

THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN CYPRUS

Nayia Roussou

Abstract

The present article examines the relationship between the language(s) used in television programmes on Greek-Cypriot television channels and the national or ethnic identity of Greek-Cypriots, after the Turkish invasion of 1974. In a globalising world, with Cyprus sharing in the homogenisation processes, the shift of preferences of Cyprus audiences, in the last five years, from the English-language to Greek and Cyprus productions in the Greek Demotic and the Cyprus Dialect (broadcast in complementary or even competitive relationships), present interesting insights into the connection of television language with the national or ethnic identity of Greek-Cypriots. The article also renders further evidence that the notion of nationhood fading away into globalising processes, is not only premature, but in the case of Cyprus, quite unrealistic, as indigenous territorial, political and national problematics, illustrate the particular complexities existing in the globalisation processes which are universally developing today.

Cyprus and its National Identity After Independence

Cyprus is a country that emerged into the status of a new state, gaining its independence in 1960 under a problematic constitution, after four years (1955-59) of internal unrest and fighting.¹ This phase which occurred towards the end of a long period of British colonial rule (1878-1959) led the country to a state of political life during which it had to face all the problems, conflicts and difficulties of adjustment in economic, social and cultural areas, which new nations usually encounter. The issue of the formation and development of a national, social or cultural identity is very much an issue at stake in Cyprus as a result, as in any other new state.

Thomas (1997, p.3) defines national identity as follows: "National identity is often taken to mean a shared structure of feeling, a largely imagined consciousness, that is reinforced both through life's daily routines, as well as through ritualised, symbol-

laden celebrations of nationhood."

Thomas (ibid, pp. 4-5) also considers "the right to culture" or the "inherited baggage of culture and its interpretation (through communication channels) as the inalienable right of every nation". He also stresses that "in our media-saturated environment the mass media are a primary source for meanings, understandings and interpretations on a host of issues including those related to the question of national identity."

Featherstone (1997, p. 109), on the other hand, stresses the importance of discourses, images and practices in building allegiance to a nation. Television, he claims, with its functions of "instanciation" and "simultaneity", can definitely promote forcefully this forming of a national totality (ibid).

As Rokkan (in Richards, 1995) proposes, one of the main conflicts in a new state is the "identity crisis", i.e. the crucial initial challenge in the establishment and development of a common culture as well as the development of media and agencies for the socialisation of future citizens into a community of social codes, values, memories and symbols - in brief a common history.

This identity crisis has indeed become a sharp issue in the historical development of nation-states and generally all new states, and is still of crucial importance in the inter-connectedness of these new states with their new technology and new media systems (all instruments of culture) all the more so, because these instruments are not indigenous essentially; they are imported from the civilisations of more developed countries - that is, America and the states of Northern Europe. The financial, social and cultural forces that have to be integrated by new political conditions, as a result, initiate, in newly emergent nations - Cyprus not excluded - an intricate pattern of relationships and priorities.

One can say that in the case of most newly-formed nation-states, there is, as in the case of classical Hellenism, a "distinction between *ethnos* (the people) and *kratos* (the state) which played a significant role in political philosophy" (Friedman, 1995, p. 118).

In the case of Cyprus, "ethnos" and "kratos" (ibid) have not been led by historical developments to a conflation and the post-colonial status of the country never allowed it, as a result, to develop into a "nation-state". But other phenomena, like that of nationalism, conventionally connected with post-colonialism, have been present in the Cyprus post-colonial years after the 1960 Independence.

After 1960, the Enosis-with-Greece movement in the Island² still existing at the

time, became blurred and was ultimately relegated to historical nostalgia, in spite of the fact that mainland Greeks and Greek Cypriots shared the same culture. This, according to Kyriacos Markides, was due to a number of differences in the political and economic institutions in the structure of Greek and Cyprus society: "Although mainland Greeks and Greek Cypriots shared the same culture, the structure of their societies and their political and economic institutions were diametrically different and often contradictory. Cyprus was spared the two world wars, the Asia Minor disaster of 1922 and the bloody Greek civil war of the 1940's. The Cypriots were able to develop their social and economic institutions relatively unhampered" (Markides, 1977, p. 78).

The continuous modernising process in the Island, however after Independence, was not the beginning of a new era of peace in the Island, but the beginning of a sharp, inter-communal cleavage between the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot communities, known henceforth, as the Cyprus conflict. This culminated in the eruption of fighting between Greek and Turkish-Cypriots in 1963 and led to the eventual self-enclavement of the Turkish Cypriots, in the Turkish quarter of Nicosia and other parts of the Island.

The inter-communal problems arising from the ineffectiveness of the London-Zurich agreements, as illustrated above, together with the powerlessness of President Makarios to solve these problems, made other issues even sharper: the question of *Enosis* was still a major issue with disloyal political Government opponents - and the existence of terrorist group EOKA B, added to the tension in the Island. Furthermore, the dictatorship at the helm of the Greek government made things even worse and eventually paved the way to the coup of 1974. This gave occasion for the invasion of the Island by the Turkish troops, in July, 1974, described by Groom (in Koumoulides, ed, 1986, p. 128) in the following words: "An important benchmark occurred in the Cyprus conflict in 1974, when, following the coup d'etat against Archbishop Makarios and the subsequent Turkish military intervention, there was a territorial consolidation of the two communities."

The de facto geographical separation between the two communities which followed, and the final consolidation of the two communities in their individual ethnic and cultural status, led to the final abandonment of any idea about a unified national state.

