

EU Legal Language and Translation

— Dehumanizing the Refugee Crisis

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate lexical choices made in the EU legal texts, which could contribute to dehumanizing the “refugee crisis”, and compare them with the choices made by Greek translators. For this purpose, a corpus of EU legal texts, regulating migration matters and issued by the European Commission, is compiled. The language versions studied are English and Greek. The theoretical model adopted is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and the major tools used are “framing” and “detachment techniques”. The methodology employed in this research is corpus-based and the analysis is both qualitative and quantitative. The English corpus studied revealed some convincing evidence about the existence of dehumanizing strategies in EU legal texts, and its Greek version is, as expected, totally in line with the original lexical choices. By analysing a number of characteristic examples, the present paper sheds some light on the multidimensional relationship between language and ideology, while examining its influence on the translation process.

Keywords

EU Legal Language, EU Translation, Migration, Dehumanizing Strategies, Corpus-based Methodology, Critical Discourse Analysis

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1. Introduction

In the context of increasing social and political conflict, Europe is experiencing nowadays the greatest mass movement of people of the last sixty years. Almost one million migrants and refugees, fleeing war and persecution, intolerable misery or human rights violation, have arrived in the European Union (EU) to find refuge. How is this situation tackled at the European level? Are these populations received and welcomed? In the words of the Secretary General of Amnesty International, Salim Shetty, “While some countries such as Germany [...] have tried to meet the challenge, the prevailing narrative in many countries is xenophobic, anti-migration, and driven by fear and concerns about security”¹. Can language disguise agony, horror or violence? Can particular linguistic choices dehumanize a humanitarian crisis?

The aim of this paper is to study the language used in the EU in order to describe and/or regulate the socio-political phenomenon referred to as “the refugee crisis”. More specifically, we intend to investigate the choices made by the Greek translator when rendering EU legal texts.

To do so, we first discuss the special characteristics of EU legal language and EU translation. We then briefly report on the current situation of the refugee crisis, with special reference to Greece. Next, we describe the interconnection between language and ideology and define “dehumanization” in linguistic terms. Finally, the actual case study we are working on and our results are presented and discussed.

The motivation for this study has been both the historical circumstance of the refugee crisis and our previous research on ideology, EU translation and terminology management. In our study, dehumanization is studied from the perspective of a corpus of EU legal texts, using a qualitative and quantitative approach in the English-Greek language pair.

Our theoretical background is Descriptive Translation Studies and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), while we also use the methodology of Corpus Linguistics.

1.1. EU Legal Language and Translation

As the EU is foremost a legal institution, texts produced in its context are mostly of a legal language. Legal language is considered a sub-category of general language, a language for special purposes (LSP), having its own morphological, syntactic and semantic characteristics (Koutsivitis, 1994; G emar, 1995; Cao, 1997; Biel, 2012; 2014; Valeontis & Kribas, 2014). Despite the special characteristics that each national legal lan-

¹“Tackling the global refugee crisis: Sharing, not shirking responsibility”, Available at [amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2016/10/tackling-the-global-refugee-crisis-sharing-responsibility](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2016/10/tackling-the-global-refugee-crisis-sharing-responsibility) (accessed 31 October 2017).

guage may have, there are some common features, according to Cao (1997: 20–23). These are as follows:

- 1) At the lexical level, an extensive use of terminology is observed; in some languages the use of archaic forms of language is also present.²
- 2) At the syntactic level, the main characteristics are: impersonal constructions, nominalizations, long and complex sentences.
- 3) At the pragmatic level, performative language is used.

Another characteristic of legal language, noted by Biel with special reference to Polish, is the “depersonalised type of contact between the sender and the receiver” (2014: 27). According to the author, this kind of language lacks direct forms of address, diminutives, colloquial expressions or emotive words, etc. These remarks also apply to the Greek language (Koutsivitis, 1994).

Moreover, the term “legal language” covers different varieties of language used in different settings, such as courtrooms, legislative bodies or even public administration (Biel, 2014: 19). Thus, there is an internal hierarchy of legal texts and genres in which legislation has a prominent place. In the EU context, regulatory and prescriptive legal acts are: a) regulations, b) directives and c) decisions while recommendations, opinions, communications, or reports are non-legally binding texts³.

EU legal language is influenced by several other factors, such as the multilingual/multicultural environment of its production which is believed to lead to hybridity phenomena (Schäffner & Adab, 1997; Trosborg, 1997; Sosoni, 2003; 2012; 2016; Loupaki, 2005; 2008; 2017; McAuliffe, 2011). First introduced by Schäffner and Adab (1997: 325–337), “hybridity” in EU documents is defined as the linguistic elements that seem “out of place” or “strange for the receiving culture” (Schäffner & Adab, 1997: 325). In particular, hybrid texts present specific features at the level of vocabulary, syntax and style “which may clash with target language conventions” (Schäffner & Adab, 1997: 327). Inspired by functional/text linguistics theories, studies of this category place emphasis on the communication circumstances under which EU texts are produced (sender, receiver, medium, aim, genre, etc.). Another important factor is related to the fact that the authors of legal texts are not always native speakers of the drafting language, for instance English (EU-sociolect, Dollerup, 1996). Furthermore, another parameter that influences EU legal language is the need to reach a compromise between different Member States, between different political orientations, etc. (*Eurospeak*, Schütte, 1993). Finally, a recent approach to EU legal language has been inspired by ethnographic studies (Mason, 2003; Koskinen, 2008; 2014; Kang, 2011), which include EU language in the category of “institutional languages”, i.e. languages that are self-referential. It is by no means accidental that all these contributions are made by translation studies scholars, as translation is vital for the functioning of EU institutions.

