

Research Paper

Educational Conflicts concerning Private Universities in Greece

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Contextualization

In 2008, the Greek New Democracy government, with Evaripidis Stilianidis as Minister of Education, introduced Law 3696/2008, 'Establishment and operation of colleges and other provisions', which legalized the operation of private degree-granting colleges in Greece. The new law indicated terms and conditions for the legalization of existing private colleges and for the establishment of new colleges in Greece. The new law (3696/2008) was passed by a majority of the members of the parliament. However it provoked extensive debate among political parties and the academic community (both students and teaching staff) because it created uncertainty about its impact on the free and public character of Greek higher education. This study examines the causes of conflict between those who supported the establishment and operation of private universities and those who opposed them in the political debate concerning Law 3696/2008.

Abstract: *The objective of this study is to offer a theoretical framework through which conflict in Greek higher education can be analysed and discussed. Critical discourse is used to provide a critique of practice which may explain why certain consequences have ensued. Discursive struggles are examined in relation to the political and historical context of Greek universities. After the fall of the military junta (1974), the government laid the foundations for democratic development in all educational processes and functions of Greek higher education. Article 16 in the Greek Constitution of 1975 refers to the objectives and the mission of education. Key features of the content of this article were the protection of academic freedom and the rights to free higher education for Greek citizens. The examination of the discourse of political parties suggested that the educational culture, which was created through the history of Greek higher education, was a powerful factor that provoked resistance to the new policy (Law 3696/2008).*

Introduction

The process of democratisation and modernisation of Greek higher education began after the collapse of the seven year military dictatorship of Papadopoulos (1967-1974) (OECD, 1980, 1982). In the period from 1974 to 1990, following the fall of dictatorship, successive governments led citizens towards open and free participation in education. In 1975, for example, the new Constitution was voted upon, which secured public and free education for all Greek citizens through Article 16 (Greek Constitution, Article 16). A second example was the establishment of new universities located in areas outside big Greek cities, and, as a result, the number of students accepted for studies increased (Saitis, 1988; Pasmazoglou, 1994; Bouzakis, 2006; Kazamias, 2009). The reason for the political decision to facilitate access to universities was the need for further economic and cultural development of the country during a period of economic and political instability (Saitis, 1988, p. 249).

In addition, students participated in the administrative bodies of universities through their representatives and the university asylum was established in 1982 (Law 1268/1982). To the present, the asylum law is a reminder of the role of students in bringing to an end to the military dictatorship of Papadopoulos (1967-1974) and in re-establishing democracy (17 November 1974). It forbids the police from entering university grounds, thus giving power to students to protest for their rights and aims to protect academic freedom, free expression, freedom of research and dissemination of ideas. Although student participation in administrative bodies has been criticised in some cases in which students have served party politics by hindering the smooth operation of universities, their participation in administrative bodies initially helped the system to acquire transparency and democratic procedures (Karmas, Lianos, Kalamatianou, 1988, p. 265; Pasmazoglou, 1994, p. 292).

The essential functions of Greek universities and the general aims of education in Greece were outlined in Article 16 of the Greek Constitution of 1975. Greek education generally identifies education with national democracy and identity, and thus the aim of education is identified as preparing students to act as free and responsible citizens in society (Greek Constitution, Article 16, par. 2). Higher education is provided free of charge (paragraph 1) and only by institutions which operate under the public law and the supervision of the state (Greek Constitution, Article 16, Greek Constitution, Article 16, par. 5), which prohibits the establishment of non-state universities. Academic staff are classed as civil servants and they 'cannot be dismissed prior to the lawful termination of their term of service', likewise Greek universities and 'self-governing bodies' (Greek Constitution, Article 16, paragraph 4). However, this has been criticised as contradictory to what happens in reality because Greek universities require ministerial approval when applying decisions (Kazamias, Lianos, Kalamatianou, 1988, p.267; Saitis, 1988, p. 251; Kazamias and Starida, 1992, p. 104).