Strictly speaking, of course, according to De Vos (1995, p. 20) "nationality is indistinguishable from ethnicity". But whereas nationhood can embrace diverse ethnic groups in the same politically unified system, ethnicity refers to common traditions among a community of people, which can include "folk religious beliefs and practices, language, a sense of historical continuity and common ancestry or place

of origin" (ibid, p. 18).

The resulting separation and consolidation in the cultures of the two communities in Cyprus, is not, therefore surprising, as cultural and national identity, for many people cannot be distinguished, again according to De Vos, (ibid) "especially when ethnic identity and a national territorial identity have been united historically." And this territorial identity, especially after 1974, with the division of the island, played a decisive role in the historical conflation of the national and ethnic identities of the Greek-Cypriots, on one hand and the Turkish-Cypriots on the other.

The result of this territorial division, and the accompanying dislocation of the national state of Cyprus after the invasion, was, therefore, not just a territorial, or ethnic, but a socio-cultural consolidation as well. The national identities of the two communities have evolved (subjectively) along parallel lines in a triple direction: on the Greek side, people tend to consider themselves either as "Greeks" (the affiliation being with Greece, the motherland), "Greek Cypriots" or "Cypriots". Generally, one could say there is a Helleno-centric drive and a Cypro-centric drive which latter matured some years ago, into the formation of the Neo-Cyprian Association, that has drawn since, a lot of political criticism. Whereas Cypro-centrism was limited to the traditional left-wing movement before 1974, the spectrum was widened to include followers from other political parties and ideologies, with the Association pointing out lessons to be realised by the Cypriots: love of the country by all ethnic communities, as well as a "democratic way of life", in place of the obstacles presented by former chauvinistic tendencies.

However, in spite of the fact that the Association's positions were in time accepted by members of right and left wing political parties, the semiology, the values and identification symbols of the three groups ("Greeks", "Greek-Cypriots" and "Cypriots") like the Greek or Cyprus flag or religious symbols, became "radically different" (Peristianis, 1995, p. 133).

At the same time, in the Turkish sector, a similar pattern of cultural nationalism, appears to exist with people identifying themselves as 'Turks', "Turkish-Cypriots", (strongly affiliated with mainland Turkey) or just "Cypriots", with a strong emphasis on their "Cypriotness" (citizens of the Cypriot state).

Other than this common identification trend however, there are more ethnic/cultural differences between the two communities today, than there are similarities in spite of their common wish for self-determination.

So, whereas the conflation of ethnicity and nationhood is a natural process among ethnic groups claiming self-determination (Gillespie, 1995, p. 10) in the case

THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN CYPRUS

of Cyprus citizens, this claim has brought about the opposite result - a cleavage between the ethnicity and nationhood, of the two communities (Greek/Turkish), contrary to the conflation of ethnicity and nationhood within each respective community. This is not surprising, as Gillespie (*ibid*) herself suggests that "ethnicity, as consciousness of shared ethnic identity tends to crystallise in situations where people of different backgrounds come into contact or share the same institutions of political systems." This sharing of similar political or cultural systems was absent in the case of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, after 1963.

Grossberg (1989, p. 33) defines ethnicity as the "the astonishing return to the political agenda of all those points of attachment which give the individual some sense of place and position in the world, whether these be in relation to particular communities, localities, territorialities, languages, religions, or cultures". This kind of crystallisation has been absent, as to the nation of Cyprus: its ethnic communities - Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots - have been and still are caught in a painful process of survival, counter to a political problem and a climate of dispersed communities, drawing strength from their individual language, religion, territoriality and culture, sometimes beyond the borders of the state of Cyprus: Greek-Cypriots - looking to Greece - and Turkish Cypriots to Turkey.³

It is no coincidence, therefore, that the two communities in Cyprus have, for one, developed distinct cultural elements that have given them, especially after 1974, a feeling of separate ethnicity and "place-bound nationalism" which has negated the other side. This has been one of the main impediments in the way of forming a unitary nation-state in Cyprus, as would have been the case in any other country coming out of colonialism. A nation-state involves "coherence and integrity of identity" according to Morley & Robins (1995, p. 24). This has been lacking in the newly established state of Cyprus, as the differences between the two communities did not allow them to respond to the requirements for the construction of a nation-state: "The construction of nation states involves the elimination of complexity, the extrusion or marginalisation of elements that compromise the 'clarity' of national attachment. This process was about the purification of space and of identity. The nation state does not easily tolerate difference" (*ibid*, p. 23).

Kyriacos Markides, referring to Cyprus realities, describes this decisive lack of homogeneity, which was one of the historical cornerstones of the modern nation-state in Europe, in the following words: "A durable republic cannot be maintained when Turkish Cypriots celebrate the twentieth of July, the invasion date, as a national holiday and Greek Cypriots treat it as a day of mourning. Nor is the diligent commemoration by Greek Cypriots of the Greek War of Independence of 1821 and the Greek Cypriot rebellion of 1955 conclusive to intercommunal trust" (Markides, 1977, pp. 185-6).

Plamenats (1973, pp. 23-24) has proposed that nationalism is a "cultural phenomenon and a desire to preserve or enhance a people's national or cultural identity, when that identity is threatened, or the desire to transform or even create it, where it is felt to be inadequate or lacking". So the phenomenon of nationalism in post-colonial conditions is not strictly speaking distinct from the cultural identity of a people. In the present volume, the article by Professor Mike Richards titled "National Identity: Cyprus and Global Contexts", contributes further approaches to the above, much discussed issues about national identities in our times.

Having established, however, in the present paper, the overall problems of national, versus ethnic identity in Cyprus - a new dichotomised state with modernising Western institutions - it will be interesting to move on to the recent media developments in the Island, as the media is a powerful tool in socialisation, but also in the spread of western practices in contemporary times.

