
RESEARCH ARTICLE / ARAŞTIRMA YAZISI

Discursive Traces of Trauma: Identity, Memory, and Othering in Cyprus

Travmanın Söylenmesel İzleri: Kıbrıs'ta Kimlik, Bellek ve Ötekileştirme

Bekir Erbekir¹, Cemaliye Direktör²

Abstract:

This study aims to comprehensively examine the ideological structures, identity construction, and chosen trauma themes underlying the discourses present in videos published on the YouTube platform representing two different communities in Cyprus, using the critical discourse analysis method. Based on Van Dijk's approach to discourse and ideology, one video from each community was selected, and the discourses within these videos were systematically analyzed. The analyses reveal that chosen traumas serve as significant tools in the formation of social identities and demonstrate how these traumas are constructed through language aligned with ideological orientations. Furthermore, it is emphasized that language and discourse play a central role in maintaining social power relations, creating hegemony, and reinforcing social divisions. This study presents important findings on how social divisions and collective memory dynamics in the context of Cyprus are reproduced through language and highlights the theoretical and methodological contributions of critical discourse analysis to studies on social identity, ideology, and power relations. The results particularly demonstrate how discourses represented in media and digital platforms influence the construction and maintenance of social realities, offering an original contribution to the literature on the political and social functions of language within the social sciences.

Keywords: Greek-Turkish Relations, Cyprus, Chosen Trauma, Discourse, Otherness.

¹Msc., Ankara Social Sciences University Northern Cyprus Campus, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, Department of Psychology, Haspolat, TRN Cyprus, E-mail: bekir.erbekir@asbu.edu.tr, Orcid Id: 0000-0002-1838-7771

²Asst. Prof. Dr. Cemaliye Direktör, Cyprus International University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of Psychology, Haspolat, TRN Cyprus, E-mail: cemaliyedr@gmail.com, Orcid Id: 0000-0002-2249-4908

Address of Correspondence/Yazışma Adresi: Bekir Erbekir, Lecturer, Ankara Social Science University, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, Haspolat, TRN Cyprus, No: 20, E-mail: bekir.erbekir@asbu.edu.tr

Date of Received/Geliş Tarihi: 05.09.2025, **Date of Revision/Düzelme Tarihi:** 25.09.2025, **Date of Acceptance/Kabul Tarihi:** 23.11.2025, **Date of Online Publication/Çevrimiçi Yayın Tarihi:** 29.12.2025

Citing/Referans Gösterimi: Erbekir, B. & Direktör, C. (2025). Discursive Traces of Trauma: Identity, Memory, and Othering in Cyprus, *European Archives of Social Sciences*, 2(3), 160-166.

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Cyprus Mental Health Institute / European Archives of Social Sciences (www.eassjournal.com). This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, provided the original work is properly cited and is not used for commercial purposes. <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Öz:

Bu çalışma, Kıbrıs'ta temsil edilen iki farklı toplumun YouTube platformunda yayınlanan videolarında yer alan söylemlerin ardından ideolojik yapıların, kimlik inşasının ve seçilmiş travma temalarının eleştirel söylem analizi yöntemiyle kapsamlı bir şekilde incelenmesini amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada, Van Dijk'in söylem ve ideoloji yaklaşımı temel alınarak, her iki toplumdan birer video seçilmiş ve bu videolardaki söylemler sistematik biçimde analiz edilmiştir. Analizler, toplumsal kimliklerin oluşumunda seçilmiş travmaların önemli bir araç olarak kullanıldığını ve bu travmaların, ideolojik yönelimlerle dil aracılığıyla nasıl yapılandırıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca, dil ve söylemin toplumsal güç ilişkilerinin sürdürülmesinde, hegemonya yaratılmasında ve toplumsal ayışmaların pekiştirilmesinde merkezi bir rol oynadığı vurgulanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, Kıbrıs özelinde toplumsal ayışmaların ve kolektif hafıza dinamiklerinin dil yoluyla nasıl yeniden üretildiğine dair önemli bulgular, eleştirel söylem analizinin toplumsal kimlik, ideoloji ve güç ilişkileri çalışmalarına sağladığı teorik ve metodolojik katkıları da ortaya koymaktadır. Sonuçlar, özellikle medya ve dijital platformlarda temsil edilen söylemlerin, toplumsal gerçekliklerin inşasında ve sürdürülmesinde ne denli etkili olduğunu göstermekte ve sosyal bilimler alanında dilin politik ve toplumsal işlevlerine dair literatüre özgün bir katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rum-Türk, Kıbrıs, Seçilmiş Travma, Söylem, Öteki.