Although the Greek Constitution has been revised three times (1986, 2001, 2008), Article 16 has, until recently, remained unchanged because the centre-right party of New Democracy government failed to concentrate the majority of votes in Parliament in amending Article 16 (Greece, House proceedings 2007). For the Government, the establishment and operation of non-state non-profit universities would provide economic and social benefits for Greece: it would connect Greek education with European culture and would create further educational opportunities for young people wanting to study and further employment opportunities for teaching and research staff (House Proceedings, 2007. pp. 4739-4740). The opposition political parties, meanwhile, would maintain the need to protect independence of universities from those private and political interests considered as threats to equal educational opportunities and the quality of studies (House Proceedings, 2007: 4739-4746). It can be argued that, by using Law 3696/2008, the Government again attempted to pass changes previously rejected during the revision of Article 16 in 2007, which potentially allowed for the operation of private universities in Greece.

From 1990 onwards, the new political and social conditions influenced the educational policies of the following years. These conditions included the participation of Greece in the Bologna process (1999) and the adoption of the Euro in 2001. Higher education during this period was co-funded by European funds. In 2000, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment were both involved in the 'Education and Initial Vocational Training Program', which was funded by national and European Funds (EPEAEK, 2000-2006) aimed at improving the education system and training services (Ministry of Education, 2003). The European Union (EU) also attempted to establish this through a policy-making framework, that of the Bologna Declaration, which committed its members to link their national systems to the goals and values defined by the EU. Throughout this system, EU policies aimed to establish a cultural consensus within the EU and play a significant role in shaping national educational systems. The New Democracy government based the content of its new

policies on the agreed aims of the Bologna Declaration (1999). The European policy initiatives in higher education included the establishment of a common structure of degrees ('two main cycles') as well as 'a system of credits' to facilitate the mobility of students among European universities (Bologna Declaration, 1994: 4). Quality assurance and evaluation for universities was also established with common criteria and methodologies. Moreover, the Europeanisation of national higher education systems should take place through the organisation of joint curricula, programmes of studies, training and research (Bologna Declaration, 1994: 4).

The Bologna Agreement (1999) has been the reference for the adaptation of Greek higher education to European structures (Greece, House Proceedings, 2004, 2007, 2008). The period between 2007-2008 can be considered one of the most turbulent periods in the history of Greek higher education, with political parties, students, pupils and teaching staff reacting against the new policies (Law 3549/2007, concerning the structure and functions of Greek universities and Law 3696/2008 concerning private colleges in Greece) while gaining public support through various protests, speeches and student occupations of universities (Greece, House proceedings 2007, 2008).

While there is extensive literature about the structure, history and problems of Greek higher education (Saitis, 1998; Kazamias and Starida, 1992; Kazamias and Kassotakis, 1995; Gouvias, 1998; Kokosalakis, 2001; Karafillis, 2002; Psacharopoulos, 2003; Liagouras, Protogerou, Caloghirou, 2003; Katsikas and Therinos, 2004; Ksanthopoulos, 2005; OECD, 1996, 2007, 2008, 2009; National reports, 2004-2005), there is no academic literature about the resistance to change in Greek higher education. Also, there has been a lack of systematic study and research into the resistance to the proposed educational changes during the period 2007-2008. Information can be gathered from national reports concerning the lateness of implementation of the Bologna Process in Greek universities when compared with other countries (OECD, 2007; OECD, 2008). For example, in a national report in 2003 (Ministry of Education, 2003) it is noted that opponents argued that the restriction of studies to three years would lead to the 'professionalisation' and 'de-academicisation' of studies, and would undermine academic content by only maintaining courses considered relevant to the needs of the market. Therefore the Greek Government and universities refused to implement the agreed three-year study ceiling for most degree courses, with the exception of subjects such as medicine and architecture.

This study is important because it is a systematic study that has the potential to illuminate and analyse educational issues related to the reasons behind resistance to change in Greek higher education in two ways: primarily in educational practices which require acceptance by the educational community as a whole (teaching staff and students) and secondarily in educational transformations within the structure, operation, administration and content of education which do not conform with the established educational culture in Greek universities.

