

Teaching news discourse in the Greek Lyceum: Language teaching proposals based on the multiliteracies framework

Anthippi Douka¹, Anna Fterniati² & Argiris Archakis³

ABSTRACT

According to the Curriculum for language teaching in the Greek Lyceum, language lessons should afford students the opportunity to cultivate a body of values, critical thought and attitude towards society and the world. In other words, the Curriculum attempts to shift language teaching towards a critical approach aimed at the development of pupils' critical literacy. To this end, in the present study we introduce some experimental language teaching material, as the main methodological tool for an experimental intervention which investigates critical language awareness of 16-17 year-old students. Following critical literacy and the multiliteracies teaching framework (New London Group, 1996; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012), we propose learning activities which involve collecting and processing newspaper articles, in order to cultivate students' critical language awareness (Fairclough, 1992).

Keywords: Critical Literacy, Multiliteracies, Language Teaching, News Discourse, Journalistic Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Among the basic aims of language teaching in the Lyceum is students' familiarization with media discourse in order for them to develop a critical attitude. Students are expected to cultivate *critical language awareness*, realizing that the news constructs social reality through particular ideological perspectives. We first review the current material for teaching news discourse, designed for students in the second year of Lyceum (16-17 years old) in Greece. Based on our findings, we argue that it doesn't seem to help students recognise the ideological framing of the news (Douka, Fterniati, & Archakis 2014).

So, we designed and conducted an intervention which would allow us to investigate critical language awareness in 16-17 year-old students. The intervention was based on the critical analysis of newspaper articles (Fairclough, 1995a; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 258; Blackledge, 2005: 65-67), focusing on evaluation strategies as the main news colouring practice (Renkema, 1984; Bednarek, 2010; Bednarek & Caple, 2012). Following the principles of experimental research, we compared the critical language awareness level of the experimental group with that of the control group, who were exposed only to the current teaching material in the language course materials used in Greek Lyceum.

Here, we present a part of the experimental language teaching material, which is the main methodological tool for our intervention. It includes activities for selecting and processing newspaper articles in class, following the *multiliteracies model* (New London Group, 1996; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012).

THE CURRICULUM FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE GREEK LYCEUM

One of the central goals of the most recent *Curriculum* (henceforth, C.) for the teaching of *Modern Greek Language* in Lyceum⁴ is the "formation of students who as future citizens will be able to successfully meet the challenge of continually changing social conditions, with the critical reflexes at their disposal" (Government Gazette, 1562, 2011: 21052). In particular, "through language lessons the opportunity must be afforded for the cultivation of the field of values, critical thought and attitude towards society and the world as much in their various dimensions, as in their various social tendencies and perspectives" (op.cit.: 21052). Hence, a central objective of language teaching is the instruction of students so that they are able to comprehend the social world and its socio-linguistic structures not as natural and given but as fields of negotiation in continual evolution and change (Fairclough, 1995b: 222). For this reason, the new C. aims at the upgrading of the provided education with clear reference to critical literacy (see Koutsogiannis, 2014: 6-9; Anastasiadi-Simeonidi et al., 2015: 57).

¹ PhD student, Scholar of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, Department of Philology, University of Patras, Patra, 26504, anthithaki@upatras.gr

² Associate professor, Department of Primary Education, University of Patras, Patra, 26504, afterniati@upatras.gr

³ Professor, Department of Philology, University of Patras, 26504, archakis@upatras.gr

⁴ It is being piloted in recent years in some state schools.

In addition, a basic objective of the current C. for the teaching of modern Greek language in Lyceum is “for the students to understand the importance of discourse for participation in social life, in order to be able to take part in it, either as transmitters or as receivers of discourse with a critical and responsible attitude” (Teaching Guide, 2002-2003: 103). Studying the Teaching Guide more closely (2002-2003: 127-133), as well as the teacher’s book (Tsolakis et al.; 10-54) concerning the chapter dealing with news in the second year of Lyceum, we realize that the development of students’ critical attitude, as an objective of the language lesson, is clearly repeated. The pupils should be armed with suitable critical tools so as to be able to realise that news texts build ideological representations of social reality and shape particular ways of seeing it.

According to the aforementioned, the C. (*current and most recent*) attempts to turn language teaching in the direction of a critical approach, aiming at the development of students’ critical literacy. Nevertheless, the critical dimension of language teaching is not accomplished through particular teaching activities. In other words, in the current teaching material for the unit on news in the second year of Lyceum, there are no activities that aim at the critical approach to language teaching and by extension at the development of the students’ critical literacy (Douka, Fterniati & Archakis, 2014).

So, in this paper, we present indicatively one unit of experimental teaching material. The proposed unit includes linguistic teaching activities for the collecting and processing of news texts, based on *critical literacy* and *multiliteracies* (New London Group, 1996; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). The objective is the development of *critical language awareness* (Fairclough, 1992a; Clark & Ivanic, 1999) in second year Lyceum students, which is a fundamental requirement of the C for teaching Modern Greek Language.

Next, we will refer to some basic theoretical issues that concern the journalistic evaluation as a component element of newspaper articles, which the students are called on to process in the teaching unit we present. Following that, we refer to *critical literacy* and analyse the *multiliteracies* model, an approach which we follow in order to shape the proposed teaching unit.