Introduction

In the historical process, Turks have been coded in Europe as people from Asia but not considered to belong (Aktaş, 2014). Western Christianity defined its identity by othering the different, establishing a discursive basis for the distinction of 'us and them' (Inceoglu, 17; Üvez, 2014). The long-standing conflict between Christians and Turks was experienced with the Ottomans. In Europe, when 'Muslim' is mentioned, the Ottoman Empire comes to mind, positioning the Ottomans as an irreconcilable other (Yanarışık, 2013).

The conquest of Constantinople in 1453 marked a major turning point for the Western Christian world; this event was seen not only as the end of a city but also as the closing of an era, causing deep fear. After the conquest, rhetoric against Muslims became even more aggressive, and negative images were reinforced (Tseligka, 2025). In 1571, the Ottoman Empire conquered the island of Cyprus (Önder, 2000). Thus, on June 4, 1878, an agreement was signed based on an alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Britain, and the administration of the island was handed over to the British, making Cyprus a British colony (Uçarol, 1978). However, due to different political conditions and policies pursued by the Ottoman Empire and Britain, Britain annexed Cyprus in 1914 (Gürel, 2020).

Before the annexation process, because they wanted to take over the island completely, Britain implemented administrative reforms favoring the Greeks with a 'divide and rule' policy, while also aiming to use the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots against each other (Keser, 2008). In 1955, EOKA, founded by Greek Cypriots, declared the Turkish Cypriots and the British as enemies and announced that they would eliminate these communities (Öztürk, 2020). The peaceful environment that came with the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 did not last long on the island (Göktepe, 2012). Following conflicts from 1963 to 1974, Turkey's intervention in Cyprus in 1974 led to the island's division into two parts. As a symbol of this division, the 'Green Line' was drawn, and a large portion of the population left their homes and jobs behind to become refugees (Dolunay, Keçeci & Kasap, 2017). Thus, Cyprus became a divided country, divided into regions inhabited by two distinct ethnic communities (Acun, 2019). Consequently, the war during the 1963-1974 period and the subsequent forced

migrations of the two ethnic groups from north to south and south to north are psychologically traumatic for the Cypriot people (Karaoğulları and Eş, 2021).

Chosen Trauma

Psychological trauma is a set of events that can be caused by both humans and natural processes, studied within many scientific disciplines, which can lead to personal or societal consequences. These events or incidents hinder individuals' functional states in social life after they occur and can elicit psychological reactions (Öztürk, 2020).

The chosen trauma, in relation to the concepts of heroism and enemy, represents the collective trauma of the ancestors of the larger group. During the developmental process, symbols transmitted from the previous generation are integrated with shame and helplessness, differentiated, and the mourning period is ended; these are psychological responsibilities that need to be completed. The chosen trauma has persisted as a psychological phenomenon within society for years, but has deviated from its original meaning due to external influences. When it becomes active again within society, it can be integrated and intensely empowered. When incited by leadership, political rhetoric, and ideology, it can lead to mass violent activities against existing enemies, including genocide.

Thus, violent behaviors of this kind that result in terrorism are a precursor to mass trauma for the victimized party (Volkan, 2001). In chosen trauma, historical events have a significant impact (Volkan, 2015; Yıldız, 2014). As these historical traumas are passed down from generation to generation, the reflection transmitted leads to the formation of the concept of chosen trauma. These historical traumas, transmitted through collective reflections across generations, lay the groundwork for the development of the concept of chosen trauma. Especially in the Christian world, Turks have historically been positioned as occupiers and threats to the holy lands. In this context, the loss of Constantinople in 1453 can be seen as an unresolved, mass wound that revives previous traumas. This loss triggered feelings of humiliation, helplessness, and shame; over time, these feelings have been reproduced at the level of discourse (Volkan, 2015). On the other hand, the collective history that appears in societies' collective memory, related to the history stored

in societal memory, plays an important role (Doyuran, 2018).

Collective Memory

The concept that explains how the past is collectively remembered, forgotten, or interpreted is called Collective Memory (Halbwachs, 1992). The term collective memory was first used by Hugo Von Hoföammthal in 1902 (Olick & Robbins, 1998). While the concept of collective memory is often considered a reconstruction, it also plays an important role in politics. Accordingly, it can be said that societies develop both historical and political consciousness collectively (Halbwachs, 1992). Especially, collective memory is regarded as a type of memory formed by individuals who have specific intersection points, such as childhood, neighborhood relations, commercial life, or political life, and whose memories are structured by group dynamics (Werth, 2013). On the other hand, the concept of memory also emerges as a concept that connects phenomena such as history, ideology, belonging, and identity (Bilgin, 2007). It can also be said that collective memory plays an important role in the formation process of identity and group identity (Halbwachs, 1992).

