

# Sociolinguistic representations of the military in Greek comedy films

## Laughing at the army

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This paper aims to explore cinematic representations of the military in peacetime, and more importantly, from a socio-cultural setting in which mandatory military service is highly devalued. Focusing on three Greek popular comedy films, we examined humorous depictions of the military. By adopting the ‘identities in interaction’ model of Bucholtz and Hall, our analysis suggested that the use of the formal vs. the informal military sociolect indexed the contrasting identities of film officers vs. soldiers as well as their diverging views about the military. On the other hand, the use of the informal military sociolect by soldiers established an affinity among them, helping them to jointly construct the army in their talk as unjust, corrupted and ineffective for the Turkish ‘threat’.

**Keywords:** Greek army, military service, sociolinguistics of cinema, military sociolect, identities in interaction

### 1. Introduction

The representation of war and the military occupies a position of significant and sustained attention within popular culture across a broad spectrum of textual forms, from documentary television programs, video games, and (auto)biographies of experiences of war, to war films in Hollywood film-making. In light of this, there has been a number of cultural and media studies exploring the imagery of the military as depicted in the content of Hollywood films. This line of research has particularly focused on cinematic representations of World War II (e.g. Marouf 2001; Slocum 2005), of the Vietnam War (e.g. Karpushina 2002; Woodman 2003), and to a lesser extent, of US involvement in post-Cold War conflicts (e.g. Godfrey 2009). In World War II, there was a clear moral imperative behind the mission and, as a result, the US and Allied soldiers were presented as heroic; by contrast,

cinematic representations of the Vietnam War have mostly revolved around the Americans' physical hardships and psychological traumas. Also, against the backdrop of Vietnam, Hollywood's depictions of post-Cold War military actions have tended to be critical of US foreign policy, while reproducing a hegemonic discourse of war films by focusing on the soldiers' courage and moral integrity.

Whereas cultural and media research privileged the analysis of popular culture, early sociolinguistics has taken mass media and cultural texts to produce 'inauthentic' and 'scripted' linguistic data in comparison with the 'naturally occurring' speech of everyday conversations (Coupland 2003). In this context, contrary to the growing interest of cultural and media research in cinematic representations of the military, the sociolinguistics of cinematic discourse, as a body of research emerging only over the last decade, has dealt with social categories traditionally linked to sociolinguistic research on non-mediated data (Stamou 2014). Specifically, most of these studies have focused on film representations of ethnicity (and gender), such as the appropriation of Asian masculinity by non-Asian protagonists in Hollywood martial arts films (Hiramoto 2015), the use of White, Hollywood African-American English for the construction of hegemonic black masculinity (Bucholtz 2011), or the German practices of dubbing Hollywood African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) into a passable target language (Queen 2004). Another important line of relevant research involves the exploration of ethnocultural stereotypes in Hollywood (Bleichenbacher 2008; Petrucci 2008) or Disney animated films (Lippi-Green 1997). For example, in her seminal study, Lippi-Green has disclosed systematic associations between specific cartoon character types and particular speech styles and accents, concluding that cartoons constitute a powerful tool for transmitting to children the social discrimination linked to certain social groups' 'other' styles of talk.

In light of the above, this study explores sociolinguistic representations of the military in three Greek popular comedy films. In this respect, on the one hand, our research contributes to the sociolinguistics of cinematic/popular cultural discourse, whereas, to the best of our knowledge, there is no study dealing with the mediation of military sociolect. On the other hand, it contributes to the area of cultural and media studies, by providing evidence from cinematic representations of the military in peacetime, specifically (and more importantly) in a country such as Greece, where military service is mandatory for all male citizens over a certain age. In fact, a different conceptualization of the army seems to occur in countries in which there is mandatory conscription, compared with countries where there is only a professional army. For example, in Israel, the mandatory military service is largely seen as a means to show who is a 'patriot' (Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008). By contrast, in the United States, the well-paid military service is mostly viewed as a means for social mobility (Moskos 1993). The different military values prevailing

in different socio-cultural settings undoubtedly have some impact on the cinematic representations of the army found in these settings. Besides, making a film for an audience having (at least for its greater part) no direct experience of the military (as it is the case for Hollywood films), is different from making a film for viewers with concrete memories of the army, as in the case of Israeli or Greek men.

That said, the Greek context, on which the present study focuses, differs greatly from the Israeli one. Specifically, in Israel, the army is highly valued and, since not all Israeli citizens are entitled to be drafted for military service, it reproduces ethnic and class discrimination. Therefore, military service is seen as an honorable 'right' (Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008). In contrast, in Greece, the army is widely devalued, with military service being considered an unfortunate 'duty' for all male citizens.

Against this backdrop, and adopting a micro-level discourse analytical perspective on three selected scenes from three Greek popular comedy films, the present article examines to what extent the military values prevailing in the Greek socio-cultural setting are likely to be reflected in the moment-to-moment cinematic construction of fictional characters' identities through the structure of their fictional talk. In the next section, we provide a brief description of the Greek military context within which our study is situated.

## 2. The context of the study: The Greek military service

Greece has a mandatory military service of nine months for all male citizens over 18 years old, (even though it also has developed a professional army system). Women are accepted to serve their military service on a voluntary basis; they even can become officers in the Greek army. In case of severe illness or psychological problems, the medical committee of the Greek army may decide on an exemption from military service. Draftees are expected to serve away from their place of residence and, due to the meager salary they are paid by the army, most of them depend on their parents to support them financially while they are away.

Overall, the professional army is estimated in Greek society. Officers, especially those serving in the Greek air force, hold a prestigious place because of the supposed 'threat from the East' (i.e. from Turkey). Moreover, officers need to pass very strict and highly competitive entry exams. In contrast, regular military service is generally undervalued among Greeks;<sup>1</sup> it is mainly regarded as a waste of time, since draftees are not essentially trained for the battlefield, but spend most of

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1. The points made about the status and devaluation of Greek military service are based on experiential knowledge by the authors (who both are Greek residents), and especially on the lived experiences of the second author while serving his tour of duty in the mid 2000s.

their time cooking and cleaning, doing guard duty, or carrying out various chores for the officers. Moreover, the army is considered to be badly organized and to be largely corrupt. Several illegal exemptions of famous actors and politicians have been disclosed, while voters of certain political parties were successful in serving their tour of duty close to their home.