THE BASIC THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Journalistic evaluation in news texts

As Politis notes (2014: 480), the Mass Media (television, the internet, the press and so on) produce a large number of texts, which narrate current affairs and/or “construct a multi-form, fractured reality” (see also Bell, 1991; Lavoinnie, 2004). This kind of text often (re)frames the extra-linguistic reality from particular perspectives, reproducing particular ideologies and strengthening socio-cultural inequalities and differentiations (see, among others, Androutsopoulos, 2010: 754; Spilioti, 2017). In news discourse, these subjective perspectives are implemented through journalistic evaluation (amongst other ways) as strategy for news colouring (Renkema, 1984: 3).

Evaluation refers to the linguistic implementation of the writer’s opinion as he expresses feelings, beliefs, knowledge and personal experiences (Bednarek, 2009). As Thompson and Hunston point out (2000: 6-7), each act of evaluation performs three important functions simultaneously: it points out the writer’s opinion, expressing his/her personal system of values as well as the values of the community he lives in, it constructs relationships between the writer and his/her reader and it organizes the text.

Hence, evaluation echoes a wider system of values, which on the one hand determines which events are newsworthy, while on the other, maintains and consolidates the dominant ideologies in the socio-political framework (Bednarek, 2016: 228; see also Bell, 1991: 156).

In an attempt to classify the evaluations she found in news discourse, Bednarek (2010: 18-26) analysed a corpus of one hundred sources of printed news, published in five British broadsheets and five tabloids. The proposed evaluation categories are attributed to particular events, personalities, processes, intentions and circumstances and are formed based on various semantic distinctions (e.g. how certain is the matter the writer refers to, how desirable, how positive, and so on). More

specifically, from the *evaluative parameters*, as Bednarek defines them (op cit: 18-26), in our teaching proposals we make use of the *Emotivity parameter* and the *Parameter of (un)expectedness*, which can be paraphrased as follows:

- *Emotivity parameter – How good/bad are the events that are being (re)framed?*
 - The views of reality are constructed in the news text as good or bad expressing the approval or rejection of the journalist (through the use of terms such as *inspired, brave, fiasco, racist*).
- *Parameter of the (un) expectedness – How expected or unexpected are the events that are (re)framed?*
 - The views of reality are constructed in the news text as expected or unexpected (through the use of terms such as *usually, unprecedented, unexpected*).

Critical literacy and the multiliteracies framework

Critical literacy promotes the enrichment of teaching programmes with critical approaches to language (Luke & Dooley, 2011). These approaches aim at the development of students' critical attitude, so that they can comprehend the ideologies which the texts are imbued with. Within this framework, the students are trained so that they are in a position to understand the way in which the linguistic and communicative phenomena cover up and/or incubate phenomena of social and/or socio-linguistic discrimination (Fairclough, 1995b: 217; 221-22). Consequently, the main goal of the pedagogy of critical literacy is to make the students participants in the learning process, shaping active citizens demanding their rights democratically and fight every form of social exclusion (Dinas & Goti, 2016, 44).

The principles of critical literacy have been utilized and enriched within the context of *multiliteracies* (New London Group, 1996; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). *Multiliteracies* aim at the development of the students' critical language awareness through the processing of a variety of multimodal texts from the learners' socio-cultural environment (see Silvers et al., 2010; Archakis & Tsakona, 2011: 220 – 246; Stamou et al., 2016). The multimodal texts are made up of various semiotic modes (among others, linguistic, visual, auditory, see Kress, 2000: 179-199). The objective of this is the correlation of the texts with a wide range of contemporary communicative circumstances, as well as the development of the students' critical language awareness (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

In multiliteracies, a central concept is that of *design*, which as an active and dynamic process, is applied to each semiotic activity, including language use, for the production and understanding of a text. Using the concept of design, multiliteracies propose a discourse theory, within the framework of which each semiotic activity constitutes a creative application and combination of conventions (available resources or available design). During designing, one reproduces and at the same time reshapes these conventions (New London Group, 2000: 20; see also Koufaki, 2009).

From this perspective, design includes the following elements (New London Group, 1996; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012):

- The *designed*, which refers to the available semiotic *resources* which are used for the production of meaning. The available resources concern the socially identified conventions for each semiotic activity⁵
- The *designing*, which concerns the process of the transformation and reframing of available resources, so that they meet some new semiotic activity

⁵ For example, the grammar conventions of the language as a communication system and the "grammar" conventions of other semiotic systems (such as, music and sound, moving and still image, typography and so on). Semiotic activities like films, photographs, body language etc are formed by the aforementioned conventions.

- The *redesigned*, which refers to the outcome of the *designing*. As a product of transformation and intertextuality, this outcome constitutes a new available resource for the construction of meaning, a new redesigned.

In the multiliteracies programme, design, as a dynamic process for the production of meaning, is implemented in the following four phases:

- *Situated practice*, which concerns the use of the available resources including those integrated into the students' wider socio-cultural environment. In other words, the students themselves can select and bring into class texts from their everyday experience, that is to say, texts that they hear, read and/or see daily.
- *Overt instruction*, which concerns instruction and the students' realization of the linguistic mechanisms and elements that contribute to organization, composition and understanding of the texts.
- *Critical framing*, which refers to the critical study and interpretation of texts in relation to their social and cultural contexts.
- *Transformed practice*, which concerns the reframed production of discourse, in other words the transfer and integration of a text from one socio-cultural and communicative context to another.
- Based on the multiliteracies model, the teaching module we present aims that the students will:
- Recognize the existence of evaluation in the news text, identifying its linguistic elements (grammatical, syntactic and lexical);
- Recognize the evaluation categories in the news text (eg. Positive/negative evaluation);
- Recognize the objective of the news text, realizing that the journalist, through evaluation, promotes as tellable particular aspects of the event;
- Realize the reasons that the journalist chooses to evaluate particular individuals and events in his/her journalistic text.