Media Developments in Cyprus and Globalisation Issues

The radical changes in the electronic mediascape, brought on by independent broadcasting in Cyprus, after 1990, with the introduction of pluralism and the commercialisation of both radio and television placed a new set of values before Cyprus audiences.

The end of the monopoly by the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation, in 1990, signified two things: on one hand, this station had to review its policies and broadcast contents in order to effectively face competition, in the context of an unfolding, antagonistic scene. This also meant that with the de facto partition of the Island and the illegal television stations functioning in the occupied areas, there was not much use for programmes addressed to the Turkish community and the only station broadcasting any programmes in Turkish, was the public station CyBC, which aired the minimum broadcast time demanded by its Constitutional requirements: a brief news bulletin in Turkish, daily and two half-hour weekly magazine programmes, in Turkish. On the other hand, the complex realities of local-global dialectics and tensions had to be handled not only by the CyBC, but by all the channels that were called upon to contribute to a discourse of media power and authority, with the encounter of the local and the global, the particular and the universal. Globalisation has often been identified with westernisation and the connection of westernisation and the media has been made by many writers: "When people talk about 'Westernisation' they are referring to a whole range of things: the consumer culture of Western capitalism with its now all-too-familiar icons (McDonald's Coca-Cola, Levi Jeans), the spread of music, the adoption of an urban lifestyle consuming extensively the information and entertainment products of the electronic mass media, a range of cultural values and attitudes regarding personal liberty, gender and sexu-

ality, human rights, the political process, religion, scientific and technological rationality and so on."

The use of English in a global context is, of course, another widely accepted practice.

The above range of western or global elements is present in Cyprus realities, as much as it is in the life of many other countries.

One of the proponents of the cultural homogenisation thesis is Meyrowitz, in Gillespie (1985, p. 16). He argues, that "the electronic media, particularly television, has led to a radical restructuring of social life by disrupting the traditional link between culture and geography, allowing people to escape from forms of identity forged by the relation between persons and the 'symbolic place' identical with geographical locality." Meyrowitz (ibid) proposes that the media are destroying our sense of "locality" and the "popular search for 'roots' and the resurgence of concern with ethnic identity, are signs of the decay of group identity, rather than of its regeneration."

Mckay and O'Sullivan (1999, p. 2) further propose that "Culture cannot be understood without foregrounding the media." And almost a decade earlier, Arjun Appadurai (in Featherstone, 1990) argues that "communication systems and the media have been deeply implicated in the development of modernity" and that "modern times are constituted partly through their *mediascapes*, as the media not only provide information but also have profound implications for forms of identity" (ibid). Meyowitz (1985, p. 308) will specify the concept even more definitively by arguing that television has led to a new reconfigured social order: He uses the notion of a 'sense of place' which raises questions of identity and mediated versions of space and place to explain the profound change caused by television - i.e. identities arise and are shaped in part through changing mediated versions of space and place. Television with its own generic semiotics (camera shots and movement, lighting and props), as well as the broadcast language contents are therefore, today, a vital factor in the cultural and national identity of any country.

The commercialisation of television in the Island, therefore, with its inherent commodification has bestowed upon thirsty audiences all the boons of an imported, Western culture with global (simulacrum) models and trends and lifestyles mediated on a number of channels, in English-language programmes. Parallel to this, of course, Cyprus television has also been featuring programmes in Standard Modern Greek (the Demotic) and the Cyprus dialect, or in a combination of the two. These are programmes respectively imported from Greece or produced in Cyprus. It is also appropriate to indicate at this point that after 1974, no programmes in the

Turkish language were broadcast by any channel, apart from the CyBC, as mentioned earlier.

Hall in Gillespie (1995, p. 18) maintains that "globalisation does have the power to contest and dislocate national identities, in that it has a pluralizing impact, opening up new possibilities and positions of identification". Gillespie (1995, p. 21) herself, further epitomises the role of the media in the global/local dialectics as follows: "Media" she says, "mediate cultures; and as cosmopolitans read media, they translate between territorial, local, diasporic, national and global cultures and identities."

Patterson, in Richards (1995, p. 57) further reinforces the relationship between identity and television when he comments that "it is clear that national identities are one expression of collective identities, complex in their formation and widely represented on television."

Preston (1997, p. 6) in emphasising the role of language in our lives, will point out that: "Our idea of what belongs to the realm of reality is given for us in the language that we use." The tensions therefore between globalisation and localisation are not irrelevant to the use of language on television.

"Glocalisation", a third term initially used in marketing to roughly signify "global localisation" (Robertson, 1994, p. 174) has also been taken up in the media and also seems to apply to Cyprus-produced programmes which try to use global techniques or appeals. Some such glocal programmes produced by other countries - e.g. Latin American tele-novelas, have succeeded, while others have failed. The "site-specific" histories of individual countries are certainly a factor to account for, and so are their particular economy, the politics, society, ecology and culture. This should not be surprising, as Smith says (in Ferguson, 1995) because the Media "must operate within an historically defined context; and today that context is one in which national identity and ethnic community, far from withering away, is the dominant mode of human association and action."

One of the primary building-blocks of national identity is language. The significance of language as an expression of resistance and a core-symbol and core-value in the process of identity - national, ethnic, or cultural - according to Van den Buijk and Van Poecke (1996), reflects the fact that language is the carrier of all other notions or symbols of nationhood, partially because it is made into a prime symbol by intellectuals and other influential figures adept at its interpretation. The same authors (ibid) are very specific when they maintain that "language often constitutes the most important embodiment of ethnicity and the means for distinguishing 'us' from 'them'."