² For the use of “katharevousa” in the Greek legal language see Valeontis & Kribas (2014: 49).

³ Available at europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU_1.2.1.pdf (accessed 31 October 2017).

In fact, the EU started with just four languages in 1958 and now works in 24 official languages, creating 552 language combinations. As such, translation constitutes a major tool for communication, or as Umberto Eco has stressed, “translation is the language of Europe”. To give an example of the scale of translation services in the EU, the Directorate General of Translation of the European Commission

“employs about 1 600 translators, 700 support staff and uses all kinds of new technologies to translate approximately 2 million pages per year, of which some 500 000 are handled by external contractors”.⁴

Let us now move on to a brief presentation of the refugee crisis.

1.2. The Refugee Crisis: Some Facts and Figures

In 2015, the term “European refugee crisis” was coined to describe the rising numbers of people arriving in the EU, travelling across the Mediterranean Sea or overland through Southeast Europe. According to data available from the UNHCR portal, from 2015 till August 2017 there has been over 1.5 million new sea arrivals. Because of its geographic position, Greece is a major gateway on the Eastern Mediterranean Route. For instance, in the first six months of 2017, 9,286 refugees and migrants crossed the sea from Turkey to Greece with many in need of international protection.

Most of these migrants came from Syria (37 %), followed by Iraq (13 %), DR Congo (7 %), Afghanistan (6 %) and Algeria (6 %).⁵ Most sea arrivals in the first six months of 2017 have been in Chios (33 %), followed by Lesbos (29 %), Samos (18 %), and the South Dodecanese islands (16 %). Of the arrivals, 46 % were male, 22 % female, 32 % were children. According to the same report, a large number of women coming to Greece from Africa have been victims of sexual and/or gender-based violence, either in their country of origin or during their journey. Moreover, from 2015 until August 2017, 11,000 refugees and migrants have been reported drowned or missing.

Once in Europe, the problems are not over for these groups of people; in a UNHCR report, it is stated that: “Those moving onwards irregularly from Greece and Bulgaria have reported abuse at the hands of smugglers, as well as being beaten, set upon by police dogs and pushed back by some border authorities” (2017: 2).

One of the founding documents to protect refugees is the 1951 Geneva Convention on the protection of refugees. Furthermore, since 1999, Member States have set as a common goal the creation of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS), in order to harmonize standards of protection and align the EU States' asylum legislation. To this end, new EU rules have been agreed, such as the revised Asylum Procedures Directive,

⁴ Data available at ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/en_print_2016.pdf (accessed 31 October 2017). To provide a measure of comparison, it is worth mentioning that leading Language Service Providers such as Lionbridge or SDL count some 4,500 and 2,700 employees respectively (Common Sense Advisory Report, 2012).

⁵ Statistics from UNHCR Report “Desperate Journeys”, available at data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/58838 (accessed 31 October 2017).

Reception Conditions Directive, Qualification Directive, Dublin Regulation, and EU-RODAC Regulation. As stated by the European Commission,⁶ these legal documents aim, among others, to establish quicker asylum decisions, to ensure humane material reception conditions, and to improve access to rights and integration.

However, despite this legal reinforcement, the situation is far from ideal. For instance, during the winter of 2016, borders between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (F.Y.R.O.M.) were closed resulting in an unofficial, completely primitive refugee camp in Idomeni (Greece) for several months. Moreover, although an EU-Turkey deal was signed in March 2016 to prevent smuggling, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) report numerous violations of human rights and violent incidents both in Turkey and Greece, according to their patients' testimonies. Finally, in a report issued in October 2017,⁷ MSF stress the urgent need to relocate asylum seekers from the Greek islands to the mainland, because of the adverse conditions they face, which in turn lead to an increased number of mental health problems.

Hence, in this context, if we conduct a Wikipedia search for information on the “European Migrant crisis”, we can find the following statement as early as the first paragraph: “These people included asylum seekers, but also others, such as economic migrants and some hostile agents, including Islamic State militants disguised as refugees or migrants”.⁸ This description is indicative of the misleading perception of the refugee crisis, in which, as I will suggest, EU legal texts have a role to play. In fact, it is interesting to investigate which aspects of this socio-political phenomenon are described in EU texts and through which linguistic means; because, as is it will be discussed in the following section, language reflects ideology.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

The relationship between language and ideology is hardly a new phenomenon. According to Fairclough (1989: 3) “ideology is pervasively present in language,” and as Hodge and Kress point out,

“ideology involves a systematically organized presentation of the reality [...] and presenting anything in or through the language involves selection.” (1993: 15)

⁶ See ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum_en (accessed 31 October 2017).

⁷ Available at msf.lu/sites/default/files/2017_10_mental_health_greece_report_final_low.pdf (accessed 31 October 2017).

⁸ Available at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_migrant_crisis#cite_note-12 (accessed 31 October 2017).

One approach of Linguistics that has contributed a lot to the analysis of the relationship between language and ideology, language and power is CDA. As explained in the Dictionary of Linguistics, CDA is a “socially directed application of linguistic analysis”, which lays on the assumption that all language materializations bury ideological patterns; transmit an encoded perception of the reality (Malmkjaer, 2002: 102). Hence, different sociolinguistic choices may hide different ideological structures. It is worth mentioning however that CDA should not be regarded as an “automatic hermeneutic procedure” (Malmkjaer, 2002: 103). In this sense, all linguistic choices are studied in relation to their context of production.