In this context, a number of films have attempted to depict Greek military service from a humorous and (largely derogatory) perspective, the most popular of which being the three movies selected for this study. However, representations of the military in Greek cinema have not always been negative. For instance, in a study by Stassinopoulou (2000) on the representation of military characters in Greek films following the Greek Civil War (1946–1949) and during the administration of right-wing governments (from 1952 to 1963), a positive image of the military was created, largely thanks to the anti-communist censorship regulations of the time.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Framework of analysis

Adopting a micro-level discourse analytical perspective on three selected scenes from three Greek popular comedy films, this study complements an earlier macro-level stylistic analysis of the films, which focused on the (socio)linguistic and semiotic aspects of the mediation of military sociolect (Christou and Stamou 2013). Contrary to macro-level analysis, through which only some general sociolinguistic patterns can be revealed, a micro-level scene-by-scene analysis permits to flesh out the moment-to-moment cinematic construction of fictional characters' identities through the structure of their talk. Consequently, this kind of analysis discloses the ways officers and soldiers are represented in the film as constructing themselves and each other during fictional interaction; in the process, it examines the role of the military sociolect. In this way, we address some of the limitations detected in the sociolinguistic research of fiction, which has not largely opted for micro-level discourse analytical approaches (Stamou 2014).

Specifically, the sociolinguistic representations of the military in the Greek comedy films were explored through the 'identities in interaction' model (Bucholtz and Hall 2005: 585–586), which conceptualizes identity from a constructionist perspective, "as a relational and socio-cultural phenomenon that emerges and circulates in local discourse contexts of interaction". While not proposing a novel

approach to identity,<sup>2</sup> Bucholtz and Hall's model is useful as an analytical apparatus, since it attempts to synthesize into a coherent whole the diverse ways in which identity is currently approached in the broad and interdisciplinary field of 'sociocultural linguistics'.<sup>3</sup> In other words, the model helps to systematize the comprehensive toolkit already available for the analysis of identity as an interactional phenomenon. Specifically, the model proposes to consider identities in talk in accordance with the five principles of 'emergence', 'indexicality', 'positionality', 'partialness', and 'relationality'.

First, the emergence principle focuses on a view of identity as an emergent product of interaction. In this way, it challenges the traditional essentialist conceptualization of identity as an internal psychological mechanism, and thus as a largely fixed and given entity prior to talk. Under the emergence principle, fictional characters will be considered as actively constructing military identities in the dialogues selected.

Second, the indexicality principle refers to the mechanism through which identity is constituted in talk, in particular to the sociolinguistic resources that construct identity. Therefore, this principle is at the heart of sociolinguistic inquiry. Following Bucholtz and Hall (2005), we consider indexical processes to be realized at all levels of language use, from implicatures and labeling/ categorization, to specific language forms and entire language varieties. In our case, the major indexical processes of military identity are the use of military sociolect and the introduction of identity category labels (categorization) by film characters (the former were addressed in detail in Christou and Stamou 2013). Our analysis of indexicality draws on Sacks' 'Membership Categorization Analysis', MCA (Sacks 1992), an analytical framework for examining the practically oriented and commonsensical cultural reasoning of language users (called 'members') in interaction. Adhering to an ethnomethodological tradition, MCA views identity as arising from practical action, accomplished in conversation, and thus is compatible with the 'identities in interaction' model (Bucholtz and Hall 2005: 588; for a synthesis of these two models, see also Stamou et al. 2012). Specifically, MCA builds on the categorizations people make in talk as members in society; such membership categories draw on

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2. To be sure, this model is not the only one being proposed for the study of the discursive construction of identity. We indicatively cite, among others, Zimmerman's (1998) ethnomethodological approach and his distinction among 'discourse', 'situated', and 'transportable' identities, and Bamberg's (1997) model of 'narrative positioning'.

3. By the term 'sociocultural linguistics', Bucholtz and Hall mean a loose coalition of different approaches which address language, society, and culture, such as (among others) sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, socially oriented forms of discourse analysis (e.g. conversation analysis, critical discourse analysis) and linguistically oriented strands of social psychology.

social categories ('teacher', 'soldier'), grouped together by members of a culture into 'natural' collections shaped by what is called 'Membership Categorization Devices' (MCDs; the category 'teacher' comes from the MCD 'education', and 'soldier' from the MCD 'army'). The explicit use of identity categories in talk is the most direct type of the indexical process (Bucholtz and Hall 2005). However, the MCA's most important contribution to the indexical process of categorization is that membership categories involve a set of typical activities and characteristics known as 'category-bound predicates', so that there are conventional expectations about what constitutes a teacher's or soldier's normative behavior (Watson 1978). Category-bound predicates make members infer a membership category by simple reference to the members' typical activities and attributes. Therefore, through MCA, we can study how film characters are represented as categorizing each other as certain types of soldiers and officers, what these types of people are represented as doing and being, and how they construct the army MCD in their talk.

Third, the positionality principle concerns the multiple positions or identities, including not only macro-sociological categories, but also the local ethnographic categories and transitory interactional positions in which an individual is simultaneously engaged during a single interaction. Consequently, this principle helps us to explore the different aspects of film characters' military identities. The positionality principle will also be addressed using MCA, revealing the multiple categories (e.g. different types of soldiers) through which the film characters are constructed in the scenes analyzed.

Fourth, the partialness principle focuses on a view of identity as being in part habitual, as an effect of larger ideological processes, and in part intentional, as a product of interaction. While on the one hand, it is only through interaction that social structures come into being, on the other, any conversation is impinged on by larger ideological processes and material structures. In other words, the partialness principle attempts to synthesize the macro- with the micro-level, considering identity as being an outcome of both structure and agency. As our focus is on cinematic data, the partialness principle is very relevant to the present study, in that specifically, the creators' intentions behind their fictional characters' voices are well evident. Consequently, we seek to analyze how the relevant dominant ideologies about the military which circulate in Greek society (structure) affect the way fictional characters are represented as categorizing themselves and others in specific scenes (agency).

Finally, the relationality principle sees identity as an intersubjective phenomenon, always determined in relation to other people's identities, by separating the self from the other. In other words, relationality can account for how film soldiers are represented as constructing themselves in contrast to officers, and for how

certain categories of soldiers are constructed with respect to other categories of soldiers. Following Bucholtz and Hall, there are three pairs of complementary identity relations through which language users position themselves and others. The first pair, 'adequation-distinction', involves the relation of similarity and difference through which people are constructed as alike, but also different from others. The second pair of relations, 'authentication-denaturalization', refers to issues of veridicality. Here, authentication concerns processes by which identities are constructed as true, such as a speaker's attempt to confirm or validate his/her identity. In contrast, denaturalization challenges the authenticity of an identity and highlights ways in which it is problematic or artificial, such as the questioning of an identity which challenges ideological expectations. The third pair of relations, 'authorization-illegitimization', focuses on the role of structures of institutionalized power in the validation of identities. Authorization alludes to cases where an identity is imposed by authority or receives institutional legitimation. Illegitimization involves denial, ignorance or exercise of censorship with regard to an identity imposed by institutionalized power. In social research, the adequation-distinction pair is the most well-known and most often addressed. Nevertheless, the other two pairs of relations are equally relevant to our study, in that they can account for how film officers are represented as authorizing certain identities and as illegitimizing others, or for how soldiers are represented as authenticating themselves both as a diligent and industrious out-group and as a 'loafers' in-group.

