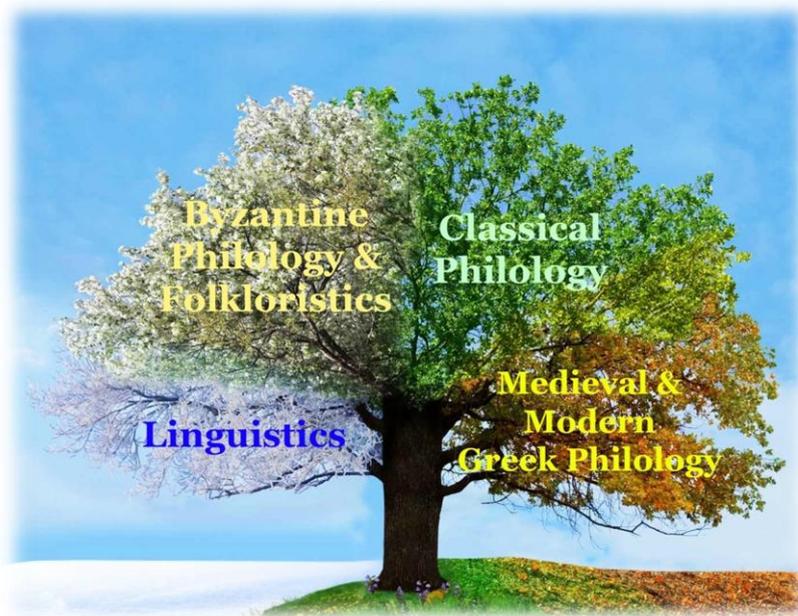


Πρακτικά



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‘It’s very awful and none of us had expected it’: Greek crisis and stance-taking on Facebook

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Το παρόν άρθρο εξετάζει τις στάσεις (stances) των ελλήνων χρηστών του κοινωνικού δικτύου Facebook απέναντι στην κρίση χρέους που αντιμετωπίζει η Ελλάδα από το 2009. Συγκεκριμένα, μελετώνται οι απόψεις, τα συναισθήματα και οι προθέσεις τους σχετικά με την ανεργία, τη λιτότητα, την κυβερνητική αστάθεια, την κοινωνική αναταραχή, καθώς και τη γενικότερη αβεβαιότητα και απαισιοδοξία που διακατέχει τους έλληνες πολίτες. Αντλώντας εργαλεία και θεωρητικές ιδέες από την ανάλυση λόγου και την εθνογραφία του διαδικτύου (Androutsopoulos 2008), η έρευνα επικεντρώνεται στους τρόπους με τους οποίους οι χρήστες αξιοποιούν την πλατφόρμα του Facebook προκειμένου να αναπτύξουν και να προβάλλουν στάσεις χρησιμοποιώντας συναισθηματικούς και γνωστικούς δείκτες, ανωνυμίες, ρητορικές ερωτήσεις, κοινοτοπίες και ειρωνικές εκφράσεις. Το Facebook προσφέρει ποικίλες δυνατότητες διαμοιρασμού περιεχομένου, γεγονός που συνεπάγεται ποικίλους τρόπους ανάπτυξης στάσεων. Αυτές οι στάσεις μπορεί να είναι διαδραστικές, πολυτροπικές, και/ή διακειμενικές, άμεσες ή έμμεσες. Είναι αξιοσημείωτο ότι το αναγνωστικό κοινό στο Facebook δεν παραμένει αμέτοχο, αλλά εναρμονίζεται ή διαφοροποιείται, μέσω σχολιασμού, με τις στάσεις που διατυπώνει ο εκάστοτε χρήστης για την κρίση.

1. Introduction

Let me commence by giving the first word to my research participants.

*ehei para polla functions gia mena to fb
oti pairmeis [...] tin prosopiki aposi kapoion
einai food for thought kapoia postings
vlepeis apopseis akraies pou allios den tha tis
akouges pote kai eksaskeisai sto argumentation
esto kai den to kaneis explicitly*

*Αισθάνομαι πως [στο Facebook] έχω πολλούς
τρόπους να εκφράσω πολλά πράγματα για τα
οποία ίσως δεν μου δίνεται η ευκαιρία ή το
ερέθισμα για να εκφραστώ στην υπόλοιπη
καθημερινότητά μου.*