In our research we intend to investigate the existence and translation of *dehumanizing strategies* in EU legal texts – or the lack of them. Dehumanizing, or as Simon Weill calls it “*l’empire de la force*” [the empire of force], is a certain state of mind in which “people deny the humanity of others whom they destroy, manipulate, or exploit” (White, 2006: 2). This ideological stance – typical of propaganda during wars or other military operations – can also be found in peacetime. Thus, the word “force” refers not only to military or physical force but also to other forms of force such as psychological, ideological or emotional (White, 2006: 5). Dehumanizing is here understood as a process of undermining the pain, the human nature, of a group of people, for instance refugees and migrants, while magnifying the trouble, the problems this group is causing to another – usually ruling group – i.e. EU Member States. It is a classic bipolar schema opposing *us* vs. *them*, which could be linked to what van Dijk describes as Ideological Square (1997: 28). This notion defines an argumentation strategy used in situations characterized by polarization, namely in political discourse, and is reflected in the semantic macrostructures⁹

Emphasizing Our Good Actions/Properties and Their Bad Actions/Properties

De-emphasizing Our Bad Actions/Properties and Their Good Actions/Properties

Another tool used in our analysis is “framing”. Borrowed from Discourse Analysis, framing is part of the verbalization process (Chafe, 1982; Tannen, 1993), in which a speaker turns non-verbal knowledge into verbal.¹⁰ One thing stressed by Chafe (1982) in relation to the verbalization process is its creativity, as the speaker –ideally – makes choices between many available options. In this sense, choices are made in both morpho-syntax and semantics, for instance through the choice of active or passive structures; modality patterns; impersonal structures; as well as the choice of emotive or

⁹ “Macro-structures are assumed to be semantic structures of discourse whose meaning and reference is defined in terms of their constituents’ meanings. [...] the meaning of macro-structures is a function of the meaning and reference of the constituent propositions of the explicit text base and the relations between those propositions.” (van Dijk, 1977: 7).

¹⁰ For Chafe, framing is the second stage of verbalization in his three-fold “schema-frame-category” and is limited to sentence level expression and role of participants. Here framing is understood in its wider sense, i.e. the linguistic choices made to name objects or actions with reference to the refugee crisis.

neutral lexical items; lexical items having positive or negative connotations; the extensive use of terminology, etc.

In our study, we will focus on the semantic characteristics of both English and Greek EU legal texts.

2.2. Aim of This Research

In particular, the aim of this research is to examine lexical choices made in EU legal texts, which could contribute to dehumanizing the *refugee crisis*, and compare them with the choices made by Greek translators. For the purpose of our study, we built and analysed a corpus of EU legal texts in ENG and their official translations into GR.

In the following section we will present our corpora and methodology.

3. Presentation of the Corpora and Methodology

The interconnection between translation and corpora is by no means a new one in Translation Studies (TS). From the early history of translation theory to the present, translation scholars have always analysed different texts: either the original with its translation, in comparative or sociocultural approaches; or translations with non-translations in descriptive approaches. The use of corpus linguistics methodology was first advocated by Mona Baker in 1993 and has since then expanded into the field of TS (for a general overview of the different studies in this area, see Olohan, 2004).

In our study we have used what Olohan describes as “unidirectional parallel corpora” (2004: 24). This category of corpora contains source texts in language A and target texts in language B, for instance English and Greek.¹¹ In particular, we have analysed 20 legislative texts,¹² all of which were issued in 2016 and 2017 (final version). The author of the texts is the European Commission and the genres they represent are mainly communications, reports, green papers, proposals for regulations, proposals for directives, etc. Following the hierarchy of legal texts that we have outlined earlier, the texts studied here belong to both legally binding and non-legally binding texts. Finally, the basic themes discussed in our corpora are: the resumption of transfers to Greece; the reform of the common asylum system; the temporary internal border control; receiving of applicants of international protection, family reunification, etc. Some statistical data about our corpora are presented in the table below:

¹¹ For legal reasons and because of the principle of equality of languages, all language versions are considered authentic in EU legal documents. However, for practical reasons, as Greek is not one of the procedural languages, we assume that the Greek version is a translation from the English original.

¹² For a detailed list of texts references, see Appendix.

Table 1: Statistical data of our corpora.

	English sub-corpus (ENG)		Greek sub-corpus (GR)		Total
Documents	10	50.00 %	10	50.00 %	20
Sentences	2,631	40.92 %	3,799	59.08 %	6,430
Words	103,618	46.27 %	120,338	53.73 %	223,956
Tokens	123,128	46.18 %	143,504	53.82 %	266,632

Note: Percentages refer to the Total value in the same row.

In terms of representativeness, as stressed by McEnery & Wilson (2003: 78), we should always keep in mind that “we are dealing with a sample of a much larger population”. In fact, texts chosen in our study are a limited part of a larger group of texts entitled EU legal texts. Sampling was made randomly, although three basic criteria were taken into account:

- a) we selected recently issued texts (2016, 2017),
- b) the thematic field was the refugee crisis and we tried to include different aspects of the phenomenon, and
- c) we were bound by the existence (or not) of a Greek translation available.