Methodology

This paper examines the resistance of political parties to the establishment and operation of private degree-granting colleges in Greece using critical discourse analysis (CDA) and the discourse historical approach (DHA) (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009:). CDA views language as 'social practice'; it is socially constitutive and socially conditioned (Wodak and Meyer, 2009, p.5). In other words, discourse is the reality with all the elements that exist within it, the expression of which includes actions and language (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 6). Ideology is an intrinsic element of DHA. Ideologies are used to challenge or maintain relations of

power through discourse. According to critical discourse analysis (CDA), ideology reflects social struggle and ideological conflict (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, p. 88). The view of CDA accepts that ideologies are general sets of beliefs and values which conflicting groups use to create hegemonic relations (*ibid.*). Therefore discourse has the power to produce and reproduce unequal power relations in the society (*ibid.*).

DHA is an interdisciplinary approach, which means that it uses a variety of empirical data and theories to examine a problem (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009). It approaches a problem by examining the content or topics of a specific discourse, the discursive strategies, such as ideologies, the linguistic means, and the context-dependent linguistic realisations. Reisigl and Wodak (2009, p. 94) describe strategy as 'a more or less intentional plan of practices (including discourse practices)' through which speakers attempt to influence listeners and argue their beliefs. Nomination strategies are strategies by which speakers classify social actors. Predication strategies are those in which the speakers attribute negative or positive characteristics to social actors, while argumentation strategies are those in which various topoi are used to justify the claims of the speaker (*ibid.*). Topoi are parts of arguments; they are 'content related warrants' which connect the argument with the conclusion (*ibid.*). I examined topoi in order to clarify the positions of the political speakers concerning the proposed law and to further illuminate the reasons for resistance to change. Secondly, the identification of topoi facilitates the understanding of the importance of concepts which construct the dialogue and arguments. I also identified intensification and mitigation strategies which are the linguistic means through which the speaker either strengthens or weakens meanings in their text.

In summary, this paper addresses examination of the following questions:

- i. How and why was the issue of private colleges discussed by representatives in the Greek Parliament?
- ii. What ideologies were expressed by the representatives of relevant political parties?
- iii. What were the arguments about the proposed changes in Greek higher education?
- iv. Who were the political and social actors and what were their actions involved in the process of change in Greek higher education?

The political speeches presented in this paper were selected from the debate on voting for Bill 3696/2008 regarding the operation and establishment of private colleges in Greece. These took place on Thursday 31 July 2008. During this debate, members of the Parliament spoke in the Plenum. The choice of the parliamentary speeches for this study is derived from the fact that they presented important issues of Greek higher education which constitute reasons for resistance and contained the arguments of political parties for, or against, the proposed policy - as well as indicating the strong ideological differences among political parties. The speakers of three main political parties were selected for this study, in order to illuminate the ideological differences: the centre-right political party of New Democracy (government), the centre-left political party of PASOK (Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement), and the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). The speakers were: Evripidis Stilianidis, Minister of Education; Anna Diamantapoulou, PASOK Member of Parliament; and Costas Alissandrakis, KKE member of the Parliament. The parliamentary debates were taken from the library of the Hellenic Parliament, in files which were available to the public. Political speeches were translated from Greek to English. During the process of translation, I tried to clarify the language for the reader without detracting from the meaning.

Findings

The analysis of political speeches is divided into two parts: first, the content of political speeches and second, discursive strategies.

Anna Diamantopoulou

1. Content

Anna Diamantopoulou, the representative of PASOK party, agreed with the establishment and operation of private colleges or universities but she also maintained the reinforcement of the public nature of public education. She attacked the representatives of political parties and members of the Greek parliament who dogmatically accepted or rejected the implementation of the directives of the European Court. She agreed with the adaptation of higher education to European standards but she also insisted on the maintenance and reinforcement of the public character of Greek universities, claiming that the public character of Greek universities can be reinforced through the adaptation of the European declarations, Sorbonne (1998) and (Bologna) (1999), to public higher education. She also claimed that the PASOK party was against the commercialisation of higher education. For that reason, she proposed the establishment of an independent authority which would control the quality of the education provided in private institutions.

2. Discursive strategies

Nomination strategies

She also used the pronouns 'we' and 'all' in order to show political and civil responsibility when referring to the recommended measures for resolving the issue surrounding making decisions for national rather than full implementation of post-secondary education EU law.

Predication strategies

The personification 'The government meets the incomprehensible by closing its eyes and saying nothing happens, there is no problem' implied the deliberate indifference or apathy of the Government regarding the problems within Greek higher education. The Government did not resolve the problem of private institutions due to its desire to avoid undertaking the political costs of a different regulation which would affect the consolidated interests.