Television language and identity processes, are therefore strongly related factors in the life and identity of any nation, the relationship always emerging upon close examination.

Television Language and Identity in Cyprus

Naisbitt (in "Megatrends, 2000") quoted in Doyle (1993, p. 82) states that "language is the frequency on which culture is transmitted." And Sarup (1998, p. 156) believes that "communal memory is sustained by language."

This complexity therefore, in the formation and representation of national identity on television cannot be separated from the use of language, even though semiotics on television are a complex system of communication, involving, as they do, images, sounds, colour, lighting and production techniques, a distinct audio-visual system of prosody, beyond the use of words to define the televisual representation or reconstruction of reality.

In Cyprus, language itself and, as a result its use in television programmes is, in essence of crucial importance, as there are three languages prevalent on Cyprus home screens: English, Standard Modern Greek and the Cyprus Dialect. This is in perfect accord with language as part of the cultural identity of Cypriots, a theme studied by Lydia Sciriha (1996) in "A Question of Identity: Language Use in Cyprus."

In Cyprus English is widely spoken, while Standard Modern Greek is the basic language of instruction in formal education, on all levels. The Greek-Cypriot Dialect is, on the other hand, generally spoken by the Greek-Cypriots, while Turkish is also a language spoken by only a small part of the Greek-Cypriot population.

Sciriha's research (1996, pp. 104-105) concluded that while English is in reality widely spoken, only about 4% of Greek Cypriots know Turkish, leaving the two languages - Standard Modern Greek and the Greek-Cypriot Dialect, in competition with each other.

It is interesting to identify at this point, the doubts existing around the use of the Cyprus Dialect, in television programmes, in Sciriha's research (ibid, p. 86), bearing in mind that it was conducted after 1990, when independent television with its pluralistic presence had already changed the media scene in Cyprus: Sciriha's conclusions established that the Greek Cypriot Dialect should not be used on television as a language medium, it should not be acquired by children as a first language and that is also considered to be spoken by uneducated people" (ibid).

Furthermore, it is also interesting to refer to Prodromou's (in Tsangaras & Peris-

tianis, 1995, p. 87) argument that the Cyprus Dialect has been losing ground in industrialised (modernised) Cyprus for half a century now. "As it was a dialect corresponding to an 'agricultural traditional society', without great demands on written communication and intellectual (participative) education, it could not be an adequate language instrument or horizon of thought". This "gap", according to Prodromou, was filled by a foreign, international language (English in this case). This has survived colonialism and the "pseudo-dilemma" as he terms it, is whether Standard Modern Greek or English will be the languages of contemporisation in Cyprus.

The above triglossic canvass - English, the Greek Demotic and the Cyprus Dialect - on Cyprus television has, since 1995, gone through significant changes. In a survey conducted by the author (Roussou, 1995), among a sample of 400 11-13-year-olds, the highest percentages for programmes being "regularly" viewed by them, were distributed as follows:

1995	
Programme	%
1. Beverly Hills	57.5
2. Married with Children	49.4
3. Knighttrider	41.3
4. Miami Vice	19.7
5. Afetiries - Cypriot	19.7
6. Santa Barbara	13.2
7. Vice Squad - Greek	11.7
8. Anatomy of a Murder - Greek	8.5
9. Adult Zone	7.4

Five of the above top nine programmes were English-language, imported productions and only one was a Greek-language Cyprus production, Afetiries - a youth competition programme, discontinued after 1996 and resumed again in 1998. Two of the productions were Greek programmes with considerably lower percentages than the English productions.

In 1997, in a Field Survey conducted again by the author as part of a doctoral dissertation,⁴ among a sample of 600 13-18-year-olds, the following programmes led the sample's preferences:

1997			
Programme	Regularly	Always	Total%
1. News at 8.30	32.3	23.7	55.00

THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN CYPRUS

2. To Kafenion (The Coffee shop)	20.8	26.0	46.8
3. Kalimera Zoi "Good morning life"	21.3	22.9	44.2
4. Efharisto Savvatovradho (Pleasant Saturday Night)	7.3	16.9	43.12
5. Pater Imon (Our father)	27.5	15.7	43.2
6. Beverly Hills	18.8	21.1	39.9
7. Athlitikes Idhisis (Sports news)	14.2	25.2	39.4
8. Epitelous Mazi (At last, together)	29.0	9.9	38.14
9. Istories tou horiou (Stories from my village)	19.9	19.3	38.12
10. Costas Costa stis Okto (Costas Costa at Eight)	24.4	13.2	37.6

The picture was entirely different in this research. The only English-language programme in the top ten was "Beverly Hills", all the rest being Greek (imported from Greece) and local, Cyprus productions. Even though there was an age difference in the two samples - 11-13 (1995) and 13-18 (1997), subsequent ratings among a more inclusive age-group, indicated similar patterns.

In a Ratings Research report conducted by AMER, for the CyBC.1, among a Pancyprian sample of 1011 people, from 13 to 70 years old, this time, between 25 - 31 May 1997, with the use of the Day-After-Recall Method, the top twelve programmes consisted mainly of Greek-language and Dialect programmes, with only two imported productions in the top list: "Viva" (Latin American) and "Look at the Year" (English). It is of interest that five programmes in the top preferences of the 13-18 age-group were also in the top list of the above sample - 13-70 year-old: Kalimera Zoi, Manolis ke Katina, Epitelous Mazi, Efharisto Savvatovradho and To Kafenion.