Regarding the methodology used in this research, firstly, we studied both originals and their translations in order to semantically map the texts and detect some of their macro-structures. After this stage, we chose the thematic fields of security vs. insecurity and misery vs. support and we tried to identify all notions related to them. To do this, we have created a list of key-words in English that were expected to be found in relation to the four fields mentioned. For instance, key words related to the notion of *security* were “order”, “regular”, “lawful”, “controlled”, and “stable”, while the notion of *insecurity* was represented by key words such as “disorder”, “irregular”, “unlawful”, “uncontrolled”, and “instable”.

These words were both chosen after examination of a sample of the texts and some presumptions made by the author, based on linguistic expectations.

Subsequently, Sketch Engine¹³ was used to study all the occurrences, along with their linguistic environment and examine their translation into Greek.¹⁴ Three functions offered by Sketch Engine were mainly used:

- a) Word Sketch, which is a one-page summary of a particular word’s grammatical and collocational behaviour (Kilgarriff et al., 2014: 9).

¹³ Sketch Engine is the flagship product of Lexical Computing, a research company founded in 2003 by Adam Kilgarriff. Sketch Engine is an easy-to-use corpus management tool that contains more than 200 corpora in more than 60 languages. It is web-based and also offers the possibility to the user to build its own corpus.

¹⁴ This same linguistic tool has been used by Kopytowska & Grabowski (2017), Kopytowska, Grabowski & Woźniak (2017) and Kopytowska, Woźniak & Grabowski (2017) to analyse discourse on refugee crisis in Polish language.

- b) Concordancer, in which all instances of a word or phrase found in a corpus, also called “a node”, are presented along with their immediate context.
- c) Sketch Diff, which is a table illustrating the grammatical and collocational behaviour of two different words using different colour for each word (see Picture 1 below).

All examples found by the use of Sketch Engine were then analysed in a qualitative way, as will be explained in the following section.

4. Data Analysis

The data presented here illustrate dehumanizing strategies found in our corpora of EU legal texts and their translation into Greek.

4.1. Framing

We will firstly analyse the framing techniques used to verbalize the actual situation of migrants and refugees arriving in the EU, travelling across the Mediterranean Sea or overland through Southeast Europe and in particular the use of the word “crisis”. According to Oxford English Dictionary online, the word “crisis” derives from the Latin word “crisis”, which in turn is borrowed from Ancient Greek “κρίσις” [krisis], meaning discrimination or decision. In the 16th century, it was used in medicine to describe the point in a disease trajectory when a development takes place that determines whether one will recover. Finally, in the 17th century, it took on the meaning which is closer to its current one: a decisive point in the course of an event where change is inevitable. As we see it, “crisis” is a misleading term when used to describe a situation that has been ongoing for three years. It no longer refers to a point in time and, in a way, it nourishes the hope that there is an end in sight. In the entirety of Greek examples, crisis is translated as “κρίση”.

Another framing element is the use of different lexical items to describe people involved in this crisis situation; in our corpora we find the following nine lexical choices:

Table 2: Framing the agents of the refugee crisis

ENG	Freq.	GR	Back translation
Refugees	166	Πρόσφυγες	Refugees
Migrants	93	Μετανάστες	Migrants
Asylum seekers	41	Αιτούντες άσυλο	Asylum applicants
Asylum applicants	24	Αιτούντες άσυλο	Asylum applicants
Asylum claimants	1	Αιτούντες άσυλο	Asylum applicants

Those in need of international protection	52	Άτομα που χρειάζονται διεθνή προστασία	Persons who need international protection
Third country nationals in need of protection	14	Υπήκοοι τρίτων χωρών που χρειάζονται προστασία	Third countries nationals who need protection
Those who seek protection	2	Άτομα που αναζητούν προστασία	Persons who seek protection
Applicants for international protection	46	Αιτούντες διεθνή προστασία	Applicants for international protection

Note: Back translation (in French ‘traduction retour’, Larose, 1989: 83) is a technique for checking the accuracy and the construction of a Target Text in comparison with its Source Text. As a word-for-word translation, it is by no means a fluent one.

For the difference between all these terms, we consulted two reference documents in Migration Terminology: Firstly, the Asylum and Migration Glossary 3.0 produced by the European Migration Network (EMN), and published in October 2014 by the European Commission.¹⁵ This glossary is only available in English but its earlier version (2.0) was published in a number of EU languages, as well as Arabic. Secondly, the Glossary on Migration, published by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in 2004 in English.¹⁶

For the term “Asylum Seeker” the EMN Glossary provides the following definition: “In the EU context: a person who has made an application for protection under the Geneva Convention in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken”. The term “Applicant for international protection” is defined in the EMN Glossary as “A third-country national or a stateless person who has made an application for international protection in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken”. It is worth mentioning, however, that in the notes of this entry it is clarified that:

“In most Member States th[e] term asylum seeker is understood as a synonym to applicant for international protection following the adoption of Directive 2011/95/EU (Recast Qualification Directive) and Directive 2013/32/EC (Recast Asylum Procedures Directive)”.

Furthermore, in another explanatory note we find: “In everyday use, the terms ‘asylum application’ and ‘application for asylum’ are often used more frequently than ‘application for international protection’”. Finally, the terms “asylum applicant” and “asylum claimant” are not included in either Glossary. We can find a reference to them only in IATE, the inter-institutional term base of the EU, where all three terms are listed in the same entry as synonyms. Furthermore, if a closer look to the reference material for “asylum applicant” and “asylum claimant” is taken, it becomes clear that the terms derive from UK immigration rules and Border Agency. We can therefore assume that these terms are mostly used in common law.

¹⁵ Available at ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/emn-glossary-en-version.pdf (accessed 31 October 2017).