During the teaching process, we propose that the multiliteracies model is implemented in conjunction with group work. More precisely, this particular teaching method foresees the creation of learning groups that work together for part or all of the teaching activities (Matsagouras, 2000). The number of members of each group ranges from 3 to 6, while usually formations of 4 or 5 are preferred. One of the positive elements of groupwork, which the multiliteracies model also promotes, is the fact that it encourages the most dynamic possible involvement of the pupils themselves in the learning process and not its exclusive management by the teacher. In addition, groupwork cultivates cooperation, pupil interaction, flexibility and negotiation for the achievement of a common end (Hamayan & Perlman, 1990; Matsagouras, 2000: 29-31; Richards & Rodgers, 2014: 244-258).

THE EXPERIMENTAL LANGUAGE TEACHING MATERIAL: "NORMAN ATLANTIC" MODULE

The module we present is addressed to students in the second year of Lyceum. They are called on to process two newspaper articles, which refer to the Norman Atlantic shipping tragedy and were published on 31st December 2014 in the *Eleftheros Typos* and in the *Rizospastis* newspapers (newspapers with different ideological orientations; see appendix, 1st and 2nd texts respectively). In this module, as we already mentioned, emphasis is placed on journalistic evaluation as the visible side of journalistic mediation (Politis, 2003: 2), so as to highlight the ideological weight of the linguistic choices in the news texts.

Beginning with the presentation of events, on 27th December 2014 the passenger/vehicle ship "Norman Atlantic" set sail from the port of Patras with an intermediate stop at the port of Igoumenitsa and final destination Ancona in Italy. In the early hours of Sunday 28th December 2014 a fire broke out in the ship's garage, when the "Norman Atlantic" was off the coast of Corfu. The wind was very strong in the region and there was heavy rain and hail. The flames quickly spread and the decision was made to evacuate the ship, with the bad weather however making the situation worse. At 10 a.m. on the morning of 28th December 2014 the ship drifted into Italian waters and so Rome took on the rescue mission in collaboration with the Greek authorities.

The text in *Eleftheros Typos* (see appendix, 1st text) refers to the uncertainty that existed concerning the precise number of passengers on board the ship and the responsibilities of the Italian side. The journalist at *Rizospastis* (see appendix, 2nd text) focuses on the press conference, during which the then minister of shipping and high ranking members of the Coast Guard were called on to answer questions regarding the causes of and responsibilities for the shipping tragedy.

Situated practice

We encourage the students to search for and process news texts that deal with current affairs, which attract their interest. In this sense, through the proposed teaching activities, we make use of news articles which are integrated into the students' social and cultural experiences.

Overt instruction

Working together, students and teachers begin with the text from the *Eleftheros Typos* and are called on to uncover the existence of journalistic evaluation, as well as the linguistic elements that express this evaluation. At the same time the class is called on to discuss the categories of journalistic evaluation found in the text (positive or negative evaluation of the events, (un)expectedness; see Bednarek, 2010, 18-26). Indicative activities:

- Do you believe that the journalist expresses her opinion on the matters she refers to in her text? If so, in what way and using what means is this done?
- Which linguistic elements of the text (grammatical, syntactical and lexical) do you believe convey journalistic evaluation? Complete the table below placing the above linguistic elements into categories, if they exist:

Recognition of the linguistic elements that convey journalistic evaluation
Noun phrases
Verbal phrases
Adjectives
Conjunctions
Metaphors
Rhetorical questions

- In which categories of journalistic evaluation belong the above elements of the text, which integrate the evaluation (eg. positive/negative evaluation, (un)expected)?

At this point we should note that in the text of *Eleftheros Typos* newspaper the journalist evaluates the people and events referred to using a) metaphors in noun and verb phrases, b) adjectives and c) conjunctions. In addition, she uses these linguistic elements to evaluate the events as negative and unexpected.⁶

Critical framing

Once they have identified the linguistic elements that express the journalist's positioning on the events and people she refers to, teachers and pupils then work together to determine the target of the journalistic evaluation. More precisely, they find the people, the acts, the intentions and the events that are evaluated in the journalistic article of the *Eleftheros Typos*. The class focuses on the fact that the journalist evaluates the uncertainties regarding the precise number of passengers on board the ship, as well as the actions of the Italian authorities and crew members.

The students then linked the evaluation categories that they found during the overt instruction of the news text (negative evaluation, evaluation of the events as unexpected) to their targets. At this point the class firstly notes that the journalist negatively evaluates the lack of clarity regarding the number of

⁶ For a more extensive critical analysis of the journalistic texts in the newspapers *Eleftheros Typos* and *Rizospastis* see Douka, Fterniati & Archakis (2016).

passengers, as well as the actions of the Italian authorities and crew members. It is worth noting that in this particular journalistic text the target of the journalistic evaluation were mainly the actions of the Italian side. The journalist shows disapproval of the actions of the Italian authorities and crew members, thus transferring the responsibilities exclusively to the Italian side. Within this framework the students note that *Eleftheros Typos*, as a newspaper belonging to the conservative political world, is attempting to remove blame from the Greek authorities for the shipping tragedy, transferring the responsibilities in their entirety to the Italian side, attempting in this way to support the conservative government that was in power at the time.

