standard Greek "tebelis" comes from Turkish, whereas ours is Ancient Greek, "okniros". So, isn't "okniaris" more correct?

<div align="right">(primary school teacher, 40)</div>

(4) Φυσικά αγαπάμε την κυπριακή, είναι μέσα στην καρδιά μας. Αλλά δεν είναι κατάλληλη για την εκπαίδευση. Είναι φτωχή.
Of course we love Cypriot, it's in our hearts. But it is not suitable for education. It is impoverished.

<div align="right">(high-school teacher, 57)</div>

Research findings indicate that teachers think that maximizing exposure to Standard Greek is necessary in order for students to learn the language "correctly" and that they themselves must somehow be models of "correct" language behavior and sources of language learning for their students. In practice, of course, this is not the case, as they constantly code-switch between Cypriot and Standard Greek, which is to be expected, as such linguistic versatility is required by the multifaceted nature of classroom discourse (as is register / style-shifting in non-diglossic teaching and learning contexts). Abundant data from ethnographic research in Cypriot classrooms (Ioannidou 2002, 2009; Ioannidou & Sophocleous 2010; Tsiplakou 2007a, b, 2016; Tsiplakou et al. 2018) however show that, despite the apparent linguistic versatility, overall Standard Greek is reserved for what is construed as 'actual teaching' while Cypriot Greek is reserved for more peripheral functions, such as giving instructions, joking with the students, imposing order, making remarks that are outside the remit of the lesson proper, etc. To give but one example, in (5) the teacher switches from Standard Greek, which is the code in which the content of the lesson is couched, to Cypriot Greek to address an individual remark to Georgia. The same code-switching pattern occurs in (6), where the directionality of the switch is again from Standard Greek, the language of the lesson, of learning, to Cypriot Greek, the code reserved for peripheral tasks such as giving instructions (italics indicate Cypriot Greek; data from Tsiplakou 2007b):

(5) Georgia: éçi mɲan paráŋgan mikrí
Teacher: méni se mɲan paráŋga
 kséris jatí ta epanalamváno ɟeorɟía
ɟatí *en akúese*.

Georgia: He has a small shack.
Teacher: He lives in a shack.
You know why I am repeating this, Georgia,
because *we can't hear you*.

(6) Teacher: ce i tris, ce ta tría tu ta peðɟá
ívrete ta ta tría tu peðɟá
Teacher: All three, all three of his children.
Did you find them? His three children.

The argument has been made in recent research that such code-switching data do not point to translanguaging as meaningful alternation and exchange between and beyond linguistic systems and codes that would allow for new meanings and teacher/learner subjectivities to emerge (García & Li Wei 2014; cf. Snell 2013); instead, such code-switching practices covertly index a hierarchical relationship between language and dialect reflecting dominant attitudes and hegemonic practices outside the school classroom (see Tsiplakou 2016 for extensive discussion).

3. Curricula and textbooks, paved with good intentions

It is of particular interest that in the context of the purported "communicative" turn in language teaching, the 1999 Greek Program of Studies for Language and the and the IUFPS (IUFPS 2003), which incorporated the national Program of Study for Language, stipulate communicative appropriateness, a balanced approach to oral and written language, and the treatment of language as a social product. Indeed, the IUFPS state that language teaching should make children competent users of the language, that development of the spoken language should be given priority, that proficiency in spoken and written language is attained through use, that students are expected to make *appropriate use* of language, and, crucially, that *children should be able to recognize and appreciate linguistic variation.* Indeed, the Program of Studies states in no uncertain terms that linguistic prescriptivism is not a desideratum, and it clearly opts for a variationist agenda for language teaching and literacy learning (data first discussed in Tsiplakou 2015):

