



Department of Political and Social Sciences

Europe beyond Brussels: An analysis of everyday discourses in the EU Agencies

Vassiliki Triga

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of
Doctor of Political and Social Sciences of the European University Institute

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Department of Political and Social Sciences

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*Στους γονείς μου,
Τάσο και Δέσποινα*

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Summary

Using insights from the theory of discursive psychology, and a combined methodology of quantitative and qualitative techniques, this dissertation investigates the everyday discourses of individuals working in three “European Community Agencies”. Two main issues were studied: a) how individuals in the agencies talk about “working together” and b) how individuals construct the roles of the EU agencies. The research brought to the fore a variety of interpretative repertoires concerning the notion of “working together” and the role of the agencies. Furthermore, the variation that was observed was shown to parallel scientific discourses about Europe and culture, as well as the more specialised literature on the EU agencies. In this way, both the lay and the scientific discourses were structured on similar arguments. Thus, it was shown that scientific discourse informs and is informed by lay discourse, a finding that is consistent with a discursive psychology approach. However, the analysis also identified innovative discourses that are emerging in an attempt to transcend the ideological dilemmas that pervade both the lay and the scientific discourses. In this connection, one of the major claims advanced in this dissertation is that focusing on the norms and expectations produced in an agency’s organisational setting through statistical techniques as well as the qualitative analysis of the agencies’ everyday discourses can provide illuminating insights on questions such as identity, culture and issues of political power which are extremely pertinent to the broader European integration process.

PART I: INTRODUCTION, THEORY AND METHODS

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

“La ciencia es sólo un ideal. La de hoy corrige la de ayer, y la de mañana la de hoy.”
(José Ortega y Gasset)

Europe, and its institutions, has been studied by an impressive array of research projects that span various disciplines. Most of these valuable research exercises have focused on important policy areas or institutional dynamics that are related, in one way or another, to the European integration process. Inevitably, given the rather embryonic nature of the integration process, not all its dynamics have been explored systematically. This applies with particular force to the European agencies. The present thesis has, therefore, focused on an under-explored area of EU studies, namely the study of the EU agencies. This lack of attention is somewhat surprising since they constitute among the newest institutional additions to the EU organisational reality. At the same time, this thesis aims to put forward an eclectic theoretical framework that is mostly inspired by social constructionism and, in particular, by approaches rooted in discursive psychology. In line with discursive psychology, the analysis is focused upon the ways in which speakers construct different accounts, or versions, of the world and of themselves. It does so by emphasising the macro-discursive as well as the micro-discursive phenomena of talk-in-interaction. This exercise will help use our knowledge of this broader context to make sense of the discursive patterns that emerge in the everyday interactions. In sum, the aim is to focus on the constructive and functional dimensions of discourse and study its social action (Potter & Wetherell 1987).

Two main themes are investigated: First, how agency employees construct the notion of ‘working together’, and, second, how they construct the role and nature of the EU agencies within the overall EU institutional architecture. These two themes have been selected as crucial since they are seen to engage broader discourses regarding Europe as a cultural entity and Europe as an institutional entity. The notion of culture, as well as the institutional formation in Europe, has generated long debates rooted in dominant ideologies. This thesis parts from the standpoint that investigating discursively the notion of “working together” - a notion closely related to culture and cooperation in work - will bring to the fore argumentations that are not merely focused on the organisational culture but also on culture in broader terms. Accordingly, the investigation of the role and function of the EU agencies aims at engaging broader arguments that are not exclusive to the agencies but also to the overall EU institutional format.

The core analytical question is whether individuals working in an agency, as competent members of the discursive community, comprehend and judge the different dimensions of their work and their

organisation in a variety of ways or whether they express uniform and well-established arguments. The analysis will also focus on whether the discursive constructions of the notion of “working together and the ‘role of the agencies’” facilitates the strengthening of hegemonic ideologies, such as Europeanism, nationalism etc., or whether it facilitates their ‘disarticulation’ through the articulation of alternative lines of argumentation and identities. Hence, although this study focuses on some of the EU agencies’ employees, its findings are relevant to the wider field of social research that explores the discursive devices and ideologies through which Europe, its culture, as well as its institutions, are legitimised.

The thesis attempts to identify the variety and content of the interpretative repertoires or alternatively the culturally familiar lines of argumentation upon which individuals in the agencies draw in order to describe “working together” in the agency and the role and nature of the EU agencies. The search of the interpretative repertoire is considered a key exercise and is based on the conviction that ‘speakers, in framing their individual utterances, are using commonly shared discursive resources’ (Antaki et al. 2002). Since emphasis is put on the reflexive understanding of the construction of identities, one of the objectives aims to to unfold and examine the variety of subject positions adopted by the speakers within the frame of the interviews in order to support their views (Hepburn 1999). Drawing on theories of social constructionism, discourses are understood as containing subject positions from which certain descriptions are levelled and different identities are discursively constructed by subjects depending on the functions they serve (Edley & Wetherell, 1999). The interest, therefore, lies in studying and understanding the historical, social, political and cultural context of the discourse in order to be able to draw conclusions about the ideological dilemmas inherent in the argumentation (Wetherell 2001a; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Billig et al. 1988, 1991). Finally, the thesis explores the everyday discourses in the agencies and the scientific discourses on relevant topics, a task that is intended to uncover their potential inter-relation by bringing to the fore the similarities and differences between them. Thus, one of the main goals of the thesis is to show the close relation between the lived ideologies and those found in the legal, cultural, political and social debates about Europe. This will help us understand the pervasiveness of some discourses and the emergence of new ones.

The thesis consists of ten chapters. In chapter two there is a brief discussion of the EU agencies as these are presented in the official EU documentation and a description of the three agencies selected to be studied. These are the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), the European Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and the Office for Harmonisation of the Internal Market (Ohim).

Given that the EU agencies are relatively new organisations, the third chapter summarises existing studies of EU organisations and institutions in general. The purpose is to show the gaps in pre-existing studies and, consequently, the novelty of the theoretical approach followed in this thesis. Chapter four presents the basic principles of discursive psychology.

An important argument of the thesis is that individuals' discourse about the EU agencies draws on some of the major ideological dilemmas found in the scientific literature on the EU agencies, the EU as a whole and its culture. Accordingly, the following two chapters outline the relevant discussions in the scientific literature. Chapter five deals with discourses that construct the notion of Europe and culture while chapter six focuses on discussion, in the political science and legal studies literature, of the phenomenon of the EU agencies.

Chapter seven deals with methodology. Two main methods of data collection were employed: standardised questionnaires and interviews, each of which was intended to fulfil different research needs. This chapter outlines the process of data collection, the construction of the research sample, and the basic principles of data analysis.

The second part of the thesis presents the empirical results. Chapter eight presents the results of the analysis of the standardised questionnaire, the Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI). These results set the context in which the interviews are subsequently interpreted. In Chapter nine extracts from interviews with the staff of the three agencies are analysed. The focus here is on constructions of the notion of "working together" with others in EU agencies. Three interpretative repertoires are identified, the repertoire of "working together" with different working roles in order to achieve a common task, the repertoire of "working together" with different nationalities, languages and cultures, and finally the repertoire of "working together" as post-national and pluralistic. These repertoires are structured on the same dilemmas that pervade the scientific theories on Europe and culture, which were presented in chapter five. However, the analysis brings to the fore a new type of talking about the concept of working together in an effort to overcome the dilemmas between achieving cohesion or preserve differentiation.

The last chapter of the analysis looks at how the interviewees in the three agencies construct the meanings of the role and nature of EU agencies. We investigate how the interviewees identify themselves with the agencies as dependent organisations on the EU institutions with the scope to promote European integration, or adopt the position of specialised experts belonging to powerful, autonomous agencies independent from the rest of the EU, or speak about the agencies as victims of intergovernmental and inter-institutional politics adopting the positions of detached but informed speakers.

The third part of the thesis contains the final chapter, which summarises the research and argues for the role of discursive psychology in future research on the EU.

Chapter 2. EU AGENCIES AND THEIR SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This chapter presents the socio-historical context of the agencies based on the EU official documentation. Following the premises of discursive psychology, the presentation of the agencies in this chapter is considered to constitute the official EU discourse, which may inform the everyday discourses of the individuals in the agencies. The second part of this chapter will provide a brief presentation of the three selected agencies. This aims at informing the overall context in which the everyday discourses in the agencies will be interpreted.

A. *The EU Agencies*

The European agencies are a relatively recent phenomenon in the EU architecture. More specifically, since 1993 there has been a considerable expansion of agencies at the EU level, a fact that has serious effects, not only on the EU's administrative space but also on the EU's governing capacity (Groenleer 2005). There is a quite high number of specialised and decentralised EU agencies which all aim at providing support to the EU and its member states. It should be noted that only recently in the EU's official website¹, agencies have been grouped in four clear-cut categories with different roles and characteristics. Before, EU agencies were considered just those, which are currently named as "Community Agencies"². They were initially given a variety of different titles, such as "independent agencies", "satellite bodies", "decentralised agencies", "autonomous bodies and organs" etc. (Kreher 1997). Nonetheless, all these titles were abandoned since they failed to provide a coherent and unitary framework³.

Briefly the four existing categories of EU agencies are: a) the Common Foreign and Security Policy Agencies, which have been created with the scope to undertake specific technical, scientific and management tasks within the framework of European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) – the so-called "second pillar" of the EU; b) the second category contains the Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters Agencies, whose goal is to promote the cooperation of member states in the fight against organised international crime - an issue included in the "third pillar" of the EU. Agencies in this category are also called "Council agencies"; c) the third category contains the Executive Agencies, which have been established in order to execute specific tasks relating to the management of one or more Community programmes. These agencies are operational for a limited period and are located within the European Commission; d) the last category includes

¹ http://www.europa.eu/agencies/community_agencies/index/en.htm

² Communication du Président à la Commission, *Les Agences Communautaires*, Brussels, 20 February 2001, SEC (2001) 340.

³ Union Syndicale Fédéral (USF), *Organismes Décentralisés et Gouvernance*, Document de travail, Brussels, May 2003.

the Community agencies operating in the “first pillar” of the EU. At present twenty-three Community agencies⁴ exist, which will be discussed extensively below.

According to the official EU website, all four types of agencies deal with new tasks of a legal, technical and/or scientific nature and address the need for geographical devolution. These tasks were assigned some decades ago to the Community agencies since they were the only existing ones. Since then they have undergone a considerable expansion and evolution due to which long debates concerning the phenomenon of “agencification” have been generated. As a result, not only for practical reasons (due to the existence of these agencies at the time the present research was launched) but mostly for analytical reasons the focus of the present research is on Community agencies.

B. The Community Agencies

B1. The Agencies’ Creation

The first EU Community agencies, also named as “first generation agencies” were the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and the Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND). They were established in the 1970s and became the first decentralised bodies (Yataganas 2001). Their goal was to promote the social dialogue in Europe (Groenleer 2005). This initial movement towards “agencification” was not considered a major institutional evolution since only two agencies were created with limited powers in very specific fields (Geradin & Petit 2004).

The “agencification” phenomenon became fully visible during the 1990-94 period, when ten more agencies were established (Chiti 2000). These were named as “second generation agencies” and were given the mission of helping to complete the internal market. In particular, they undertook new tasks of a technical and/or scientific nature and implemented a geographical devolution⁵. The majority of the second generation agencies started their activities in 1994 or 1995, after a decision by the European Council that fixed the headquarters of seven agencies⁶. In contrast to the first wave of agencies, the “second generation agencies” influenced heavily what is at present called “a Community model” of European agencies (Chiti 2000). This is due to the high number of agencies and their operation in diverse sectors of EC policy (e.g. social policy, environmental security, intellectual property, etc.).

⁴ The twenty-three decentralized Community agencies are presented in Appendix A1.

⁵ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm

⁶ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm

For the last five years, a third wave of agencies' creation has been taking place. Their functions are distinct from those of earlier agencies, so we could refer to them as "third generation agencies" (such as the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the European Railway Agency (ERA)). A noticeable feature of this third generation agencies is their expertise in issues concerning safety and inter-operability (Geradin & Petit 2004).

The will of the EU to create new agencies seems limitless, so more agencies may yet be created⁷. This is partially due to the piecemeal approach followed so far given that many agencies were created in order to respond to different needs⁸ (Everson 1995).

B2. Definition and Organisational Characteristics

Not all agencies are referred to as agencies and there are a series of different terms to designate them such as Centre, Foundation, Agency, Office, Observatory. Admittedly, such a variety of names 'may lead to some confusion, particularly as the same terms may be used to designate other bodies which do not answer the official definition'⁹. The official definition is that a "Community agency" is an autonomous Community body of a public nature governed by European public law. Such a specialised administrative authority is distinct from the Community Institutions (Council, Parliament, Commission, etc.)¹⁰. In particular, every agency has its own legal personality and is set up to accomplish a very specific technical, scientific or managerial task indicated in the relevant Community Act (Geradin & Petit 2004; Vos 2003; Kreher 1997)¹¹. Thus, agencies are not established by the Treaties, which in legal terms means that they do not belong to the Commission or the Council (Kreher 1997). Agencies operate outside the supranational institutions and are presently located in twelve member states. Needless to say, EU agencies are differentiated from the respective national ones (Amato 1996; von Lesner 1996; Shapiro 1996, 1997). Their characteristics are usually summarised in the concept of decentralisation, which refers to, on the one hand, the idea of withdrawing tasks of regulation from the centralised responsibility of the Commission, and, on the other, the location of the agencies in various EU member states in order to reduce the concentration of the EU administration in Brussels (Geradin & Petit 2004).