### 3.2 Textual material

The Greek comedy films which were included in our study involve humorous and derogatory depictions of the Greek army and military service. Although (mostly humorous) representations of the military seem to be a recurrent topic in Greek cinema, the three movies selected are among the most popular and well-known military films. Moreover, all three movies attempt to criticize and devalue Greek military service, revolving around the 'loafing' (λούφα) Greek soldiers try to practice in order to avoid the chores assigned to them by officers. Interestingly, 'loafing' is a concept found in the title of all three films, providing intertextual links among them and making them into a kind of trilogy. Besides, two of the three films have been authored by the same script writer and director (Nikos Perakis). Perakis's first film, *Loaf and Camouflage* (Λούφα και Παραλλαγή), was released in 1984, his second, *Loafing and Camouflage: Sirens in the Aegean* (Λούφα και Παραλλαγή: Σειρήνες στο Αιγαίο) in 2005, while the third, *I4: Loafing and*

*Camouflage (I4: Λούφα και Απαλλαγή)*, written and directed by Vassilis Katsikis, was released in 2008.<sup>4</sup>

Specifically, the film *Loaf and Camouflage* (1984), containing many autobiographical elements from Perakis's own military service, depicts a group of soldiers serving their tour of duty at the TV station of the Armed Forces during the first months after the take-over by the Greek junta of colonels in 1967. The TV station is newly established and broadcasts experimentally. Hence, as viewers, we watch the military service of some soldiers involving mostly working for the TV station in the shadow of the junta and the officers' propaganda about the Greek army.

The second film by Perakis, *Loafing and Camouflage: Sirens in the Aegean* (2005), alludes to today's Greece. Specifically, it refers to the military service of a group of soldiers on the island of Kos, in the Aegean, near the Turkish border. The Aegean becomes the symbol of Greek-Turkish relations. In particular, the film intends to deconstruct the supposed 'threat' from the East (i.e. Turkey), upon which the mandatory nature of Greek military service and the huge military expenses budgeted are largely premised.

The film *I4: Loafing and Camouflage* (2008) also alludes to the contemporary Greek army, representing a group of soldiers who attempt to be exempted from military service for frivolous reasons. However, when a scandal of illegal exemptions breaks out, they do not receive their exemptions. Hence, they are obliged to carry out their military service as 'I4 soldiers' (*γιωτάδες*), meaning gun-exempt soldiers. The film wants to criticize the corruption of the Greek army, since several illegal exemptions of famous actors and politicians had been revealed in the last years.

The scenes selected to be included and analyzed here revolve around the three comedy films' major concerns about the military. Specifically, the scene analyzed from *Loaf and Camouflage* (1984) depicts Greek military service in the time of the junta, and the army as a language gatekeeper. In the scene from *Loafing and Camouflage: Sirens in the Aegean* (2005), the Greek army is represented as a corrupted institution, unable to defend Greece's interests. Finally, in the scene selected from *I4: Loafing and Camouflage* (2008), military service is constructed as a futile operation.

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4. We use the official translated titles of the films in English, as they were employed for their international marketing.



#### 4. Analysis

In the analysis below, each transcribed excerpt is given in Greek, followed by its English translation.<sup>5</sup> As speech style is not easy to translate, stylistic information for each turn is given in the English text. Obviously, any attempt to classify style is a ‘daring’ task and inevitably simplifies, to some extent, what are complex sociolinguistic realities. Having these limitations in mind, we present below, mostly for the benefit of the non-Greek reader, the tentative stylistic classifications made, along with their abbreviations (added below, in the translated text):

- The binary category ‘Greek Katharevousa’ (GK) vs. ‘Greek Dimotiki’ (GD) refers to the diglossic sociolinguistic context of the 1960s to which the film *Loaf and Camouflage* (1984) alludes. Greek diglossia (in Ferguson’s 1959 terms) was caused by the so-called ‘Language Question’, an acrimonious debate between those who supported Greek Katharevousa as the standard (i.e. an artificial linguistic variety which made extensive use of linguistic items of Ancient Greek; the ‘high variety’), vs. those who supported the adoption of Greek Dimotiki as the standard (i.e. a naturally occurring linguistic variety which was mainly spoken in the Peloponnesian parts of Greece; ‘the low variety’). The origins of Language Question date back to the 19th century and coincided with the constitution of the modern Greek state after the deliverance of Greece from the Ottoman Empire (cf. Fragoudaki 1992). The question of Greek diglossia was officially resolved in 1976, after the overthrow of the Greek junta; since then, a standard variety of Modern Greek has been institutionalized, mostly based on Dimotiki.
- By ‘vernacular’ (VR), we mean a largely unmarked speech style in our transcription, namely, informal and oral Modern Greek in the post-diglossic sociolinguistic context of the 2000s, within which the films *Loafing and Camouflage: Sirens in the Aegean* (2005) and *Loafing and Camouflage: I4* (2008) are situated.
- The terms ‘formal military sociolect’ (FMS) and ‘military slang’ (MS) refer to the two principal divisions of Greek military language (see also Christou and Stamou 2013). Specifically, formal military sociolect refers to the linguistic code used by officers and soldiers in formal settings, and it is mostly premised upon Greek Katharevousa (Moschonas 1993; Rofouzou 2009). In contrast, military slang (along with other speech styles, such as youth language) is an

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5. The following transcription conventions are used:

(.) = pause, ((text)) = comments made by the transcriber, TEXT = stylistic information for the preceding turn, . = end of intonation unit; falling intonation, , = end of intonation unit; fall-rise intonation, ? = end of intonation unit; rising intonation, ! = end of intonation unit; high rise-fall intonation.

in-group sociolect, mainly used by the soldiers themselves; it is characterized by many re-lexicalizations and neologisms, clippings and abbreviations (Spiliotis and Fragiadakis 2007).