She also used another personification, 'it [the country] takes orders and implements them' meaning that the Government received and expected to follow commands without thinking of the interests of its citizens and without taking responsibility of the consequences of the EU policies.

The consequence of the new law regarding the operation of private colleges in Greece, which was proposed by the European culture, was the 'commercialisation of education'. The term 'commercialisation' is repeated in the text: 'a big door for the commercialisation of education', 'Commercialisation of Studies', 'it opens a huge door of commercialisation'. This phrase is a metaphor which was used by the speaker to describe the loss of orientation of education towards the safeguard of scientific knowledge and social values, the subordination of education to economic interests and the exchange of educational products based on market rules.

The prepositional phrases 'with wide horizons', 'with a new logic', '(with) new infrastructures', and '(with) a global network' implied that the Greek higher education system was isolated from political, technological and social change and characterised by old logic and a conservative mentality. Therefore, the Greek university did not benefit from opportunities provided by the global economy. It lacked innovation, new technology, new research and teaching and so it was threatened by competition.

While the speaker accepted the competitiveness of the university she did not accept the introduction of university in the European economy as a product of exchange ('however'). She did not want education adapted to market interest, but instead to remain independent from it in order to protect the universities from the power of the market and to remain outside of subjection and commercialization. The market should not dictate the curriculum and educational goals.

Perspectivisation strategies

The speaker expressed Euroscepticism and nationalism. She showed an increased concern about the role of the EU in improving Greece's higher education competitiveness and its place in the global arena. The reduction of the monopolisation of EU law over Greek higher education has been proposed due to the particular characteristics of the Greek education system, which is mainly public, and the social demands of Greek people for opportunities of equal access to higher education. Socialist ideology was expressed through claims for increasing the state funding of public universities so that higher education system could provide equal opportunities for all ('investment in public university', 'finance', 'self administration', 'equal access for all', 'all have equal access').

Intensification/Mitigation strategies

The speaker used questions ('why I do this introduction, and specifically about universities? Why is there that obsessive reference to public education?') to intensify her position towards change and mitigation of the proposed law. The above questions were located after the description of the European context in which changes in higher education have taken place and the requirements of that context for universities. The speaker expressed her view position towards the inability of the New Democracy government in improving the education system in response to EU agreements (Sorbonne (1998) and Bologna (1999)) and its aims to commercialise higher education.

Argumentation strategies

The claims regarding the proposed law were justified mainly by the following topoi: commercialisation, European higher education landscape, independence, distinction.

The topos of 'commercialisation' referred to the negative consequences of the new policy and could be paraphrased as follows: if we do not want to open the door to commercialisation, we should establish an independent authority which can ensure the quality of services and set healthy competition between private and public education.

The topos of the 'European higher education landscape' could be paraphrased as follows: if we want our universities to be able to compete with other universities, we should create the right conditions within them. Following this argument, universities need to make changes incorporating 'a new logic', 'infrastructure', 'global co-operations', 'equal access for all' and a 'high level of education'. The proposed law could not provide these features. Problems were implied here, which the proposed law either created or failed to resolve: a lack of

infrastructure, the inequalities created by the education system, the low quality of education and the lack of connection with the global world.

The topos of 'independence' could be paraphrased as follows: if we want to be independent from EU control, we should prepare the grounds and create the appropriate conditions in the country. Here the speaker claimed that the single European area of education did not remove the independence of the member states. It enabled them to adapt their educational terms to their data. Therefore, the Greek Government was responsible for the uncontrolled operation of private institutions and needed to prepare the grounds and create the appropriate conditions in the country for the operation of private institutions.

The topos of 'distinction' could be paraphrased as follows: because private institutions such as the Centres of Liberal studies ('KES') are supposed to serve public interest, they do not pursue profit and so they do not possess the quality characteristics implied by their being named 'colleges' therefore, they should not be called 'colleges' as proposed by the new law.