Identity and the Other

The concept of identity, derived from the Latin term 'Idem,' which defines sameness and continuity, is a Turkish term that conveys a sense of mandatory belonging and being the same (Varol, 2014). Its most fundamental point concerns how people perceive one another or how the individual is viewed by society. Therefore, identity is a concept that enables individuals to adapt to society (Hall, 1996). On the other hand, the concept of national identity emphasizes the constructible aspect of identity (Bilgin, 2007). National identity, which has a highly variable structure, emerges from ongoing power struggles between individuals and 'others.' It can be said that identities are largely shaped by discourse (Wodak, 2009). However, since the power relations among discourses do not end, it is not mentioned that identities may cease to exist (Sütçüoğlu, 2009). The concept of 'the other' can be defined as the differentiation and separation of specific individuals, groups, or peoples based on relationships between different societies, cultures, or classes at various points in history. The differentiation of an individual or a group from the majority, in any way, is often considered sufficient grounds for othering. This process poses a serious obstacle to developing understanding towards those who are different, building empathy, and establishing social harmony (Kundakçı, 2013). Due to this barrier, social relations are shaped not by objective evaluations but by subjective value references; judgments about the 'other' are established through the cultural standards of the 'self' (Köse & Küçük, 109). In this context, in relationships based on the roles of self and other, the 'self' is the rational entity that determines rules and draws boundaries; the 'other' is the side that is foreign, ambiguous, expected to comply with regulations, and is included in the planned order (Kundakçı, 2013). This distinction, which makes 'we' privileged and normative, assigns negative qualities to the other, placing them in a disadvantaged position within the social hierarchy, thus laying the groundwork for discrimination. The widening gap between the self and the other makes social integration and coexistence practices even more difficult. The Other is often in the minority, considered weak or marginalized, and is therefore labeled strange, inappropriate, or immoral

(Durna, 2014). Consequently, while 'we' are seen as representatives of stability and order, the 'other' is positioned as an element that threatens the existing order, empties the content of laws and norms, and even has the potential to undermine the foundation of society (Kundakçı, 2013). Historically, the other has always existed. People, communities, and civilizations have coexisted throughout their lives. This is also clearly seen in ancient Greek civilization: here, the other was defined through an elitist understanding based on the distinction between 'Greeks' and 'barbarians' (Cartledge, 1993; Nahya, 2011). According to Bauman (2003), this group, often seen as an enemy, can embody a range of characteristics. In the context of Northern Cyprus, studies on identity reveal that Turkish Cypriots suppress differences between themselves and Greeks in favor of a common Cypriot identity, emphasizing concepts such as being Cypriot or being a resident of the island (Şah, 2020). However, in some cases, it can be said that Turkish Cypriots create a national 'we' identity by excluding Greek Cypriots and including Turkish citizens from Turkey, focusing on Turkishness and being part of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (Şahin, 2011). Additionally, a study on Turkish Cypriots states that clinging to their ethnic identity during war and migration processes plays an effective role in coping with traumatic experiences (Erbekir & Direktör, 2024). Therefore, this study aims to examine how selected practices of trauma, identity construction, and othering are reproduced and ideologically structured through digital media discourses among Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots.

Method

Critical discourse analysis is a discourse analysis that developed in the late 1970s and became theoretically mature in the 1990s, focusing on the interaction between language and social power relations (Şah, 2020). This approach examines how social phenomena such as discrimination, inequality, and hegemony are produced and reproduced through linguistic structures. Theorists such as Van Dijk (2000), Wodak, and Fairclough (1995) have highlighted the interdisciplinary nature of critical discourse analysis and have connected the method to social theory. Critical discourse analysis is not limited to linguistic analysis alone; it aims to reveal how discourses relate to social and cultural contexts and construct ideological structures. The term 'critical' here refers to an attitude aimed at uncovering social power relations and how they are maintained through discourse (Mahboob & Paltridge, 2005). In this context, Van Dijk (2000) states that critical discourse analysis concerns not only texts but also mental representations. According to him, ideological discourses shape individuals' and groups' ways of perceiving the world. Therefore, critical discourse analysis considers the cognitive, social, and discursive layers of discourse together.