*fb has many functions for me
you get [...] some people’s personal opinion
some postings are food for thought
you read extreme opinions which in other
circumstances you’d never hear and you
exercise in argumentation even if you don’t do it
explicitly*

(Helen, online interview¹)

*I feel that [in Facebook] I have many ways to
express many things for which I’m not probably
given the chance or the stimuli to express in the
rest of my daily life.*

(Alkis, online interview)

As the previous excerpts suggest, in the contemporary social media landscape, with the perpetual user-generated and user-consumed content, stances have found fertile soil to thrive. They are articulated in status updates, comments, tweets, retweets, in the form of texts, video and images. They are unlimited, public, or semi-public, innovative, and very often uncensored. Yet, they can sometimes be dangerous having serious consequences on one’s self-presentation and hence their everyday life. Suffice to recall the case of the Greek athlete Voula Papachristou, who was banned from the London Olympic Games 2012 after conveying a xenophobic stance² on Twitter.

¹Italics are used for key terms, interview excerpts, and for mentioning extracts from the data. The acronym FBU is used for my informants’ Facebook friends and stands for Facebook User. Different Facebook participants are enumerated for ease of reference (e.g. FBU1, FBU2, FBU3...). All textual data are rendered intact including the use of Greeklish, stress omissions (in Greek), spelling and typos mistakes, multiple punctuation, absence of or extra spacing between words, incomplete meanings and unconventional usages. All Greek data are translated into English. When there is only English this means that the original was in English.

In the present paper, I will address one question: What can attention to the social network site Facebook tell us about stance and the Greek crisis? By *stance*, I mean the discursive choices that users make to express their emotions, thoughts, opinions and assessments. By *crisis*, I am not only referring to the economic/financial crisis but to a multiple crisis which is also political, social, moral, and intellectual (cf. Fairclough 2009).

2. Data and methodology

To answer my question, I will present and discuss a dataset of Facebook status updates, comments, links and photos from three different Greek Facebook users, having adopted a discourse-centered online ethnographic approach (Androutsopoulos 2008). This approach combines the systematic and longitudinal observation of Facebook profiles with the direct (face-to-face or mediated) engagement with their owners, and is complementary to the textual analysis of online data.

My own participants were recruited via convenience sampling (i.e. they were friends of friends). Initially, they were sent a message in which I explained the purposes of my study asking them to fill in an online questionnaire, which helped me to formulate an idea on how they experience the mechanics of social media. Those interested were invited to participate in a semi-structured online interview via email, instant messaging and/or Facebook messages. The data I have selected to present in this paper come from 3 of my 5 in total informants. Table 1 offers a rough idea about their demographics.

Table 1: Participants' demographics.

Participants	Recruited	Demographics
Carla	October 2010	born in 1975; holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting; works as a translator of Latin American literature; maintains 2 Facebook profiles, one personal & one professional; lives in Athens, Greece.
Alkis	December 2010	born in 1981; holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting as well as an MSc in Services Management; works as a real estate agent; lives in Athens, Greece.
Helen	October 2011	born in 1979; holds a BA in English Language and Literature, an MA in English Language and Literary Studies, and a PhD in Linguistics; works as an Assistant Professor of Linguistics; lives in Athens, Greece, & in UK for 2 months / year.

In what follows, I will briefly talk about stance and Facebook, and then proceed to concrete examples from my case studies.

3. Defining stance

One of the most vital things we do with words is taking a stance (Du Bois 2007). The term *stance* refers to the explicit or implicit expression of a writer's or speaker's personal attitudes, feelings, beliefs, evaluations, judgments, or commitment towards a precise target. This target can be an interlocutor, a person represented in the discourse, ideas represented in the discourse, or other texts (Biber & Finegan 1989; Du Bois 2007; Kiesling 2011). As you can understand, stance is a broad term that covers a range of linguistic features such as modality, evaluation, appraisal, evidentiality, hedging, politeness and metadiscourse (Myers 2010). Nonetheless, as Du Bois (2007: 163) has argued powerfully and persuasively, stance is not only a linguistic act; it is also a social act:

²‘Με τόσους Αφρικανούς στην Ελλάδα, τα κουνούπια του Νείλου θα τρώνε... σπιτικό φαγητό!’ (‘With so many Africans in Greece, the West Nile mosquitoes will eat... homemade food!’).

Stance is a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field.