(7)   Η γλώσσα είναι κοινωνικό προϊόν: εκπορεύεται από την κοινωνία, υπηρετεί την κοινωνία και επιστρέφει [sic] σ' αυτήν. […] [Η] γλώσσα ενδείκνυται να διδάσκεται σε συνάφεια / σχέση με τα κοινωνικά γεγονότα [sic], τα οποία την παράγουν και τη θρέφουν [sic] [...] Η γλώσσα είναι κοινωνική αλληλενέργεια: Με τη γλώσσα τα μέλη μιας γλωσσικής κοινότητας δέχονται και ασκούν επιδράσεις. [...] *Για τη διδασκαλία αυτό σημαίνει ότι η γλώσσα πρέπει να παράγεται στο φυσικό της κοινωνικό αλληλενεργειακό πλαίσιο.*
Language is a social product: it comes from society, it serves society and returns [sic] to it. […] [L]anguage ought to be taught in relation to / consistently with the social events [sic] that produce and nurture [sic] it. […] Language is social interaction: it is through language that members of a speech community receive and exert influences. For teaching, this means that language must be produced in its natural social inter-energetic context.

(PS 1999: 7239-7240, emphasis added)

What does the above statement actually imply for language teaching? The 1999 Program of Studies is eloquent in expressing non-prescriptivism and being in favor of a distinctly variationist turn:

(8)   Θα αποκτήσουν ακόμη κατά το μάθημα της γλωσσικής διδασκαλίας δάσκαλος και μαθητής συνείδηση των γλωσσικών ποικιλιών με τις οποίες λειτουργεί [sic] ο λόγος. […] [Ο] λόγος απλώνεται οριζόντια μέσα στο χώρο και δημιουργεί [sic] γεωγραφικές γλωσσικές ποικιλίες (ιδιώματα, διάλεκτοι) ή διαφορίζεται κάθετα και δίνει τις κοινωνικές γλωσσικές ποικιλίες.
In the course of language teaching the teacher and the student will gain awareness of the linguistic varieties with which language functions [sic] [...] [L]anguage spreads horizontally in space and creates geographical linguistic varieties ('idioms', dialects) or it diversifies vertically and yields sociolects. (PS 1999: 7242)

A few pages down, however, the variationist agenda appear to co-occur happily with a rather more traditional, prescriptive stance:

(9)   *Να δηλώνεται πάντα και προπάντων κατά τη διδακτική πράξη, σεβασμός προς την αποκλίνουσα από τη norma γλώσσα (ιδίωμα, διάλεκτος) με την οποία έρχεται ο μαθητής στο σχολείο.* Αυτήν τη γλώσσα δεν την απορρίπτουμε. Είναι μια άλλη γλώσσα [sic] μέσα στην ευρύτερη ελληνική γλώσσα. Δεν αποτελούν σφάλματα οι διαλεκτικοί/ιδιωματικοί τύποι που χρησιμοποιεί κάποτε ο πόντιος, ο κύπριος ή ο ηπειρώτης κτλ. μαθητής όταν έρχεται στο σχολείο. Δεν είναι γλωσσικά σφάλματα, είναι άλλες μορφές του ελληνικού λόγου. Δεν τους απορρίπτουμε, λοιπόν, αυτούς τους τύπους, αλλά από αυτούς ξεκινούμε για να οδηγήσουμε τον μαθητή στην κατάκτηση του νεοελληνικού λόγου. [...] Έτσι η γλώσσα μας λειτουργεί [sic] με πλήθος γλωσσικές ποικιλίες, γεωγραφικές (ιδιώματα, διάλεκτοι) και κοινωνικές (ειδικές γλώσσες κτλ.). *Σκοπός μας είναι η μελέτη ολόκληρου αυτού του γλωσσικού θησαυρού και η αξιοποίησή του κατά τις κοινωνικές και επικοινωνιακές περιστάσεις/συνθήκες.* Μία από τις γλωσσικές αυτές ποικιλίες είναι εκείνη την οποία καλλιεργούμε στο σχολείο. Είναι η γλωσσική ποικιλία στην οποία γράφονται τα σχολικά βιβλία, οι εργασίες/εκθέσεις κτλ. των μαθητών. *Σ' αυτήν γίνεται η διδασκαλία και συναρτάται [sic] αυτή με τη γλώσσα που μιλιέται στα αστικά κέντρα της χώρας και που γράφεται από τους δόκιμους Έλληνες συγγραφείς.* Η ίδια γλωσσική ποικιλία καλλιεργείται στην επιστήμη, στη διοίκηση, στα γράμματα, στις τέχνες κτλ., προσαρμοζόμενη κάθε φορά στις συγκεκριμένες (διοικητικές κτλ.) επικοινωνιακές συνθήκες.