Fairclough (1995) suggests that critical discourse analysis should be evaluated not only at the textual level but also in conjunction with broader social structures and processes. Jorgensen and Phillips (2002) see this approach as a multidisciplinary analysis method for examining the relationship between cultural transformations and discourse. This study aims to reveal how the ideological structures behind the discourses in YouTube videos representing two different communities in Cyprus, as well as the construction of identities and the selected trauma

themes, are structured within the framework of critical discourse analysis. In this context, one video from each community was selected and analyzed. The main goal is to demonstrate, based on Van Dijk's approach, how identity structures, selected trauma, and ideological orientations are reflected in these videos. Critical discourse analysis is a critical research approach that examines how social inequalities and power relations are established, legitimized, and how they can be resisted through discourse. Van Dijk (2015) proposes four fundamental analytical principles:

Highlight the positive things about them.

Highlight the negative things about them.

Do not emphasize the negative things about them.

Do not emphasize the positive things about them.

These four actions play a vital role within the broader contextual strategy of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. The first two principles are referred to as self-presentation and clearly express various ideological concepts while discussing individuals' actions as members of a group. Positive self-representation emphasizes individuals' positive behaviors, such as speaking positively about 'us' and using negative expressions about 'them.' This positive stance is an abstract feature of group conflicts, and the interaction pattern contrasts with other groups. Negative other-presentation, on the other hand, describes the idea that no negative statements should be directed toward 'us.' nor should any positive statements be directed toward 'them.' Critical discourse analysis examines social and discursive processes to reveal assumptions made by the more powerful about the less powerful, integrating various linguistic theories and approaches. In contrast, Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach aims to establish the relationship between cognitive theories and linguistics. Additionally, Van Dijk's critical discourse studies seek to shed light on implicit ideologies in social practice, offering a multidisciplinary critical perspective on these ideologies. Therefore, according to Van Dijk, discourse, cognitive phenomena, and society must form a tripartite relationship (Van Dijk, 2009). This situation highlights how cognitive phenomena related to discourse structures emphasize the emergence of social inequalities, domination, and ideologies.

To explore the social representations, attitudes, and ideologies of social actors, the relationship between the structure of discourse and that of society should be the focus. Van Dijk (2015), in critical discourse analysis, uses the top-down model to highlight how discourse reveals typical forms of injustice in society.

Ethics Approval and Participation Permission

This study does not involve any personal data, biological material, or direct experimental intervention from human participants. Only secondary data/statements obtained from publicly available sources were used in the research. Therefore, the study does not require ethics committee approval. Privacy and academic ethical principles have been followed in the study.

Scope, Sample, and Limitations of the Study

The universe of this study consists of videos related to Cyprus published on the YouTube platform. The sample selection focused on analyzing current and publicly

available content that represents the discourses of the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities, in line with the research's purpose. In selecting the sample, cost and time constraints were taken into account; however, the chosen videos were primarily evaluated based on their suitability and representativeness for the study's theoretical framework, which includes critical discourse analysis, and their relevance to themes such as trauma, identity construction, and othering.

Video Criteria

In the YouTube search engine, the following keywords were used to identify videos reflecting the discourses of the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities: 'Turkish Cypriots,' 'Greek Cypriots,' 'Cyprus peace,' and 'Cyprus interview.' These keywords were selected to encompass perspectives from both communities. To capture current discourse, videos published within the last six months (April 2025 - September 2025) were scanned as of April 2025. This time frame was chosen to reflect current social dynamics and to align with the rapid content turnover on digital platforms.

Sample Selection

In the sample selection, 7 videos were examined in the YouTube survey. Among these videos, two were selected that represent both communities and have the most suitable content for analysis: one is an interview featuring statements from individuals in the general Turkish Cypriot community, and the other is an interview featuring statements from individuals in the general Greek Cypriot community. The selected videos were preferred because they clearly reflect the discourses of both communities on the themes of identity, othering, and chosen trauma, and are suitable for comparative analysis. Videos excluded from the study were not included because they were outdated or featured only interviews with Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot politicians.

Data Collection and Preparation

Selected videos were manually reviewed, and sections containing direct comments from Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots were transcribed. The transcriptions were made in Turkish and categorized for analysis. Only the relevant sections of the videos, specifically responses to the questions 'What do you think about Cyprus?' and 'What do you think about Greek Cypriots/Turkish Cypriots?' were included in the analysis.

Research Data

Statements of Turkish Cypriots

1. I believe that if we earn our identity and live together, the future of Cyprus will be brighter. When we talk to our fathers and grandfathers, we know they had very good friendships with the Greeks, but between 1951 and 1974, there were some incidents, and they killed each other. We lived here for a while after these events happened.

2. We used to meet and live together with rum. Now, it's hard to reunite, and on their side, they are more fanatic than we are.