A central concept pertinent to stances is that of *alignment/disalignment*, namely the agreement/disagreement towards others' attitudinal assessments, beliefs and assumptions. As Martin and White (2005: 95) have put it, when people take stances:

they not only self-expressively 'speak their own mind', but simultaneously invite others to endorse and to share with them the feelings, tastes or normative assessments they are announcing. Thus declarations of attitude are dialogically directed towards aligning the addressee into a community of shared value and belief.

It follows from the above that in any given stance statement, there are four essential components: first, the person who expresses the stance, the stance-taker; second, the topic under discussion; third, the resources that are drawn upon; and, fourth, the addressee, the reader or the hearer in any stance-taking situation (Barton & Lee 2013: 87).

4. Facebook and stance-taking

As of its launch in 2004, Facebook has become an immensely popular social network

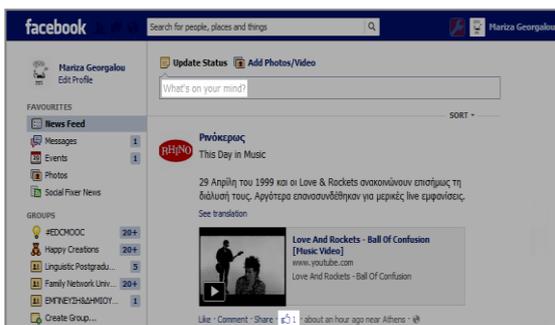


Figure 1: Facebook prompt “What’s on your mind” and the “Like” button.

site, namely a web-based service which allows individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a circumscribed system; articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, the so-called *friendship*; and view and browse not only their list of connections but also those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison 2007: 211). It is instructive to mention here that, in juxtaposition to other

social network sites, Facebook deals in the main with physical friendships and acquaintances that are initiated offline and then transferred to the virtual scenario. Facebook participants can post status updates, that is to say, short messages in which they report what they are doing, thinking or feeling, share photos, photo albums and links as well as comment on the material they or their friends post.

The mobilization of stances on Facebook is triggered by the architecture of its software: 1) the prompt “What’s on your mind” and 2) the button “Like” which is itself a social activity that indicates alignment amongst Facebook friends (figure 1). So, Facebook itself invites users to write about, reflect upon and share their mental states, opinions, tastes, evaluations, and intimate feelings, and the very fact that they opt for doing it is a matter of taking a stance. Let us see at this juncture ‘what’s on users’ mind’ regarding social happenings and states-of-affairs within the current crisis context in Greece.

5. Kinds of crisis stances on Facebook

5.1 Affective stances

My first example is a status update where Helen expresses her attitude towards Greek politicians.

- (1) Dear politicians, I'm fed up with your dilemmas! The only dilemma I have in 18 degrees sunshine is: coffee break from work in Exarcheia or Monastiraki?
24 February 2012 at 15:19

This is a case of *affective stance* which signals feelings and is communicated by the emotive adjective *fed up with*.

5.2 Epistemic stances

The next instance, abstracted again from Helen's profile, reads:

- (2) Helen: have stayed too long in this country....
25 May 2012 at 20:22
FBU1: Hehe... I thought that the other week when I got really offended by queue-jumpers in Germany... what was your trigger?
25 May 2012 at 20:27
Helen: :-)the fact that the country (Greece) is literally collapsing..., unknown whether I'll get a salary next month.. I guess I should consider myself lucky I still have one
25 May 2012 at 20:31

FBU1 asks Helen what propelled her into writing this status. Helen's answer (*the fact that the country (Greece) is literally collapsing..., unknown whether I'll get a salary next month.. I guess I should consider myself lucky I still have one*) constitutes an example of *epistemic stance*. Epistemic stance signals knowledge and beliefs and here is realised via the adjective *unknown* and the cognitive verb *guess*, both of which mark Helen's uncertainty on the issue.

5.3 Stylistic stances

One stylistic device that is used again and again in computer-mediated environments and can mark a stance is the smiley. Alkis uploads a video (figure 2) which shows clashes among Greek protesters and policemen on 29 June 2011, as the Greek



Figure 2: Stylistic stance via a smiley.



Figure 3: Smiley indicates ironic stance.

parliament was voting to accept the EU's austerity measures. His disappointment and sadness (affective stance) because of the Greek police violence are condensed into the naked, self-contained sad smiley :-(-.