Indicative activities:

- Which events and people are evaluated by the journalist in the news text?
- Can you link the linguistic elements of the news text with the evaluation of specific people and events which are referred to in it?
- Why do you believe that the journalist chose these particular events and people?
- Which people and events are evaluated as positive, negative or (un)expected by the journalist? Why do you believe that the journalist makes these particular choices?

It is also interesting to investigate how the same matters are dealt with in newspapers with a different ideological orientation and editorial line. In this context, students and teachers compare the news text in the *Eleftheros Typos* with the corresponding one in the traditionally left wing *Rizospastis*, locating similarities and differences in terms of linguistic elements that express the journalistic evaluation, the object of the evaluation and the ideologies that each article highlights:

Indicative activity:

- Compare the journalistic text from the *Eleftheros Typos* with the corresponding one in the *Rizospastis* (see appendix, 2nd text), which was published on the same day and is also about the Norman Atlantic shipping tragedy.
- Do you find any similarities and/or differences regarding the linguistic elements that express the journalist's evaluation?
- Do you believe that the object of the evaluation is different in the two articles?
- What ideological positions are highlighted through the evaluation in the *Rizospastis* article? Do you notice any similarities and/or differences with the text in the *Eleftheros Typos*?

In this activity the students are called on firstly to ascertain that in both news texts evaluation is carried out through metaphors, adjectives and conjunctions. However, in the *Rizospastis* the journalist makes use of additional linguistic elements, such as adverbs, verb phrases, preposition phrases and punctuation. Moreover, the students identify the divergences concerning the object of the journalistic evaluation. More precisely, the object of the journalistic evaluation in the *Rizospastis* are the statements that the minister as well as the representatives of the coastguard body made, disapproving the attempt made by the officials who participated in the press conference to cover up their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the shipping company. In this way the class sees that the political purposes that each newspaper serves appear to determine the way in which the news texts are ideologically constructed. The *Eleftheros Typos* belongs to the conservative political space and obviously attempts to support the conservative government that was then in power, as well as its ministers. Hence, the *Eleftheros Typos* journalist, in accordance with the newspaper's editorial line attempts to exonerate Greek authorities of any blame and omissions for the shipping tragedy, laying all the blame on the Italian side. In contrast, the *Rizospastis* belongs to the space of the traditional communist left and is systematically in opposition to the government and its relationship with the capitalist ship owners. Hence, the journalist of the *Rizospastis*, following an entirely different editorial line, constructs the news text in such a way as to highlight the responsibilities and omissions of the Greek government and the Greek authorities, as well as the shipping company (see Douka, Fterniati & Archakis, 2016).

Transformed practice

The students are called on to themselves write a journalistic text on the same subject but integrated into a different context. More precisely, they should produce a news article on the same events from the perspective of a newspaper that has a different ideological orientation to the newspapers examined (*Eleftheros Typos and Rizospastis*). Their text could support for example the Italian side, serving different political interests to those in the texts in the newspapers *Eleftheros Typos and Rizospastis*. More specifically, the students, as journalists on an Italian newspaper could for instance support the actions of the Italian authorities and crew members, drawing attention to the responsibilities and omissions of the Greek authorities. The texts produced by the students aim to give them the opportunity to process the same events from different perspectives with different ideological objectives. We then recommend that there follow evaluation of the produced texts, as much by the team of students who produced the text itself (self-assessment), as by the other teams of classmates (peer assessment). The assessment of the news texts that the students produce can be carried out according to the following criteria:

- Are the linguistic elements used in the text in such a way that they evaluate particular people and events?
- Through the evaluation, is emphasis placed on particular people and events which are connected to the issue dealt with in the produced news article?
- Do the categories of journalistic evaluation that are used in the text (positive, negative, (un) expectedness) correspond to the objective concerning the strengthening or rejection of particular views?
- Are particular views strengthened or rejected through the evaluation as well as the emphasis placed on particular people and events?

SUMMING UP

In the present paper, we examined the main objectives of the Curriculum (old and new) for the teaching of *Modern Greek Language* and we propose indicative teaching activities aimed at the development of the students' critical language awareness. Using assumptions of critical literacy within the framework of multiliteracies, our objective is to equip students with suitable critical tools so that they are aware of the ideological contextualization of news texts. We believe that the proposed activities help the students to realize, among other things, that different strategies in journalistic discourse, like journalistic evaluation, are often linked to different ideological interests.

The proposed teaching module consists of the teaching material which was applied experimentally in a high school in the prefecture of Achaia. According to primary findings, the students of the experimental team were, after the teaching intervention, in a position to recognise that news texts construct social reality from certain ideological perspectives, something which wasn't true before the intervention. In other words, the students who took part in the experimental teaching intervention realised that the political interests that each newspaper serves determine the way in which current affairs are reframed in news texts. On the other hand, the students in the control group, with whom the current teaching material was used, do not appear to be aware of the ideological reframing in the news texts either before or after the intervention.