In a more recent AGB Survey, among 250 households, between 20 - 26 March 2000, about 900 respondents over 6 years, from all areas of Cyprus recorded their programmes of preference, in the form of Audience shares. Results did not differ very much from those recorded in 1997:

2000

Programme

Audience Share

1. Grafio Taxi (Taxi Office)	39.2
2. To Kafenion (ANT.1)	37.5
3. Ke I Pantremeni Ehoun Psihi (Married men also have a Soul)	36.7

THE CYPRUS REVIEW

4. Angigma Psihis (Touch of the Soul)	35.0
5. Kalimera Zoi	35.2
6. Anaconda	33.2
7. I Lampsí	33.2
8. Konstantinou ke Elenis	32.4
9. Hercules	32.4
10. In the Line of Fire	29.1

Again only "Anaconda" and "In the Line of Fire" are Latin American and American programmes respectively, the rest being Cyprus and Greek productions. The conclusions from all three reports, taken at different time-periods, over the last five years, among different age-group samples, leave no doubt that Cyprus audience preferences have changed over from English-language programmes to Greek and Cyprus productions, a matter which seems to be in consonance with the crystallisation of the national (or ethnic) identity Cyprus society, more especially after 1974, with the territorial consolidation of the ethno-cultural identity of the Greek-Cypriot population.

Television Language Encounters in Cyprus

It is obvious from the above figures and information, that the first level of competition, or encounter between languages on Cyprus television screens - i.e., between English and Greek-language programmes, is also paralleled by the encounter between Greek and Cyprus productions. On the other hand, however, the latter is paralleled by another tier of confrontation, that which occurs between Greek language programmes in the Standard Greek Demotic and the Cyprus productions in the Dialect. A third level of competition presents itself within the Cyprus productions themselves, where the Demotic and the Dialect are juxtaposed through the characters and their relationships in the programmes.

Two examples of this confrontation can, perhaps give us an idea of the tie between the Demotic and the Dialect: "Para Pente" is a funny series featuring both well-known Cyprus actors - and some not so well known, or even completely unknown, but made popular by the series. Sophocles Kaskaounias, playing the fool of the bar, as well as Elena Sawa are such examples of newly-emergent actors in the Cyprus scene. They all keep their real names in the series and the set-up is that of a modern bar which reminds the viewer both of "Kafenion" and could also be considered as the "glocal" version of the popular American series, "Cheers". Standard Modern Greek is used parallel to the Cyprus dialect which at times is the very rough, almost vulgar version, that is used in the villages. Two of the characters who are often in conflict - perhaps also embodying, a cultural encounter, are Sophocles (a Cypriot, using the heavy type of Cyprus dialect and Ntinis, the bar-

man, using Standard Modern Greek).

The presence of Ntinou, a Greek barman and of an outlandish (but refined) lady - Elaine - using the Demotic, versus Sophocles, using the heavy Dialect, create a subterranean linguistic and cultural tension in the programme. The two characters mentioned, consider many Dialect expressions bizarre and incomprehensible and frequently (and ironically) ask Sophocles for clarifications of idiomatic meanings. This tie between the two languages is probably an extra attraction for Cyprus audiences, as this is really what happens in real society: Greek Cypriots are called upon to switch back and forth between the two languages, the struggle for dominance creating a continuous, but unidentified struggle for power.

Another example of the mixed use of the Demotic and the Dialect occurs in one of the most popular programmes on Cyprus TV channels during the last three years "The Coffeeshop." The "Coffeeshop" inmates mostly use the Dialect, except for Mikis, who uses the Demotic. He is also the only person referred to, and addressed by all other characters as *Mr. Mikis*. Apart from his rich social background, or perhaps parallel to that, this could be an indication that anyone speaking Standard Modern Greek (not the Cyprus Dialect) can be considered more learned and commands more respect. Another indication that the Demotic is the legitimate language, the Dialect being the vulgar one, as indicated earlier in the present study (Prodromou, 1995, p. 87). All the rest speak the Cyprus Dialect and throw in, like Stavris does - the leading character of "Kafenion" - phrases in English and Italian. Again, as indicated before, this could be an indication of the substitution of the Cyprus Dialect with foreign languages - English, mostly, or Italian and other languages, as well, instead of the Demotic. One can almost detect a subvert tie in some of the episodes, in the juxtaposition of the Demotic - represented by Mikis - and the Dialect - by all the others: Mikis comes off as the educated but naive figure, essentially a misfit, the others (using the Dialect) come off as pragmatists, tuned to Cyprus social realities and openly enjoying life's pleasures and opportunities.

The above language encounters on television may indicate a tie or competition, but as a whole, they also indicate a language use on television which is coincidental with the territorial division between Greeks and Turks: In spite of sporadic indications of global trends in their television preferences, Greek Cypriots generally prefer programmes both in the Demotic and the Dialect (Greek and Cypriot) this being another indication of the cultural identity coinciding with the national (ethnic) identity (De Vos, 1995, p. 20) as this identity {Greek-Cypriot} has been historically reinforced by both the political and territorial dichotomy of the Island, after 1974. And as Sarup (1998, p. 156) believes, it is "through language that national culture organises and sustains communal memory."

Television Language and National Culture: A Tie Within a Tie

The use of the Dialect in any country, parallel to the legitimate or more refined language in a country, could, perhaps not carry any special significance, if its juxtaposition with the Demotic, which is the officially adopted legitimate language in Cyprus, was not so pronounced and popular in Cyprus television programmes, for some years now.

Language being an expression of social and cultural values, however, it is important to investigate the matter of this linguistic encounter on television, which, as Kellner (1995, p. 5) points out, "provides materials out of which we forge our very identities."