3. We live together in the pile, but there is a difference between their thoughts and our thoughts. If everything gets mixed up, it will still be a problem. They see themselves as superior to us. (politically)

4. In these kinds of matters, even politicians' work ends. I think people grow up the way they learn from their

mother, father, or teachers. I mean, when you meet young people, you already know how good they are.

Statements of Greek Cypriots

I also have a Turkish Cypriot friend, and we are good friends. There are also bad people among us. Problems already exist because of the past. I don't know if this is right or not.

I know that many Cypriots hate them, but it wouldn't be right to blame the people for it.

I don't believe there will be good things between Turks and Greeks because there is too much history. They literally came to this island, and most people took everything from them. Today, due to the Turks who are still alive, their homes are gone.

Nothing will change regarding peace in Cyprus, just like in Constantinople; if you lose your money in gambling, they won't give it back to you.

Analysis and Findings

The analysis process is based on Van Dijk's socio-cognitive discourse analysis. The discourse examples have been examined under themes such as 'othering,' 'collective victimhood,' 'peace-guilt,' and 'identity'; these themes have been coded according to recurring patterns in the data. Below, examples of the discourses of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots within these themes are analyzed.

Analysis of the Statements of Turkish Cypriots

The phrase 'If we gain our identity' in the opening sentence is thought to actually refer to the existence of an identity struggle and the search for a national identity. The statement that they have very good friendships with the Greeks but also experienced some events between 1951 and 1974, during which they killed each other, highlights the contrast between close friendships and mutual violence. This contrast indicates how perceptions of the other can change over time. On the other hand, the phrase 'between 1951 and 1974' suggests that the traumatic past cannot be fully articulated and contains a repressed pain. Therefore, this expression functions both as an indicator of a chosen trauma and as a protective shield.

It is believed that the phrase 'we used to meet and live together with the Rum' is based on the idealization of the past. In the continuation of the peaceful, nostalgic reference in this sentence, the statement 'it is now difficult to come together' is understood to include the fear, distrust, and emotional disconnection caused by traumatic experiences stemming from war. This can also be interpreted as a reference to a chosen trauma. In the phrase 'they are more fanatic on their side than us,' there is a clear distinction between 'us' and 'them.' It is thought that attributing a negative trait, such as fanaticism, to the other side reinforces their own identity and group belonging. The concept of fanaticism is used to emphasize that the Rum are more irreconcilable and potentially threatening, thereby reconstructing the process of othering.

We live together on the island, but in the statement that there is a difference between our thoughts and their thoughts, the distinction between 'we' and 'they' also leads to the othering of the Greeks. It is believed that differences in thought processes are considered a threat. They see themselves as superior to us (politically), and while othering is present in this statement, considering the Turkish minority situation on the island, it is thought that

we are already secondary, and therefore, establishing an equal relationship is impossible.

On the other hand, the phrase 'this kind of issue ends with politicians' reflects a belief that the resolution of social problems will not be achieved through individual efforts but through the will of political actors, while also attributing the source of the problem to political authority. This situation presents a critique: despite the potential for public-level consensus and mutual understanding, political structures hinder this process. At this point, the political institution is positioned as a producer of the 'other'. However, there is a potential ground for peace and rapprochement among peoples; it is thought that the stereotypes about who the 'other' is are constructed from the top down.

The statement 'People grow up the way they learn from their mother, father, and teachers' is thought to reveal the belief that their mental frameworks are shaped not by individual experiences, but by cultural and educational values acquired at an early age.

The phrase 'Young people already know what good people they are when you meet them' implies that positive impressions of individual young Greek people are being discussed, while also suggesting that social prejudices fuel intellectual differences. Therefore, while the belief that direct contact with the other can break prejudices is prominent, the phrase 'young people already' indirectly emphasizes that the elderly are bad. This emphasis is actually shaped by references to the conflict periods between 1950 and 1974. It is thought to be built on a chosen trauma landscape nourished by the pains embedded in collective memory.

Analysis of the Statements of Greek Cypriots

I also have a Turkish Cypriot friend; we are good friends. There are also bad people among us. Problems already exist because of the past. While the phrase 'I don't know if this is true or not' acknowledges the existence of positive individual relationships between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, it also suggests that collective traumas stemming from past events continue to have an impact. On the one hand, the statement 'I have a Turkish Cypriot friend' emphasizes positive interpersonal relationships; on the other hand, the phrase 'problems already exist because of the past' implies that historical conflicts and societal memory still cast a shadow over current relations. Additionally, the phrase 'there are also bad people among us' can be seen as a defensive stance against othering. It highlights that their own group is not homogeneous and that blame is not solely on one side.