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APPENDIX

Text 1, Eleftheros Typos

ΜΕΧΡΙ ΧΘΕΣ ΕΙΧΑΝ ΒΡΕΘΕΙ 13 • ΦΙΑΣΚΟ ΤΩΝ ΙΤΑΛΙΚΩΝ ΑΡΧΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΓΑΛΗ Η ΕΥΘΥΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΠΕΤΑ

Φόβοι για περισσότερους νεκρούς στην Αδριατική

Πνιγμένοι στην αγωνία τους για ακόμα μία μέρα είναι οι συγγενείς των επιβατών του οχηματοπλοίου-επιβαταγωγού «Norman Atlantic», με το μακίβριο αλολούμ με τις λίστες των επιβατών των αγνοουμένων και των νεκρών να συνεχίζεται ακόμα. Χαμένοι στη μετάφραση είναι όσοι εμπλέκονται με την υπόθεση, καθώς εκτός από τις δύο εκδοχές των θαλάμων επικοινωνίας Ελλάδας και Ιταλίας, προστέθηκε και τρίτη εκδοχή, αυτή της Εισαγγελίας στο Μπάρι, ανεβάζοντας τους επιβαίνοντες στους 499.

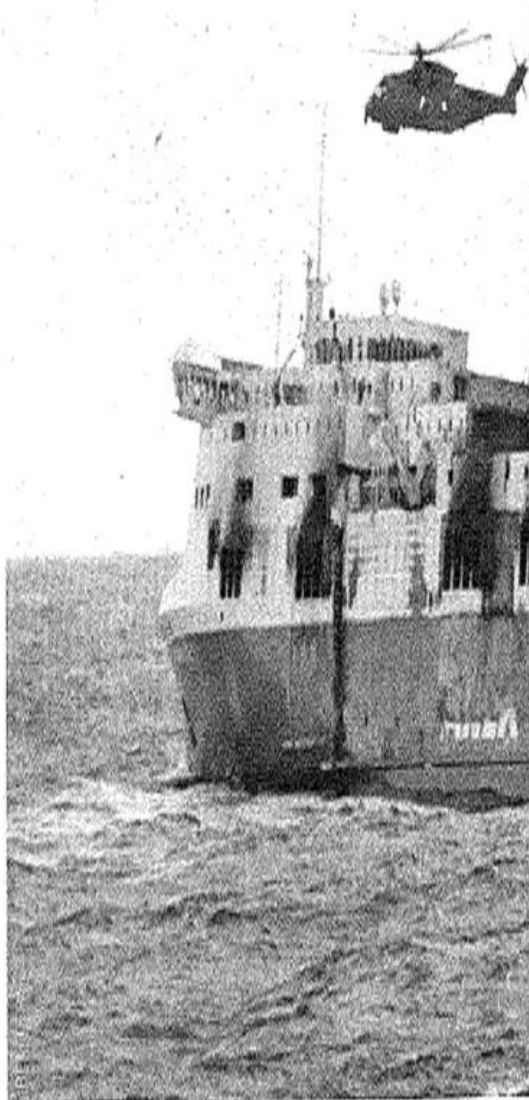
Δεκατέσσερα χρόνια μετά την τραγωδία του ναυαγίου του «Σάμνα» και τους ελέγχους που επιβλήθηκαν μετά από αυτήν -εφαρμογή λίστας επιβατών και αποστολή της ηλεκτρονικά τουλάχιστον μία ώρα μετά τον απόπλου στις λιμενικές αρχές-, και πάλι τα ερωτήματα για το ποιοι και

ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΑ ΒΑΜΒΑΚΑ
avambaka@e-typos.com

πόσοι τελικά επιβιβάστηκαν στο «Norman Atlantic» πέφτουν σαν καταπέλτης.

Με τον αριθμό των νεκρών αλφένια να μεγαλώνει και το θρίλερ για τον εντοπισμό ζωντανών αγνοουμένων να συνεχίζεται, υπάρχουν φόβοι ότι ο αριθμός των νεκρών θα είναι μεγαλύτερος. Τα επίσημα ελληνικά στοιχεία ανέφεραν ότι αγνοούνταν μέχρι αργά τη νύχτα 30 Έλληνες, είχαν διασωθεί 236, ενώ ο αριθμός των νεκρών έχει φτάσει συνολικά ήδη τους 13, με τις ελληνικές αρχές να μιλούν για 11. Από τους νεκρούς ταυτοποιημένοι Έλληνες είναι ο Γιώργος Δουλής και ο Κωνσταντίνος Κουφόπουλος.