Helen, in figure 3, posts a BBC article on how a Spanish village decided to grow cannabis in order to clear its debt. In contrast to the previous example, the smiley does not signal an emotional reaction to a specific trigger. It is used as an indication of the illocutionary force of the textual utterance that it accompanies (Dresner & Herring 2010). Helen is not serious about the content of the message *the Spanish showing us the way out of the crisis*. It is the tongue-hanging smiley :p which indicates that she adopts an ironic stance.

5.4 Prepackaged stances



Figure 4: Sharing an internet meme.

Stances do not always have to be one's own words. Stance-takers can use entirely intertextual materials to express their stances. Figure 4 is an internet meme, namely a cultural unit (e.g. joke, rumour, video, website) that spreads from person to person via the internet (Shifman 2013). Facebook to a large extent is based upon such propagation of content that is made by users for users. A meme conveys certain ideas and ideologies. When reproducing a meme, users imitate (actually, the word *meme* is etymologically related to the Ancient Greek word *μίμημα* and means *imitated thing*) a certain position that they find appealing with a view to showing alignment or disalignment with the stance that is represented or implied. Helen shares the meme depicted in figure 4 to identify with its perception of what a Greek is thought to be (i.e. protester, lazy, rioter, credit card, dreamer). Interestingly, in accordance with my online ethnographic observation, there are also some biographical elements in the 'What I really do image': Helen participates in demonstrations herself; she holds a PhD and feels insecure regarding her professional future as we have already seen in example 2.

5.5 Stance-taking through lyrics

During times of economic hardship and threat, individuals consume, listen to and share music to contemplate social issues (Pettijohn & Sacco 2009). How can such activities be transposed to the realm of Facebook? As illustrated in figure 5, Helen has uploaded the song *Σιγά μην κλάψω – I won't cry* to embody her stance towards pre-election talks one day before the parliamentary elections in Greece on 17 June 2012. These are the chorus lyrics:

Κι όταν φοβούνται πως μπορεί να τρελαθώ
μου λεν να πάω κρυφά κάπου να κλάψω
και να θυμάμαι πως αυτό το σκηνικό
είμαι μικρός, πολύ μικρός για να τ' αλλάξω.
Μα εγώ μ' ένα άγριο περήφανο χορό
σαν αετός πάνω απ' τις λύπες θα πετάξω.
σιγά μην κλάψω, σιγά μη φοβηθώ.

And when they fear I might get crazy
they tell me to go somewhere to cry secretly.
and I should remember that this scenery
I am small, too small to change.
But I, with a wild proud dance,
will fly like an eagle over the sorrows.
I won't cry, I won't fear.³

Combining her comment *dealing with pre-election terror talk* with the lyrics, we can deduce that she draws a parallelism between the song's *they* and the Greek politicians as well as the *I* and herself as a conscious Greek citizen. It is as if the politicians threaten and warn people that they have no other choice of salvation but voting them; that citizens are helpless without them and they are incapable of changing the situation on their own. Helen, though, chooses to share this song to yield a fearless stance.

³Greek lyrics by Giannis Aggelakas. English translation found online. Available HTTP: <http://www.stixoi.info/stixoi.php?info=Translations&act=details&t_id=2687> (last access 21 August 2013).

The post in figure 6 comes from Carla's profile. She thanks her friends who wished her on her birthday and, in turn, she wishes them Happy Christmas and to have the strength to face 2013.



Figure 5: Helen's stance-taking via lyrics



Figure 6: Carla's stance-taking via lyrics.

The noteworthy bit in this post is the music link she attaches to which there is no reference at all in her accompanying comment. Here it is the title of the song, *Δεν μας τρομάζουν τα νέα μέτρα* – *We are not scared of the new measures*, that does the stance-taking for the poster and complements her wishes.

5.6 Stances in interaction

The true value of any stance is shaped by its framing through the collaborative acts of co-participants in dialogic interaction (Du Bois 2007). Let us explore the interactional nature of stance by taking a close look at the example of the Appendix. My informant, Alkis, writes a status update which includes mere phatic communion (*Καλό μήνα και με ΠΟΛΥ ΚΑΛΗ διάθεση συνέχεια!!!! – Have a nice month and a VERY GOOD mood all the time!!!!*). But what happens in the course of the interaction, as his Facebook friends enter the thread?