Costas Alissandrakis

1. Content

According to the representative of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), Costas Alissandrakis, the recognition of the Centres of liberal studies would have negative effects on the higher education system. It would open up new opportunities for business profits through education and lead to the production of cheap labour. He called upon Greek people, in particular the younger population, to demand withdrawal of the proposed policy, and to demand the removal of any business in education and non-integration of the European directive 36/2005. He required the establishment of free public and vocational schools that provide an effective and a thorough professional training.

2. Discursive strategies

Nomination strategies

The speaker separated the position of his party from others ('Mr. Alavanos', 'SYRIZA', 'New Democracy', 'PASOK'). He construed the opposition parties (New Democracy and PASOK) as having equivalent positions to the EU. The EU policies and laws were mentioned (the Bologna Process (1999), Article 149 of the Treaty of Maastricht (1999), the European Directive 36/2005 (2005/36/EC)) constructing the EU as a political entity with a particular education program which tries to impose on member states.

Predication strategies

The speaker tried to deny the plausibility of the intentions of the Bill with use of strong metaphors which described promises made by the government, but which were proved by the proposed law (3696/2008) as not having been supported and therefore not guaranteed. In particular:

- 'behind the backs of the House': he blamed the government for insidious attempts to impose the bill and avoid criticism.
- 'hunting the customers': this described how the government brought the Bill into Parliament for discussion in the summer in order to help entrepreneurs-owners' educational structures gain more clients before the next school year.

- 'mechanism': this described the EU's system of organization and operation of education services with which it tried to realize its aspirations (economic and political) through European legislation, such as recognition of professional rights, and European agreements ('non-legislative mechanisms') and the Bologna Process. The European Union showed intentions towards expansion of other educational systems.

The verbs criticized the expansion policy of the EU in educational matters: (the EU) 'requires', 'demands', 'supposedly respects' and 'subordinates'. This showed the guilty involvement of EU policy in Greek education and the compliance of the bill with this intervention.

Franchising was characterised as a 'degenerative phenomenon', aiming to show the government's inability to handle matters concerning EU policies. As a result, 'the government will repeat business type models such as 'MacDonald's' and 'United Colours of Benetton'. He also used adjectives with negative meaning when discussing franchising, such as 'degenerative' in order to show the negative effects upon the quality of public higher education.

Using the analogy 'as centres of Liberal Studies', he attempted to show the main entrepreneurial and minimally educational character of educational structures. The meaning of this analogy is shown by his repeated mention of the Centres of Liberal Studies which, according to the speaker, did not ensure education quality but instead operated on economic interest and market needs.

Intensification/mitigation strategies

Using the exclamation 'Noticeable claim!' the speaker emphasised that although PASOK was against the commercialisation of education when it was in government it did everything to encourage the privatisation of higher education and the revision of Article 16. Indirect questions were used ('...is not only a great example of how governments adjust the Greek education system to the requirements of the EU. It is also a good example of how the European Union subdues the education in the market and more generally the needs of the profitability of the capital') to highlight the full application of the European Directive by the Greek Government in the education system the subjugation of education by the European Union in the market and economic interests of businesses. 'Now that we refer to partnerships, I wonder how proud the Government is of the transfer of the franchising to education' is a further example of indirect questioning used with ironic intonation by the speaker, in order to mitigate franchising with undermining effects on the quality of public higher education. Finally, he used metaphors to mitigate the intentions of the Government for debate ('behind the backs of the House', 'hunting the customers'), and its promises for quality ('Coal the treasure').

Perspectivisation strategies

The Marxist ideology of the Communist Party was reflected in the claims of Costas Alissandrakis towards the barriers resulting in the exclusion of the lowest social classes from education. It was claimed that there would be no educational quality and freedom of individual choice because social class determines individual choices and access to higher education.

Marxism was also reflected in the arguments against private education in the service of profit. The Communist Party was committed to public and free education for all. The

European Union was seen as forcing universities to function in a unified economy. In that economy, universities would become competitive and would be forced to function under business criteria in order to attract more students and increase their funding. From this viewpoint, capitalism was presented as affecting the functions and mission of universities, as well as the content of studies. Because science and research would be concentrated on the increase of capital, research and science free from the pursuit of economic profits would be undermined and only fundraising research would be promoted.