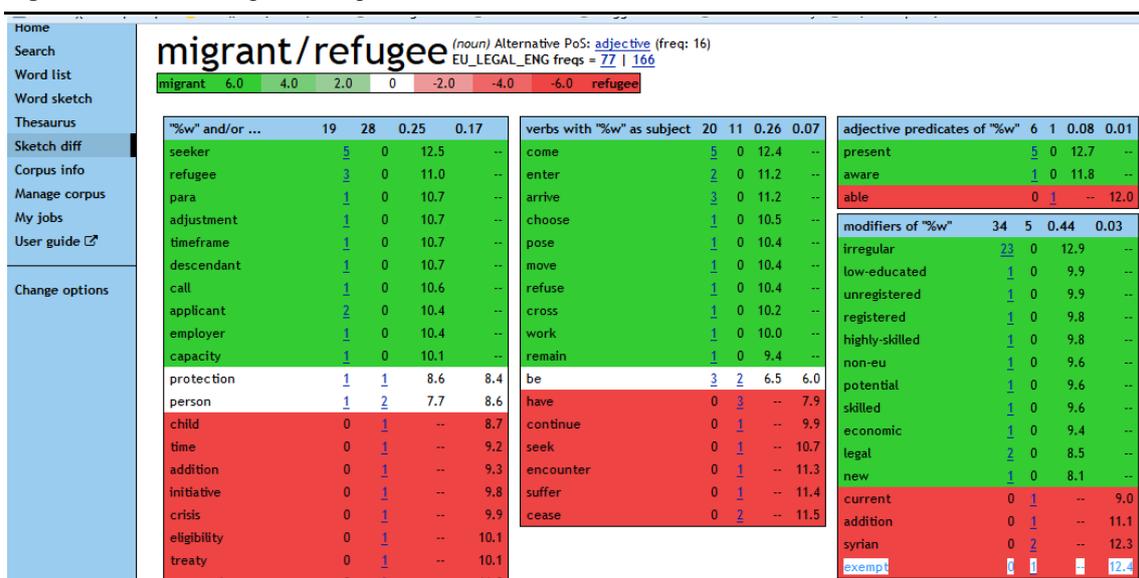
¹⁶ Available at publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_1_en.pdf (accessed October 2017).

Some could advocate that legal language requires different terms to describe different realities; nevertheless, do these nine terms and collocations really describe different realities? In Prescriptive Terminology the goal in special languages is to have one term for one concept. This is known as the “univocity principle”. Even though this principle has been questioned by modern scholars, the idea that multiple designations of the same concept may lead to semantic confusion is still valid.¹⁷

The Greek version, in the majority of cases, translates word-for-word the lexical choices made by the original in English legal text, thus reproducing the phenomenon of multiple denominations for the same concept. The only differentiation in translation are the terms “asylum seekers”, “asylum applicants” and “asylum claimants” which are all translated with the same term in Greek “αιτούντες άσυλο” [etúndes ásilo]. Furthermore, the English pronoun “those” is translated as “persons” [átoma].

Another element that we studied is the linguistic environment of the lexical items used to frame these peoples, and especially the pair “migrant – refugee”:

Figure 1: Sketch Diff migrant/refugee



Note: The screenshot depicts the collocations found in relation to this pair of words. In the last column, entitled “modifiers” we can observe for the word “migrant” that negatively connotated adjectives such as “irregular”, “low-educated”, “unregistered” return 25 items, while positively connotated modifiers, such as “registered”, “highly skilled”, “skilled” return 5 items.¹⁸

¹⁷ This lack of consistency in the terminology used with reference to migration is also stressed by Eugenio Ambrosi, Regional Director of International Organization for Migration’s Regional Office for the EU (for the entire interview, see chicagopolicyreview.org/2015/10/06/crisis). For comprehensive work on the use of the terms “migrants”, “refugees” and “asylum seekers” in different EU languages, see also Mariani (forthcoming).

¹⁸ A comparison of word sketches of the lexical units “migrant” and “refugee” in Polish data has been done by Kopytowska & Grabowski (2017). For a descriptive analysis of the different translations of the term “irregular migrant” into Greek and their political and ideological implications, see also Loupaki (forthcoming).

As our corpus refers to refugees, we investigated the frequency of words framing “misery”. The following table presents the key words used in our search and their 68 occurrences in the ENG sub-corpus.

Table 3: Lexical items denoting misery

Lexical item	Occurrences	Lexical item	Occurrences
Smuggling	6	Trauma	3
Suffer	13	Victim	17
Trafficking	14	Vulnerable	15

Note: Occurrences total 68, out of 103,618 words in the ENG sub-corpus (see Table 1).

In particular, considering the lexical item “suffer”, it has 13 occurrences in a total of 103,618 items and its distribution is 5/11 texts. 6 times out of 13, the specific item is found in the collocation “real risk of suffering serious harm” which is a specific expression used in Article 15 of the Qualification Directive (2008) in order to identify someone as refugee. The Greek translation of this particular collocation is less emotive than its English equivalent, as the word “suffer” is translated as “undergoing”.