The particular date Alkis posts this status (1st September) is very crucial as it heralds the end of the summer vacations and is usually identified with melancholy. FBU1 and FBU2, in comments 1 and 2 respectively, do not share Alkis's optimism adopting an ironic stance towards him (*ase mas ke si – Leave us alone, POIO MHNA? – WHAT MONTH?, APO EW KAI PERA OLOI OI MHNES IDIOI THA EINAI – FROM NOW ON ALL MONTHS WILL BE THE SAME*). It is comment 6 and the reference to the Greek prime minister's name (Samaras) that sparks the conversation on crisis. In comment 7, Alkis targets a negative evaluation (*ΦΤΑΝΕΙ ΠΙΑ – ENOUGH, ΕΛΕΟΣ – MERCY*), expressed emphatically via capitalization, against their sarcastic and cynical attitude. In the remainder of the thread, we have a debate between FBU1 and Alkis. FBU1 complains because his salary has been reduced so he does not have money to go for a coffee, to fill his car with petrol, to pay his loans and bills. On top of that, he lives with his mother who still treats him as a child. Alkis, on the other hand, introduces his friend some hypothetic scenarios of how to solve the situation.

The phrase *To έχουν δοκιμάσει πολλοί πριν από εμάς κι έπιασε* (*Many people have tried this before us and it worked*), namely, behaving and acting as if you were optimistic, (comment 10) is used to dramatize his optimistic stance by attributing the event to many others, so it is not something unattainable. This is a mechanism via which disagreements can be mediated since the credibility of the attributed material lies in the fact that one is speaking of experienced facts and not just personal impressions (Myers 2004). To further enforce his positioning, he deploys a 'writer-inclusive we' (*Ας μας το*

θυμίζουμε κι ας το εφαρμόσουμε για να το “πάθουμε” κι εμείς – *Let’s remind this to ourselves and let’s practice it so as it can “happen” to us as well!*).

In comment 12, he offers alternatives on how FBU1 could have entertained relying on the commonplace *Για να περάσεις καλά δεν είναι ανάγκη να βγαίνεις έξω και να ζοδεύεις* (*To have a good time it’s not necessary to go out and spend*). In a less face-threatening light, he employs third person plural (*ας παραπονιούνται άλλοι που είναι άνεργοι, όχι όσοι έχουν ακόμα δουλειά, κι ας μην είναι τόσο καλά όσο παλιά στη δουλειά τους!* ;-) – *other people who are unemployed should complain, not those who still have a job, even if they are not so well [well-paid, secure] in their job as in the past!* ;-) instead of *όχι εσύ που έχεις ακόμα δουλειά, κι ας μην είσαι τόσο καλά όσο παλιά στη δουλειά σου* (*you who still have a job even if you are not so well in your job as in the past*). Nevertheless, FBU1 continues to complain. Alkis advises and consoles him through shifting to ‘specific you’ in comment 14 (*θα πρέπει να χειριστείς τη σχέση σου με τη μαμά και να βάλεις όρια* – *you will have to handle your relationship with mum and set limits, να μην είχες* – *you didn’t have, να σου δώσει* – *give you*) and imperatives (*Φαντάσου* – *Imagine, Δες τα θετικά* – *See the positive things*) as well as a neither-nor co-ordination (*ΟΥΤΕ τον μισθό, ΟΥΤΕ τη μαμά* – *NEITHER the salary NOR mum*) amplified by capitalization. FBU1, though, still does not seem to be convinced and keeps on ironicising. What he writes in comment 15 is pragmatically incoherent and that is why he adds *Trololololol*⁴ at the end. Alkis sees *trololol* as a stance to life (notice he code-switches in English) in general that FBU1 should adopt.

In *Είναι πολύ άσχημο και δεν το περίμενε κανείς μας* (*It’s very awful and none of us had expected it*), in comment 20, Alkis implies the crisis and the general prevalent feeling of uncertainty and insecurity with *μας* (*us*) in *κανείς μας* (*none of us*) referring metonymically to all Greeks. He then shifts to an impersonal *you* and formulates a series of rhetorical questions: *Όμως τι θα κάνεις; Θα μεμψιμοιρείς όλη μέρα ή θα προσπαθήσεις με όσα σου μένουν να έχεις καλή διάθεση ... και να περνάς όσο πιο όμορφα μπορείς τις μέρες και τις στιγμές σου;* (*But what are you going to do? Are you going to cavil all day or are you going to try with those things that have been left to you to have a good mood ... and enjoy as much as you can your days and your moments?*) This impersonal *you* presents personal perceptions and experience as potentially shared by a whole group of people (Lampropoulou & Myers 2012). The next instance of *you* is clearly targeted at FBU1 (*τι να σου πω* – *what else can I tell you*). Once again, Alkis tries to knock some sense into his friend by means of imperatives (*προσπάθησε να κάνεις ότι καλύτερο μπορείς με όσα έχεις. Ή κάτσε και μιζέριασε* – *try to do the best that you can with what you have. Or remain miserable*).