- The term ‘youth language’ (YL) refers to the linguistic resources typically associated with young people, and it is largely characterized by extensive borrowings from English, a heavier use of slang and taboo words than in the case of adults, changes of meaning of existing lexical items, and stereotypical address forms. In particular, our main sources for detecting the linguistic features of Greek youth language have been the relevant studies of Androutsopoulos (1997, 2001; for a summary of the major grammatical features, see also Saltidou and Stamou 2014).
- By the term ‘slang’ (SL), we mean a very informal style of Greek, mostly associated with lower social strata and/or the underworld; it is not always discernible from youth language.
- ‘Taboo words’ (TW) refer to vulgar expressions, mostly typical of youth language and slang.

#### 4.1 Military service in the time of military junta

- (1) Film *Loaf and Camouflage* [1984], 23rd scene: 32:55–36:41  
 ((The colonel proudly guides the new draftee Papadopoulos around the TV station of the Armed Forces. They now enter the newsroom, where they encounter the soldiers with whom Papadopoulos is going to collaborate during his service))

##### Original text in Greek

Αντισυνταγματάρχης (Α), Στρατιώτης Μαρλαφέκας (Μ), Στρατιώτης Σαββίδης (Σ), Στρατιώτης Λάμπρου (Λ), Στρατιώτης Παπαδόπουλος (Π)

- 1 Μ: Λάμπρου! ((ο Μαρλαφέκας αντιλαμβάνεται ότι κάποιος πρόκειται να εισέλθει στην αίθουσα σύνταξης και ειδοποιεί τον Λάμπρου που κοιμάται κάτω από ένα τραπέζι. Ταυτόχρονα, οι στρατιώτες παίρνουν θέση εργασίας και προσποιούνται ότι εργάζονται απερίσπαστοι. Μόλις μπαίνει ο αντισυνταγματάρχης, ο Σαββίδης σηκώνεται από τη θέση του))
- 2 Α: Συνεχίστε τας εργασίας σας. Ο Μαρλαφέκας επιμελείται τας μακέτας της τηλεόρασης. Τι φτιάχνεις εκεί παιδί μου;
- 3 Μ: Την τεχνική βλάβη κύριε συνταγματάρχα.
- 4 Α: Να μην ξεχάσεις να βάλεις το έμβλημα των Ενόπλων Δυνάμεων πάνω από τα γράμματα.
- 5 Μ: Μάλιστα κύριε συνταγματάρχα.
- 6 Α: Ο Σαββίδης συγγράφει το δελτίο ειδήσεων και δημοσιεύει το πρόγραμμα. Αλλά εκεί στην Αγγλία που ήτο, εξέχασε δυστυχώς παντελώς τα ελληνικά του. Έχω δίκιο Σαββίδη;

- 7 Σ: Υπερβάλλετε ολίγον τι κύριε συνταγματάρχα.
- 8 Α: Δεν υπερβάλλω ποσώς ! Εάν δε μάθεις τον χειρισμόν της ελληνικής γλώσσης, δε θα σταδιοδρομήσεις ποτέ εις την δημοσιογραφίαν. ((ο Λάμπρου σηκώνοντας τα χέρια, δείχνει -κοροϊδευτικά- ότι συμφωνεί με τον αντισυνταγματάρχη)) Και εσύ το ίδιο και χειρότερο! Τι μεταφράζεις εκεί;
- 9 Λ: Είναι ένα ντοκιμαντέρ από την Αυστραλία για το κούρεμα των αρνιών κύριε συνταγματάρχα.
- 10 Α: Έτσι το μεταφράζεις; Η κουρά των αμνών λέγεται ελληνιστί! Αγράμματα!
- 11 Λ: Μα είναι κοτζάμ προβατίνες κύριε συνταγματάρχα μου. ((με χιουμοριστική διάθεση))
- 12 Α: Σκασμός! Έχουμε αναλάβει την ιεράν υποχρέωσιν έναντι του λαού να διατηρήσομεν την αριμέλειαν της ελληνικής γλώσσης. Έγινα καταληπτός Σαββίδη; ((ο Σαββίδης κουνάει ειρωνικά και κοροϊδευτικά τα χέρια του, πίσω από την πλάτη του αντισυνταγματάρχη))
- 13 Σ: Μάλιστα κύριε συνταγματάρχα. ((ο Λάμπρου χαμογελάει κρυφά))
- 14 Α: Άντε. Να μη σας πάρει ο διάλογος τον πατέρα. ((απευθυνόμενος στον Παπαδόπουλο))  
Εσύ, μείνε εδώ. Περίμενε, θα σε ξαναφωνάξω.
- 15 Π: Μάλιστα κύριε συνταγματάρχα! ((Ο Αντισυνταγματάρχης αποχωρεί))
- 16 Σ: Μαλακίαί γονέων παιδεύουσι τέκνα! Εσένα τέκνον μου, οποία εστί η ειδικότης σου; ((με επιτηδευμένα υπεροπτικό ύφος))
- 17 Π: Φωτογράφος-οπερατέρ.
- 18 Λ: Όπα! Την έκανε λαχείο ο μάγκας ε; Ρε κάθε μέρα έξω με υπηρεσιακό θα 'σαι! Δε μου λες, την ξέρεις τη δουλειά; Ή έχεις κανένα γλύψιμο;
- 19 Π: Αφού ήμουνα βοηθός στου Φίνου.  
(...)

### English translation by the authors

#### Lieutenant Colonel (C), Soldier Marlafekas (M), Soldier Savvides (S), Soldier Labrou (L), Soldier Papadopoulos (P)

- 1 M: Labrou! ((Soldier Marlafekas notifies the other soldiers that the colonel is coming. So, they immediately sit and pretend to work on the news. When the colonel enters the newsroom, soldier Savvides stands up))  
FMS
- 2 C: Carry on with what you're working on. Marlafekas is working on the TV graphics. What are you tinkering with there, son?  
GK
- 3 M: A technical glitch, Colonel, sir.  
FMS
- 4 C: Don't forget to put the emblem of the Armed Forces above the lettering.  
GK
- 5 M: Yes, sir, Colonel, sir.  
FMS