The following two examples also contain the lexical item “suffer”:

EXAMPLE 1: “Their family members may have undergone similar situations of conflict, trauma and extreme hardship as the refugees have suffered themselves.” [Appendix # 17 & 18]

– “Τα μέλη της οικογένειάς τους μπορεί να έχουν υποστεί παρόμοιες καταστάσεις συγκρούσεων, τραυματισμών και δυσμενών συνθηκών όπως και οι ίδιοι οι πρόσφυγες.” [The members of their family may have undergone similar situations of conflict, injury and extreme hardship as the refugees themselves]

EXAMPLE 2: “Both girls and boys in migration are exposed to risks and have often suffered from extreme forms of violence, exploitation, trafficking in human beings, (...)” [Appendix # 5 & 6]

– “Αγόρια και κορίτσια είναι εκτεθειμένα σε κινδύνους και έχουν συχνά βρεθεί αντιμέτωπα με ακραίες μορφές βίας, εκμετάλλευσης, εμπορίας ανθρώπων, (...)” [Boys and girls are exposed to risks and have often faced extreme forms of violence...]

As back translation reveals, in example 1 the lexical item “suffer” is omitted in the Greek translation and in example 2, the word “suffered” is translated by the more neutral “have faced”. An implication of this translation choice is the decrease of compassion towards this population.

4.2. Depersonalized Contact

All the examples in this section are typical of the phenomenon described by Biel as “depersonalized type of contact between the sender and the receiver” (see *supra*). A very close notion in Discourse Analysis is “detachment strategies” which refers to linguistic choices often observed in written discourse that serve to distance language from spe-

cific states and events; in other words, speaker puts more emphasis on the information conveyed than its interpersonal connection with the listener/reader (Tannen, 1993: 124–125; Chafe, 1982: 45). Detachment devices are, for instance, the use of passive voice, impersonal syntax and extensive use of terminology.

Examples of neutral, depersonalized lexical items frequently found in our ENG sub-corpus are “management”, “mechanisms”, “schemes”, “structure”, “sustainable”, “system”, and “tools”.

EXAMPLE 3: “Concrete actions to implement the above-mentioned approach are currently ongoing and focusing on supporting the development of child protection mechanisms in partner countries, with specific focus on unaccompanied minors, in order to provide a safe environment for children along the migration route.” [Appendix # 5 & 6]

– “Επί του παρόντος βρίσκονται σε εξέλιξη συγκεκριμένες δράσεις για την εφαρμογή της ανωτέρω προσέγγισης οι οποίες εστιάζονται στη στήριξη της ανάπτυξης μηχανισμών προστασίας των παιδιών στις χώρες εταίρους, με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στους ασυνόδευτους ανηλίκους, προκειμένου να εξασφαλιστεί ασφαλές περιβάλλον για τα παιδιά κατά μήκος της μεταναστευτικής διαδρομής.” [... which focus on the support of the development of child protection mechanisms in partner countries, with specific emphasis to unaccompanied minors, in order to ensure a safe environment for children along the migration route]

EXAMPLE 4: “...to strengthen regional cooperation on child protection supporting the West Africa Network for the protection of children on the move, providing assistance in developing common protection standards and sustainable return and reintegration mechanisms” [Appendix # 5 & 6]

– “...για την ενίσχυση της περιφερειακής συνεργασίας για την προστασία των παιδιών υποστηρίζοντας το Δίκτυο Δυτικής Αφρικής για την προστασία των μετακινούμενων παιδιών, παρέχοντας συνδρομή για την ανάπτυξη κοινών προτύπων προστασίας και μηχανισμών βιώσιμης επιστροφής και επανένταξης.” [... to strengthen regional cooperation for child protection, by supporting the West Africa Network for the protection of moving children, providing assistance in order to develop common protection standards and mechanism for sustainable return and reintegration]

In these examples the use of the word “mechanism”, which originally refers to “a system of parts working together in a machine; a piece of machinery” (Oxford English Dictionary online) creates a conceptual metaphor. In their classic book “Metaphors We Live By”, Lakoff & Johnson (1980) explain that human language is filled with metaphors that conceptualize one abstract idea by borrowing terms and notions that originally belong to another, more concrete, physical or social experience. Here the word “mechanism”, used in industry, communicates the values of stability, reliability and accuracy, traditionally connected to machines. Along with the use of the terms “children on the move” and “unaccompanied minors” and the very obscure word “sustainable” it offers a very detached perspective of the very emotionally-loaded subject of children being abused, attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally. The Greek translation totally aligns with the original in terms of linguistic choices.

EXAMPLE 5: “...speeding up the interviews and procedures while maintaining the requisite standards, with the support of EASO where appropriate, including by introducing interview and support tools” [Appendix # 19 & 20]

– “να επιταχύνει τις συνεντεύξεις και τις διαδικασίες, διατηρώντας παράλληλα τα απαιτούμενα πρότυπα, με την υποστήριξη της ΕΥΓΑ όπου χρειάζεται, μεταξύ άλλων εισάγοντας εργαλεία για τη συνέντευξη και τη στήριξη” [... with the support of EASO, when needed, by introducing, among others, tools for the interview and the support]

EXAMPLE 6: “In particular, the Commission proposed the two temporary crisis relocation schemes agreed in September, which provide for the transfer of responsibility for certain asylum claimants from Italy and Greece to other Member States.” [Appendix # 15 & 16]

– “Ειδικότερα, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε τα δύο προσωρινά προγράμματα μετεγκατάστασης λόγω κρίσης που συμφωνήθηκαν τον Σεπτέμβριο, τα οποία προβλέπουν την μεταβίβαση της ευθύνης για ορισμένους αιτούντες άσυλο από την Ιταλία και την Ελλάδα σε άλλα κράτη μέλη.” [In particular, the Commission proposed the two temporary relocation programs because of crisis that have been agreed in September, ...]