Argumentation strategies

The claims of the speaker regarding the proposed law were justified mainly by the following topoi: implicit objectives, Europeanisation/commercialisation, EU legislative mechanisms, EU non-legislative mechanisms, erosion, profit, distinction of 'colleges' from other institutions, commerce, degradation of higher education studies, unequal opportunities, social and labour rights, franchising.

The topoi of 'implicit objectives' and 'European integration' revealed the speaker's opposition to the integration of the EU directive in the Greek education system from which the proposed law derived. The above topoi could be paraphrased as follows: because the proposed law opens the door to private universities, it must not be passed in Parliament. The topos of 'implicit objectives' implied that Greek citizens should oppose the government's insidious efforts to impose the European Directive because its application is contrary to the interests of Greek education.

The topos of 'mechanisms' contained the argument that the EU has implemented expansionary policy in two ways: the mechanisms of law and conditions or through the legislative adaptation of each country in terms of the EU if the mechanisms fail to influence. This can be paraphrased as follows: the proposed law needed to be rejected because it served only the expansive education policy of the EU.

The topoi of 'profit', 'economic inequalities', 'degradation', 'unequal social and labour rights', 'distinction' and 'commerce' referred to the consequences of the implementation of the proposed law. The speaker used a condemning tone within these topoi to indicate to the Government that its policy would lead the public universities towards full depreciation and education to the uncontrolled subjection of various economic and business interests. Emphasis was given to the consequences of the above, particularly for those families of low economic status who rely on free public education. These arguments could be paraphrased as follows: 'If the proposed law is voted, a trend of hope will be created', 'if the proposed law is voted, a huge financial burden will be placed on working class families.', 'If the proposed law is voted, universities' studies will degrade.', 'If colleges operate, public universities will be influenced', 'if colleges operate, a labour force will be created without advanced curricula at the mercy of employers', 'If colleges are allowed to operate, immense opportunities for investments and profits will open to private companies'

Eвриpidis Stilianidis

i. Content

The Minister of Education, Evripidis Stilianidis, recognised the obligation of Greece to implement the decision of the European Court (Law 3696/2008). He emphasised the need for adjustment of the Greek Constitution to the European legislation of higher education. Private foreign universities operate legally in Greece and function as annexes of private universities in other European countries. However, there is a need for creating legislation for

the quality control of education provided by private universities. He also agreed with the Communist Party's proposal for the creation of a higher quality of education for the nation.

ii. Discursive strategies

Nomination strategies

The speaker made comparisons between the current Government of the New Democracy and other parties by using the pronoun 'we', thus excluding others ('never any government', 'all the previous') in order to show the superiority of the current government and its political courage in undertaking the resolution of a long standing difficult case.

He named the presidents of the other parties, 'Mr. Papandreou', 'Mr Vaso Papandreou', 'Mr Tsipras' and 'Mr. Alavanos'. With these nominal references, he tried to assign responsibility to them for the situation which exists in private education.

In order to persuade even those who were sceptical or had different suggestions to the proposed law, Stilianidis frequently explicitly referred to the articles of the Greek Constitution (Article 16, Article 5) and the European Directive or Community Law (8948/88, 36/2005) to convince them that the proposed law was the right choice. For example, he excluded the closure of post-secondary education institutions operating in Greece since this would be against Article 16 Paragraph 1 of the Constitution and EC Directives. He also excluded the prohibition of 'franchising' because that would be against Article 5 of the Community and the Community Law. Thus both his speech and the law-making process allowed for post-secondary education institutions to provide programs and degrees under the quality control of the State, more prestige and the necessity to dissolve the problem of illegal structures operating in Greece, while at the same time corresponding with the Community and National Constitution.

Predication strategies

The speaker exposed the presidents of the Coalition of the Radical left (SYRIZA), Nikos Alavanos and Alexis Tsipras, ironically using the word 'bilingualism'. Bilingualism is a metaphor and means that the leaders of the opposition parties support different things in society and in Parliament, aiming at reinforcing their positions only in order to gain the favour of their supporters or to increase numbers of voters.

The private centres or institutions were accused by the speaker of exploiting the deadlocks of the Greek families on providing education for their children by providing poor quality educational options to students. Phrases such as 'taking advantage of the desire of the younger generation and their parents', 'do not hesitate to present themselves as supposedly universities', 'to exploit abusively (the young Greek people)' and 'playing with the dreams (of thousands of young people)' provided a moral sense to the need for re-arranging the structures of non formal education. They do not honestly meet the real needs of students and the quality of education required by the market but instead they mainly satisfy their own financial interests, providing knowledge with speculative motives.