⁷ Recently a few proposals have been put forward in the agenda by the Commission for the creation of agencies in a variety of sectors, such as the European Procurement Agency and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) etc.

⁸ White Paper on Governance, Report by the Working Group 3a "Establishing a Framework for Decision-Making Regulatory Agencies", Rapporteur A. Quero, June 2001, SG/8597/01-EN.

⁹ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm

¹⁰ Legal Service to the European Commission. *Note on the European Agencies*. SEC (2001) 340 of 20 February 2001.

¹¹ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm

According to the official website of the European Union¹², every agency fulfils an individual function defined at the time of its creation. Yet, all agencies should pursue a series of goals, which are to:

- “introduce a degree of decentralisation and dispersal to the Community’s activities,
- give a higher profile to the tasks that are assigned to them by identifying them with the agencies themselves;
- some answer the need to develop scientific or technical know-how in certain well-defined fields, while
- others have the role to integrate different interest groups and thus to facilitate the dialogue at a European (between the social partners, for example) or international level”.

In many respects, the common goals of the agencies can be interpreted as promoting the Community’s services as well as serving the supranational interest: on the one hand, by working for all member states to identify new needs that the EU should respond to, and, on the other, by serving the European public interest.

Moreover, although agencies are unique in terms of their size and function in a variety of specialised fields, they share a common organisational structure and similar ways of operating. In this sense, they are characterised by a unique organisational model. The latter is structured upon three main organisational entities that play an important role for the function of every agency. These are: the administrative/management board, the executive director and the scientific committee.

The administrative or management board is responsible for setting down the general guidelines and strategic objectives of every agency, adopting the annual work programmes, reports and budgets which are designed according to the mission, resources and Community priorities. In addition, the board appoints the executive director of every agency. Following the founding regulation of every agency, the board consists of member states’ representatives, Commission representatives or in some cases members appointed by the European Parliament, who can be representatives from industry or other stakeholders such as ‘social partners’¹³. The presence of the management boards manifests a strong presence of the member states’ governments and consequently their interests (Yataganas 2001).

¹² http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm

¹³ In cases in which the social partners are involved, the total number of board members is higher than the average, while the number of board members is lower in agencies with decision-making powers (Groenleer 2005).

The executive director is the legal representative of every agency¹⁴. The director is responsible for all the agency's activities, the preparation of a draft budget, the implementation of its working programs and the management of the agency. His/her powers are defined by the founding regulation of every agency as well as his/her role and relations with the administrative/management board.

The third important organisational entity is the (one or more) technical or advisory committee(s). These are mostly scientific that consist(s) of experts in the specialised field in which every agency operates. The scientific committee usually provides its expertise as input for the management board (e.g. budgetary committees) and the director.

Furthermore, all agencies are subject to the external control of the Court of Auditors. Internally the majority of the agencies appoint a Commission's Financial Controller or an auditor to carry out an internal audit. Concerning the agencies' funding, the majority of them are financed from a Community subsidy which is prescribed in the general budget of the EU. However, three agencies are fully self-financed (Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (Trade Marks and Designs) (Ohim), Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) and Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT)), two others are partially self-financed (European Medicines Agency (EMA) and EASA) and are able to charge fees for their provided services¹⁵. While these agencies have a relatively high degree of budgetary autonomy, they are not completely free in setting the fees they charge. The power to fix the fees is divided between the Commission and the Council, in accordance with a procedure laid down in the constituent acts (Groenleer 2005).

Agencies consist of international, multicultural, polyglot and professional elites, or in other words, statutory expatriates from all the EU member states and in some few cases from non-EU countries. So, it can be said that agencies constitute a working context in which different administrative traditions, intellectual backgrounds and past working experiences are brought together. The staff is covered by the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Communities¹⁶.

B3. Agencies' Classification

The piecemeal approach of the agencies' creation as well as every agency's uniqueness in terms of its individual function, make it difficult to define a clear typology of them. This difficulty is reflected by the variety of agencies' classifications and the diversity of criteria applied.

¹⁴ There are several appointing procedures for an agency's executive director, indicating the degree of formal autonomy an agency has in relation to the Commission or the member states (Kreher 1997: 234-235).

¹⁵ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/function_en.htm

¹⁶ See footnote no. 8

The first classification of agencies was presented by the Commissioner Neils Ahrendt (Secretary General of the Commission) in 1996. His basic argument was that the Union's policy should be the promotion of different agency models. These should be formed according to every agency's mandate, degree of accountability and legitimacy as well as the need for European Parliament's involvement.

Later, Kreher (1997) proposed the division of agencies in two categories based on functional and organisational criteria. More particularly, agencies were distinguished between "information" or "executive" (table 1). There were seven "information" agencies which either followed the so-called approach of 'regulation by information' (such as Cedefop, EUROFOUND, European Training Foundation (ETF) and CdT) or constituted a European network of administration in different policy areas (Ladeur 1996; Majone 1996) (such as European Environment Agency (EEA), European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC))¹⁷. The "executive" agencies (CVPO and Ohim) were those that provided specific services and were responsible for implementing the newly created Community trademark and industrial property regimes. Nevertheless, another third category was mentioned that contained just one agency (EMEA), which was considered to combine characteristics from the previous two categories. Kreher's classification has been characterised as too generic, particularly with regard to the agencies' areas of intervention (Chiti 2004).

The most recent and prevailing agency classification has been published in the official website of the EU¹⁸ and includes also the newly founded agencies. The criterion applied for this classification is the agencies' tasks and nature of powers conferred to enable the accomplishment of tasks, as well as the variety of their mandates, partners and clients¹⁹ (Yataganas 2001).

In this latest classification, four main agency-models are recognised²⁰: a) cooperation, b) monitoring, c) regulatory and d) executive. These four agency models differ also between them in terms of their independence. More specifically, the "monitoring" and "regulatory" agencies need

¹⁷ The systems managed by the agencies are examples of network administrations that provide a functional integration of structurally separated bodies (Chiti 2001). Their positive effect concerns firstly the institutional development at the EU level through efficient and flexible implementation of EU legislation (Kreher 1997; Majone 1997) and the decision-making processes at national level through the provision of a pan-European perspective (Kreher 1997). In sum, agencies can be seen as an impetus for the europeanisation of national experts as well as their structures and procedures in politically sensitive areas at both the European and national level without eclipsing national regulatory authorities as they rely on them (Kreher 1996). Needless to say, this kind of administrative integration through networks contributes to a "Europe closer to its citizens" and fosters public confidence in EU action (Vos 2000a, b; Kreher 1997) by addressing also any legitimacy problem that may potentially occur (Williams 2005).

¹⁸ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm

¹⁹ See footnote no. 8

²⁰ See Appendix A2 for a more detailed presentation of this latest classification of the twenty agencies.

more independence than the “cooperation” or “executive” ones in order to accomplish their task (Everson 1995).

The present research has selected three out of the ten existing agencies at the time the research design was formulated (Cedefop, EMCDDA, Ohim). These were selected from three different categories and subcategories in the classification developed by Kreher, which was the latest available by that time.

Table 1. An evolved version of the 1996’s classification of the agencies by Alexander Kreher (1997).

ROLE-FUNCTION	AGENCIES
A. “INFORMATION FUNCTION CATEGORY” Agencies in this category provide information, they are charged with coordination and supervision of this information and the creation of networks.	
A1. Analyse, collect and disseminate information in their specific policy areas.	-Cedefop (Thessaloniki) -EUROFOUND (Dublin) -ETF (Turin) -CdT ²¹ (Luxembourg)
A2. General information function, create and coordinate networks of experts. They offer influence to Member-states.	-EEA (Copenhagen) -EU-OSHA (Bilbao) -EMCDDA (Lisbon)
B. “EXECUTIVE AGENCIES” Provide specific services and specific measures to implement Community regimes by executing registration procedures and keeping public registers.	-CPVO (Angers) -Ohim (Alicante)
C. “A COMBINED MODEL” Provide information, expertise, services are compulsory basis for decision-making but do not have decision-making powers. This category is a mixture of the categories 1 and 2.	-EMEA (London)

C. A brief presentation of the three selected agencies

C1. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP²²)

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training was established in 1975²³ in order to facilitate the promotion and development of vocational education and training. It is one of the two “first generation agencies” and thus one of the first specialised and decentralised agencies. Cedefop functioned with the vision of becoming the EU’s reference point for vocational education and training²⁴. In the founding regulation, the seat of Cedefop was decided to be in Berlin, yet in 1995 the agency’s headquarters were transferred to Thessaloniki. Certainly, this change affected the agency’s personnel and resulted in a 50% turnover. Cedefop has also a liaison office in Brussels²⁵.

²¹ This agency is not included in Kreher’s classification. However, the agency’s characteristics coincide with this category.

²² Cedefop is the French acronym of the organisation’s official title (Centre Européen pour le Développement de la Formation Professionnelle).

²³ Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75 OJ L 39 of 10 February 1975.

²⁴ <http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies>

²⁵ <http://www.cedefop.eu.int/inbrief.asp>

According to the founding Regulation of the Centre, its mission is to “contribute, through its scientific and technical activities, to the implementation of a common vocational training policy” (Art. 2). The main tasks of the agency are a) to provide information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice; b) to contribute to developing and coordinating research and c) to support any concerted approaches to vocational training problems. The centre’s activities deal in particular with the problem of the approximation of standards of vocational training with a view to the mutual recognition of certificates and other documents attesting completion of vocational training, exploit and disseminate information and provide a forum for debate and exchanges of ideas (Agora Thessaloniki Conferences) (Art. 2). So, Cedefop organises courses and seminars, concludes study contracts or, where necessary, carries out pilot or individual projects to assist the implementation of the centre’s work programme, publishes and distributes useful documentation, including a Community vocational training bulletin²⁶. All these activities are oriented to help adopting policies for enhancing employment, social inclusion and the competitiveness of the EU.

Cedefop also operates an interactive website European Training Village (ETV)²⁷. This platform brings together policy-makers, social partners, practitioners, researchers and all those with an interest in vocational education and training. The agency collects its information through the European network of reference and expertise ReferNet. This network comprises a national consortium in each member state made up of representative institutions and bodies of vocational education and training²⁸.

The Centre establishes appropriate contacts, particularly with specialised bodies, public or private, national or international, with public authorities and educational institutions. It has also developed close cooperation with another EU agency, the European Training Foundation (ETF). In short, Cedefop’s products are targeted at vocational education and training policy-makers, researchers, practitioners, other specialists and academics in the EU and beyond.

In relation to the agency’s structure, Cedefop is managed by a directorate, comprising the director and a deputy director. The centre is organised around five areas according to the execution of four types of activities: a) research, b) reporting, c) exchanges and support for partners, and d) administration. As is the case for all agencies, the agency has a scientific committee and it is administered by a management board, which in this case has a tripartite composition (member states representatives, employer and employee organisations and the European Commission).

²⁶ [http:// www.cedefop.eu.int](http://www.cedefop.eu.int)

²⁷ <http://www.trainingvillage.gr>

²⁸ European Communities (2004), *European agencies working across Europe for you. Service Knowledge Information*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

The number of the personnel at the time of research was approximately 100 individuals. Nowadays, this number has increased marginally (for example in 2004, there were 120 employees, including local agents and others on external contracts). The majority of the staff is temporary agents (around 50) while permanent officials are almost one third of the agency's staff. Cedefop has no other significant revenues apart from the EU subsidies.

As was mentioned above, Cedefop is located in Thessaloniki away from the city centre, in a suburb in a rather isolated spot yet in a new and modern building. Until recently Cedefop was unknown among locals and local organisations and institutions, but lately it has taken initiatives to enhance its visibility (such as the organisation of cultural events and seminars). As a result, it has become more known and an increasing number of interested actors and groups (including university students) have developed contacts with the centre.

Cedefop had an external evaluation ordered by the Commission within the overall frame of the reform process of EU institutions. This external evaluation was performed by PLS Ramboll Management (2001). The results highlighted some positive characteristics, such as the agency's openness to its external environment, the provision of good services and high quality products, but also some negative aspects. More particularly, Cedefop was said to be highly centralized, having non-transparent human management practices, recruitment policies and imbalances between the numbers of experts and administrative staff. In addition, the centre suffered from the provision of limited resources. Finally, the fact that vocational education and training still remains a national policy issue, the agency witnessed a visible tension between member states and European institutions regarding their decisions on vocational training. As a result, the agency was faced with the dilemma of whether to develop positive relations with the Commission at the expense of its relationship with its management board, which is more directly the vehicle for member states' influence.

C2. The European Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) is one of the so-called second generation agencies. The creation of this agency aimed at providing a response to the escalating drug problem in Europe and to demands for an accurate picture of the phenomenon throughout the EU²⁹. In February 1993, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction was established under the Council Regulation (EEC) No 302/93³⁰. The centre became fully operational in 1995 and was also located in Lisbon.

²⁹ <http://www.emcdda.eu.int>

³⁰ OJ L 36 of 12 February 1993.