Respect is to be expressed, on all occasions but above all during teaching, for the language deviating from the norm (idiom, dialect) with which the student comes to school. We do not reject this language. It is another language [sic] within the broader Greek language. The dialectal / 'idiomatic' forms used by the Pontic, Cypriot or Epirot student when he comes to school are not errors. They are not linguistic errors, they are other forms of Greek. We therefore do not reject those forms, but we start off from them to guide the student to the acquisition of the Modern Greek language. […] So our language functions [sic] with a multitude of linguistic varieties, geographical ('idioms', dialects) and social (special languages, etc.). *Our aim is to study this linguistic treasure in its entirety and to capitalize on it it in social and communicative circumstances/situations.* One of these linguistic varieties is the one that we cultivate in school. It is the linguistic variety in which school books, student projects/compositions, etc. are written. *It is in this variety that teaching takes place and it is correlated* [sic] *to the language spoken in the urban centers of the country and used by canonical Greek writers.* The same linguistic diversity is cultivated in science, administration, letters, arts, etc., adapting to particular (administrative, etc.) communicative conditions on each occasion.

(PS 1999, 7244-7245, emphasis added)

As discussed extensively in Tsiplakou 2015 (see also Kostouli 2002; Tsiplakou 2007a), these statements on the one hand make the 1999 Program of Studies a non-prescriptive project oriented towards the use of dialectal varieties for educational purposes; on the other hand, in a rather inaccurate and contradictory way, the Program simultaneously stipulates that the language of school literacy is the standard language, as it is akin to the language spoken in urban centers. Such inherent contradictions in the formulation of teaching objectives for linguistic diversity ultimately come as no surprise, as they are consistent with a number of other

contradictions and inconsistencies regarding the ways in which the communicative approach is perceived (see Tsiplakou et al. 2006 for discussion), leaving many questions unanswered: no concrete proposal is made as to how linguistic diversity in the classroom should be addressed, or what 'respecting' and, crucially, 'studying' in its entirety the 'linguistic treasure' of dialects actually implies in terms of teaching practices. In effect, the problem is solved by the availability of centralized, compulsory textbooks, whose serial order of chapters of texts and language drills provides the absolutely, unyieldingly linear language syllabus observed in all schools in Greece and Cyprus. Interestingly, the textbooks were produced in 1981-1982, i.e. long before the Study Program of 1999, and were replaced in 2006, but the new ones, which are still the ones used in 2019, were designed presumably following the dictates of the Program of Studies of 1999, which is also still the one in use, despite the fact that a pilot Program of Studies with a strong orientation towards critical literacy was produced in 2011 (PS 2011). Textbooks, at least those used until 2006, effectively contradicted the Program of Study as they did not feature authentic texts from different genres appropriate for different communicative situations, but instead showed a strong preference for literary or pseudo-literary texts, the non-contextualized, non-functional teaching of grammar and the unsystematic treatment of linguistic diversity. Indeed, elements of geographical dialects, sociolects and even different registers and styles were present, especially in literary texts as part of literary style, but without systematic instructions as to how such variation should be dealt with in language teaching.