The terms 'validation' and 'franchising' were used in English and showed the hegemony of globalisation at national level. They expressed new functions in complementing the operation of Greek education system, for instance, by meeting the different expectations of students. They also offered the possibility of Greek higher education attracting foreign students.

The phrase 'schizophrenic policy' is a 'personification' which was used against Mr. Alavanos in a press interview on 29 August, 2002. It was communicated to the audience by Mr. Stilianidis and showed the contradictory policy of the government in the field of post-secondary education. While the government has the option, according to the European Directive, to disallow the operation of post-secondary education institutions which operate alongside foreign universities, it does allow this but it persists in not recognizing diplomas awarded to graduates from these institutions. According to Alavanos, this educational attitude of the government is a political game at the expense of families and students and shows ignorance of European legislation. Stilianidis transferred this metaphor in his speech in order to strengthen the fight for hegemony and to support his opinion and imposition of the proposed law.

The metaphor 'trade of hope' was aimed at emphasizing the bad education policy of previous governments which, in combination with the illegal function of the centres of liberal studies, created the illusion that students who were unable to study in public universities could be assured of professional qualifications and jobs; in fact, the professional rights were not recognised by the market.

The participle 'uncontrolled' (quality) and the adjectives 'doubtful' (quality) and 'high-risk' (laboratories) were used to refer to negative characteristics of the content of studies and programs provided by the post-secondary education institutions operating in Greece.

Intensification/Mitigation strategies

The speaker mitigated the opposition of the other parties by using adjectives which attribute negative characteristics to the closure of the structures, such as 'illegal', 'anti-Constitution' and 'anti-community'. He intensified his arguments for change using comparative superlative adjectives about the proposed law, including 'the most insightful and responsible choice' and other adjectives such as 'a systematic and responsible work', 'legally', 'bold reform', 'bold and clear' (choices) and 'strict framework'.

Perspectivisation strategies

The suggestions made by Stilianidis for resolving the problem of the uncontrollable operation of post-secondary education institutions in Greece showed his decisive engagement to implement the Community education law in the education system of Greece. They also expressed neoliberalism. Neoliberalism was also reflected in the changing relations between universities and the state. The new policy would give universities the freedom to reorganise their functions with the state only intervening through accountability and assessment mechanisms to control universities. At the same time, his claims for establishing the national sovereignty betrayed a level of nationalism and Euro-scepticism, and attempted to decrease the authority of EU. By using the publications of other representatives of the Opposition in the Press, the speaker identified his own views about post-secondary education institutions compared with those of the Opposition Parties.

Argumentation strategies

The frequent use of the following topoi can be identified: control, history, illegality/unconstitutionality, obligation.

The topos of 'history' was used in order to show the historical depth of the problem of the operation of post-secondary education institutions in Greece and thereby allowed the revelation of the amount of political courage required by the Government in order to

undertake the resolution of the problem, unlike previous governments. It can be summarized as follows: non-formal education has existed since 1935 and therefore the Government should take political initiative for placing conditions on the operation of non-formal education because abolishing the already existing structures of non-formal education would cause great economic and social problems. In addition, stating that post-secondary education institutions were 'disorganised', 'misleading parents and students', 'playing with the dreams of thousands of young people', were 'uncontrolled' and operated 'with anarchy', despite the legitimacy which existed since 1935 and the Law 1966/1991, the speaker delegitimized previous governments which were unable to effectively manage control of post-secondary education in Greece.

The topoi of 'control' 'unconstitutionality' and 'obligation' can be summarized as follows: the elimination of non-formal education would conflict with Articles of the Greek Constitution and the Community law therefore the provision of post-secondary education should be legislatively safeguarded. The European Community law and the Greek Constitution were presented as the superior goals of policy-making. The above topoi expressed a moral duty of the Greek Government towards the Greek people, and the commitment to European community law and Greek Constitution.