Comment 21 is a positive answer to the question posed by FBU3 in comment 18. Το *παιχνίδι της χαράς* – *The Glad Game* alludes to Eleanor H. Porter’s fictional character Polyanna and her attitude of finding something to be optimistic and glad about in every situation. Here Alkis, on the basis of his personal experience of *grief and stress*, expresses the willingness to endorse Polyanna’s stance and see life from a more cheerful perspective. In comment 22, he explains how the game can be changed (from grief to glad) from a non-authoritarian position (*Δεν λέω πως πατάς κουμπί και γίνεται* –

⁴*Trololol* is the laugh (analogous to *lol*, the abbreviated form of laughing out loud) you do after you troll someone in a cyber environment. Trolling someone is making fun of them or just annoying them. When you succeed, you are then permitted to write *trololol* (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=trololol>; accessed 21 August 2013). For a meticulous overview of trolling from a linguistic perspective see Hardaker (2013).

I don't say that you press a button and it happens) resorting to commonplaces to invoke a shared understanding of how the world works (Myers 2004): *από κάπου ξεκινάς για να αλλάξεις το όλο πράγμα. Και μάλλον ξεκινάς εσύ ο ίδιος από εσένα τον ίδιο* (*you start from somewhere to change the whole thing. And you probably start from yourself.*). Remarkably, he acknowledges the taken-for-grantedness of his statement asking if it is a cliché. He answers himself with a claim of ignorance (*Δεν ξέρω – I don't know*) which is, however, granted by a concession (*Αλλά λογικό – But logical*). In his last comment, 29, Alkis becomes more decisive and assertive wishing to end FBU1's constant grumbling using imperative (*κάνε το στο inbox μου – do it on my inbox, μην το κάνεις καθόλου – don't do it at all*) reminding him that if he has problems, these should be discussed personally with Alkis and not publicly on his wall in front of all his friends.

Alkis in this thread achieves to construct himself as a supportive and caring friend who –apart from being optimist– he also appears to be realist, trying to seek alternatives and suggestions within crisis. Two issues should be kept after such a quite extensive analysis. First, stance-taking, although it may not have been the poster's original aim, can be triggered / provoked by friends' comments. Secondly, the way in which its multiple layers are being unfolded is highly dependent on the content of friends' comments.

6. Concluding remarks

To sum up, stance is always an act of self-presentation and social judgement by which we say something about ourselves but also we unavoidably say something about our view of the world (Thurlow & Jaworski 2011). Stances, therefore, are something we do rather than an interior property we have (Du Bois 2007). Facebook is an arena in which, amongst other things, users have the opportunity to position themselves within the current Greek crisis context. In the examples I have presented, we saw that stance-taking, which of course is manifested most obviously in citizens' demonstrations, can also be witnessed in these small, daily online gestures. Crisis can evoke a vast array of kinds of stance-taking, expressive as well as persuasive. They can be obvious, in the form of explicit emotional disclosures and thoughts, or implied in song lyrics, visuals or articulated through irony. They can be plainly inscribed in a few words or in a smiley, or packed in longer comments replete with rhetorical devices that have a more elaborate structure. Lastly, Facebook brings out the interpersonal nature of stance-taking allowing the unraveling of identity claims, relations to other people, and views on crisis issues, expanding simultaneously our idea of what stance-taking is.