According to the founding regulation, the centre's objective is to "provide the Community and its Member States with objective, reliable and comparable information at European level concerning drugs and drug addiction and their consequences" (Art. 1). This information is intended to help the Community and the member states to take measures or decide on action. In other words, the agency's task is to collect, analyse or turn a mass of fragmented data and sources into a coherent information system. The agency receives its information from local, national, regional, European, international bodies in various sectors of action, such as rehabilitation, prevention, therapy (Chiti 2000). EMCDDA also gathers crucial information from its Reitox network (the European Information Network on Drugs and Drug Addiction)³¹. Reitox consists of twenty-five focal points in all EU member states, as well as in Norway, the candidate countries to the EU and at the European Commission.

Moreover, the information gathered by the agency and its network should be disseminated to interested actors, such as policy-makers who use the information to help formulate coherent national and Community drug strategies, professionals and researchers working in the drugs field, Commission DGs, the Council of Ministers, national authorities, NGOs, international research communities and organisations³² and, more broadly, the European media and general public (Chiti 2000).

Although the centre cannot formally propose any policies, it nevertheless makes a clear impact on decision-making through its analyses, instruments and standards. The agency operates in a very complex environment since member states have very different policies and the coordination at the European level is more expressed in political declarations than achieved in practice. The agency so far has given the EU and its member states greater visibility and credibility in the international drugs debate despite the member states' and other stakeholders' lack of uniform enthusiasm about the agency's work and organisation.

EMCDDA consisted of six departments at the time of this study. These departments can be grouped around two main activities: a) administrative and b) scientific or technical. Other important entities of EMCDDA include its management board and scientific committee. The number of employees working in the agency in 2001 was approximately 69 people. The vast majority of EMCDDA staff is temporary agents. The agency receives yearly a subsidy from the Community budget.

³¹ This network according to the agency's founding regulation is "a computer network forming the infrastructure for collecting and exchanging information and documentation. And this network is "an autonomous computer system linking the national drug information networks, the specialised centres in Member States and the information systems of the international or European organisations or bodies cooperating with the Centre" (Art.5).

³² Notably the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Council of Europe's Pompidou Group, the World Customs Organisation (WCO), the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) and the European Police Office (Europol).

EMCDDA is located in Lisbon, in a building a bit outside the city centre. Given its small size, it is considered relatively unknown among the locals in the Portuguese capital. Yet due to the high relevance of the drugs issue for Portugal, the agency has managed through its activities to establish a high profile and reputation.

Despite the agency's short operational period and the continuous process of change, a reform process took place, which followed an external evaluation by Deloitte and Touche (2000) authorized by the Commission five years after the agency's creation. An internal evaluation was also undertaken and commissioned by the management board. The results of the external evaluation were rather negative, especially in relation to the agency's internal efficiency, and lack of transparency concerning recruitment and promotion processes. Additionally, the agency was seen as operating under Commission procedures that were characterised as inappropriate due to their high bureaucratic burden. Nowadays, and after the reform period that followed, EMCDDA is considered to have advanced importantly.

C3. The Office for Harmonisation of the Internal Market (Ohim)

The idea of addressing the functions this agency were already mentioned in the Treaty of Rome. In the early 1990s, and after a long institutional debate, it was felt that the completion of the internal market was facing important obstacles deriving from the existence of different national intellectual property regimes and various registration procedures (Combaldieu 1996). As intellectual property rights confer national protection according to the territoriality principle, they could thus have hindered the free movement of goods (Geradin & Petit 2004). In order to avoid this potential risk of market fragmentation, and given the recognized necessity to have a central office to manage and administer the community trademark, the Council launched the autonomous agency on trademarks or alternatively the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (Ohim), and created the Community Trade Mark³³. Moreover, in 2003, the Community Design was also created³⁴. It was decided that the agency should be located in Alicante. This form of agency, closely connected with the completion of the internal market and entrusted with quasi-judicial powers is considered representative of the "regulatory model" (Geradin & Petit 2004).

Ohim was set up with the mission of deciding on applications for the grant of the EC Trade Mark and Designs (Geradin & Petit 2004). Its aim is to contribute towards the harmonious development of economic activities throughout the Community, by managing a system that enables companies -

³³ Council Regulation (EC) No 40/94 of 20 December 1993, OJ L 11 of 14 January 1994.

³⁴ Council Regulation (EC) No 6/2002 of 12 December 2001, OJ L 3 of 5 January 2002.

European and from other countries -, to acquire the rights relating to the exclusive use of signs and to identify their goods or services in the vast territory of the Community³⁵.

More specifically, the agency' tasks involve the implementation of registration procedures for titles to Community industrial property (Community Trade Marks and Community Designs), the maintenance of public registers of these titles and also the partaking with the courts in member states of the task of pronouncing judgment on requests for invalidation of registered titles³⁶. The agency offers simple procedures which are managed by its website in considerably reduced costs, compared with the overall costs of national registration in EU countries. It should also be mentioned that in executing its tasks, Ohim has links with national registrations and the Madrid Protocol System for the international registration of trademarks³⁷.

The tasks undertaken by the agency are specialised and cannot not be executed by the Commission since they are beyond the latter's competence. To this end, it can be said that Ohim is both an agency of the European Community and an industrial property office. It is considered to be one of the most powerful and independent agencies – despite its limited mandate. Its independence is manifested in legal, administrative and financial terms³⁸. The Commission does not direct the agency's activity, and Ohim has private relations with its own clients. Finally, the Ohim generates its own resources. Yet this kind of independence is not without difficulties (Combaldieu 1996).

Regarding the agency's structure, this is formed with the view of achieving a better implementation of the agency's highly specialised tasks and procedures. Therefore, apart from its director, the agency used to have also two vice-directors with separate types of tasks concerning technical and legal matters as well as administrative affairs. This separation of services though was said to cause inflexibility and lack of communication and consistency. As a result, Ohim currently has just one vice presidency. An important entity of the agency is the Boards of Appeal. The latter is a part of the governance of the office, being responsible for overseeing the legal aspects of the work. It is completely independent in taking decisions from the rest of the agency so its members are not bound by any instructions. Additionally, the office has an administrative and a Budget Committee, which is the Office's budgetary authority. The Community courts - the Court of First Instance and the Court of Justice of the European Communities - are responsible for overseeing the legality of the Office's decisions.

³⁵ <http://www.ohim.eu.int/eu/offices/messages.htm>

³⁶ <http://www.ohim.eu.int/en/mark/role/brochure/br1en09.htm>

³⁷ <http://europa.eu.int/agencies>

³⁸ <http://oami.eu.int/en/mark/role/brochure/br1en09.htm>

This agency is one of the biggest in terms of the numbers of its personnel, and in terms of the numbers of permanent officials. According to the agency's annual account, in 2000 the agency had approximately 600 employees (of whom 370 were permanent officials) and in 2004, 643 employees (of whom 437 were permanent officials). The big number of permanent officials in Ohim is due to the autonomy of the agency's director on staff policy issues and in particular his/her right to organise internal competitions ("concours") that provide the opportunity to the employees to acquire the status of "fonctionnaires".

The office used to receive a Community subsidy from 1994 until 1998. Since 1998 it became self-financed thanks to the big number of trademark applications received, which generated a higher income. Certainly, there is always the question of whether it would be possible for the office to keep up the rhythm in order to preserve its self-financing status. After several years of decrease, the forecasts now show a substantial surplus.

At the time of present research, the office was situated in a modern building half-way between Alicante and the airport, almost on the sea-shore. Due to the big size of the agency, many different divisions, services and sections are located in two other buildings closer to the city centre. However, there was a plan for expanding the agency's new building in order to acquire permanent headquarters with all its units installed together³⁹. Ohim is well-known in Alicante. Often there are articles published in the local press, which hosts also opinions and interviews from the office's director or other members. In general, the agency is considered by the locals as an investment for their city not only in financial terms (since Ohim employs a relatively high number of locals) but also with regard to the city's international reputation.

As was the case in the two previous agencies, Ohim had also an external evaluation ordered by the Commission in the frame of the overall reform process of the EU institutions and due to the EU enlargement. So the evaluation of the agency undertaken by Deloitte & Touche (2001) brought about a series of interesting points. It highlighted the lack of a consistent recruitment system, a lack of structure, as well as a lack of a common vision. Moreover, the evaluation pointed to the constraining role of the agency's founding and financial regulation, the control of the Court of Auditors and the operating systems imposed by the Commission concerning the agency's development and competitiveness. On the other side, the agency's productivity and quality of procedures and services offered to its clients were praised. In general, Ohim was presented as a successful and dynamic agency, a fact that was manifested by the speed at which it has grown and the way it became self-financed from its second year of operation.

³⁹ <http://oami.eu.int/en/mark/role/brochure/br1en09.htm>

Chapter 3. STATE OF THE ART

European organisations and their cultures as well as the way individuals work together within the EU institutions have been the research topics of several studies in a series of disciplines. The majority of these studies focus on cultural aspects of the European institutions in order not only to substantiate and provide insights for the actual EU institutions, but also to provide evidence for the meaning of Europe, its culture and collective identities, national or European. Moreover, these studies developed in different disciplines, follow different theoretical frameworks and employ different types of methodologies in order to investigate the cultural elements of the EU organisations. To this end, the goal of the present chapter is to map the field of the study of European organisations' cultural elements through a critical examination of the existing literature. This exercise aims to point out in what ways the present study expands or contradicts previous findings and thus highlight its relevance.

A. The study of cultures, nationalities, hierarchies and stereotypes

The first studies of the European Commission were undertaken by Michelmann (1978a, b) at the end of the 1970s. These studies developed within the field of organisation studies since their goal was to measure how the individual characteristics of the Commission's civil servants (such as educational and prior career backgrounds and nationalities) influenced their interaction and performance as well as the organisation's effectiveness. The overall scope was to describe the nature of the Commission as an organisation and contribute to the study of large public and international bureaucracies. It is for this reason that Michelmann's studies are relevant to several substantive areas of political science, such as European politics, international organisation and public and comparative administration. The results brought to the fore that nationality did not influence patterns of information flows and organisational performance whereas hierarchy turned out to be more influential. This finding coincides with those of anthropological studies conducted within the Commission. Moreover, common nationality was found to be crucial for the establishment of close relations between civil servants and their respective governments. Relations between individuals of different nationalities were frequently hampered by linguistic, religious and cultural barriers. Additionally, the existence of national stereotypes was discussed, which were held subconsciously by civil servants and came to the fore during periods of stress. In sum, it was found that in times of crisis, nationality exacerbated tensions within the organisation and rendered European consciousness tenuous.

The significance of national stereotypes as well as the importance of hierarchy within the EU institutions was investigated by a series of other studies based on anthropological insights. The anthropological studies of the EU do not have much in common with the studies of traditional anthropology of two or three decades ago, given the impact of Europeanization and globalisation process as well as the cultural relations and social patterns they generate (Bellier 1997; Borneman & Fowler 1997; Bellier & Wilson 2000; Shore & Abélès 2004). The new anthropological approaches studying the EU, examine the complex relationships between institutions, identities, cultures and societies. As Shore and Black characteristically mention “it is the Community beyond the Community that is our subject of ethnographic concern” (1992: 10). The relevant studies that will be discussed below analyse the EU at its ‘heart’ and particularly the administrative and political cultures of institutions, since these are considered the source and symbolic center of the EU (Borneman & Fowler 1997).

A1. The study in the European Parliament

The first anthropological study of the EU was carried out by Marc Abélès (1992, 1993) in the European Parliament (EP) (from 1989 to 1992). The question addressed was how politics was conducted at a transnational level. Abélès, following the strand of political anthropology, considered the EP as an interesting research site due to its position in the EU’s institutional triangle (Abélès 1992). So, Abélès investigated whether a new type of public space was emerging, shared by people of different cultures, languages and with widely varying national political histories (Shore & Abélès 2004).

The analysis looked at officials’ everyday tasks, topics of discussion, meetings and their relation with the external environment, both social (city and locals) and professional (lobbyists, journalists). Moreover, it scrutinized the interconnection between officials’ national and regional identities-which interfered with community projects-and the shared identity and common sense of belonging as members of the EP.

One of the most salient conclusive points of the study of Abélès was that the EP was “a reflection of a common contradiction among its members, between the awareness of the indispensable nature of cooperation (European integration) and the existence of very strong particularities and cultural disparities” (1993: 16). More particularly, he argued that hierarchy played an important role and highlighted the fact that the MEPs’ occupational identities were unclear (Abélès 1992). As a consequence, the ambiguity of the European interest and the conflict with national interests was brought to the fore. Furthermore, Abélès discerned that MEP’s political identities could not transcend the national ones. Finally, the observed high degree of heterogeneity of interests equipped

the MEPs with a series of skills that became apparent in the political practices: the need for compromise, technicality and expertise, negotiation and bargaining. These elements, however, led to a progressive loss of political content (Abélès 1992; Abélès & Bellier 1996).

Abélès explained these phenomena as a consequence of the process of deterritorialisation (Abélès 1992, 1993, 1996). He argued that this process generates a discontinuous space and fragmented time, elements that do not necessarily facilitate the creation of a public space of debate in the EU. This was clearly expressed by MEPs' nomadic way of life, moving from Strasbourg to Brussels and vice versa. In short, deterritorialisation is considered as posing an obstacle to the federal dream of integration and harmonization since the lack of a centre can hardly facilitate the construction of any sense of identity (Shore & Abélès 2004).