Examples 5 and 6 illustrate the phenomenon of extensive use of terminology, i.e. terminologization. Collocations such as “temporary crisis relocation schemes” or “interview and support tools” may condense a complex reality, but on the other hand they are quite opaque, enhancing depersonalised contact or detachment between *us* and *them*. The translation into Greek follows the same style, syntax and linguistic options with its original. The only exception is the word “scheme” that is translated by “program” in Greek.

EXAMPLE 7: “The EU needs a robust and effective system for sustainable migration management for the future that is fair for host societies and EU citizens as well as for third country nationals and countries of origin and transit.” [Appendix # 15 & 16]

– “Η ΕΕ χρειάζεται ένα εύρωστο και αποτελεσματικό σύστημα για τη βιώσιμη διαχείριση της μετανάστευσης στο μέλλον, το οποίο να είναι δίκαιο για τις κοινωνίες υποδοχής και τους πολίτες της ΕΕ, καθώς και για τους υπηκόους τρίτων χωρών και τις χώρες καταγωγής και διέλευσης.” [The EU needs a robust and effective system for the sustainable management of migration in the future, which will be fair for reception societies and citizens of EU, as well as for third countries’ nationals and the countries of origin and transit]

EXAMPLE 8: “Ensuring and enhancing safe and legal migration routes. Smart management of migration requires not only a firm policy in addressing irregular flows while ensuring protection to those in need, but also a proactive policy of sustainable, transparent and accessible legal pathways.” [Appendix # 15 & 16]

– “Διασφάλιση και ενίσχυση ασφαλών και νόμιμων μεταναστευτικών οδών Η έξυπνη διαχείριση της μετανάστευσης απαιτεί όχι μόνον μια αυστηρή πολιτική για την αντιμετώπιση των παράτυπων μεταναστευτικών ρευμάτων με την παράλληλη προστασία εκείνων που τη χρειάζονται, αλλά και μια προορατική πολιτική βιώσιμων, διαφανών και προσβάσιμων νόμιμων οδών.” [Ensuring and reinforcement of safe and legal migration pathways. Smart management of migration requires not only a rigid policy to address irregular migration flows...]

Examples 7 and 8 illustrate the extensive use of the lexical unit “management”, found in our sub-corpus (see Table 4, below). According to the Oxford English Dictionary online the word refers to “the process of dealing with or controlling things or people” and it is typically used in companies and in economic contexts. The systematic use of this lexical unit, along with its collocational environment “robust and effective system”,

“firm policy in addressing irregular flows” emphasizes on the idea of order and security for US, while de-emphasizing the insecurity felt by THEM. All these lexical units are equally prevalent in their Greek version.

EXAMPLE 9: “Applying the current RULES and improving the functioning of existing TOOLS AND MECHANISMS is key to regaining control of the present situation.” [Appendix # 15 & 16]

– “Η εφαρμογή των ισχυόντων κανόνων και η βελτίωση της λειτουργίας των υφιστάμενων εργαλείων και μηχανισμών είναι καίριας σημασίας για την επανάκτηση του ελέγχου της παρούσας κατάστασης.” [The application of current rules and the improvement of functioning of actual tools and mechanisms is of high importance to regain control of the present situation].

This final extract best exemplifies the ideological square that we have explained before (see *supra*). Conceptual metaphors, such as “tools” and “mechanisms”, lexical items denoting “law and order”, such as “rules” and “control”, are chosen to reinforce the idea of security against the insecurity caused by the refugee crisis, which is indirectly alluded as “the actual situation”. Here, the macro-structure places emphasis on the concept of security for *us* while it de-emphasizes the concept of insecurity for *them*.

The following table offers a general overview of the lexical choices:

Table 4: Lexical items of Security/Insecurity

Security		Insecurity	
Lexical item	Occurrences	Lexical item	Occurrences
Mechanisms	59	Trauma	3
Tools	10	Victim	17
Schemes	43	Smuggling	6
Structure	13	Trafficking	14
Management	15	Suffer	13
Sustainable	28	Vulnerable	15
Total	168	Total	68

These lexical items were chosen after manual examination of a sample of the texts and are also the result of some presumptions made by the author, based on linguistic expectations.

Following the analysis of the most representative examples found in our corpora, let us now move to the discussion of our findings.

5. Discussion

The aim of this research was to examine lexical choices made in EU legal texts, which could contribute to dehumanizing the “refugee crisis”, and compare them with the

choices made by the Greek translators. The study of our corpus verified the existence of depersonalising techniques, such as the extensive use of terms for naming refugees, leading sometimes to a kind of terminological saturation; the preference for formal, impersonal words; the framing techniques that perpetuate the *us vs. them* dichotomy. Could we conclude that EU legal texts reflect dehumanizing strategies?

Although general conclusions cannot be drawn from the findings, owing to the small size of the sample, they do offer convincing evidence about the existence of dehumanising strategies in the corpora studied. In other words, EU legal discourse reproduces (intentionally or not) representations of the refugees that erase their human nature and overstress the complications related to their arrival, perpetuating, in this way, a hostile image of them. These representations which are ideologically charged should be expected to play a role in the perception of the migration phenomenon by citizens of the Member States. Some could argue that the findings discussed here, such as terminologization, impersonal syntax or detachment techniques, are to a great extent predictable, as they are typical of legal language. In fact, as already explained in section 1.1., their existence is demonstrated by several linguists and TS scholars, in many EU official languages. However, a broader study with bigger corpora involving many sensitive subject matters could better test our initial hypothesis and lead to findings which can verify it.