- 6 C: Savvides is preparing the news broadcast and issuing the schedule. But in England where he was, unfortunately, he completely forgot his Greek. Am I right, Savvides?  
GK
- 7 S: You are exaggerating a little, Colonel, sir.  
GK
- 8 C: I'm not exaggerating at all! If you don't learn how to utilize the Greek language, you won't build a career in journalism. ((Labrou gestures mockingly with his hands to show agreement with the colonel)). And you're just as bad or even worse. What are you translating there?  
GK
- 9 L: It's a documentary from Australia about shaving lambs,  
FMS  
GD  
Colonel, sir.  
FMS
- 10 C: Is that how you translate it? It's called sheep shearing. You illiterate!  
GK
- 11 L: But it's a humongous ewe, ((humorously expressed))  
GD  
Colonel, sir.  
FMS
- 12 C: Shut up! We've undertaken the sacred duty toward the people to maintain the integrity of the Greek language. Understood, Savvides? ((Savvides nods sarcastically, using hand gestures to mock the colonel behind his back))  
GK
- 13 S: Yes, sir! Colonel, sir! ((Labrou laughs, secretly))  
FMS
- 14 C: Go to hell, damn you!  
TW  
You, stay here ((addressing Papadopoulos)). Wait, I'll call on you again.  
GD
- 15 P: Yes, sir! Colonel, sir! ((the Colonel leaves))  
FMS
- 16 S: The shits of the fathers are visited upon the children!  
TW in GK GK  
You there, son, what's your field of expertise? ((with an affected and arrogant look))  
GK
- 17 P: Photographer-camera operator.  
GD
- 18 L: Wow! You got it made, man, eh?  
SL MS  
You'll be out on leave every day. Tell me, do you know the job or are you brown-nosing a superior?  
MS
- 19 P: I was Finou's assistant. ((a famous Greek film producer))  
GD  
(...)

In this interaction, in terms of positionality, the four soldiers are represented as constructing different categories in-group as opposed to out-group. Specifically, at the beginning of the scene, when they perceive that the colonel has entered the newsroom, they attempt to authenticate themselves as diligent and industrious soldiers, who work hard to the benefit of the Armed Forces. This is indexed by the formal way (i.e. use of address forms from the formal military sociolect: e.g. *κύριε συνταγματάρχα* / ‘Colonel, Sir’) they respond to the colonel, through which they construct an identity relation of distinction from him, by acknowledging the military hierarchy (turns 3, 5).

In contrast, when the colonel leaves the newsroom, they construct the category of indifferent and unproductive soldiers (‘loafers’), who try to avoid working for the army. Hence, after the departure of the colonel, they instantly stop working and start talking about their military service. In this respect, they construct the MCD of the army as lacking meritocracy and as being corrupted. Thus, soldier Labrou asks the new draftee Papadopoulos if he really knows the job of cameraman, or if he is a “brown-noser” (*γλύψιμο*), because he implies that serving the tour of duty at the TV station of the Armed Forces is quite favorable (turn 18). This in-group construction of the category of soldier is stylistically indexed through a constellation of sociolinguistic resources from Greek slang (e.g. “you got it made, man” / *την έκανε λαχείο ο μάγκας*) and military slang (e.g. “you’ll be out on leave every day” / *κάθε μέρα έξω με υπηρεσιακό θα ‘σαι*). These speech styles form a ‘stylistic complex’ (Eckert 2001: 124) of the Greek informal military sociolect (Christou and Stamou 2013; Spiliotis and Fragiadakis 2007). In this way, a familiar, relaxed and informal overtone is introduced in their communication, which stresses their ‘loafing’.

Conversely, the colonel stylistically indexes his category as an officer through the extensive use of linguistic forms from Katharevousa and other markedly learned linguistic items. Characteristic cases include the archaic morphological ending of accusative case -ας in the definite article *τ-ας* (plural feminine of ‘the’) and in the noun *εργασί-ας* (meaning ‘works’), the learned preposition *εις* (meaning ‘in’), and the morphological ending of accusative case -ν in the definite article *τη-ν* (singular feminine of ‘the’), in the adjective *ιερά-ν* (meaning ‘sacred’) and in the noun *υποχρέωσι-ν* (meaning ‘duty’).

In his talk, the colonel constructs the Greek army as a meritocratic institution, which utilizes the potential of soldiers by using the ‘right man in the right place’ (e.g. turn 6). Moreover, the imagery of the Greek army as having an active role in the Language Question of the time is constructed by the colonel, as supporting the use of Katharevousa, and as protecting Greek language from decay (turns 6–12). In this way, he reprimands soldier Labrou for translating “sheep shearing” into Greek by using linguistic forms from Dimotiki (*κούρεμα αρνιών*) instead of using forms

from Katharevousa, such as the archaic forms *κουρά αμνών* (turns 9–10), while he accuses young people who study abroad, such as soldier Savvides, of suffering from language poverty (turn 6).

Interestingly, soldiers Savvides and Labrou attempt to resist the colonel's conservative language ideology. On the one hand, soldier Savvides mildly disagrees with him (turn 7: “you are exaggerating a little, Colonel, sir”). In a further tepid reaction, Savvides accommodates to the colonel's speech style and aligns his own speech with Katharevousa. Likewise, soldier Labrou appears to be puzzled by the colonel's reprimand and reacts with humor by drawing upon Dimotiki (turn 11). Moreover, paralinguistically, behind the colonel's back, the soldiers use body movements to show their lack of respect for the colonel's ideas. However, in both cases, the colonel strongly disagrees with them, defending his language ideology and authorizing the Greek army as a language gatekeeper, by associating success in journalism with a good command of Katharevousa (turn 8) and by assigning to the Greek army the duty of maintaining Katharevousa (turn 12).

In all this, the interplay between the centrifugal and centripetal forces of Greek heteroglossia of the time (Bakhtin 1981) is well evident in the interaction. Specifically, the colonel shifts to the low variety, Dimotiki, by even using some taboo words (“go to hell, damn you” / *θα σας πάρει ο διάλογος τον πατέρα*). This style shifting could be done for rhetorical reasons, in order to persuade soldiers about the role of the Greek army as a bastion of Katharevousa (turn 14). Against the colonel's intentions and language ideology, his style shift seems to ‘betray’ the artificiality of Katharevousa, as it is proven an unsuitable linguistic code for everyday and emotional talk. An alternative explanation could be that the colonel switches to Dimotiki in order to appeal to the specific soldiers who do not endorse Katharevousa. Thus, after the colonel's departure, soldier Savvides addresses the new draftee Papadopoulos by ‘stylizing’ the colonel's use of Katharevousa (Coupland 2001), by ironically imitating his speech style (turn 16). This ironical overtone of Katharevousa on the part of Savvides is conveyed paralinguistically (by his affected and arrogant look). Moreover, it occurs through the reformulation of the Biblical dictum in Katharevousa “the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children” (*αμαρτίαι γονέων παιδεύουσι τέκνα*) into “the shits of the fathers are visited upon the children” (*μαλακίαι γονέων παιδεύουσι τέκνα*), namely by replacing the original word *αμαρτίαι* with the taboo word *μαλακίαι* (but retaining the archaic morphological ending – *αι*; here translated as ‘shit’; literally meaning ‘(male) masturbation’), as well as through the ‘obsolete’ and marked address form he uses, being stereotypically associated with Orthodox priests (“son” / *τέκνον*;

literally meaning ‘child’).<sup>6</sup> Through this stylization, he attempts to denaturalize the conservative language ideology with which not only the Greek army, but particularly the military junta, is associated. In this way, also the political tensions behind the metalinguistic aspects of the Language Question of the time are revealed (Stavridi-Patrikiou 1999).