Although this study provided an insider's point of view and highlighted very interesting elements of the internal life of the EP, which inspired later anthropological studies within the European Commission, its findings about the EU are not unique. Many of the issues discussed, such as the process of negotiation, bargaining and compromise, have been discussed for instance by Paul Taylor and applied to the study of the EU's consociational decision-making and bargaining style. Indeed a whole literature on the so-called consociational aspects of the EU exists. Additionally, the EP based on the descriptions of Abélès is closer to the ideal type of a working parliament rather than a debating parliament (Dann 2003). The difference between these two ideal types is that a working parliament functions primarily through working committees, while the debating parliament through parliamentary debate. Therefore, the characteristics of the EP are not as unique or bizarre as claimed by Abélès. Instead the EP resembles a working parliament model, similar to that of Swiss Parliament for example, that is also characterised by deterritorialisation and linguistic diversity. Nevertheless, the contribution of this study consists in its revelation concerning the multiplicity of identities in contrast to the dominant perception of a unique European interest, culture and identity.

A2. The studies in the European Commission

i) Anthropology

In the early 1990s, a team of anthropologists was invited by Jacques Delors to undertake an officially sponsored anthropological study of the Commission and particularly an investigation of the identity and the emergence of a European culture among EU civil servants (Shore & Abélès 2004; Bellier 2002a, b). While the final report was never officially published, Abélès, Bellier and McDonald, the research team that undertook the study, published most of the findings elsewhere (see Abélès, Bellier & McDonald 1993).

The basic premise that guided the research was that the Commission is a micro-society with its own codes, rites and customs. A wide range of issues were investigated such as: the use of language, the relevance of stereotypes, nationalities, motivations and age, the relations between sexes, the importance of the social sphere, various organisational characteristics like the impact of hierarchy, the personnel policy, officials' attitudes to management, the relevance of north-south cleavages and the leadership styles.

The anthropologists, in an effort to investigate whether there was a Commission culture and to what extent a European identity existed inside the Commission, revealed various sources of tension. The conviction and worry of many officials that the Commission did not have a single coherent and clear culture of its own was related to the existence of different languages. So, the importance of language was tied in with the identities and cultures in the Commission as a constant reminder of the existing diversity of histories which have formed the national identities of member states (Abélès 1992; Shore & Abélès 2004). The researchers identified the emergence of a professional jargon, full of neologisms and grammatical constructions, the so-called 'Eurospeak'. This was described by Bellier (1995a, b, 2000a, 2002b) as a new type of socio-language that fulfilled the need for a common language of communication. Moreover, 'Eurospeak' was the emblem of the multicultural job demanded in European institutions (Bellier 2000b).

National identifications and stereotypes were present and these structured important contradictions, constituting a major source of incongruence in the Commission. The process of "working together" was described as a cultural melting pot. Moreover, there was a dominating discourse of national differences and identities. In this discourse, the most common constituent was the occurrence of stereotypes; those concerning the division between 'north' and 'south' were particularly salient.

In another ethnographic study undertaken in both the Commission and the Parliament (1993, 1996), McDonald arrived at similar conclusions in an effort to investigate the role of stereotypes as well as the construction of differences by officials in the two institutions. She reported that in spite of the officials' reluctance to refer openly to the occurrence of national prejudices or stereotypes (1996), the informal practices of the institutions provided proof of the importance of nationalities and national cultures⁴⁰. However, the importance of national differences within the EU institutions was hardly surprising but its prevalence ran counter to the notion of 'European Culture'. Nationalities were represented as a continuous threat to the European unity and spirit and became even more significant in the practices of recruitment and promotion in which nationality became an operative

⁴⁰ Yet McDonald (1996) observed some variation between the Commission and the Parliament. In particular, for the officials in the Commission, differences were principally translated in national terms while for those in the Parliament, differences were also constructed in terms of political properties.

criterion (Bellier 2000b, 2002a, b; McDonald 1993). Needless to say, national diversity, and in effect linguistic or cultural diversity led to the necessity of constructing “others” in order for the EU to maintain its harmony and unity. Thus, the EU was contextually defined by what it was not: such as the past, the US or Japan and any particular nation state.

Regarding the issue of hierarchy, the anthropologists described the Commission as an ordered universe. Hierarchy was characterised as rigid and turned out to be crucial in structuring the professional relations while the horizontal and vertical divisions represented another form of differentiation (Abélès et al. 1993; Bellier 1994). The most significant differentiation occurred within the various DGs, which ultimately represented the most obvious structures of identity. Bellier (1994, 1995b) claimed that management represented a “conflict between cultures” (Bellier 1994), expressed in the Commission’s personnel management policies, the promotion systems as well as the practice of “parachutage”. For example, the north-south division created divergences regarding the position of the individuals, the meaning of the working hour, the role of the administrator, the definition of corruption, etc. (Bellier 1994).

In sum, one of the conclusions of these studies was that the Commission was not characterised by a unique culture but by a number of competing cultures, a finding that coincides with the results of other studies (see Cini 1996a, b, 1997, 2000a). Given that culture for the anthropologist is contextual and relational, the fact that there was not a unique culture or identity in the Commission was an expected outcome. The Commission was represented as a place of power where several administrative, political and national cultures merge in order to guarantee the Commission’s own ‘cultural cohesion’. However, these different cultures generate strong centrifugal tendencies which are responsible for the pluralism but also divergence and conflict in the Commission. Moreover, this divergence emerged due to individuals’ competing ideas regarding the nature, role, function and norms of their institution (McDonald 1997).

The lack of a coherent Commission culture and the observed discrepancies between formal and informal systems due to national, cultural and linguistic barriers led other anthropologists to pursue another study within the Commission following the approach of critical social anthropology of European integration (Shore 2000; Joanna & Smith 2002). Cris Shore (1993, 2000) conceptualized culture in more critical terms, as a “political process” embedded in a continually changing context, and “cultures” as sites of contested meanings which involve plural accounts and multiple interpretations (Wright 1994: 26 in Shore 2000: 23). Shore and other scholars (Shore & Black 1992, 1994) focused on the cultures of EU institutions as well as the institutions of European culture in order to integrate theory and practice in their studies in the EU. The overall questions underpinning

these research studies were “what exactly is the EU, and what is it for?” (Shore & Abélès 2004: 11), whether there is evidence of a “European identity” and “culture”, and whether the Commission civil servants undergo a cognitive change and become progressively more “Europeanist” in their allegiance (Shore 2000).

In Shore’s analysis a wide range of organisational themes were elaborated under the concept of organisational culture, the *modus vivendi* of the European Commission. Apart from scanning the official documentation on Commission’s role and function, history and origins, he examined the Commission’s personnel and management practices, its staffing and recruitment policies and the general norms, ground rules and implicit assumptions that address the Commission’s multinational and multilingual character. Additionally, Shore examined the education and professional background, motives, national allegiances and other political, behavioural and psychological traits of the Commission’s officials.

The conclusions of Shore’s study underlined that the new European architecture is based on an anarchic and unaccountable system of power (Shore 2000). In particular, the Commission was characterised by a “parallel system of administration” or informal network politics which led to scandals, nepotism, fraud and mismanagement. This evidence, according to Shore, not only challenges the idea of the Commission as a ‘cultural melting pot’ as well as the integration theorists’ positivist assumption about the moral superiority of the EU supranational order, but it entails also a warning for the bureaucratisation - or Brusselisation - of the EU (Shore 2000). In short, the Commission’s cultural characteristics represented a “system of political bargaining and networking” (Shore 2000: 173; see also Shore & Abélès 2004) or a “culture of compromise” as Abélès and Bellier (1996) have stated.

Moreover, Shore claimed that his findings regarding the Commission’s officials as a group with its own self-interests and political identity challenges the future of democracy, citizenship and governance in Europe. Yet Shore’s explanations have been criticized as surprisingly monolithic due to his absolute euro-sceptic point of view (Stevens 2002a).

ii. Political Sciences

Albeit in political sciences, Michelle Cini (1996a) applied a cultural approach to the study of organisational and institutional politics of the European Commission as well. Her approach was informed by new institutionalist thinking (Hall & Taylor 1996) and by organisational theory. With regard to the first component of her theoretical framework, the new institutionalism, Cini (1997) viewed institutions as more than purely instrumental organisations. Although she considered it necessary to focus on culture, she did not subscribe to the new-institutionalist view of it, as one of

the many institutional variables. Instead, she followed Allaire and Fisirotou's (1984) conceptualisation of administrative culture as consisting of the organisation's belief systems, shared values and institutional ideology as well as the myths, symbols and norms that pervade it (Cini 1996a, b). To this end, in her approach the notion of organisational culture "opens the windows on the institutional sub-conscious" (1997: 88).

The goal of Cini's first study of the Commission (1996a) was to offer a complete and comprehensive explanation of how the institution functions and how individuals, collectively, give meaning to what they are, where they are and what they do. For this purpose she focused on three aspects: a) leadership, b) socio-structural aspects of the institution and c) the cultural system. The analysis uncovered a multitude of cleavages, cut along various lines, leading to the conclusion that a plethora of cultures exist and not just a unique one within the Commission (Cini 1996a, b). Although she identified certain common underlying assumptions as a result of intense and continuous processes of socialisation, these, however, could not overcome the cultural, national, professional, linguistic, departmental and functional divisions.

The objective in her second case study was to address the relationship between policy content, policy process and administrative culture (Cini 1997, 2000a). For this reason, she conducted interviews in DG IV on Competition and State Aid Policies and DG XI on Environment⁴¹. The results brought to the fore two distinct DG cultures confirming a trend towards diversity rather than harmony, already identified in her previous study. Her conclusion was that DGs would continue to be culturally distinct one from the other until an overall cohesive Commission culture emerges.

So far it becomes obvious that although the aforementioned studies within the European Commission investigate culture or cultural elements and come up with similar conclusions, such as the lack of a unique organisational culture due to the dominant role of nationalities, languages and linguistic and other professional identities, they offer two completely different conceptual paradigms regarding European culture and identity. The study of Abélès et al. (1993) provided a thick description of the Commission that conveyed a widespread discord among Commission officials' values without attempting to chart or explain these sentiments systematically (Hooghe 2001). In other words, and as Cini claims (2002: 5), Abélès et al.'s study (1993) implied that "the culture is the organisation". On the other hand, Shore (2000) suggested a causal link, first between the organisation (its rules, norms, practices etc) and its culture, and second, between the culture and its potential effects (e.g. corruption) (Cini 2002). Cini's study is closer to the approach of Shore

⁴¹ Cini has sought to focus on the DG level after having been inspired by the argument of Bellier (1995) who had suggested that DG identity rests upon the substance of DG activity, the personality of its leaders and professional relations in the respective policy area.

guided nonetheless by the principles and theories of new institutionalism and organisation theory without having an ethnographic orientation. The identification of such causal mechanisms concerning cultures in organisations is therefore based on a different epistemological foundation since the interest is in explaining rather than interpreting reality.

A3. The study in the European Space Agency

Another ethnographic study that addressed similar questions was undertaken by Stacia Zabusky (1995) in the European Space Agency (ESA). The goal of her study was to explore the complex symbolic and practical interconnections between macro-political and bureaucratic EU institutions and the micro-level social and cultural processes of the ESA (Zabusky 2000). It can be said that her study was differentiated from the ones described so far, as it did not intend to investigate the agency as a culture, but rather the culture in the agency.

Zabusky focused on the analysis of the meaning of cooperation. Her goal was to “open up the black box by trying to understand not only how cooperation works, but what it means to those who are involved in the process of “working together towards one end” as Mead (1961: 8) defined cooperation” (Zabusky 1995: 18).

The empirical analysis included the study of the structural resources of “working together” by exploring ESA’s history in relation to the EU’s economic and political project and the public discourse about the agency. The latter was based on a rhetoric of pragmatism echoing the ideology of European integration. Additionally, Zabusky analysed the agency’s bureaucratic, economic, and political framework with a particular focus on ESA’s Science Programme and scientific missions. She drew special attention to these missions – what they were and how they were chosen, designed, and produced – in order to sketch out the details of the division of labour that underlie their construction. The following step in her analysis was to investigate the actual practice of cooperation, and especially the daily routine and the negotiation of differences that substantiated the practices.

Zabusky also examined issues of cultural identity, (national and/or European), precisely because the agency was not dedicated to the production of European Unity per se, but to more material outcomes (space, technology) (Zabusky 2000). In other words, Zabusky investigated whether and in what ways people in the agency attributed meanings to the notion of Europe, even though they were not working towards any specific EU related political goal or ideal.

The results highlighted two core issues: firstly, the fact that “working together” was not a unitary process but was instead characterised by contradictions. Secondly, these contradictions were

expressed in terms of two categories of difference: national affiliation and occupation, discipline or task. These differences that were expressed in the form of officials' distinct interests, abilities, allegiances, identities, knowledge and goals constituted the cultural material of the practice of "working together". In other words, these aspects provided significant resources for negotiation, conflict, and consensus in "working together".