So the triglossic encounter on television is taking on new dimensions, as English the Demotic and the Dialect seem to be in direct competition on Cyprus television channels, the latter two frequently in the same programme. As a result the struggle for the "social distribution of power" through the use of language as an expression of ethnicity, seems to be rising in importance in the struggle of cultures in the Island and in the overall role language on television can play, in the formation and maintenance of national identity. This significant role of language in the latter part of the century is underlined by many authors and more especially, language as resistance, or as the ground on which different cultures (or national lifestyles) thresh out their differences. Bourdieu (1991, p. 60) has his own proposition: "Language is a locus of struggle for power and authority in that some types of language (styles, accents, dialects, codes and so on) are presupposed to be 'correct', 'distinguished' or 'legitimate' in opposition to those which are 'incorrect' or 'vulgar.' Those who use (in speaking or writing) the varieties ranked as acceptable, exert a degree of control over those with the dominated linguistic habitus."

In Cyprus, apart from the tie between Greek and English, both in social realities and in television programmes, we can refer to another tie within a tie, the encounter between the Demotic and the Dialect.

The Standard Greek Demotic and its official use in Cyprus and the inferior standing attributed to the Cyprus Dialect - in spite of the complementarity of their relationship, both in real life and on television, formed one of the issues taken up in the author's already mentioned doctoral study. Here are some of the responses given by the Interviewees in the Study, as to the Demotic and the Dialect and the two respective cultures of Greece and Cyprus: "The programmes we view in the Cyprus Dialect are becoming more usual, like the Greek serials we view. Yes, I think we should maintain the Cyprus Dialect, as it is tradition and we must preserve it."⁵

Other respondents on the other hand, whose parents had a higher level of education, discriminated between the heavy village type of Cyprus dialect and the one spoken in the cities. Phanourios Tamanis,⁶ whose parents are philologists, was an example: "At home we speak the Cyprus Dialect, but not the old type, as my parents are philologists and they try to improve our vocabulary. In school, we also speak the Cyprus Dialect, but not the very old, heavy type of the village kind. We speak the Dialect used in the town". This sounded like a direct under-estimation of or apology for the heavier dialect, spoken in the countryside.

Another respondent, Anastassiades,⁷ spoke directly of words that must be taken out of the Cyprus Dialect, in an effort to clean it up of foreign words, like, for example, "tsaera" for chair, which comes from English (he said) or "tzisves", the coffee-pot, which comes from Turkish. This of course is true, as there are many foreign influences in the Cyprus Dialect, resulting from different foreign occupations, even though "tzisves" doesn't come from English. This concern, on one hand sounded strange, as it indicated that the sample were not aware that all living languages contain foreign words in their vocabularies. On the other hand, though, it seemed to point back to the fears discussed earlier in the study i.e., that there is an influx of English words in the Greek language, or in the Dialect, which is a type of colonial language dominance that - according to Papapavlou (1997) - threatens the "Helleno-patriotic feelings" of the Greek-Cypriot society with "erosion and eradication of its national identity".

Beyond the Demotic and the Dialect as languages, however, the two cultures behind them - of mainland Greece and of Cyprus - were also compared by respondents interviewed in the author's doctoral study with the following, among other, comments: "Our culture differs from that of Greece. I don't think people care much for each other. I haven't been to Greece, but my father has and he tells me that people walk down the street, angry and thoughtful, or not having this gentle, hospitable disposition, that we in Cyprus have."⁸

Anna Zamba put it differently⁹ "I feel I am a Cypriot, as I was born in Cyprus, but Greek also. We have differences from Greece in language, also the way of life in Greece. Sometimes we copy them, their way of dressing, their habits, their entertainment styles, etc."

And Phanourios Tamanis: "I would say I am a Greek-Cypriot. There are differences between our culture and that of Greece. Not because the spirit is different, but because the economy in Greece is declining, it is not as healthy as the Cyprus economy. So they don't have the same opportunities like we have. They try to safeguard what they have. We - in Cyprus, don't hesitate to give what we have, to help others."

Other views about the two countries, however stressed differences even more: "In Cyprus we are a little oriental. The Greeks are more European in mentality. We are more passive than Greeks. We do not fight for our rights, we accept situations more easily."¹⁰

Thomas Anastassiades who mostly viewed Cyprus productions stated: "There is a Greek element in me, but I will always remain a Cypriot, a citizen of the Cyprus state and will support Cyprus matters." This is a very clear indication of the strong direction of localism, or particularism versus universalism, in the local-global dialectics around which a lot of television public discourse is conducted.

These strong and repeated reverberations about differences between the cultures of Cyprus and Greece, seem to be in support of views already presented by Markides (1977, p. 78): "Although mainland Greeks and Greek Cypriots shared the same culture, the structure of their societies and their political and economic institutions were diametrically different and often contradictory."

Tzermias (1994) will agree with Markides, in describing the complexity of the Cypriot identity: "It is true, the Greek Cypriots are Greeks. But they have their own peculiarities, in the same way as, for instance, the Cretans have their own features in comparison to the continental Greeks. The same goes for the Turkish Cypriots."

So the encounter of Demotic and Dialect in the national and cultural realities of the Greek-Cypriots, has, for the last five years also developed into a television language tie, within the wider encounter of global English versus Greek, a matter that does deserve further attention and discussion.

Conclusions

In an elaboration of the concept of nationalism and its relationship to globalism, Preston (1997, p. 11) suggests that nationalism has been forced to adjust to the ongoing changes of globalisation, the result being, the supersession of nationhood itself.