#### 4.2 The army as unjust

- (2) Film *Loafing and Camouflage: Sirens in the Aegean* [2005], 7th scene: 04:35–05:38 ((Soldier Tzibitzides is a lawyer who, thanks to his prestigious acquaintances, receives favorable treatment from his officers, to the detriment of the other soldiers. He has now secured a leave to meet his girlfriend. While he is taking off his uniform to go out, he encounters soldier Nakos, who is serving as guard of the dormitory. Soldier Nakos has psychological problems but has not been exempted from military service, against military regulations, in order to avoid social stigmatization))

##### Original text in Greek

Τζιμπιτζίδης (Τ), Νάκος (Ν)

- 1 Ν: Τουφ, τουφ (...)! ((κάνει ότι πυροβολεί – μίμηση ήχου όπλου))  
Πάρ’ τον κάτω.
- 2 Τ: Νάκος; Τι κάνεις εκεί ρε μεγάλε; Ποιον καθάρισες; Πάλι σε ρίξανε θαλαμοφύλακα;
- 3 Ν: ‘Δώσαν άδεια σ’ όλα τα τσατσόνια και δεν έχουν να βγάλουν ούτε σκοπιές. Χθες έκανα δύο νούμερα και σήμερα πάω Πίττα.
- 4 Τ: Πίττα; Όχι ρε πούστη μου. Με τον Χάμπο;
- 5 Ν: Μ’ αυτόνε. Τον Χάμπο.
- 6 Τ: Γάμησέ τα δηλαδή.
- 7 Ν: Τον είδα στ’ όνειρό μου. Να μου ξεστρώνει το κρεβάτι. Έχεις πάει ποτέ Πίττα;
- 8 Τ: Να μου λείπει. Να γίνει καμιά στραβή, θα σας γαμήσουνε οι Τούρκοι.
- 9 Ν: ((γέλια)) Στα παπάρια σου ε; Τι μου λέει τώρα ο ψυχάκιας δε σκέφτεσαι; Πού πας; Αθήνα;
- 10 Τ: Λογαριασμό θα σου δώσω ρε ψάρακα; ((Ο Νάκος απογοητεύεται που του απαντάει με αυτό τον τρόπο. Ο Τζιμπιτζίδης αντιλαμβάνεται την απογοήτευσή του και τελικά απαντάει στην ερώτησή του)) Έρχεται η κοπέλα μου ρε Νάκο.

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6. Μαλακία/-αι (‘(male) masturbation’) is a sexual activity which is forbidden by the Orthodox Church. Therefore, it is multiply tabooed here, especially in the eyes of the Greek junta’s colonels (we owe this observation to an anonymous reviewer).

English translation by the authors

## Soldier Tzibitzides (T), Soldier Nakos (N)

- 1 N: Pow, pow (...)! ((he acts like he is shooting, imitating the sound of a gunshot)) Man down.  
VR
- 2 T: Nakos? What are you doing there, big guy? Who are you taking out?  
VR YL VR  
Are you on dormitory guard duty again?  
MS
- 3 N: They gave all the brown nosers leave and there's nobody to guard the perimeter.  
Yesterday I did two shifts and today I'm off to Pitta ((a remote outpost))  
MS
- 4 T: Pitta? No way, man. With Habo? ((The name of an officer)).  
VR TW VR
- 5 N: Yeah, with him, Habo.  
VR
- 6 T: You're fucked, in other words.  
TW
- 7 N: I had a dream of him unmaking my bed. Have you ever been to Pitta?  
VR
- 8 T: No, thank you. If something goes wrong, the Turks will fuck you up.  
YL TW
- 9 N: ((laughter)) You don't give a shit.  
TW  
You're thinking what is this psycho talking about? Where are you off to? Athens?  
VR
- 10 T: None of your business, nubie  
MS  
((Nakos gets disappointed when he answers him like that. Tzibitzides realizes his disappointment and finally answers his question)). My girlfriend is coming, Nakos.  
VR

In this scene, regarding positionality, the two fictional characters are represented as co-constructing distinct categories of the 'Greek soldier' in their talk. On the one hand, Nakos constructs himself as an aggrieved soldier, who does a lot of service turns, while "brown nosers" (*τα πατσόνια*) secure illegal leaves (turn 3). Interestingly, this category is also authenticated by soldier Tzibitzides, who asks him whether he is serving again as guard of the dormitory (turn 2). Moreover, Nakos attempts to playfully authenticate himself as a psychologically imbalanced person, who imitates the sound of gunshots (turn 1), who has bad dreams about



his officers (turn 7), and believes that the other soldiers such as Tzibitzides attribute to him the characterization of “psycho” (turn 9). But, he is also constructed as a ‘loafer’ by not treating his service seriously. Tzibitzides constructs Nakos as a “nubie” (‘newbee’, *ψάρακα*), who does not have the authority to ask an older (in terms of draft) soldier where he is going (turn 10). Therefore, in Tzibitzides’s talk, the informal hierarchy existing among soldiers depending on the date of their draft emerges, although he shows his regret for his impolite way after seeing Nakos’s disappointment.

On the other hand, Tzibitzides is sharply distinguished from Nakos, constructing himself as a favored soldier enjoying special advantages. This distinction from Nakos is even visually portrayed, since, contrary to Nakos, he is not wearing a uniform because he is preparing to go out and meet his girlfriend, while he admits that he has never gone to the Pitta outpost, which is considered a difficult location for soldiers to carry out their service (turn 8). His distinction from Nakos is further emphasized through the selection of the self-exclusive ‘you’ instead of the all-inclusive ‘us’ (“the Turks will fuck you up”: turn 8), by clearly distancing himself from the other soldiers. The category assigned to himself is also authenticated by Nakos, who admits that the issue of service turns is not something that concerns Tzibitzides (turn 9).

By accepting each other’s categorization and the distinct categories of the ‘Greek soldier’ through which they construct themselves, the two characters co-build an imagery of the MCD of the army as an unjust and corrupted social practice, which favors some people, by giving them illegal leaves, while it obliges others to carry out a large number of services. On the other hand, in Tzibitzides’s talk, the Greek army is also depicted as being ineffective and inferior to the Turkish one (turn 8). This is quite interesting, since Tzibitzides (probably echoing the script writer’s voice) attempts to deconstruct the major argument upon which the mandatory nature of Greek military service as well as the huge military expenses budgeted are largely premised, namely the supposed ‘threat’ from the East (i.e. Turkey).