Therefore, the process of "working together" was based on centripetal and centrifugal forces that constructed two types of rhetoric in the agency. On the one hand, the centripetal force represented integration that led to officials sharing ideas, producing technology and constructing social cohesion in face-to-face settings. The rhetoric that emerged was one of harmony. In this rhetoric, the talk was about consensus and compromise while the value of difference was expressed as interdependence in order to achieve a common good. On the other hand, the centrifugal force represented individuals' differentiation from each other. This led to the rhetoric of conflict in which the value of difference was expressed as independence. The talk was about control, autonomy and individuality, while consensus was redefined as coercion. These two social forces developed by ESA's officials were interrelated and brought to the fore the resistance against the hegemony of cooperation, by asserting the importance of diversity and difference as well as the constant negotiation these require (Zabusky 1995).

Finally, European identity was found to be present but inextricably linked with national identities. In particular, a vague notion of European identity emerged but having as a key component the existing national identities. The latter remained important as a category of belonging regarding the preservation of difference and the production of unity.

Discussion

The studies discussed constitute a significant literature in the study of the EU organisations and particularly the ones of the European Commission have come to complement the existing literature on the EU and have enabled a constructive dialogue with other disciplines (Shore 1996; Cini 2000a, b; Joanna & Smith 2002). As was mentioned above, the studies of the cultural elements within the EU institutions have two major epistemological concerns: either explaining or interpreting the phenomena they describe. The present analytical framework, which is based on discursive psychology, is oriented towards the interpretation of discourses rather than the search for identifying causal mechanisms for what the interviewees describe in their agencies.

Ethnographic analyses of the internal life of various EU organisations provide very rich descriptions, which can inform other studies or even be used for the development of normative theories. Nevertheless, the basic theoretical principle followed, which is antithetical to the concerns

of the present study, is to uncover the hidden reality or the discrepancy between the “official” system, based on legal, rational norms and procedures, a codified morality and conformity to universalistic principles and the “unofficial” system, which follows more individualistic, particularistic and idiosyncratic cultural codes and practices (Abélès 1993). This thesis does not aim to uncover an inconsistency between the formal and informal systems of the EU agencies: instead, the focus is on language, through which various ways of constructing reality are formed.

The major inspiration that the present study derives from the aforementioned studies concerns the notion of “working together” and particularly the conceptualisation and elaboration of this notion by Zabusky. Although all the studies address issues of employees’ cooperation, Zabusky considered this concept as crucial not only for how particular organisational contexts seek to achieve their goals but also for how this is related to Europe, since in the past cooperation had turned out to be a significant social force (e.g. against the war) (Zabusky 1995). That said the notion of “working together” is selected to be discussed in the European agencies because this is considered to inform and be informed by the overall socio-cultural and political context of the EU.

B. The process of socialisation, attitudes, rules, and individuals’ personal and professional backgrounds

Another field of interest lies in the issues of socialisation of the officials working in the EU institutions. This issue has mainly been addressed by various studies in political science, which follow different variants of institutionalism, such as sociological institutionalism, organisational institutionalism and mixed frameworks with other disciplines, like political sociology and organisation studies.

Initially, Ann Stevens (2002a, b; Stevens & Stevens 2001) provided a thorough analysis of the Commission, following sociological institutionalism, an approach that emphasises the capacity of institutions to socialise actors and thus influence their interests and identities (Hall & Taylor 1996; Rosamond 2000). She argued that in order to understand how the Commission functions, it is necessary to understand the ways its actors form their preferences and goals. Therefore, she explained the rationale of sociological institutionalism in the study of the Commission as follows: “Actors operate within a framework of ‘rules’. By rules we mean the routines, procedures, conventions, roles, strategies, organisational forms and technologies around which political activity is constructed. We also mean the beliefs, paradigms, codes, cultures and knowledge that surround, support elaborate and contradict those roles and routines (March & Olsen 1989). Institutions are defined as specifying not only “what one should do” but also “what one can imagine oneself doing in a given context” (2002b: 2). In other words, for the study of the Commission, and in particular

the administrative system, Stevens considered it important to analyse not only the formal structures but also their cultures (2002b). For the purpose of this present review, the discussion of her study will be confined to the analysis of the cultural aspects.

Within sociological institutionalism, cultures are viewed as socially constructed behaviour patterns, deriving from assumptions, values, preferences and historical, social, legal and educational contexts. Thus, given the relative newness of EU institutions, their goals and preferences were expected to be influenced by pre-existing, mainly national, institutions. The goal of the study was to investigate the existence of a collective European administrative culture and describe its features. In particular, the study addressed the question of who the bureaucrats of the EU institutions were and focused on the examination of their roles, recruitment and career prospects, socialisation process and their administrative and cultural background (Stevens & Stevens 2001).

The conclusion coincides with that of other studies of the European Commission (Cini 1996a, 1997; Page & Wouters 1994), according to which there is no clear model for European public administration and, therefore, no cohesive ethos or culture but rather a coexistence of many different types of interpretation within a single organisation (2002a). Nonetheless, in contrast to other studies, she does not consider cultural differences as the main source for divergence and conflict. Instead administrative issues, such as the nature of political control (Stevens & Stevens 2001) or the failures and successes of the administrative reforms (Stevens 2002a) are considered to be the main reasons for creating conflict in the EU organisations.

A study by Liesbet Hooghe (1997, 1998a, 2001) sought to provide an account of the preferences of top officials within the European Commission, as these are related to the future of European governance. Her study adopted an institutionalist perspective combined with sociological insights since she claimed that the prevailing institutionalist approaches "...are ill-equipped to deal with multi-layered institutional settings like the European Union, in which senior officials live" (1997: 1). One of the aims of the study was to contribute to the theoretical literature in political science on preference formation. Hooghe combined two competing theories of human motivation: a sociological one, assuming that values shape preferences and an economic theory of self-interested utility, assuming that interests shape preferences.

Hooghe identified four dimensions of preferences, which corresponded to coherent images of Europe as articulated by Commission officials and on which she based the testing of the socialisation and utility maximisation hypotheses. She found that top officials' preferences were better explained by their experiences outside the Commission than by experiences within the organisation, while they were more influenced by internalised values than by career calculations.

One of the major contributions of the study was that considering the Commission as a unitary actor is misleading, although this type of divergence is expected in systems of multi-level governance, such as the EU (Hooghe 1997). This finding, along with those of other studies (Abélès et al.1993; Cini 1996a, b), challenges the cohesive vision of the internal functioning and aspirations of the Commission, particularly the popular, pro-integration discourse (McDonald 1997). Finally, the study provided valuable insights on some of the cultural characteristics of top officials inside the Commission and their causal effect on the images of Europe.

Other studies that are worth mentioning tend to apply an institutional middle-range approach in the study of public administration, which is explained as the shift from a study of EU institutions towards a study of the EU organisations through institutional lenses (Jupille & Caporaso 1999; March & Olsen 1989; Schneider & Aspinwall 2001).

Trondal in his study (2001a, b) provided a critical examination of the socialising and re-socialising power and, ultimately, the integrative and transformative role of the European Commission. He investigated whether the Commission managed to transform the loyalties and identities of officials who were seconded on short-term contracts. He also examined the characteristics of the so-called “parallel administration” (Cini 1996a; Shore 2000; Wessels 1998).

Given that the emergence of supranational identities and roles amongst seconded Commission officials is conducive to European integration and Europeanisation across levels of governance at a micro level, the author concluded that seconded personnel to the Commission had two major institutional affiliations: the national central administrative system, which was considered as a primary affiliation, and the European Commission, which was considered as a secondary affiliation. These two types of affiliations were likely to exceed supranational allegiances amongst the vast majority of seconded personnel. However, it was pointed out that intensive interaction within the Commission was likely to evoke supranationalism more strongly in the seconded personnel (Trondal 2001a, b).

Trondal published another study in 2002, in which he addressed the question whether national civil servants (Danish, Norwegian and Swedish) attending EU committees evoked supranational loyalties that transcended pre-established national and sectorial identities. Additionally, in a similar later study (Trondal & Veggeland 2003), the focus was on the extent to which Swedish and Norwegian civil servants, when participating in EU committees, considered themselves as mainly national government representatives, independent experts or supranational actors. The results from both studies are similar. Firstly, supranational identifications merely supplemented pre-established national and sectorial allegiances but they did not replace them (Trondal 2002; Trondal &

Veggeland 2003). Secondly, supranationalism reflected not only the re-socializing impact of EU institutions on national decision-makers, but also particular institutional dynamics of national government institutions embedding EU decision-makers (Trondal 2002). Although these studies do not address directly the study of culture of the EU organisations, they nevertheless draw conclusions about issues such as official's loyalties and identities, which are important cultural elements.

The question regarding the degree of supranational attitude of civil servants has been addressed by additional studies which adopted a more eclectic theoretical framework that combines hypotheses from liberal-intergovernmentalism, political sociology and new-institutionalism. In particular, Beyers (1998) sought to explain the variation in positions towards the European integration process adopted by member-state representatives in the Council working groups while at the same time he compared the Belgian representatives with officials of other nationalities. He measured the impact of nationalities, the previous trans-governmental and national experiences of the officials in Council working groups, the length of working in Council, the antagonistic ideologies such as left and right, the way of perceiving policy problems as well as a series of characteristics of the member states of the officials (like size, geographical cluster and politico-administrative cultures). The results highlighted a prevalence of the socialisation process as the most influential in explaining supranational attitudes.

In a later study, Beyers & Dierickx (1998) investigated the psychological and cultural adaptation as well as the performance of Belgian civil servants in the working groups of the Council of Ministers. The research question was inspired by the seminal comparative study of the political culture of senior bureaucrats and politicians in several Western democracies (Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman 1981 in Dierickx & Beyers 1999). The study underscored the importance of ideology and particularly, the ideology of supranationalism that emerged as a unifying power among the Euro-Belgian civil servants and gave them a feeling of superiority over their national colleagues. On the other hand, the novelty of the EU working environment made Belgian civil servants represent themselves not as simple civil servants but rather as negotiators, mediators and policy makers.

Finally, the studies of Morten Egeberg on EU committees adopted an organisational institutionalist approach. Following the latter, in order to understand the mechanisms lying behind preference and identity formation within the EU institutions, it is necessary to unpack the basic organisational characteristics of the institutions (Egeberg 2001, 2004). For this reason, the respective studies measured factors such as the organisational structure, demography, locus and degree of institutionalisation (Egeberg 1996; Egeberg et al. 2003).

One of Egeberg's first studies (1996) tested whether Commission officials' national or other types of societal background as well as other personal and organisational characteristics were important for their actual behaviour in the Commission and subsequently in the policy process (Egeberg 1996, 2001a, b). Despite the fact that such an assumption has been confirmed by previous studies (Coombes 1970; Michelmann 1978a, b; Nugent 1994), Egeberg attempted to specify the conditions under which nationality might be expected to be of particular significance in the decision-making process. The results revealed nationality to be a stronger influence than the societal backgrounds of Commission officials. Nonetheless, the most crucial factor appeared to be the DGs' affiliation. These findings were tested and confirmed in later studies that focused more on the EU "governance" committee and, in particular, the preparatory committees in the Commission and the Council. The main concern was the elaboration of the dilemma between a supranationalist or intergovernmental vision of Europe. In a study published by Egeberg et al. (2003), it was shown that Council and Comitology Committees displayed behavioural patterns that were strongly intergovernmental in character, while Commission committees appeared more multi-faceted, combining at the same time supranational and intergovernmental behavioural patterns (Egeberg et al. 2003; Egeberg 2002a, b, 2004).

The general conclusion that emerged from these studies views EU civil servants as multiple selves with multiple identities due to their multiple institutional embeddedness. These findings are similar to other studies in other disciplines (Zabusky 1995; Shore 2000) according to which supranational identities supplement pre-existing national and sectoral identities and that officials learn to live with diversity and partially conflicting interests and loyalties (Egeberg et al. 2003). Nonetheless, the organisational approach is suitable when trying to understand the European integration process within the organisations of the EU but less relevant in making assumptions and understanding politics and dynamics outside organisational contexts.

Discussion

The review of the studies in political science provides interesting insights on the role of pre-existing cultures and identities as well as their interplay at the EU organisational level. Nonetheless, they are confined to studies inside the Commission and/or Commission and Council working groups. Moreover, while the goal is to aid our understanding of the process of European integration and the future of the EU, many of the above studies tend to be restricted to the micro-organisational level. Additionally, the way in which cultural elements have been investigated lacks a conceptual and interpretative stance. Culture and its components (different according to every theoretical perspective and research goals) are used as variables that explain institutional and administrative

processes and policy outcomes rather than providing a deeper analysis of organisational culture itself. To this end, the above studies follow a positivistic rationale and investigation despite their constructivist underpinnings.

C. The study of discourses in the European Parliament, Commission and Council of Ministers

The work of Ruth Wodak uses a theoretical framework closer to that adopted in the present research. She follows a discourse-historical perspective by exploring the ways in which particular genres of discourse are subject to change (Muntigl et al. 2000; Reisigl & Wodak 2000; Weiss & Wodak 2000). She analysed different genres of discourse (politicians' speeches, media, interviews⁴² and focus group discussions) in order to highlight the discursive construction of European, national and supranational identities, the ways the EU is defined, the role of the relevant EU organisations and their officials and, finally, the meaning of the day-to-day working life (Wodak 2004).