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Appendix

STATUS UPDATE

Alkis: Καλό μήνα και με ΠΟΛΥ ΚΑΛΗ διάθεση συνέχεια!!!!
[Have a nice month and a VERY GOOD mood all the time!!!!]
1 September 2012 at 14:52

COMMENTS

1. **FBU1:** ase mas ke si palioxroma... :P [Leave us alone... :P]
2. **FBU2:** XAXAXAXAXAXA POIO MHNA????????????
[HAHAHAHAHAHA WHAT MONTH?????????????]
3. **Alkis:** Τι παίρνεις; Τον Σεπτέμβριο ντε!! :-) [Are you taking something? September of course :-)]
4. **FBU2:** APO EW KAI PERA OLOI OI MHNES IDIOI THA EINAI!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
[FROM NOW ON ALL MONTHS WILL BE THE SAME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!]
5. **Alkis:** Αν είναι καλοί κι έχουμε καλή διάθεση, ας είναι! :)
[If they are good and we have good mood, let them be! :)]
6. **FBU1:** ke an o Samaras valei patinia... [And if Samaras puts on roller skates...]
7. **Alkis:** MA ΦΤΑΝΕΙ ΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΑΡΝΗΤΙΚΟΤΗΤΑ ΠΙΑ! ΕΛΕΟΣ! :-D
[ENOUGH WITH NEGATIVITY! MERCY! :-D]
8. **FBU2:** KALA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! ALLA THN AISIODOXIA POU THN VRISKEIS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
[OK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! BUT WHERE DO YOU FIND OPTIMISM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!]
9. **FBU1:** siga min exo amitikotita epidi emina mesa olo to s-k giati den ix lefta gia ton kafe ke na valo venzina, kseris ti oreá pou esiodoksis otan trelenese? [I don't have negativity because I stayed at home all the w/e because I didn't have money for the coffee and to fill [the car] up with petrol, do you know how nice is it to be optimistic when you get crazy?]
10. **Alkis:** Αν αρχίσεις να φέρεσαι και να πράτεις σαν να είσαι αισιόδοξος, θα σου έρθει!! Το έχουν δοκιμάσει πολλοί πριν από εμάς κι έπιασε. Ας μας το θυμίζουμε κι ας το εφαρμόσουμε για να το "πάθουμε" κι εμείς! :-) [If you start behaving and acting as if you were optimistic, it will come to you!! Many people have tried this before us and it worked. Let's remind this to ourselves and let's practice it so as it can "happen" to us as well! :-)]
11. **FBU1:** ne pios tope afto o Joker ston Batman? [who said this, Joker to Batman?]
12. **Alkis:** Μπορούσες όμως με σχεδόν μηδέν λεφτά να καλέσεις τους φίλους σου να δείτε μια ταινία και να φάτε ποπ κόρν ή να συναντηθείτε σε άλλου φίλου/φίλης το σπίτι. Για να περάσεις καλά δεν είναι ανάγκη να βγαίνεις έξω και να ξεδεύεις. Κι επίσης, ας παραπονιούνται άλλοι που είναι άνεργοι, όχι όσοι έχουν ακόμα δουλειά, κι ας μην είναι τόσο καλά όσο παλιά στη δουλειά τους! :-)

[You could, however, with almost no money to invite your friends to watch a movie and eat pop corn or meet each other at another friend's house. To have a good time it's not necessary to go out and spend. What's more, other people who are unemployed should complain, not those who still have a job, even if they are not so well in their job as in the past! ;-)]