Σύμφωνα με τον εκπρόσωπο του λιμενικού Σώματος Νίκο Λαγκαδιανό, η επίσημη

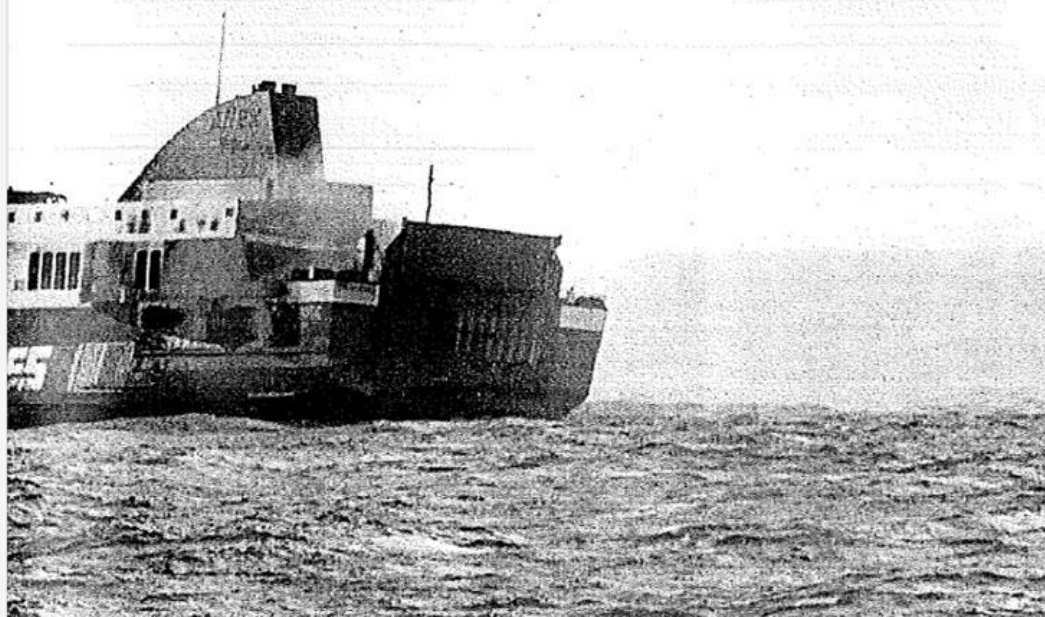


λίστα επιβατών είναι έγκυρη και συμπεριλαμβάνει 475 άτομα, εκ των οποίων τα 55 είναι τα μέλη πληρώματος. Κύκλοι της ναυλωτικής εταιρείας ANEK επιστημονίζουν στον «Ε.Τ.» ότι όσες ασάφειες έχουν εντοπιστεί σε ονόματα πιθανόν είναι από τη μεταφορά των ελληνικών χαρακτήρων σε λατινικούς, ενώ τονίζουν ότι θα προ-

ντίσουν να αποδοθούν ευθύνες εκεί όπου αναλογούν. «Το πλοίο ήταν εφοδιασμένο με ό,τι χρειαζόταν για να αντιμετωπιστεί μία τέτοια κατάσταση. Οι ευθύνες πέφτουν στον καπετάνιο και τον πλοιοκτήτη. Θα αναζητήσουμε και εμείς τους ενόχους για το τι έκαναν πάνω στο πλοίο», ανέφεραν χαρακτηριστικά στον «Ε.Τ.».

ΝΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΛΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ

Καννοί έβγαιναν και χθες
από το άδειο πλέον κουφάρι
του «Norman Atlantic».



Μία από τις δυσκολότερες και πιο σύνθετες επιχειρήσεις χαρακτηρίζει η ηγεσία του Λιμενικού Σώματος την επιχείρηση διάσωσης και έρευνας του «Norman Atlantic». Ο υπουργός Ναυτιλίας και Αιγαίου, Μιλτιάδης Βαρβιτσιώτης, επικοινωνήσε χθες το πρωί με την εισαγγελέα του Αρείου Πάγου, Ευτέρπη Κουτζαμάνη, ζητώντας την επίσηυση των ενεργειών διερεύνησης των συνθηκών εκδήλωσης πυρκαγιάς και πρόκλησης ναυτικού δυστυχήματος, τονίζοντας πως οι υπεύθυνοι για την τραγωδία θα τιμωρηθούν και στόχος της Πολιτείας είναι να ταυτοποιηθούν όλοι οι Έλληνες επιβαίνοντες και να γυρσουν με ασφάλεια στα σπίτια τους.

Η Εισαγγελία του Αρείου Πάγου έχει διατάξει τη διενέργεια της σχετικής προκαταρκτικής εξέτασης από την προϊσταμένη της Εισαγγελίας Πρωτοδικών Πειραιά. Ανεξάρτητα από τις ελληνικές και ιταλικές εισαγγελικές έρευνες, η επιτροπή διερεύνησης ναυτικών ατυχημάτων έχει ξεκινήσει τη συλλογή στοιχείων, προκειμένου να υπάρξει τεχνικό πόρισμα.

Τραγικά λάθη των Ιταλών

Εγκληματικά λάθη των ιταλικών αρχών και του πληρώματος του πλοίου επέτειναν τις δραματικές συνθήκες έρευνας και δι-

άσωσης και αναμένονται να ερευνηθούν τις επόμενες μέρες.

Πρωτόκουστο είναι ότι ο ελληνικός θάλαμος επιχειρήσεων ενημερώθηκε από πολίτη και όχι από τις ιταλικές αρχές, οι οποίες ήταν ήδη ενημερωμένες, αν και το φλεγόμενο πλοίο ήταν εντός ελληνικών χωρικών υδάτων.