The two distinct categories of the ‘Greek soldier’ are stylistically indexed in a similar way, through the use of sociolinguistic resources associated with the Greek informal military sociolect (Christou and Stamou 2013; Spiliotis and Fragiadakis 2007), such as military slang (e.g. “I did two shifts” / *έκανα δυο νούμερα*), youth language address forms (e.g. “big guy” / *μεγάλε*), and taboo words (e.g. “you’re fucked” / *γάμησέ τα*). Through these speech styles, the particular reality of draftees is expressed, such as the services they have to perform. Moreover, the use of a ‘common’ style of talk on the part of the two characters establishes an affinity between them and validates the categories and the MCD of the army they co-construct in their talk.

### 4.3 Military service as a waste of time

- (3) Film *I4: Loafing and Camouflage* [2008], 57th scene, 44.06–44.56  
 ((Gun-exempt soldiers participate in a training exercise in the mountain. They are very tired from hiking and they have taken a break))

#### Original text in Greek

Γαλάτης (Γ), Κιουμπασίδης (ΚΙ), Μαυρέας (Μ), Κουμεντάκης (Κ)

- 1 Γ: Παιδιά! 'Μείναν μόνο σαράντα λεπτά!  
 2 ΚΙ: Σαράντα λεπτά; Δεν τη βγάζω χωρίς νερό.  
 3 Μ: Χαλάρωσε ρε συ! Σε λίγο θα κατέβουμε.  
 4 ΚΙ: Καλά (.) γιατί δε μας είπαν να βάλουμε λίγο νερό στα παγούρια μας;  
 5 Κ: Γιατί ό,τι έχουμε πάνω μας είναι διακοσμητικό. Γι' αυτό. Όπως κι εμείς.  
 6 Μ: Ρε συ (.) όταν μου πες πως δε γουστάρεις τον στρατό για ιδεολογικούς λόγους, τι εννοούσες;  
 7 Κ: Άστο ρε Μίλτο τώρα! ((Το μικρό όνομα του Μαυρέα)) Τι ψάχνεις;  
 8 Μ: Κάτσε ρε φίλε! Τι είμαστε εμείς και δεν μπορούμε να καταλάβουμε! Βλάκες; Μπορεί να μη σπουδάσαμε όπως εσύ, αλλά πέντε πράγματα τα ξέρουμε.  
 9 Κ: Την εξουσία τους δε γουστάρω ρε φίλε! Που σε βάζουν να κάνεις πράγματα χωρίς λόγο και αιτία.  
 10 Μ: Και τι θες να γίνει ρε Άλκη; ((Το μικρό όνομα του Κουμεντάκη)) Να καταργηθεί ο στρατός; Να μην υπάρχει;  
 11 Κ: Να υπάρχει ρε φίλε! Αλλά μ' αυτούς που τον γουστάρουν. Όχι, με μένα! Εγώ τους είμαι άχρηστος.

#### English translation by the authors

Soldier Galatis (G), Soldier Kioubassides (KI), Soldier Mavreas (M), Soldier Koumedakis (K)

- 1 G: Guys! There's only forty minutes left!  
 VR  
 2 KI: Forty minutes? I'm going to die without water.  
 VR YL  
 3 M: Relax, man. We'll be off the mountain, soon.  
 YL VR  
 4 KI: Fine (.) Why didn't they tell us to fill our canteens?  
 VR  
 5 K: Because whatever we have on us is purely decorative. That's why. Just like us.  
 VR  
 6 M: Man (.) when you told me you didn't like the army for ideological reasons, what did you mean?  
 YL

- 7 K: Leave it alone, Miltos ((first name of Soldier Mavreas)).  
What are you hoping to understand?  
VR
- 8 M: Wait a second, man!  
YL  
What makes us unable to understand? Are we stupid? We might  
not have gone to college like you, but we know the basics.  
VR
- 9 K: I don't like authority, buddy! They make you do things for  
no reason.  
YL VR
- 10 M: And what would you like to see happen, Alkis? ((first  
name of Soldier Koumedakis)) The military abolished? Non-  
existent?  
VR
- 11 K: No, it should exist but with those who are into it!  
YL  
Not with me! I'm useless to them.  
VR

In this scene, another distinct category of 'Greek soldier' is represented as emerging, that of the conscientious objector. This category is related to a particular construction of the MCD of the army, which also emerges during the interaction. Specifically, on the occasion the thirsty Kioubassides's complaint about not being notified to fill their canteens with water (turn 4), Koumedakis constructs military service as an insane and futile operation, since he characterizes both themselves and the accessories given to them as "decorative" (turn 5). Moreover, in his talk, Greek officers are viewed as abusing their power (turn 9). Through this imagery of the Greek army and military service, he also constructs the category of the conscientious objector to the military, who sees himself as misfit into the army and "useless" (turn 11). Mavreas also authenticates Koumedakis through this category, by reminding him of a previous conversation they held together, during which Koumedakis had also expressed his ideological opposition to the military (turn 6).

Interestingly, in terms of positionality, two additional categories emerge in the conversation between Koumedakis and Mavreas, based on the MCDs of education and social class, shaping a 'standardized relational pair'. Specifically, when Mavreas asks Koumedakis to explain what he means by saying that he is ideologically opposed to the army, Koumedakis refuses to do so, implying that Mavreas would not be able to understand Koumedakis's standpoint, probably due to his low social background and education (turn 7). Mavreas authenticates himself as belonging to the category of the uneducated man from the lower middle class, and conversely authenticates Koumedakis as an educated man from the upper middle class. (In another conversation, we are informed that Mavreas owns a strip club and has many debts, while Koumedakis has studied computer science and holds

a Master's degree from abroad). Even so, Mavreas rejects the predicate of 'stupidity', associated quite naturally by Koumedakis to Mavreas's category (turn 8). Furthermore, these two categories seem to relate to quite a distinct image of the MCD of the army. Apparently, the uneducated Mavreas acknowledges the necessity of military service and take its mandatory character for granted, whereas the educated Koumedakis advocates a military service organized on a voluntary basis (turn 11). This different mentality about military service, and the direct association with education of challenging military service, seem to echo a dominant discourse in Greek society, according to which educated people are often ideologically opposed to military service. The latter could be, at least partly, attributed to the fact that educated Greek people serve their military service later, after the completion of their university studies, in contrast to non-university degree holders, who serve their tour of duty immediately upon graduating from high school.