The officials' descriptions of the European organisations constructed the role of the European Commission and Parliament in similar terms and in antithesis to the role of the Council. With respect to the issue of European identities, the analyses manifested that the officials in the Commission were more oriented towards the idea of a European identity, which nonetheless, was compatible with the pre-existing national identities. On the other hand, the MEPs felt European but they were more prone to emphasise their local, regional and certainly national identities. Wodak (2004) interpreted these constructions as linked to the overall roles and goals of the Commission and the Parliament respectively. Thus, on the one hand the Commission considered by various researchers (Abélès et al. 1993; Cini 1996a; Bellier 2000b; Shore 2000) as "the conscience of the Community", represented the Community interest, while the Parliament, on the other hand, was considered to represent a wider range of interests and, thus, included multiple identities. With regard to the Council, what emerged was a conflictual interplay between supranational and national interests, a fact that was attributed to Council's composition by member states' representatives.

Furthermore, the concept of Europeaness was constructed in terms of shared cultural, historical, linguistic traditions, a future of a united Europe and finally, a unified European social model contrasted to the U.S. and other Asian countries. Wodak interpreted the above constructions as similar to the construction of national identity, which is also based on a shared culture and common past, present and future (Wodak et al. 1998: 57-60). This finding is quite significant since it reveals the persistence of the discourse of national identity even within the EU organisations themselves

⁴² Wodak conducted 28 in-depth interviews in Brussels during a period of intensive fieldwork, with delegates to the European Parliament, civil servants in the European Commission, representatives from COPERER, its working groups and the secretariat of the Council of Ministers.

despite the fact that they are supposed to transcend national boundaries. In other words, given that national identities are formed upon the principle of sameness and difference, the emergence of European identity apparently follows the same discursive pattern.

D. Conclusion

This chapter summarised, from an interdisciplinary perspective, some of the most prominent studies on the culture of EU organisations. This was a necessary exercise in order to identify the research field that has structured this thesis' theoretical and empirical focus. Despite different goals, theoretical frames and methodologies, there are a number of common issues among the studies reviewed. The goal of this chapter has been twofold: First to identify and critically evaluate the notion of “working together”, borrowed from the ethnographic study of the European Space Agency undertaken by Stacia Zabusky. This notion is important because it will structure the empirical investigation in the chapters nine and ten. At the same time, other themes identified by the literature such as the significance of socialisation processes in work, the influence of nationalities, cultures and languages, and the importance of individuals' personal and professional backgrounds, have been analysed. These themes will form the cornerstone of the quantitative analysis in chapter eight.

The second goal of the chapter has been to bring to the fore not only the novelty of the theoretical approach of the thesis, but also to introduce the EU agencies as a research site that has been under-investigated within the broader literature that studies EU institutions. Regarding the theoretical framework of this thesis, some of the contrasts between the approaches adopted in earlier studies and the present one have already been mentioned. These contrasts are mostly related to epistemological concerns and, in particular, the fact that the thesis does not seek to explain the culture in the European agencies. Instead, the objective is to interpret the discursive constructions of individuals working in the European agencies. As shown in this chapter, discourse analysis is not new. It applies to the study of organisational settings⁴³ (Marshall 1994) as much as it does to the process of European integration (Diez 1998, 1999, 2001). Yet the novelty of the theoretical framework adopted here, that of discursive psychology, has never applied before in any study within EU organisations, along with a hybrid methodology that combines both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

⁴³ For an overall review of the field, see Iedema & Wodak 1999.

Chapter 4. DISCURSIVE PSYCHOLOGY: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Discourse analysis has different understandings across social sciences. Various analytic and theoretical approaches have been developed in a series of different disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, social psychology, philosophy, communication, literary theory, cultural studies and, more recently, within international relations. The discourse analytic approach that guides the present research is named as discursive psychology and stems from the tradition of continental social philosophy and cultural analysis namely: semiology or post-structuralism and particularly, the work of Foucault who characterised his ‘archaeology’ of madness and medicine as discourse analysis (1972). It is based on social constructionism, conceptualising language by combining insights from structuralist and poststructuralist linguistics (Gergen 1985; Burr 1995; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). The analytic perspective of discursive psychology has been developed principally by Margaret Wetherell (1998) and Jonathan Potter (1996; Wetherell & Potter 1992). On the one hand, they criticise post-structuralist discourse analysis for considering discourse as coherent systems of talk and text at a macro level while ignoring people’s situated language use - the micro-level dimension. On the other hand they also criticise conversation analysis for its neglect of the wider social and ideological consequences of language use (e.g. Billig 1999; Wetherell 1998). Their approach focuses on people’s everyday practice, which constantly implicates larger societal structures on which people draw in discursive practice (Billig 1987; Wetherell 1998). Thus, the interest lies in people’s active and creative use of discourse as a resource for accomplishing social actions in specific contexts of interaction (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

Below the basic premises of discursive psychology will be discussed, also clarifying core elements of social constructionism, which underpins the overall approach of discursive psychology.

A. Discursive Psychology and its Basic Premises:

A1. Discourse in the frame of Discursive Psychology

One of the goals of discursive psychology is to study how people construct their understanding of the world in their social interactions and how discourse is constructed in relation to social action (Potter & Wetherell 1994). Discourse is defined “as all forms of spoken interaction, formal and informal and written texts of all kinds” (Potter & Wetherell 1987: 7). Language is not understood as a transparent mirror through which we can see reality, but as a medium orientated to action. This idea derives from linguistic philosophy and, in particular, speech act theory (Austin 1962),

Wittgenstein's critique of the idea of a private language (1953, 1980), Coulter's (1990) sociology of mind, as well as ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Garfinkel 1967; Heritage 1978; Atkinson & Heritage 1984).

Given that discourse is put together to perform actions as parts of broader practices, some of these actions have a generic character and appear across a wide range of formal and informal settings, such as greetings, invitations, criticisms, expressions of admirations and others. Actions that are more specialised may be found in specific institutional settings, such as counselling, political rhetoric or job interviewing, etc. (Potter et al. 1990; Potter 2004b). In this sense any person, policy or event can be described in many different ways depending on what the speakers endeavour to achieve (Marshall 1994). Speakers in order to achieve their goals, try to use factual and descriptive language (Potter 2004b), and this means that discourse is organised rhetorically (Billig 1985, 1990). Hence, for having an understanding of what discourse is doing, it is necessary to unpack and render visible the business of talk or the respective rhetorical struggle.

A2. Construction and Discourse

The notion of construction is central to discursive psychology (Potter et al. 1990). Discourses are manufactured out of a variety of pre-existing linguistic resources, almost as a house is constructed from bricks, beams and so on (Potter et al. 1990; Potter & Wetherell 2001). So language and linguistic practices offer sets of terms, narrative forms, metaphors and commonplaces from which a particular account can be assembled (Potter et al. 1990). This way, the world is seen in anti-essentialist terms as its character is not pre-given or determined by external conditions and people do not possess a set of fixed and authentic characteristics or essences. Instead the world is socially and discursively constructed (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). In the same way peoples' knowledge is considered as constructed through their social interaction with others. All sorts of interaction that take place throughout peoples' life are considered as practices which construct common truths and compete about what is true and false (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Burr 1995). Hence, knowledge cannot be seen as emerging from the individual him/herself. It becomes evident that this premise of discursive psychology is anti-cognitivist as it does not intend to explain action by referring to underlying cognitive states (Potter 2004a).

The second important element is related to the speaker's active selection among their linguistic possibilities; some resources are included while others are excluded (Potter & Wetherell 2001; Potter et al. 1990; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Burr 1995). Philosophers of science, such as Kuhn and Popper, have stressed that with even the most simple of phenomena, it is possible to provide many different kinds of description (Lynch & Woolgar 1988). What is picked out in talk depends

on the orientation and interests of the speaker. This is why there are various “social constructions” of the world.

Thirdly, the constructivist metaphor reminds us that we deal with the world in terms of discursive constructions or versions, which are consequential (Potter et al. 1990). Our access to world events, the findings of science, or how a particular film should be evaluated are via constructions in texts and talk (Potter et al. 1990). These texts and talk construct our world and therefore discourse is not only constructed but is also constitutive (Wetherell & Potter 1992). These different constructions or social understandings of the world also guide different kinds of social action from human beings (Gergen 1985). Some versions of reality may be infinitely preferable to others, and should be argued for and pushed forward whenever possible, but there is no version of reality less real than others (Wetherell & Potter 1992). Much of social interaction is based around dealings with events and people, which are experienced only in terms of specific linguistic versions. Hence discursive constructions ‘construct’ reality (Wetherell & Potter 1992). Yet it is not claimed that a person in providing the account is consciously constructing but a construction emerges as he/she merely tries to make sense of a phenomenon or tries to engage in unselfconscious social activities like blaming or justifying. There is variability in the accounts because different forms of description may be right for different occasions, but the person may be just doing what comes naturally, rather than intentionally deciding what form of language will be appropriate (Potter & Wetherell 2001).

It becomes evident that discourse is both constructed and constructive (Potter, 1996). That said discursive psychology treats knowledge and realism, whether developed by participants or researchers, as a rhetorical production that can itself be decomposed and studied in order to unfold the social consequences (Gergen 1985; Burr 1995: 6; Edwards et al 1995; Potter 2003a, b). The goal in the present study is to uncover the different ways in which individuals structure the various versions of agencies as well as the practice of “working together”, creating in this sense a variety of realities, in which individuals see themselves as members of the agencies or as citizens of the EU or even as detached and informed speakers.

A3. Taken-for-granted knowledge or scientific knowledge is doubted

Based on the construction metaphor, another assumption that underpins most discourse analytic approaches drawing on social constructionism is that not only common knowledge, but also taken-for-granted knowledge about the world should not be considered as an objective truth (Burr 1995; Gergen 1985). More particularly, it is suggested that a critical position should be adopted towards the view that conventional knowledge of the world can be offered through valid and objective observations (Burr 1995). In addition, this view presupposes that human beings can understand the

world based on the same categories and meanings. According to discursive psychology, reality is only accessible through categories that are produced by our ways of understanding the world, or they are products of discourse, and thus they do not particularly reflect an objective reality (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

The “objectivity accounts” of scientists should not be considered as a pure description of the world (Wetherell & Potter 1992). Scientific theories and findings are considered as part of the discourse of science. The latter constructs a particular version and vision of human life, - depending on i) the social and political context in which science is typically conducted, ii) the resources scientists can usually deploy and iii) the different rules to which scientific discourse belongs, - which gives science its own specific history and discursive antecedents (Burr 1995). These assumptions refer to all sciences including also the biological and natural sciences, which are equally seen as fields of discursive struggle. This struggle is defined by what can be accepted as objective or interpreted as such (Kuhn 1996). Edwards and Potter (1992) provide the example from the work done in the sociology of scientific knowledge, which shows how scientific claims which are commonly seen as accurate, neutral representations of nature par excellence, are organised to rebut competing theories and claims (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984; Collins 1985; Woolgar 1988). By acknowledging that scientific knowledge has an intrinsically rhetorical or persuasive activity, this thesis treats all the scientific paradigms and theories on EU agencies as forms of different social realities.

A4. Meanings and discourses are contingent upon their social and historical context

Potter et al. (1990) believe it would be wrong to treat spoken or written texts as if they were (nothing more than) manifestations or discourses. So they argue that in order to understand the full power of a piece of talk or text, it is necessary to understand in what political and interpersonal contexts the speaking (or writing) is being performed, as well as to what purpose and by what practical means this “discourse” achieves its purpose. In other words, the meaning of a discourse is revealed in the context of complex social and historical processes. Meaning, therefore, is conventional and normative. Yet meaning is also relational given that discourse “continuously adds to, instantiates, extends and transforms the cultural storehouse of meanings. Utterances are indexical as their sense depends on their contexts of use.” (Wetherell 2001b: 18).

Various approaches within discursive psychology, the context in which a discourse emerges can be defined in a number of ways depending certainly on the scope of every approach (Jørgensen & Phillips 2000). So, for example, in conversational analysis the context of talk and texts is defined only by the speakers’ interests and orientation uttered in their talk. As a result the context is limited to the analysis of the sequence of interactions. In the specific approach of discursive psychology

adopted by the present research, context has a dual sense and, consequently, meaning is considered as a joint production (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Wetherell 1998). Context is examined in a similar way to conversation analysis focussing on the detailed manner in which talk is made effective, and, indeed, self-evident on each specific occasion. In addition, context is examined in terms of the historical, social, institutional, political and economic arrangements in a period of time (depending on the respective research questions of a study) in which talk is uttered. By focusing on the broader socio-historical context, we can trace the ways in which the specific utterances reflect the speaker's cultural "luggage". In other words, meaning is produced by culture, given that our understandings of the world are relative, historically and socially or culturally specific. That said, the study of the socio-historical context is aimed at unfolding the ideologies and cultural orientations deployed for constructing the meanings of the agencies and their cultural practices. This is because the particular forms of knowledge that exist in any culture are artefacts of it (Burr 1995).

B. Three basic concepts of the analytical framework

Three main concepts constitute the analytical framework used in this thesis. These are "interpretative repertoires" (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1988), "subject positions" (Davies & Harré 1990; Wetherell 1998), and "ideological dilemmas" (Billig et al. 1988). In chapter seven, these three concepts will be discussed more extensively with reference to their practical analyses in the interviewees' texts.