Ο Αργύρης Σταύρος κάλεσε το διεθνές τριπλήφιο νούμερο 112 και ο ελληνικός Θάλαμος Επιχειρήσεων ενημερώθηκε στις 5.40, ενώ η φωτιά, σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες, έκαιγε στο πλοίο από τις 4.30. «Το πλοίο φλέγεται και αυτοί δεν ξέρουν τι να κάνουν», φώναζε ταραγμένος. Οπως περιέγραψε ο Νικόλας Πατρινός,

**Σύμφωνα με τα
επίσημα ελληνικά
στοιχεία, μέχρι
χθες αγνοούνταν
30 Έλληνες, είχαν
διασωθεί 236 και
ταυτοποιήθηκαν
δύο νεκροί**

υπεύθυνος του Θαλάμου Κέντρου Επιχειρήσεων, ένα δεύτερο εξαιρετικά σοβαρό πρόβλημα ήταν η αδυναμία συνεννόησης με τον πλοίαρχο του «Norman Atlantic», ο οποίος μιλούσε μόνο ιταλικά και δεν καταλάβαινε τις εντολές που έδινε το ελληνικό Λιμενικό, παρά το ότι υπήρχαν διεθνείς όροι και η επικοινωνία γινόταν μέσω διερμηνέα. Στην πορεία μάλιστα του χρόνου ο πλοίαρχος έπαιψε να συνεργάζεται με τις ελληνικές αρχές.

Μαρτυρίες

Εξοργιστικό είναι και το γεγονός ότι ο Ιταλός Α' Μηχανικός εγκατέλειψε το πλοίο τη στιγμή που αυτό είχε πάθει black out, ενώ καταγγελίες Ελλήνων επιβατών αναφέρουν ότι πολλά μέλη του πληρώματος εγκατέλειψαν και αυτά το πλοίο με σωστικά μέσα. Άλλες μαρτυρίες αναφέρουν ότι Ιταλοί μέλη του πληρώματος βοήθούσαν μόνο τους ομοεθνείς τους χρησιμοποιώντας και βία.

Χαρακτηριστικό της κακής συνεννόησης αλλά και του συντονισμού είναι η παραμονή δύο ημερών στα παραπλέοντα σκάφη των Ελλήνων και όχι μόνο διασωθέντων, χωρίς να δίνονται τα στοιχεία τους, αντί άμεσα να οδηγηθούν σε κάποιο κοντινό λιμάνι. ■

Text 2, Rizospastis

ΚΥΒΕΡΝΗΣΗ - ΛΙΜΕΝΙΚΕΣ ΑΡΧΕΣ

Προκλητική προσπάθεια να συγκαλυφθούν ερωτήματα και ευθύνες

Μαγική εικόνα παρουσίασαν χτες ο υπουργός Ναυτιλίας και το επιτελείο του, σε συνέντευξη Τύπου για το «Norman Atlantic»

Χτες το μεσημέρι, την ώρα που από το «Norman Atlantic» ανασυρόταν το πτώμα του 11ου νεκρού, ο υπουργός Ναυτιλίας Μ. Βαρβιτσιώτης και η ηγεσία του Λιμενικού Σώματος, σε συνέντευξη Τύπου, δήλωναν με τον πλέον κινικό τρόπο ότι το πλοίο ήταν σε άριστη κατάσταση, χωρίς κανένα πρόβλημα που να αφορά την αξιοπιστία του και τα σωστικά του μέσα!

Παραδέχονταν επίσης ότι δεν κατάφεραν να προσφέρουν κάθε δυνατή βοήθεια στους επιβάτες του φλεγόμενου πλοίου, αλλά σε αυτό φταίει ο «κακός καιρός» και ότι για το αλαλούμ με τον αριθμό των επιβατών, στην ουσία δεν ευθύνεται κανείς!

Τα όσα αναφέρθηκαν στη χτεσινή συνέντευξη Τύπου, πηγάζουν από την αγνία της κυβέρνησης και των αρμοδίων αρχών να προστατέψουν την κεφαλαιούχια του εφοπλιστικού κεφαλαίου και να καλύψουν τα εγκλήματά του. Γι' αυτό κρούουν τον κώδωνα του κινδύνου για τους ναυτεργάτες, τους εργαζόμενους, συνολικά το λαό. Είναι απειλή για την προστασία της ανθρώπινης ζωής στη θάλασσα, για τους εκατομμύρια επιβάτες, τουρίστες που διακινούνται κάθε χρόνο με τα επιβατηγά πλοία.

Ο υπουργός Μ. Βαρβιτσιώτης, παίρνοντας πρώτος το λόγο, έδωσε αμέσως τη «γραμμή» ότι αυτή η ανεπιτήρητη ναυτική τραγωδία στην Αδριατική είναι ένα «δυστύχημα», σαν να πρόκειται για τροχίο. «Θα ήθελα να σας διαβεβαιώσω -είπε προκλητικά- ότι η δι-άθεση της Πολιτείας και της κυβέρνησης είναι να खुβή άπλετο φως για τα αίτια, τα οποία οδηγούν σ' αυτό το τραγικό δυστύ-



Να εξηραίσει την εικόνα και να συγκαλύψει την πραγματικότητα που βιά προσάπθασε χτες η ηγεσία του υπουργείου Ναυτιλίας

Ελληνες διασωθέντες αποβιβάζονται από το C-130 στο αεροδρόμιο της Ελευσίνας

χημα! -Είναι βέβαιο -συνέχισε- ότι κάθε ναύαγιο, κάθε δυστύχημα, κάθε ανθρώπινη ζωή η οποία χάνεται, δεν μπορεί να μείνει χωρίς την τιμωρία των υπευθύνων». Οι διαβεβαιώσεις του Μ. Βαρβιτσιώτη ήταν κάτι αντίστοιχο με το «μαχαίρι θα φτάσει στο κόκαλο» που έλεγε και ο υπουργός του ΠΑΣΟΚ Χρ. Παπουτσής με το πολύνεκρο ναυάγιο του «ΣΑΜΙΝΑ», για το οποίο οι μόνοι που πλήρωσαν τη νύφη ήταν οι φτωχοδιάβολοι, δηλαδή οι ναυτεργάτες!