In the statement 'I know many Cypriots hate them,' when considering the concept of Cypriots as a collective identity, it is thought that Turkish Cypriots are not actually recognized as Cypriots. Therefore, the statement that they hate them is also seen as a clear distinction between 'us' and 'them.' Here, the fact that Turkish Cypriots are not accepted as Cypriots can be interpreted as a sign of chosen trauma.

I don't believe there will be good things between Turks and Greeks. Because there is too much history. They literally came to this island, and most people took everything from them. The statement 'because of Turks alive today, they have no homes' is not just a personal experience but is presented as a result of collective

memory regarding historical events. This expression suggests that not only the past but also the existence of Turks today is perceived as a problem. The phrase 'because of Turks alive today, they have no homes' reflects the idea that trauma is not only in the past but has been carried into the present and is perceived as an active threat. This statement suggests that the individual's group identity is built on a sense of victimization.

It can be said that there will be no change in peace in Cyprus, just as in Constantinople. If you lose your money in gambling, they won't give it back—that there will be no peace between Turks and Greeks in Cyprus, and that Cyprus actually belongs only to Christians and was taken from them just like Istanbul—this statement is rooted in a chosen trauma.

Conclusion

This study examines the discourses in videos published on the YouTube platform that represent two different societies in Cyprus, using a critical discourse analysis approach. It reveals the underlying ideological structures behind these discourses, how identity construction is shaped, and how selected trauma themes are constructed. The findings suggest that social identities are not solely the result of historical and cultural factors; instead, selected traumas—particular traumatic events highlighted within social memory—are constructed through language and become critical tools in identity formation. In this process, ideological orientations emerge as fundamental elements of discourse, actively reproducing and reinforcing power relations. The study reaffirms the central role of language and discourse in shaping social realities; particularly, it shows that discourses spread through digital media environments are increasingly influential in shaping social identities and ideologies. In the context of Cyprus, this situation is thought to serve to maintain social divisions and separations by creating a shared memory dynamic through constructed past traumas. In this regard, language can be seen not only as a communication tool but also as a mechanism that reproduces and legitimizes social power structures. The research also concretely demonstrates the theoretical and methodological contributions of critical discourse analysis to studies of social identity, ideology, and power relations.

As a result, this study fills an important gap in the literature by examining the current and spontaneous

discourses of individuals representing two communities in Cyprus in the digital media environment (YouTube) using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis approach. The study offers a methodological innovation by analyzing the relationship between trauma, collective memory, and identity construction not only through historical documents and official discourses but also through the everyday expressions of people. In this regard, it reveals how traumatic pasts are reconstructed through language in post-conflict societies and how the 'us-other' distinction is reinforced through discursive strategies. Additionally, by highlighting the impact of social media platforms on collective memory, identity negotiation, and ideological positioning, it makes an interdisciplinary contribution to political psychology, media studies, and peace research. The findings are considered valuable both for academic literature and for practical applications in peace and reconciliation policies.

Declarations

Ethics Approval and Participation Permission

This study does not involve any personal data, biological material, or direct experimental intervention from human participants. Only secondary data/statements obtained from publicly available sources were used in the research. Therefore, the study does not require ethics committee approval. Privacy and academic ethical principles have been followed in the study.

Publication Permission

Not applicable.

Availability of Data and Materials

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Funding

Not applicable.

Author Contributions

The study's concept and design were carried out by B.E. The data collection and analysis were conducted by B.E. The draft version of the article was created by B.E., and the critical revision was also carried out by C.D. The final approval and all responsibility for the work were undertaken by B.E.

References

Acun, F. (2019). Modern Türkiye'nin dış politikası. In A. Şimşek (Ed.), *Modern Türkiye Tarihi* (1. bs., ss. 212–256). Ankara, Türkiye: Pegem Akademi. ISBN 978-605-241-820-8.

Aktaş, M. (2014). Avrupa'da yükselen İslamofobi ve medeniyetler çatışması tezi. *Ankara Avrupa Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 13(1), 31–54. https://doi.org/10.1501/Avrara_0000000199

Arkonac, S. A. (2014). *Psikolojide söz ve anlam analizi: Niteliksel duruş*. İstanbul, Türkiye: Ayrıntı Yayıncılı. ISBN-13: 978-975-539-462-1.

Ağır, M. (2011). Memlük sultanlarının gölgesi altında hilafet kurumu. *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(2), 637–651. Address: <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/jss/issue/24242/257002>. Date of Access: 20.06.2025.

Bauman, Z. (2014). *Modernlik ve müphemlik* (İ. Türkmen, Çev.). İstanbul, Türkiye: Ayrıntı Yayıncılı. ISBN 978-975-539-318-6.