Regarding the speech style employed by the fictional characters throughout this interaction, it is worth noting that none of them draws upon features from military slang. Instead, they all make extensive use of youth language expressions (e.g. "relax, man" / χαλάρωσε ρε συ; "I don't like their authority, buddy" / την εξουσία τους δε γουστάρω ρε φίλε), especially when they wish to have some rhetorical effect, such as to give emphasis (turn 2, 9, 11), to calm their interlocutor (turn 3), or to show their discontent (turn 8). By employing a common style of talk which is more associated with a civilian identity (e.g. 'young people') rather than with a military one, they ultimately construct themselves – apart from their differences – as 'gun-exempt soldiers' (γιωτάδες), who, each for his own reasons, are not fit to the army and hence feel excluded.

## 5. Discussion and concluding remarks

Taking into account that film makers' intentions are echoed through the characters' voices (following the partialness principle in our analytical model), the films' script writers undoubtedly make some statements about the military through their cinematic representations. Specifically, it was found that the dominant ideologies about the devaluation of the mandatory military service which circulate in Greek society were reflected in the ways the fictional characters were represented through their talk, constructing particular identities for themselves and others linked to particular versions of the Greek army. First, in the film *Loaf and Camouflage* (1984), the officers' vs. the soldiers' identities, along with their perspectives of the army, were represented as being constructed through a relation of distinction. While the colonel was represented as building an embellished version of the army as meritocratic and egalitarian, in the soldiers' talk, the army was represented as

ill-organized and corrupted. Moreover, the status of the Greek army during the time of the military junta emerged, namely as a language gatekeeper. Next, in the film *Loafing and Camouflage: Sirens in the Aegean* (2005), the category of the 'aggrieved' vs. that of the 'favored' soldier was represented in contrast. However, through this relation of distinction, imagery of the army was jointly constructed as unjust, corrupted and ineffective to counter the Turkish 'threat'. On the other hand, in the film *I4: Loafing and Camouflage* (2008), the categories of 'the conscientious objector' and 'gun-exempt' soldier were represented, mostly through the relation of adequation, according to which the army was seen as an insane and futile operation.

Apart from exploring cinematic representations of the military in peacetime, and more importantly, in a socio-cultural setting such as Greece (where military values are sharply distinguished from those prevailing in other European countries and the U.S.A.), our research contributes to the sociolinguistics of cinema, as a body of research that has emerged only recently, during the last decade. In Christou and Stamou (2013), we focused on the linguistic aspects of the mediation of military sociolect in the same three films as those analyzed above. Specifically, it was found there that a limited number of linguistic features of both the formal (employed by officers) and the informal (employed by soldiers) military sociolect were represented in the characters' speech, probably because film makers did not wish that their characters would diverge greatly in their speech from what was supposed to be the linguistic intuition of the viewers. Moreover, while the Greek formal military sociolect was mostly premised on the high variety of Greek Katharevousa, the informal military version was shown to form a stylistic complex, consisting of a range of sociolinguistic resources, not only from military slang, but also from taboo words and youth language.

In the present study, our aim was to expand on the ways these sociolinguistic resources were exploited by fictional characters with respect to the identities and the imagery of the army constructed in their talk. The adoption of the 'identities in interaction' model of Bucholtz and Hall, with its clear constructionist orientation towards the use of conversational data as a means of learning how social identities are crafted, proved very useful for our research goals. Specifically, our analysis suggested that the use in the films of the formal vs. the informal military sociolect indexed the contrasting identities of officers vs. soldiers as well as their diverging views about the military. On the other hand, the use of the informal military sociolect on the part of soldiers established an affinity among them, helping them to jointly construct the army in their talk. Furthermore, drawing upon a variety of nonstandard sociolinguistic resources, such as military slang and youth language, the soldiers were able to introduce a relaxed and informal overtone in their talk, being represented in the films as authenticating themselves as 'loafers'.

Interestingly, in the film *I4: Loafing and Camouflage* (2008), the distancing by gun-exempt soldiers from military slang indexed their wish to construct themselves as civilians rather than as soldiers, thus also indexing their distance from military values.

In addition, using the Bucholtz and Hall model, we were able to delve into the moment-to-moment cinematic construction of identities. For instance, whereas in *Loaf and Camouflage* (1984), the soldiers were represented as authenticating themselves in front of the colonel as industrious and diligent, they were constructed as 'loafers' after the colonel's departure. Furthermore, the model enabled us to explore how identities are actually floating (even) in the (fictional) interaction. Hence, in the scenes analyzed, the identities displayed and constructed by fictional characters were (attempted to be) contested and challenged by the other characters. For example, in *I4: Loafing and Camouflage* (2008), although the one soldier accepted the category of uneducated man from the lower middle class attributed to him by the other soldier, he rejected the predicate of stupidity associated quite naturally to this category. Similarly, in *Loaf and Camouflage* (1984), a soldier challenged the colonel's conservative language ideology by parodying the colonel's style of talk after his departure. Moreover, through the concept of partialness, we were able to reconcile more micro-level based approaches to discourse analysis, such as MCA, with more macro-level critical perspectives, such as an account of the broader sociocultural Greek context.

As an analytical apparatus which originates from a broad and diversified field such as sociocultural linguistics, the Bucholtz and Hall model does not include specific steps or 'guidelines' for the analysis of empirical data; rather, it involves a specific perspective for viewing and studying identities in talk. This means that the analyst must draw on the analytical tools he/she thinks appropriate each time for considering the 'indexicality' or 'positionality' principles in the empirical data at hand (in our case, for instance, we drew upon MCA to address these issues). This means that more empirical studies could be needed for mapping out a more concrete analytical framework. On the other hand, Bucholtz and Hall's model does not address particular aspects of linguistic interactions, such as those involved in conversational narratives. Hence, it must be enriched by other analytical frameworks, such as Bamberg's (1997) model of 'narrative positioning'.

In conclusion, our study has shown that the Greek films examined here offer humorous representations of the military in an attempt to criticize the lacking organization and meritocracy of the Greek army; doing this, they echo Greek society's devaluation of mandatory military service while, by 'laughing at the army', the film makers address a (mostly male) audience having real experience and concrete memories of their own military service. Judging from the commercial success of the films analyzed here, these cinematic representations of the Greek army have

been favorably received by a large number of viewers. An interesting line of future research would be to examine how different interpretative communities (such as Greek civilians, in contrast to officers of the Greek army) read, and react to, these cinematic representations of the military.

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