4. The Cyprus Language Curriculum of 2010

The Cyprus Language Curriculum of 2010 (MoEC 2010) defines itself as a critical literacy project (cf. Bayham 1995; Clark & Ivanič 1997; Cope & Kalantzis 2000; Gee 2015; Kalantzis & Cope 2012; Muspratt et al. 1997). Critically literate students are expected to take on the role of the sociolinguist and the discourse analyst and to explore critically all aspects of language use as indexicals of social and cultural identities, but also as tools for the construction ideologies and power relations.

(10)   Ως κριτικά εγγράμματο ορίζουμε το άτομο που κατανοεί και χειρίζεται επιτυχώς τη γλώσσα στην ιδεολογική της διάσταση. Διερευνά, δηλαδή, το πώς τα διάφορα γλωσσικά στοιχεία (γραμματικά φαινόμενα, λεξιλόγιο, κειμενικά είδη, οργάνωση πληροφοριών σε κείμενα) συμβάλλουν στη σύναψη κοινωνικών σχέσεων, στην κατασκευή πολιτικών και πολιτισμικών αξιών, στην αναπαραγωγή στερεοτύπων ή στην ανατροπή σχέσεων εξουσίας και ανισοτήτων μεταξύ κοινωνικών ομάδων. Οι κριτικά εγγράμματοι/-ες μαθητές/-τριες γνωρίζουν ότι οι κοινωνικές σχέσεις, οι έμφυλες ταυτότητες και οι ιδεολογίες δεν κατασκευάζονται μόνο μέσα από το περιεχόμενο της γλώσσας/των κειμένων αλλά και μέσα από τη μορφή της γλώσσας, τα κειμενικά είδη καθώς και μέσα από τις συνήθειες ή τις πρακτικές παραγωγής και κατανάλωσης κειμένων σε μια δεδομένη κοινότητα.

A critically literate person understands and handles successfully the ideological dimension of language. S/he explores the ways in which various aspects of language (grammatical phenomena, vocabulary, genres, the organization of information in texts) contribute to the establishment of social relations, the construction of political and cultural values, the reproduction of stereotypes or the subversion of relations of power and inequality among social groups. Critically literate students know that social relationships, gender identities and ideologies are constructed not only through linguistic/textual content but also through linguistic form, genre, as well as through habits or practices of textual production and consumption in particular communities.

(MoEC 2010: 10)

A constitutive premise is that language is part of social practice and as such it reflects, but also shapes, attitudes, positions, views, aspects of the cultural and social context, "identities", stereotypes and ideologies, dominant and non-dominant alike. Language is not 'innocent'; it can turn into a vehicle for disseminating and establishing specific ways of viewing the world, but also into a mechanism for social change. Methodologically this entails that at the micro-level of the classroom and in the context of school literacy aspects of linguistic theory as well as sociolinguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis are deployed, while elements of the "communicative" and "text-centered" approach are incorporated into the curriculum in theoretocally enriched ways (for example, the vague concept of "communicative situation" is recast in the Hallidayan contextual terms of *field* and *tenor* (Halliday 1978), while genre is treated in a dynamic way as an expression, or, rather, as an indexical of these contextual parameters (Matsagouras & Tsiplakou 2008; Tsiplakou & Floros 2013). The same dynamic functional approach is proposed for understanding the structure of the language and the accompanying metalanguage (Tsiplakou 2013 a, b). Critical literacy involves

> (11) […] να συνδέουν συγκεκριμένες πτυχές της δομής της γλώσσας με την επιτέλεση συγκεκριμένων γλωσσικών λειτουργιών. Να κατανοήσουν ότι τα διάφορα γραμματικά στοιχεία επιτελούν συγκεκριμένες γλωσσικές λειτουργίες, ανάλογα με το κειμενικό είδος και την περίσταση επικοινωνίας. [...] Να κατανοήσουν τον ιδεολογικό ρόλο του λεξιλογίου και της γραμματικής, ότι, δηλαδή, οι λέξεις και τα διάφορα γραμματικά στοιχεία κωδικοποιούν ένα θέμα μέσα από συγκεκριμένη οπτική, υποδηλώνουν σχέσεις μεταξύ ατόμων και προβάλλουν ή δομούν ταυτότητες.
> [...] linking particular aspects of linguistic structure to the performance of particular language functions. Understanding that the various grammatical elements perform specific language functions, depending on the genre and the communicative situation. […] Understanding the ideological dimension of vocabulary and grammar, i.e. that words and the various aspects of grammar encode content through a specific point of view, imply particular relationships among individuals and project or construct identities.
>
> (MoEC 2010: 11)