Discussion of the Findings

Greek education in the context of globalisation as well as of European education proceeded to the adaptation of new educational needs. These adaptations related to the curriculum, learning objectives and financial and administrative functions of public universities. The ideologies expressed in the parliamentary speeches and interviews were those of liberals, socialists and communists.

- a. The neoliberal university is one that responds to the new political, economic and social trends. This ideology aims at cooperation with the private sector, and calls for legislative protection of the quality of higher education.
- b. The socialist educational vision wants a public and state university, with critical adaptation of European policies and consensus between political parties.
- c. According to communist ideology, the university combines a public character with state control. This ideology denounces the social inequalities that derive from the commercialisation of education.

In the discourses of the representatives of political parties, one can recognise the EU policies as forces that struggle for domination over Greek higher education. The concepts which mainly dominate the discourses of the representatives of political parties are the public and state-supported character of Greek universities, as well as the freedom of knowledge and research from profit. These are concepts related to Greek educational culture and history and seem to act as factors that inhibit educational changes which aim to abolish or reduce the public and free character of higher education and the freedom of teaching and research from profit. As a consequence, the new concepts for Greek higher education, 'private universities', 'validation', 'franchising' and 'investments', provoked the resistance of opposing political parties because they challenged the essential character and traditional functions of Greek higher education. Opposing political parties believed that connecting higher education with economic growth and development cause the undermining of equality, free access, the academic content of studies, and the public mission of higher education.

This study aims to explain the relation of the historical national context of Greek higher education and the resistance to Law 3696/2008. The examination of the oppositional discourse to the law suggests the existence of a strong educational culture which continues to exist in Article 16 of the Greek Constitution. Political parties referred to Article 16, either directly or indirectly, arguing that should it be maintained to protect the institutional character of Greek universities. For this reason, the oppositional parties proposed a partial implementation of EU policies (Anna Diamantopoulou) or the independence of the higher education system from EU policies (Costas Alissandrakis). The following cultural characteristics are derived from the political speeches:

- Public free higher education
- Protection of public universities from the State
- The broad participation of citizens in higher education
- Autonomy of universities

The above characteristics are mentioned in Article 16 of the Greek Constitution. Article 16 does not allow educational inequalities and the exclusion of certain social groups from higher education. The protection of higher education by the State is seen as necessary to secure democracy and equality from the European and globalised context which threatens national and cultural values. According to Article 16 of the Greek Constitution (par. 1),

Art and science, research and teaching shall be free and their development and promotion shall be an obligation of the State.

All Greeks are entitled to free education on all levels at State educational institutions. The State shall provide financial assistance to those who distinguish themselves, as well as to students in need of assistance or special protection, in accordance with their abilities. (par. 4)

Article 16 allows for no distinction between universities according to the profit which they bring in but it does provide a set of rules for universities to accomplish a common mission. The only mission of public universities is education. A public university aims to transfer complete knowledge, the provision of a professional education, the development of future citizens' personality and the better integration of students in employment and in social and political life. Article 16 of the Greek Constitution states:

Education constitutes a basic mission for the State and shall aim at the moral, intellectual, professional and physical training of Greeks, the development of national and religious consciousness and at their formation as free and responsible citizens. (par. 2)

Autonomy is restricted by Law 3696/2008. For opposition parties, the autonomy of universities is restricted when a university is forced to comply with particular economic interests and it loses the opportunity to serve the educational purpose for which it was founded.

Further study

This study enhances our understanding of the reasons for resistance of change in Greek higher education. Law 3696/2008 tried to create a new reality in education based on the principles of economy and market. Conversely, the opponents of the change referred to principles and values included in Article 16, indicating created a strong educational culture.

However, several limitations to this study require acknowledgement. The current study has only examined political speeches. Interviews with students and teaching staff would complement the findings from the analysis of political speeches and would illuminate the views of those who insist or resist the old structure of Greek higher education. It would also illuminate the perception, understanding and acceptance of students and teaching staff towards the discourse of political parties. Finally, CDA has been criticised for emphasising the interpretation of context rather than the analysis of the language itself (Bloomaert, 2005: 31). For this reason, more detailed linguistic analysis of political speeches and interviews with students and teaching staff should be conducted, closely examining how linguistic concepts enable actors to impose or resist social and political power regarding issues in Greek higher education.

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