13. **FBU1:** ne alla exo dania pou pira ke me sinesi plirona analoga me ton mistho mou ke tora vazoun ke ta xaratsia ke me miso mistho den mporo na pliroso oute tin Dei ke prepi na pao stin mama ksana ke na mou leei oti den ipia olo to gala mou... [yes but I have the loans I took out. I was prudently paying them in accordance with my salary. now they're imposing taxes and with half salary I can't pay the electricity bill. I have to go to mum again who will tell me that I don't drink all of my milk...]
14. **Alkis:** Εκεί, λοιπόν, θα πρέπει να χειριστείς τη σχέση σου με τη μαμά και να βάλεις όρια για να μπορέσετε να συγκατοικήσετε αρμονικά και λειτουργικά. Φαντάσου να μην είχες ΟΥΤΕ τον μισθό να πληρώνεις έστω και μέρος των δόσεων και να μην είχες ΟΥΤΕ τη μαμά να σε περιθάλπει και να σου δώσει στέγη και φαγητό. Δες τα θετικά! [Well, you will have to handle your relationship with mum and set limits so as to be able to live together harmoniously and functionally. Imagine you didn't have NEITHER the salary to pay even part of the installments NOR mum to care and give you accommodation and food. See the positive things!]
15. **FBU1:** sosta ke naxa genitheï stin Afriki ke na min ixa na fao epidi oi Amerikanoi theloun na poulane palia oplá gia emfilious...Trololololol [Right. if I had been born in Africa, I wouldn't have anything to eat because the Americans want to sell old weapons for civil wars...Trololololol]
16. **Alkis:** Είδες; That's the spirit! trololol! [See? That's the spirit! trololol!]
17. **FBU1:** to na theoroume pleon to fisiologiko politeleia nomizo oti ine arosto.... Trololololol [I think it's sick to consider that the normal thing is nowadays a luxury.... Trololololol]
18. **FBU3:** Alki paizeis to paixnidi tis xaras? [Alkis are you playing the glad game?]
19. **FBU1:** Xara agnoeite... [Gladness is missing...]
20. **Alkis:** Είναι πολύ άσχημο και δεν το περίμενε κανείς μας. Όμως τι θα κάνεις; Θα μεμψιμοιρείς όλη μέρα ή θα προσπαθήσεις με όσα σου μένουν να έχεις καλή διάθεση ή έστω προδιάθεση και να περνάς όσο πιο όμορφα μπορείς τις μέρες και τις στιγμές σου; Ναι, δεν είναι ό,τι καλύτερο να ανακόπτονται τα σχέδιά σου και οι προσπάθειες χρόνων αλλά αφού αυτό είναι κάτι που δυστυχώς συμβαίνει, προσπάθησε να κάνεις ότι καλύτερο μπορείς με όσα έχεις. Ή κάτσε και μιζέρισε, τι να σου πω... [It's very awful and none of us had expected it. But what are you going to do? Are you going to cavil all day or are you going to try with those things that have been left to you to have a good mood or even disposition and enjoy as much as you can your days and your moments? Yes, it's not the best to have your plans and lasting efforts hindered but since this is something which is unfortunately happening, try to do the best that you can with what you have. Or remain miserable, what else can I tell you...]
21. **Alkis:** Επειδή το παιχνίδι της λύπης και του άγχους δεν με έβγαλαν πουθενά, λέω να προσπαθήσω να αλλάξω παιχνίδι, να. [Since the grief and stress game didn't lead me anywhere, I'm thinking of trying to change the game, yes.]
22. **Alkis:** Δεν λέω πως πατάς κουμπί και γίνεται αλλά από κάπου ξεκινάς για να αλλάξεις το όλο πράγμα. Και μάλλον ξεκινάς εσύ ο ίδιος από εμένα τον ίδιο. Κλισέ; Δεν ξέρω. Αλλά λογικό. [I don't say that you press a button and it happens but you start from somewhere to change the whole thing. And you probably start from yourself. Cliché? I don't know. But logical.]
23. **FBU3:** se ti diaferei i kali diathesi apo tin kali prodiathesi eeeeeeeeeeeee???????????????? [What's the difference between good mood and good disposition? Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh????????????????]
24. **Alkis:** Δεν ξέρω. Βερμπάλισα πάνω στο μεγαλείο του λόγου που έβγαζα. :-) [I don't know. I exaggerated in the magnificence of the speech I was delivering.]
25. **FBU3:** xixixi.... [hihihhi....]
26. **FBU1:** giati ego den thaxo na valo petreleo fetos ke tha kriono ke tharostiso ke tha gino fimatikos ke den thaxo na doso fakelaki...[Because I won't have money to get heating oil this year. I'll feel cold and I'll get sick. I'll become consumptive and I won't have to bribe the doctor...]
27. **Alkis:** Επίσης το προδιάθεση το είπα με την έννοια ενός προάγγελου της διάθεσης ας πούμε. Αν δεν έχεις την ίδια τη διάθεση, να έχεις ψύγματά της για να ενωθούν και να σε οδηγήσουν στη διάθεση!! (το έσωσα; χαχα) [Moreover I said disposition in the sense of a herald of the mood let's say. if you don't have the mood itself, you can have nuggets of the mood that will be linked and lead you to the mood (is it ok? haha)]
28. **FBU3:** asto to kaneis xeirotero [forget it you make it worse]
29. **Alkis:** Αν θέλεις να μιζεριάσεις και να μεμψιμοιρείς κάνε το στο inbox μου. Όχι στον τοίχο μου. Ευχαριστώ. Και βασικά μην το κάνεις καθόλου. Για σένα περισσότερο :-) [If you want to be miserable and cavil do it on my inbox. Not on my wall. Thanks. And basically don't do it at all. For you mostly :-)]