Perhaps it is, though a little too soon to subscribe to this supersession in view of the onset of globalisation. One should bear in mind the ways in which nationalism expresses the unique truths and values of a group constituted by some given natural features (via a race, or a language, or a religion, or an ethnicity, or culture or whatever) which must necessarily be asserted and defended against the claims of other different and inferior groups (ibid).

Hall (1992) suggests three possible consequences of globalisation in the dialectic-

tics between roots and cultural identities: erosion, strengthening and the emergence of new identities or "new ethnicities" (Gillespie, 1995, p. 17).

At this time and point in their history, it is obvious that Greek Cypriots feel they must defend and reinforce their culture and national identity in view of the territorial dichotomy and pending political Cyprus conflict, but also in view of the globalising forces they are facing today, by a more widespread use of their language - the Greek Demotic and the Cyprus Dialect. There is, however, another complicacy or even encounter, within an encounter - the Demotic, representing the Greek culture, the Cyprus Dialect, representing the Greek-Cypriot culture, these two languages bearing their own national and ethnic insignia in the locus of struggle between the two cultures, of Greece and Cyprus.

Perhaps the definition of E.P. Thompson of a "culture as a struggle between ways of life" instead of Raymond Williams rendering of culture as "a whole way of life" (Turner, 1996, p. 63) is more to the point in the case of Cyprus national identity. The indications of globalisation versus localisation do not seem to detract from the ongoing processes which sustain a national (cultural) identity based on language, tradition and roots, even though these processes carry their own local problematics. So the phenomenon of particularisation - with the use of national or ethnic language - is, at present, parallel to that of globalisation which uses the English language. The competition on one hand, between English, and the Greek Demotic and the Cyprus Dialect, is thus matched by a competition between Greek and Cyprus productions, with the cultural norms and concepts transmitted by the programmes in these three languages creating different socio-cultural discourse plateaus. The Greek-Cypriot national identity, is, today, in harmony with the language and culture mediated in the majority of Cyprus television programmes parallel to English-language programmes which are usually platforms for globalised ways of culture and life. The tensions existing between these three types of prevalent television programmes, has its counterpart in the Cyprus expression of social realities. Developments towards more globalising trends, or the tilting of the balance towards more Greek or more Cyprus productions, are possible future stages in the continuous discourses between identity and television language.

Featherstone (1997, p. 114) describes global-local tensions in the following words: "...The changes which are taking place as a result of the current phase of intensified globalisation can be understood as provoking reactions that seek to rediscover particularity, localism and difference which generate a sense of the limits of the culturally unifying, ordering and integrating projects associated with Western modernity."

Identity, according to Hall (1997, p. 3), is not a matter of "being" but of "becom-

ing", especially in the modern, post-colonial world, where the search for identity is "not the so-called return to roots, but a coming-to-terms with 'our routes', which is a more definitely discursive approach to identity."

Hall (in Gillespie, 1995, p. 17) also suggests three possible consequences of globalisation in the dialectics between roots and cultural identities: erosion, strengthening and the emergence of new identities or "new ethnicities". In spite of the globalisation trends present in Cyprus realities and Cyprus television, the present study about the use of language on television and its relationship to Cyprus ethnic or national identity of the Greek-Cypriots has indicated a strengthening of its Greek-Cypriot identity and an emergence of the Cypriot identity, in the augmenting preferences for Cyprus Dialect programmes.

The above indications of ethnic or national consolidation, traced in the relationship between the Cyprus television language and national (cultural) identity of Greek-Cypriots, with interspersed global elements, leaves the Turkish-Cypriot population, completely out and this was to be expected in the course of developments. After all, the two communities have developed their ethnic or their national identities along separate lines, for forty years now, after Independence, as they were unable to unite their ethnic identity in a common, national state. The preference for Greek and Greek-Cypriot programmes is a loud statement of the desire for the distinction between "them" and "us", with other underlying ties or encounters, and it is indeed too soon to celebrate the passing away of nationalism or the concept of nationhood, versus the homogenisation process of globalisation, in countries where troubles and problems constitute an ongoing crisis. It is however, as all identity processes a matter to be revisited as identities are always in the making and the constitution of identity, is, according to Friedman, "an elaborate and deadly serious game of mirrors". Historical or political changes in Cyprus realities will probably not leave television language unaffected, as globalisation must still operate within the "site-specific histories" of nations and within the national frameworks of individual countries.

Notes

1. The 1960 independence constitution, came after the four-year liberation struggle by the patriotic, underground organisation of EOKA. It institutionalised communal dualism in government activities and in the judicial system. Moreover, it also provided for the establishment of separate municipalities in which the members would be elected by each ethnic group. It is hardly surprising that this constitution proved, in practice, unworkable, since it had been drawn by three foreign countries (Britain, Greece and Turkey) and not by the Cypriots themselves. In 1963, the amendments to this constitution, as proposed by President Makarios sparked off a rebellion by the Turkish Cypriots who decided to withdraw from the government and who, from then on, pressed for the physical partitioning of the island into two. Following a *coup d'etat* by the Greek military junta in 1974, Turkey seized the golden opportunity to invade Cyprus and annex the northern part (38% of the island). According to Iannides (1993) a Turkish army of 35,000 soldiers occupy the north and a further estimate of 74,000 Turks from Anatolia have migrated to the newly conquered area and together with 98,000 Turkish Cypriots, live on what had been (and still is) property owned by the 200,000 Greek Cypriots, who had no alternative but to flee and start anew in the unoccupied areas, as refugees in their own country! In 1983, the occupied area was declared the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, a republic which no country, except Turkey has recognised (Sciriha, 1996, p.3).