Bilgin, N. (2007). *Kimlik inşası*. Ankara, Türkiye: Aşina Kitaplar. ISBN: 9789944963176

Cartledge, P. (1993). *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0192192663

Dolunay, A., Keçeci, G., & Kasap, F. (2017). Kıbrıs'ın güneyinden kuzeyine göç eden Kıbrıslı Türklerin kuzeyde doğan çocukların aile içi sözlü anlatımlarla oluşan Kıbrıslı Türk-Rumi ilişkileri algısı. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 6(3), 560–591. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v6i3.925>.

Doyuran, L. (2018). Tarih içerikli belgesel filmlerde kolektif belleğin inşası (II. Abdülhamid belgeselleri örneği). *Ulakbilge Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 6(20), 29–58. <https://doi.org/10.7816/ulakbilge-06-20-03>.

Durna, T. (2014). Azınlıklar, ötekiler ve medya üzerine. *Ankara Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 1(1), 151–161. <https://doi.org/10.24955/ilef.106588>.

Erbekir, B., & Direktör, C. (2024). İkinci ve Üçüncü Kuşak Kıbrıslı Türklerde Aktarılan Psikolojik Travma, Psikolojik Sağlamlık, Kaygı ve Obsesif Kompulsif Bozukluğun İncelenmesi. *Yaşam Becerileri Psikoloji Dergisi*, 8(15), 51–66. <https://doi.org/10.31461/ybpd.1425314>.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. Harlow, England: Longman (Pearson Education). ISBN-10: 0582219809.

Foucault, M. (1993). Michel Foucault Ders Özeti 1970-1982 (S. Hilav, Çev.). İstanbul, Türkiye: Yapı Kredi Kültür ve Sanat Yayınları. ISBN: 978-975-363-050-4.

Göktepe, C. (2012). Kibris Meselesi'nde Kriz Süreci ve Türkiye (1964-1974). T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, ss. 1397-1427. Address: <http://www.tarihbilimleri.com/kibris-melesinde-kriz-sureci-ve-turkiye-1964-1974.html>. Date of Access: 02.01.2024.

Gürel, Ş. S. (2020). *Kıbrıs Tarihi 1878-1960; Kolonializm, Ulusuluk ve Uluslararası Politika*. İstanbul, Türkiye: İmge Kitabevi Yayınları. ISBN: 978-9755338842.

Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On Collective Memory* (L. A. Coser, Çev.). Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 978-0226115962.

Hall, S. (1996). Who needs identity? *Questions of Cultural Identity*, 16(2), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446221907.n1>

İnceoğlu, Y. (2012). *Nefret söylemi ve/veya nefret suçları*. İstanbul, Türkiye: Ayrıntı Yayınları. ISBN-13: 978-975-539-630-9.

Karaogulları, D., & Eş, A. Ç. (2021). Erişkin bireylerde travma sonrası stres bozukluğu ve akültürasyon ilişkisinin incelenmesi: Lefkoşa örnekleme. *Kıbrıs Türk Psikiyatri ve Psikoloji Dergisi*, 3(1), 3-12. <https://doi.org/10.35365/ctpp.21.1.03>

Keser, U. (2006). *Kıbrıs'ta Türk-Yunan sırtınası* (1940-1970). İstanbul, Türkiye: Boğaziçi Yayınları. ISBN-13: 978-975-451-220-5.

Kundaklı, F. S. (2013). Heteroseksizm ve ötekileştirme eleştirisi. *Liberal Düşünce Dergisi*, 71, 65-79. Address: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/liberal/issue/48163/609371>. Date of Access: 20.08.2025.

Nahya, Z. N. (2011). İmgorular ve ötekileştirme: Cadılar, yerliler, Avrupalılar. *Atılım Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 1(1), 27-38. Address: <https://kutuphane.dogus.edu.tr/mvt/pdf.php>. Date of Access: 20.07.2025.

Olick, J. K., & Robbins, J. (1998). Social memory studies: From "collective memory" to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 105-140. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.105>

Önder, M. (2000). Kıbrıs Türk vakıfları ile ilgili yeni bilgiler. In İ. Bozkurt (Ed.), *Üçüncü Uluslararası Kıbrıs Araştırmaları Kongresi, 13-17 Kasım 2000* (Cilt IV, ss. 345-349). Gazi Mağusa, Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti: Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi, Kıbrıs Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları. ISBN: 978-975-93699-4-4.

Öztürk, E. (2020). *Psikotarih, travma ve dissosiyasyon*. In E. Öztürk (Ed.), *Psikotarih* (1. baskı, ss. 1-21). Ankara, Türkiye: Türkiye Klinikleri. ISBN: 9786057010315.