B1. Interpretative Repertoires

The concept of interpretative repertoires has been initially developed by Nigel Gilbert and Michael Mulkey (1984) within the field of sociology of science. They discovered that there was not a single story but instead different ways of talking about the nature of scientific activity. In particular, they described how scientists' accounts are put together to portray their actions and beliefs in contextually appropriate ways. These ways were called 'interpretative repertoires'. The concept was subsequently borrowed by Potter and Wetherell, who defined an interpretative repertoire as "basically a lexicon or register of terms and metaphors drawn upon to characterise and evaluate actions and events" (1987: 138).

Interpretative repertoires have been described in various ways and the most characteristic one is that they are 'clusters of terms, descriptions and figures of speech used for characterizing and evaluating actions, events and other phenomena' (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Potter & Wetherell 1987). These clusters of terms are used in a specific stylistic and grammatical fashion, commonly signalled by one or more specific metaphors or other figures of speech (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1988; Burr 1995). In more structuralist terms, we can talk of repertoires as systems of

signification or coherent ways of talking about objects and events in the world, namely as “building blocs of conversation”. In other words, repertoires are linguistic resources that can be drawn upon and utilised in the course of everyday social interaction for manufacturing versions of actions, self and social structures in talk, cognitive processes and other phenomena (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984; Wetherell & Potter 1988, 1992; Edley 2001).

Nevertheless, interpretative repertoires have also been considered not just as linguistic resources but, rather, as social resources among those who share a language and culture. This conceptualisation considers interpretative repertoires to act as ‘commonplaces’, sets of taken-for-granted and commonly used value terms, “the part and parcel of any community’s common sense” (Edley 2001: 198; Billig 1987, 1991). Along these lines, Burr describes repertoires as a “tool-kit of resources for people to use for their purposes, representing a consistency that is not available at the level of the individual speaker” (Burr 1995: 117). Therefore, repertoires do not originate from the individuals but are, instead, culturally and historically embedded and socially communicated (Marshall 1994).

Repertoires are used in order to enable people to justify particular versions of events, excuse or validate their own behaviour, make evaluations, or allow them to maintain a credible stance in an interaction. So these repertoires are available to people as they have been developed over time. This is depicted by the metaphor that describes them as “books on the shelves in a library that are permanently available for borrowing” (Edley 2001). As a result, there is a variety and flexibility in using regular patterns of talk or common resources within a specific social context. This is also the reason that conversations are usually made up of a patchwork of “quotations” from various interpretative repertoires (Edley 2001). So it is not expected in discourse analysis to find consensus in the use of repertoires in the sense that some people are found to always use a certain repertoire, and on some occasions repertoires can be used in a range of contrasting and sometimes surprising ways. Instead, what is expected from people is to draw on different discourses in different contexts for constructing versions of reality under the circumstances that suit them (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

The fact that interpretative repertoires can be used in contrasting ways to legitimise or discount certain ideological/oppressive social and political practices, demonstrates their ideological function (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Bozatzis 1999). Repertoires are considered to have ideological effects generated by the use of certain argumentative practices with ideological significance in the wider social and political arena (Bozatzis 1999). Moreover, given that ideology in discursive psychology is seen as a practice whose power is discursively organised, the ideological content of repertoires

can be judged by their effect. So the aim is to show that the effect of certain repertoires is to further a group's interests at another group's expense (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Burr 1995).

Although interpretative repertoires are a way of understanding the content of discourse and the social and ideological context in which it is produced, an interest still lies in the way this content is organised. This can be found by the identification of linguistic features that speakers apply as rhetorical strategies in order to establish their accounts of the world as objective and valid and competing accounts as subjective and false (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Wetherell & Potter 1992; Potter 1996). The concern with language or rather the linguistic structure of the interpretative repertoire when people talk about a topic, helps monitor the way that some figures of speech, metaphors and so on keep turning up in their talk (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). By abstracting such usages across different interviews on the same topic, the researcher can identify such repeated figures of speech as a repertoire (Burr 1995). These are seen as analogous to the repertoire of moves of a ballet dancer: "finite in number and available to all ballet dancers for the design of a variety of different dances suitable for a variety of different discursive contexts" (Wetherell & Potter 1992: 92; Burr 1995; Potter et al. 1990). This conceptualisation of repertoires is considered to signify the analytical shift achieved by discursive psychology. In particular, "rather than attempting to derive 'discourses' from some set of materials, and then consider how those discourses work together and against one another in the abstract, the focus is very much on the implementation of those discourses in actual settings." (Wetherell & Potter 1992: 90).

The flexibility of repertoires can be considered to be one of the core differences between repertoires and discourses. Nevertheless, discourses and repertoires have a lot of similarities. In particular, they are both distinctive ways of talking about objects and events in the world and repositories of meaning developed for doing some of the explanatory work tied to the concept of ideology (Edley 2001). However, while discourses are seen as coherent, organised sets of statements that are used to construct entire institutions, such as medicine, science etc. (Burr 1995), repertoires are seen as less monolithic structures. They are smaller and more fragmented resources, providing a whole range of different rhetorical opportunities to people in social interaction. The latter can use any of them depending on the specific contexts of interaction in which the talk is situated and to which it is oriented (Edley 2001; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). The use of the term 'repertoire' avoids reifying discourses by ignoring people's situated language use and it puts emphasis on the flexibility of their use and organisation (Bozatzis 1999; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Potter et al. 1990: 212).

That said, the analytical contribution of this concept is to help us identify and describe the content of the common lines of arguments as they are deployed by the interviewees in order to construct the

meaning of the EU agencies and the practice of “working together” within the particular context of the agencies. In addition, the aim is to examine the consequences of the use of these repertoires since this will enable us to understand the wider, ideological consequences of language use. Finally, we will try to see whether new ways of talking through the flexible and innovative use of the available historically developed familiar discursive resources emerge.

B2. Subject Positions

The second analytical concept of the present framework is that of subject positions. The concept of subject positions rejects the idea that the individual self has a single, stable and well framed identity, rather, the individual self is viewed as consisting of multiple, discursively constituted and thus flexible identities (Laclau & Mouffe 1990; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). This is due to the occurrence of a number of contradictory and often antagonistic, socially and culturally constructed discourses in which minds, selves and identities are formed, negotiated and reshaped through social interaction (a concept which is based principally on the ideas of Foucault e.g. Parker 1992; Burr 1995; Hall 1996; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). Social interaction is, therefore, viewed as an integral part of the processes by which people negotiate and construct accounts of themselves in interaction with others (Davies & Harré 1990).

The notion of subject positions is linked to Billig’s rhetorical psychology in which every opinion is a position in an argument rather than an isolated, individual evaluation (Billig 1987, 1991). This is based on a rhetorical model of the mind inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin, who proposed that thought is an internal dialogue, resulting from the internalisation of public debate (Bakhtin 1981). The social dialogues that form the basis for the self are made up of cultural narratives and discourses which position individuals in particular social categories such as gender (e.g. Gergen 1994). In this sense, people are both the products and the producers of discourse, or as Roland Barthes puts it as both the masters and the slaves of language (Barthes 1972). Discursive psychology treats identity as both a product of specific discourses and as a resource for accomplishing social actions in talk-in-interaction.

Based on the premises of critical discourse analysis and discursive psychology, people can choose one or more positions within various discourses and discursive practices (Davies & Harré 1990). The choice is contingent on the range of discursive resources, which are available to individuals by virtue of their social and cultural position and status. It is easier for some individuals to adopt and be ascribed with certain identities, such as the identity of ‘expert’ within a scientific discourse. Moreover, the contingent changeable nature of identity does not mean that people start all over again with new identities every single time they speak. One factor responsible for continuity is that

the individual has to present himself/herself in a way, which is acceptable and recognisable both to him/herself and to the people with whom he/she interacts (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). Thus, subject positions of many kinds are drawn into play from moment to moment, and these may be offered, accepted, claimed or resisted by the participants. It follows that in any interchange between people, there is a constant monitoring of the 'definition of the situation' that each participant is struggling to bring off. Participants understanding of 'what this conversation is about' will radically affect their perception of what subject positions are available to them and whether they wish to claim or resist those positions. The adoption and attribution of various subject positions to others are also seen as providing us with the content of our subjectivity. Once we take up a subject position in discourse, we have available to us a particular, limited set of concepts, images, metaphors, ways of speaking, self-narratives and so on that we take on as our own. This entails both an emotional commitment on our part to the categories of person to which we are allocated and see ourselves as belonging (such as male, grandfather or worker) and the development of an appropriate system of morals (rules of right and wrong) (Burr 1995). Therefore, a person can be described by the sum total of the subject positions in discourse they currently occupy, whether these are temporary, fleeting or permanent. The fact that some of these positions are in a state of flux means that our identity is never fixed but always in process, always open to change (Burr 1995).

Given that different constructions of an interaction can offer radically different sets of rights and obligations for the participants, it should be noted that positioning is not necessarily intentional (Potter & Wetherell 1987). People may become enmeshed in the subject positions implicit in their talk without necessarily having intended to position each other in particular ways.

The form of discursive psychology of the present project incorporates both post-structuralist and interactionist perspectives, which means that the individual self and identity can also be a product of dominant, culturally available discourses, such as the ones on sexuality, race, nationality, etc. (Burr 1995; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). In other words, it is not only the individuals who can select positions for themselves and for others but it is also the discourses and the discursive practices which produce the processes and offer the conditions through which individuals are attributed with specific positions and create the respective identities (Burr 1995). This process is depicted by the concept of interpellation which describes particular kinds of individuals and their positions as being "hailed" by a particular discourse (Edley 2001: 209, 210). That said individuals do not become interpellated in just one subject position because different discourses -even if these are antithetical- impose a series of positions to the individuals in their talk (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

Because people adopt positions in the discourse and are also attributed with positions in the discourse, it becomes difficult to figure out what is personal and what is collective and cultural (Wetherell 2001b). The fact that there may be alternative discourses or that these are initially cultural and secondly personal, does not mean that any particular account might not be a 'useful truth' for those who use it.

Individuals can use discourses as resources with which they create new constellations of words-sentences that have never been uttered before. This may result in new hybrid discourses. By producing new discourses in this way, people function as agents of discursive and cultural change (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). To give an example, as a smoker, the person may have a subject position in a pro-smoking discourse that advocates individual freedom of choice and uses the libertarian argument that smoking in public places should not be banned. But this subject position may be in conflict with an anti-drug discourse that sees the policy of banning both soft and hard drugs as appropriate and essential. The identity of 'pro-smoker anti-drug activist' may emerge from the individual's positioning within a hybrid discourse in that the pro-smoker's identity and anti-drug discourses are articulated together.

In the present research, the concern is related to the interviewees' availability of subject positions and their function in their talk. In particular, by capturing the relationship that exists between discourse and the speaking subject we will be able to see how the fragmented, inconsistent and contradictory nature of our shared cultural knowledge about the notion of "working together" in the EU organisations and the nature and role of the EU agencies comes to structure the everyday lives of a particular group of employees within the three EU agencies. The availability of subject positions adopted by the interviewees themselves and those attributed to others in their talk is aimed at providing information about the interpretative repertoires available to them and the broader ideological context in which such talk is produced. Finally, the goal is to see whether new identities and positions emerge in the talk in the speakers' effort to negotiate the meanings of controversial topics between opposing ideologies.

B3. Ideological Dilemmas

The third concept that is central to the present theoretical framework is that of ideological dilemmas. These, as well as interpretative repertoires, are viewed as language resources in a society that provide "the raw materials for social interaction and private contemplation" (Edley 2001: 204). The dilemmas are called ideological in nature because their discursive work is consequential for social relations and is linked to broader social discursive practices imbued with power (Edley &

Wetherell 1999). Before focusing on the analytical use of this concept, it is worth discussing the notion of 'ideology'.

Ideology, according to Billig et al. (1988), is not considered a homogeneous, integrated and coherent system of ideas that serve to represent the domination of the ruling sections of society as natural or inevitable, such as the ideology of Marxism, dominant during various historical periods. Instead ideologies, like all other ideas, are considered as being themselves inherently dilemmatic or consisting of oppositions, conflicting counter-values (Billig et al. 1988). This can be detected by the fact that different theorists have used the concept of ideology itself in very different ways, whilst discounting each other's intellectual right to do so (Billig et al. 1988). Classic values of freedom or equality are understood not in isolation but in contrast to slavery and inequality. Another example can be seen in the ideology of individualism which already contains within it its opposite e.g. collectivism (Burr 1995). These oppositions are understood as ideological dilemmas. The latter concern the nature of human beings as being constantly engaged in debate, arguing etc. so people are seen as active thinkers, rhetoricians and arguers, capable of making decisions about the strengths and weaknesses of their values or ideas (Burr 1995).