2. *Enosis*: Union of Cyprus with Greece. This movement dates back to a revolt against the British colonial government on 21 October 1931. In 1950, a plebiscite on *Enosis*, rendered an almost 100% vote for union with Greece, on behalf of the Greek-Cypriots. The same goal initially was present in the EOKA liberation struggle of 1955-59. But the problems faced with the Turkish minority during this struggle, made Archbishop Makarios adjust the original goal, to one of independence for Cyprus.

3. In March, 1997, in a series of lectures, by the title ("The Cracked Mirror"), the Turkish-Cypriot journalist and poet, Nesie Yasin, referred to the existence of the above identity ramifications in the Turkish-Cypriot community.

4. The theme of the dissertation was "Television and the Cultural Identity of Cyprus Youth". It covered the period 1997-2000 and was submitted to Coventry University UK, in November, 2000. It consisted of three stages of original research: A Field Questionnaire among 600 13-18-year-olds, a textual and discourse analysis of five television programmes in the top ten list of the Survey sample and 23 personal Interviews and 2 group discussions with respondents, selected by the random sample method.

5. Andreas Savvides, 13, in an interview to author, 11 November 1998.

6. Phanourios Tamanis, 16, in an interview to author, 13 November 1998.

7. Thomas Anastassiades, 15, in an interview to author, 5 November 1998.

8. Marina Polyviou, 17, in an interview to author, 5 November 1998.

9. Anna Zamba, 13, in an interview to author, 11 November 1998.

10. Eleni Efthymiou, 17, in an interview to author, 13 November 1998.

Bibliography

AMER (1997) 'Audience Ratings Research'.

Coker, Ch. (1992) 'Post-Modernity and the End of the Cold War: Has War Been Re-invented?' *Review of International Studies*, Vol.18, No. 3, pp. 189-98.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC) (1984) 'Television Without Frontiers', Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

De Vos, G. (1995) 'Ethnic Pluralism: Conflict and Accommodation' in De Vos, G. & Romanucci-Ross, L. (eds), (1995), *Ethnic Identity*. London, Sage (Altamira Press).

Doyle, M. (1992) *The Future of Television - A Global Overview of Programming, Advertising, Technology and Growth*. USA, NTC Business Books.

During, S. (1987) 'Postmodernism or Postcolonialism Today', *Textual Practice*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 32-47.

Featherstone, M. (1997) *Undoing Culture*. London, Sage.

Ferguson, M. (1995), 'Media Markets and Identities', in *Canadian Journal of Communication*, Vol. 20.

Friedman, J. (1995) *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. London, Sage.

Gillespie M. (1995), *Television Ethnicity and Cultural Change*. London, Routledge.

Groom, A. J. R. in Koumoulides, J.T.A. (ed), (1986) *Cyprus in Transition, 1960-1985*. London, Trigraph Ltd.

Grossberg, L. (1993) 'Cultural Studies and/in New Worlds', in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, Vol. 10, pp. 1-22.

Hall, S. & du Gay, P. (eds), (1997) *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London, Sage.

Markides, K. C. (1977) *The Rise and Fall of the Cyprus Republic*, USA, Yale University Press.

Morley, D. & Robins, K. (1995) *Spaces of Identity*. London, Routledge.

Peristianis, N. (1995) 'Right and Left, Greco-centrism, Cypro-centrism: the Pendulum of Group Identification, after 1974', in Peristianis & Tsangaras (eds), *Anatomy of a Metamor-*

THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN CYPRUS

phose: *Cyprus After 1974*. Nicosia, Intercollege Press (Greek).

Plamenatz, J. (1973) 'Two Types of Nationalism' in Kamenka, E. (ed), *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of the Idea*. Canberra, Australian National University Press.

Preston, P.W. (1997) *Political/Cultural Identity*. London, Sage.

Prodromou, P. (1995) 'Economic Development, Social Transformation and Ideology, After 1974', in Peristianis... op.cit.

Richards, M. (1995) 'National Identity and Television: Some Conceptual Issues', in *Scottish Communication Association Journal*, 1995, Vol. 2, pp. 251-269.

Ricoeur, P. (1965) 'Civilisation and National Cultures' in *History and Truth*.

Robertson, R. (1994) *Globalisation: Social Theory and Global Culture*. London, Sage.

Rosengren, K. E, (ed), (1994) 'Media Effects and Beyond: Culture, Socialisation and Lifestyles,' in Robertson, Roland (1994) *Globalisation: Social Theory and Global Culture*. London, Sage.

Roussou, N. (1995) 'Factors of Humanitarian and Mass Culture and Aggressiveness in Children and Young People', *The Cyprus Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 38-78. Nicosia, Intercollege.

Sarup, M. (1998) *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern World*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Sciriha, L. (1996) *A Question of Identity: Language Use in Cyprus*. Nicosia, Intercollege Press.

Theophanous, A. (1995) 'Anatomy of the Economic 'Miracle'. 1974 -1994, in Peristianis... op.cit.

Thomas, P. (1997) 'Communications and National Identity: Towards an Inclusive Vision,' *Media Development 2*.

Tzermias, P. 'Cyprus Identity', *Cyprus in Text-books - Text-books in Cyprus* (Brawnschweig, 27-30 April 1994).

Tomlinson, J. in Mackay & O'Sullivan (eds), (1999) 'Cultural Globalisation: Placing and Displacing the West'. London, Sage, pp. 165-177.

Turner, G. (1996) *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction*. London, Routledge.

Van den Buick, H. & Van Poecke, L. 'National Language, Identity Formation and Broadcasting,' in *European Journal of Communications*, Vol.11, 1996.