Σχεδόν...τέλειω η διάσωση!

Ο αρχηγός του Λιμενικού Σώματος **Θ. Αθανασίου**, συνεχίζοντας την ίδια πρόκληση, παραδέχτηκε ότι από τις 4 το πρωί, που δίνουν ως ώρα εκδήλωσης της πυρκαγιάς, μέχρι τις 10 π.μ. που ήταν στην αποκλειστική ευθύνη των ελληνικών αρχών, το φλεγόμενο πλοίο και οι εκατοντάδες επιβάτες ή-

ταν ασφαμένοι στο έλεος.

Ανέφερε επί λέξει: «Οι εξαιρετικά αντίξοες καιρικές συνθήκες δεν επέτρεψαν στα επιχειρησιακά μέσα να δράσουν». Όταν του σημειώθηκε όμως ότι την ώρα που δεν μπορούσαν να δράσουν τα επιχειρησιακά μέσα του Λιμενικού Σώματος, στην περιοχή είχαν ήδη αλιευτεί να βοήθησουν ιταλικά αλιευτικά σκάφη, η απάντησή ήταν ότι «εμείς δεν είδαμε κανένα αλιευτικό».

Όταν στη συνέχεια δέχτηκε την παρατήρηση ότι τα είδε το πανελ-λίσιο από τις οθόνες των τηλεοράσεων είπε: «Εμείς πάντως δεν είχαμε δεσμεύσει αλιευτικό σκάφος ούτε οι Ιταλοί! Επίσης, σύμφωνη η ηγεσία παραδέχτηκε ότι δεν υπάρχουν ναυαγοσωστικά στο Λιμενικό Σώμα που να μπορούν να ανταπεξέλθουν σε δύσκολες καιρικές συνθήκες».

Όμως η αποκάλυψη έγινε όταν η ηγεσία του Λιμενικού κλήθηκε να απαντήσει στο ερώτημα

γιατί δεν έσπευσαν από την πρώτη στιγμή ρυμουλκά ανοιχτής θάλασσας. Η απάντηση που δόθηκε από τον αρχηγό, τον επικεφαλής του Θαλάσσιου Επιχειρήσεων, ήταν ότι αυτό δεν είναι δική τους ευθύνη! Αναφέρθηκε χαρακτηριστικά: «Εμείς στείλαμε το σήμα για το κινδυνεύον πλοίο στους σταθμούς (σ.σ. των ρυμουλκών), όμως δεν υπήρξε ανταπόκριση». Απέκριναν ότι πρέπει η εταιρεία να ζητήσει βοήθεια ρυμουλκού, κάτι που όπως όλα δείχνουν, η ANEK απέφυγε τις κρίσιμες ώρες, γιατί αυτό έχει μεγάλο κόστος.

Πέπλο προστασίας της εταιρείας

Από την πλευρά της Λιμενικής Αστυνομίας, στη συνέντευξη μίλησε ο επικεφαλής της **Ν. Σπανός**. Παρά το γεγονός ότι του ζητήθηκε να σχολιάσει τις απαντήσεις λίστες που εξέδωσε η ANEK, ανεβοκατεβάζοντας τον αριθμό των

νεκρών, είπε ότι είναι βέβαιο πως η τέταρτη λίστα είναι και η ακριβής «γιατί η εταιρεία έκανε ενδελεχή έλεγχο». Ωστόσο, δεν απάντησε αν θα έχει συνέπειες η εταιρεία γι' αυτό το αλαλούμ που έχει προκαλέσει. Σημείωσε ακόμα ότι οι λιμενικές αρχές έκαναν τον έλεγχο που χρειαζόταν.

Όσον αφορά τις παρατηρήσεις που είχαν γίνει στο πλοίο στις 19 Δεκέμβρη από το Κεντρικό Λιμενορχείο Πάτρας, οι απαντήσεις που έδωσε ο διευθυντής της Επιθεώρησης Εμπορικών Πλοίων **Σ. Ρούμπης** ήταν...αποστομωτικές. Για την πρώτη, ανέφερε ότι πρόκειται για μια πάρτα χωρίς ιδιαίτερο ενδιαφέρον και ότι «το πρόβλημα είχε αποκατασταθεί».

Για τις δύο άλλες παρατηρήσεις, ανέφερε ότι ήταν απλώς φθορές και αυτοκόλλητα σήματα και σε ό,τι αφορά τις πόρτες πυρασφάλειας ότι «σε μία από τις πυρμαχες, δεν ήταν ικανοποιητικός ο μηχανισμός κλεισίματος! Μετά από αυτά, αποφάνθηκε ότι το πλοίο ήταν σε πολύ καλή κατάσταση. Όσο για το αν οι 56 ναυτεργάτες ήταν επαρκώς αριθμός για να καλύψει τις ανάγκες ενός τέτοιου πλοίου και να διαχειριστεί κατάσταση κρίσης, ανέφεραν ότι «το πλοίο είχε σημαία Ιταλίας».