This pedagogical objective can only be achieved through systematic critical exploration of language in use, register, speech-style, geographical dialects and sociolects and their indexical, social-semiotic import. The emphasis on linguistic diversity is therefore a natural outcome of the core philosophy of the curriculum. In dialect-speaking communities such as the Greek Cypriot one, it is understood that students need to explore and analyze the dialect as one of the various linguistic/semiotic resources at the disposal of the linguistic community for producing meanings; students are expected to examine and evaluate critically the use of the various aspects of diversity in particular social contexts of production. The objective of the curriculum therefore was to cultivate awareness of the concept of linguistic diversity, the understanding that language is not a static system confined only to standard forms, but a dynamic living organism marked by diversity, both geographic and sociolinguistic or stylistic, and used in flexible ways to encode social and cultural meanings. A more specific goal was to abstract away from negative attitudes regarding the use of the Cypriot dialect, not through the cultivation of emotive attitudes regarding its 'aesthetic' value or its value as 'heritage', but through the knowledge that the dialect displays systematicity in its phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary. An equally important goal was to hone the ability to deploy creatively diversity within the native variety but also to develop awareness as to the roles and functions of this variety in relation to other languages or varieties that may coexist in the school

community as well as in society at large. In the context of critical literacy, a basic aim was to cultivate the metalinguistic awareness that different registers and styles in Standard Greek or in the dialect are used in different communicative contexts and in different genres to convey different meanings. Also, true to its philosophy, the curriculum did not suggest any kind of rigid separation of the "two" varieties, but rather it provided for critical examination of hybrid forms of language production as semiotic capital and as resources for literacy learning (see Tsiplakou & Hadjioannou 2010; Papanicola & Tsiplakou this volume).

As was shown in the above discussion, a fundamental principle of the curriculum was that the two varieties of Greek spoken in Cyprus are not in a competitive but in a dynamic complementary relationship; that metalinguistic awareness of the structural aspects of the native variety is essential to the conscious learning of Standard Greek; that children's pre-existing linguistic knowledge is valuable linguistic capital to be deployed for further successful language learning. Diglossia was therefore not treated as a problem; rather, principled ways were suggested for capitalizing on diglossia to generate higher metalinguistic awareness, not only of the extent of geographical, sociolinguistic and stylistic diversity but, crucially, of the relationship of aspects of variation to extralinguistic, social categories such as age, gender, status, etc. Such critical metalinguistic awareness was shown to lead to the honing of critical attitudes towards language use, to addressing different manifestations of linguistic diversity as indexicals of attitudes, identities, ideologies, as ways of representing and constructing different social realities.

4. Conclusions

This paper presented the pedagogical approach advocated in the short-lived Cypriot National Curriculum for Language of 2010, which focused on deploying the naturalistic acquisition of Cypriot Greek as a means of fostering metalinguistic/sociolinguistic awareness with regard to the two varieties of Greek spoken on the island within a radical critical literacy perspective. Contrastive analysis between Cypriot and Standard Greek was deployed in order to foster higher levels of metalinguistic awareness, not only at the structural/grammatical level, but, crucially, at the textual and communicative level; further, the aim was for the Cypriot Greek dialect to be capitalized on as a means of fostering awareness of sociolinguistic/register/stylistic variation depending on genre and community of practice and, ultimately, as a means of honing critical language awareness and critical literacy skills.

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