Sütçüoğlu, M. (2009). Türkiye'de ulusal kimliğin tanımını değiştirme çabası: Devlet katında Nâzim Hikmet'in değişen imagesi. In G. Pultar (Ed.), *Kimlikler lütfen* (ss. 273-288). ODTÜ Geliştirme Vakfı Yayıncılık. ISBN: 978-9944-344-78-4.

Şah, U. (2020). Eleştirel söylem analizi: Temel yaklaşımlar. *Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 7, 210-231. <https://doi.org/10.46250/kulturder.819362>.

Şahin, S. (2011). Open borders, closed minds: The discursive construction of national identity in North Cyprus. *Media, Culture & Society*, 33(4), 583-597. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443711398694>.

Tseligka, E. (2025). The extermination of Christians by Muslims in the Ottoman Empire: A critical analysis of its bearing on Islamophobia discourse. *Religions*, 16(3), 366. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16030366>.

Uçarol, R. (1978). *1878 Kıbrıs Sorunu ve Osmanlı-İngiliz Anlaşması (Ada'nın İngiltere'ye Devri)*. Filiz Kitabevi. ISBN 978-975-368-171-2.

Urban Cypriot. (2025, Haziran 2). Kibritli Rumlar Türkler hakkında ne düşünüyor? [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArC96dhbtmo>

Urban Cypriot. (2025, Haziran 2). Kibritli Türkler Rumlar hakkında ne düşünüyor? [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgeFHWKU-TU>

Üvez, F. (2014). *Medya ve risk toplumu ilişkisi bağlamında terör haberlerinin analizi* (Yüksek lisans tezi). Atatürk Üniversitesi, Erzurum. Address: <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/tezDetay.jsp?id=rrwVga7mtA3dXNZ1I5o3eg&no=XTfWw5zQKQbSFaVMZwnRIA>. Date of Access: 23.03.2024.

Van Dijk, T. A. (1995). Discourse analysis as ideology analysis. In C. Schäffner & A. L. Wenden (Eds.), *Language & peace* (ss. 47-142). Routledge. ISBN: 978-9057024801.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2000). *Ideology and discourse: A multidisciplinary introduction*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins. ISBN: 978-9027225663.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2003). Critical discourse analysis. In D. Tannen, D. Schiffrin, & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *Handbook of discourse analysis* (ss. 352-371). Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing. ISBN: 978-0631205968.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2009). Critical discourse studies: A sociocognitive approach. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (ss. 62-86). Los Angeles, CA, USA: Sage. ISBN-13: 978-1412960513.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2015). Critical discourse studies: A sociocognitive approach. In T. A. Van Dijk (Ed.), *Handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 85-108). Los Angeles, CA, USA: Sage. ISBN-13: 978-1412960513.

Varol, S. F. (2014). Medyada yer alan temsillerin kimlik edinme sürecindeki rolü. *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies*, 26(1), 301-313. <https://doi.org/10.9761/JASSS2398>.

Volkan, V. (2001). Transgenerational transmissions and chosen traumas: An aspect of large-group identity. *Group Analysis*, 34(1), 79-97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0533316012207730>

Volkan, V. (2015). Seçilmiş travma, yetkinin politik ideojisi ve şiddet. Address: https://www.academia.edu/17928522/Secilmis_Travma. Date of Access: 30.03.2024.

Wertsch, J. V. (2013). *Collective memory and social dynamics*. New York, NY: Routledge. ISBN: 978-0415525471.

Wodak, R., de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., & Liebhart, K. (2009). *The discursive construction of national identity*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press. ISBN: 978-0748637348.

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009). *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA, USA: Sage. ISBN: 1412960513.

Yaldız, F. (2014). Uluslararası göç ve diaspora ile ilişkili kavramlar. *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 3(2), 382-403. Address: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/itobiad/issue/8762/109356>. Date of Access: 16.01.2024.

Yanarışık, O. (2013). Yükselen ırkçılık ve İslamofobi gölgesinde yaşayan Avrupa Türkleri: Almanya örneği. *Yeni Türkiye Dergisi*, 54, 2911-2917. Address: https://www.academia.edu/45426209/Y%C3%BC%C3%BCCKselen_Irk%C3%A7%C4%BCB11%C4%BCB1k_ve_%C4%BCB0slamofobi_G%C3%BC%C3%BC6lgesinde_Ya%C5%99Fayan_Avrupa_T%C3%BC%C3%BCBCrkleri_Almany_a_%C3%96rne%C4%9Fi. Date of Access: 16.01.2024.