As far as the Greek translator is concerned: his/her choices are totally in line with the original, transferring the same authoritative/detached style, the same semantic and structural choices. As already demonstrated by Sosoni (2012: 87), the notion of equivalence, which is heavily criticized by modern TS approaches, seems to be pertinent in the EU context, as the goal of the translation process is to attain “identity” or “analogy” between the original and its translation. Furthermore, the few changes observed contribute to further neutralizing of the target text. Neutralization techniques are systematically observed in EU translations and have led us to propose the hypothesis of translational norms governing the translation process (see Loupaki, 2008); a hypothesis that is once more confirmed by our corpus analysis. In this sense, the neutralizing phenomena identified in our corpus are not language-dependant, i.e. are not imposed by the target language system, but are highly regulated by the factors governing the translation activity, by a particular “translation routine”.

Finally, a question that arises is whether these translations could influence the general public’s perceptions about the migration phenomenon in Greece. In other words, it is interesting to investigate whether EU terms or collocations have migrated in everyday Greek language and if so, in which way? This question could be further investigated through the use of corpora belonging to different genres, such as press releases, journalistic articles, NGO’s documentation or even TV news reports. Such studies have already been conducted in other languages and their results could serve as a starting point for future studies involving Greek.

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Appendix: List of Legal Documents Studied

#	Document Title	Year	Language
1	COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL Seventh report on relocation and resettlement	2016	ENG
2	ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ, ΤΟ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ Έβδομη έκθεση σχετικά με τη μετεγκατάσταση και την επανεγκατάσταση	2016	GR
3	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted and amending Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents	2016	ENG
4	Πρόταση ΚΑΝΟΝΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ σχετικά με τις απαιτήσεις για την αναγνώριση των υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών ή των απάτριδων ως δικαιούχων διεθνούς προστασίας, για ένα ενιαίο καθεστώς για τους πρόσφυγες ή για τα άτομα που δικαιούνται επικουρική προστασία και για το περιεχόμενο της παρεχόμενης προστασίας και για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας του Συμβουλίου 2003/109/ΕΚ, της 25ης Νοεμβρίου 2003, σχετικά με το καθεστώς των υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών που είναι επί μακρόν διαμένοντες	2016	GR
5	COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL The protection of children in migration	2017	ENG
6	ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ Η προστασία των παιδιών-μεταναστών	2017	GR
7	Proposal for a COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION setting out a Recommendation for prolonging temporary internal border control in exceptional circumstances putting the overall functioning of the Schengen area at risk	2016	ENG
8	Πρόταση ΕΚΤΕΛΕΣΤΙΚΗ ΑΠΟΦΑΣΗ ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ για σύσταση σχετικά με την παράταση του προσωρινού ελέγχου στα εσωτερικά σύνορα σε εξαιρετικές περιστάσεις που θέτουν σε κίνδυνο τη συνολική λειτουργία του χώρου Σένγκεν	2016	GR
9	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing a Union Resettlement Framework and amending Regulation (EU) No 516/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council	2016	ENG

10	Πρόταση ΚΑΝΟΝΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ για τη θέσπιση πλαισίου της Ένωσης για την επανεγκατάσταση και την τροποποίηση του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 516/2014 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου	2016	GR
11	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL laying down standards for the reception of applicants for interna- tional protection (recast)	2016	ENG
12	Πρόταση ΟΔΗΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ σχετικά με τις απαιτήσεις για την υποδοχή των αιτούντων διεθνή προστασία (αναδιατύπωση)	2016	GR
13	REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL on the application of Council Implementing Decision of 12 May 2016 setting out a Recommendation for temporary internal border control in exceptional cir- cumstances putting the overall functioning of the Schengen area at risk	2016	ENG
14	ΕΚΘΕΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της εκτελεστικής απόφασης της 12ης Μαΐου 2016 για σύσταση σχετικά με την καθιέρωση προσωρινού ελέγχου στα εσωτερικά σύνορα σε εξαιρετικές περιστάσεις που θέτουν σε κίνδυνο τη συνολική λειτουργία του χώρου Σένγκεν	2016	GR
15	COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIA- MENT AND THE COUNCIL Towards a reform of the common European Asylum System and enhancing legal avenues to Europe	2016	ENG
16	ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ Μεταρρύθμιση του Κοινού Ευρωπαϊκού Συστήματος Ασύλου και προώθηση των νόμιμων οδών προς την Ευρώπη	2016	GR
17	GREEN PAPER on the right to family reunification of third-country nationals living in the Eu- ropean Union (Directive 2003/86/EC)	2011	ENG
18	ΠΡΑΣΙΝΟ ΒΙΒΛΙΟ σχετικά με το δικαίωμα οικογενειακής επανένωσης των υπηκόων τρίτων χωρών που διαμένουν στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (οδηγία 2003/86/ΕΚ)	2011	GR
19	RECOMMENDATIONS COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION (EU) 2016/2256 of 8 December 2016 addressed to the Member States on the resumption of trans- fers to Greece under Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council	2016	ENG
20	ΣΥΣΤΑΣΕΙΣ ΣΥΣΤΑΣΗ (ΕΕ) 2016/2256 ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ της 8ης Δεκεμβρίου 2016 προς τα κράτη μέλη σχετικά με την επανέναρξη των μεταφορών προς την Ελλάδα βάσει του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 604/2013 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου	2016	GR