An important conceptual distinction is made between formal ideological systems and informal common sense, which are known as intellectual and lived ideology respectively. The distinction between the two forms of ideology is crucial for posing the question of whether the ideas of intellectual ideology can travel and inform ordinary life and thus lived ideologies⁴⁴ (Billig et al. 1988). Intellectual ideologies are products of intellectuals or academics in a form of a system of political, religious or philosophical thinking (Billig et al. 1988: 27-28; Edley 2001)⁴⁵. Lived ideology, on the other side, is society's common sense, way of life or culture (Billig et al. 1988: 27-28). These ideologies seek to describe the social patterning of people's everyday thinking and are often considered as the condensed wisdom of a society (Billig et al. 1988). Lived ideologies are not as coherent and integrated as intellectual ideologies since their content is seen to include contrary and competing arguments. To this end, lived ideologies are rich and flexible resources for social interaction. Nevertheless, although a lived ideology might contain a variety of beliefs, norms, representations and so on, it will be based around a dominant theme or value (Billig et al. 1988).

There is no assumption of a simple relationship between lived and intellectual ideology. Moreover, the consistencies of theory are not somehow imposed on the schemata of everyday life, so that everyday life is a social representation of the consistent intellectual ideology, albeit in a more

⁴⁴ Billig et al. (1988) also mentions these two types of ideology as formalised and non-formalised consciousness.

⁴⁵ Examples of intellectual ideologies are all sciences such as psychology, which is constructed through various rhetorical devices and linguistic practices and is used by relatively powerful groups in society (such as the scientific concepts of intelligence, minority, memory etc.) (Burr 1995; Billig 1990).

conventional and essentially unthinking form. Instead it is necessary to consider the contradictory themes both between and within lived and intellectual ideology (Billig et al. 1988). The contrary themes of intellectual ideology can be represented in lived ideology and lived ideology should therefore be studied in order to uncover these ideological dilemmas.

A second important aspect central to the notion of ideological dilemmas, concerns the “dilemmatic” nature of social knowledge or in other words common sense (Billig et al. 1988). According to Billig et al. (1988), socially shared concepts and issues provide our thought, its content and processes. The concepts, values and beliefs of the society are organised as two sides of an argument or issue. Billig et al. (1988) call these ideological dilemmas. They are ideological simply because they refer to thinking, which is shaped by prevailing ideologies in our society. For example, the ideology of individualism dominates our mental life and this is manifested in our thinking and social interactions in terms of dilemmas, such as whether we should prioritise individual freedom or the collective common good. Yet it is not systematised in a way that permits the individual who has dutifully accepted societies’ values to generate automatically all necessary thoughts, actions and argumentative discourse. Instead, common sense provides the seeds for contrary themes, which can be in conflict dramatically in dilemmatic situations (Billig et al 1988). Discourse that seems to be arguing for one point may contain implicit meanings, which could be made explicit to argue for the counter-point. Thus, discourse can contain its own negations, and these are part of its implicit, rather than explicit meaning (Billig et al. 1988). Billig et al. (1988) provide a lot of examples of the dilemmatic aspects of everyday thinking, taken from a number of research settings, which suggest that ordinary people do not necessarily have simple views about their social worlds. Instead, their thinking is frequently characterised by the presence of opposing themes, which are not associated with a careless lack of thought. Rather the opposing themes enable ordinary people to find the familiar puzzling and therefore worthy of thought.

The existence of dilemmas in thinking or common sense does not occur just in a particular society or in the social beliefs of particular communities. All societies possess conflicting elements that give rise to arguments given that the common sense of all types of societies cannot exist in absolute harmony. The content of the respective dilemmas is expected to vary among different types of societies and during different time periods. This is because varying patterns of cultural norms, beliefs and values will give rise to varying patterns of dilemmatic concerns (contrary themes). This view implies a different conception of ideology and indeed of social action than that found in many contemporary social theories. More generally, it is implied that thinking is necessary for society and that a society without thought is either an impossibility or ‘a totalitarian nightmare’ (Billig et al. 1988).

In the present study the use of the concept of ideological dilemmas allows us to uncover the different ways of talking about an object or event: in other words, the deployment of various interpretative repertoires and the adoption of various subject positions do not necessarily arise spontaneously and independently, but develop together as opposing positions in an unfolding, historical argumentative exchange (Potter & Wetherell 1987). This exchange and the context in which it is taking place are sustained by ideologies. Furthermore, if Billig is correct, then we should be able to trace the structuring effects of competing or contrary themes in the interviews conducted within the agencies. In addition, by identifying the ideologies employed in the arguments of the interviewees, we will also be able to appreciate how the interviewees' lives, thoughts and experiences in the agencies are organised around a particular set of "ideological dilemmas" (Billig et al. 1988). Furthermore, in examining their attempts to manage these dilemmas, we should be able to see where common sense itself becomes a site of cultural contestation (Edley & Wetherell 1999). Finally, we will be able to identify whether the dilemmas between lived and intellectual ideologies are similar and negotiated in a similar way and, furthermore, how the interviewees in their effort to overcome them, create hybrid repertoires and subject positions.

C. Conclusion

The chapter presented the theoretical framework that guides the thesis: 'discursive psychology'. It is situated epistemologically in social constructionism. It is as an eclectic approach that combines a post-structuralist strand that builds on discourse, power and the subject as well as an interactionist perspective that builds on an analysis of people's everyday discursive interactions. The basic principle of discursive psychology is that the focus is on language and not on the individuals like in traditional psychology. To this end here are four principles that structure discursive psychology: a) language is considered as social action. So people perform actions of different types through their talk, such as arguing, blaming, making a request. In order to make their talk more effective, they use factual and descriptive language. Therefore it is worth looking the way talk is organised rhetorically (Potter 2004b; Billig 1990); b) People use language to construct versions of social world (so discourse is constructed) while discourse constructs also social world and versions of 'reality'. In this sense there are various constructions of the world, some of which are preferable or more effective than others; c) Knowledge, whether common or scientific, is seen as social, intrinsically rhetorical, historically and inter-subjectively produced. Accordingly, the objectivity of scientific knowledge and discourse is doubted; d) In order to understand the meaning of a discourse it is important to understand the socio-historical context in which discourse is produced. These principles also underpin the three concepts, interpretative repertoires, subject positions and ideological dilemmas that guide the empirical analysis.

In sum, the ‘discursive psychology’ approach will be used to structure the empirical analysis that follows by focusing on how individuals in the European agencies construct their understanding of the practice of “working together” and the meanings of an “agency” in their social interactions and how discourse is constructed in relation to social action.

Chapter 5. SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSES AND THEIR DILEMMAS ABOUT EUROPE AND CULTURE

One of the goals of the present study is to explore the meanings of the cultural practice of “working together” in an EU agency as well as the notion of a European agency and of Europe as these are negotiated by the individuals who work in the EU agencies. In order to understand everyday talk and its relationship with wider questions of social practice and power, we need to look at how scientific theories come to play a role in individual discourse (Wetherell 1998; Billig 1999; Jørgensen & Philips 2002). This chapter and the next look at the scientific theories relevant to understanding the discourse of employees in the EU agencies.

The present chapter begins by focusing on the ideological dilemmas concerning the concept of Europe, European integration and the resulting visions of the EU as these have emerged in various scientific theories and paradigms. Following the argument of Billig (1987) that our ways of understanding and categorising the world are not universal but historically and socially specific and contingent, it is assumed that there is a multiplicity of meanings of Europe (af Malmberg & Stråth 2002). Thus, every theory or rather scientific discourse on Europe has its counter discourse. In this sense discourses that address the question of Europe are understood as ideological, or as containing dilemmas (Billig et al. 1988: 2).

Culture as a concept has a central role in scientific discourses about Europe. Cultural issues, generally, have become highly topical in recent years and it is no surprise that the cultural turn in the social and human sciences has influenced studies on Europe (Delanty 1995, 2003b; Passerini 1998; Wintle 1996a, b; Pagden 2002; af Malmberg & Stråth 2002; Shore 2000; Hutton 2002; Holmes 2000; Siedentop 2001; Eder & Giesen 2001; Rumford 2002; Bague 2002). Besides the understanding of Europe as culture or the link between the concept of Europe and that of culture has a history that goes back in the eighteenth century (Ifversen 2002). Culture thus continues to be a central concept or as Ifversen calls it “as a sort of unspoken subtext for the development of European integration” (2002: 5). Moreover, this is reflected in the official documentation of the EU as well as in the growing literature on European culture and identity (Kohli 2000; Stråth 2000).

The analysis of the relevant scientific discourses has brought to the fore two main conceptual distinctions upon which these are structured. The first one concerns ontological questions surrounding the nature of the EU and culture and in particular, whether the latter is viewed in essentialist or constructivist terms, and the second refers to teleological preferences for Europe based on universal or particularistic values. In the following sections below, it is intended to

illustrate these dilemmas with material that derives from the most common and prevalent scientific discourses, as well as others that attempt to overcome or bridge the respective tensions.

A. The dilemma between essentialism and constructivism

The present dilemma is structured upon two antithetical conceptualisations of the notion of culture. It can be described as a tension between constructing culture as something traditional and unchangeable in contrast to the conception of culture as a dynamic process (Jørgensen & Philips 2002).

A1. Culture in essentialist terms

One of the most common argument by scientific discourses which conceptualise culture in essentialist terms is that culture is a collective heritage of a group and comprises elements such as language, tradition, nation, race and religion all of which contribute to the homogenisation of people and refer to historic and political bounds that come before the modern state (Weiler 1997a; Baumann 1999; Wetherell & Potter 1992). Culture is seen as ancient and “pure” and generates naturally occurring differences and a self-sufficient form of explanation (Wetherell & Potter 1992). Individual identities are then seen as organic, fundamental, historically given and bounded (Shore 1993).

The ideological underpinnings of the respective theoretical paradigms are found in the ideology of nationalism and particularly the so-called ethno-nationalism (Cederman 2001). Enthonationalism is based on an essentialist assumption of the nation-state and assumes that political and cultural identities depend directly on their “own” pre-modern cultural communities. Culture thus becomes the strongest element binding communities and the members of a nation (Cederman 2001). Likewise, Europe is seen as an organic community project, the members of which are bonded and bounded by a common past, civilisational heritage and distinct cultural values (Pagden 2002).

One of the most prominent scholars, who has written about the EU integration project adopting an essentialist conceptualisation of culture, is Anthony Smith (1992, 1995). His starting-point is the concept of collective cultural identity which signifies “not only some fixed pattern or uniformity of elements over time, but rather a sense of shared continuity on the part of successive generations of a given unit of population, and to shared memories of earlier periods, events and personages in the history of the unit” (Smith 1992: 58). Shared continuity and memory lead to another important element: the collective belief in a common destiny of the unit and its culture. Therefore, the defining element of cultural identity, national or European, is the subjective perception and

understanding of the communal past by each generation of a given cultural unit of population or what Smith calls the “ethno-history” of this collectivity (Smith 1992).

Smith identifies a distinction between the nation and the state but he points out that the idea of the nation defines and legitimates politics in cultural terms. In other words, culture and politics are inextricably linked and social and political problems are all considered as cultural ones (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Cederman 2001). In this respect, the nation offers the cultural and political glue that unites a community (Smith 1995; 1992). This reiterated reference to a community of common public culture reveals the continuing influence of ethnicity and its common myths, traditions, symbols and memories in the life of modern European nations. This degree of commonality though is not present among the EU citizens since the differences among them are as many as one could identify in non-Europeans. These differences (cultural, linguistic etc.) are seen as a stumbling block to the European unification process (Boxhoorn 1996). So Smith views Europe as “a family of cultures” that coexist without achieving unity.

It becomes obvious that Smith’s theorisation assumes that nations constitute an ethnicity. Eventually this can be said to be the case for some countries such as Greece. However, there are many other European countries which are multi-ethnic nations, such as Belgium, and others which are multi-national states, such as the UK or Spain.

Similar argumentation has been supported by other theoretical frameworks which emphasise different aspects, like sovereinism or westphalianism (Kraus 2003), whose basic argument is that democratic debate cannot be stretched beyond the institutional framework of the nation. Additionally, there is euro-scepticism (Delanty 2000a, b) and those state-centric theories which are critical of the project of European integration (O’Neil 1996).

Despite the pessimism of these discourses regarding Europe’s weak culture and identity, another theoretical framework, known as euro-federalism, proposes the notion of an essentialist “thick cultural identity” as a prototype for the European identity (Delanty 2002; Shore 1998). The core ideas of this framework have its roots in a long tradition of a peace plan for Europe visualised and designed by a group of idealists (the movement ‘Pan-Europa’) after the First World War (1914-1918) and headed by Coudenhove-Kalergi (O’Neil 1996). The main issue raised by Coudenhove was the future of Europe along the lines of a United Europe instead of a politically and economically divided Europe. More particularly, de Rougement (1965) believed that Europe was a cultural and political unity. Such unity was the expression of its ancient history, which could prevail over the divisions imposed by nationalism. Culture in the federalist vision took the form of a meta-narrative or a constructed discourse that transcended national societies by referring to a European

cultural heritage that needed to be rediscovered (Boxhoorn 1996). These theoretical underpinnings resonate throughout the Commission's category of "European cultural heritage", which has also become the dominant representation of Commission officials (Shore 1998, 2000).

Finally, another theoretical conceptualization that stems mainly from the political tradition of liberal democracy, views Europe as a philosophical concept (Tassin 1992; Brague 2002; Delanty 2002) based principally on its intellectual and spiritual heritage. Here culture and politics are also inextricably linked. The basic idea is that the heritage of European civilisation is being transmitted throughout the centuries not only within Europe but also to the rest of the world.

A2. Culture in constructivist terms

Discourses that are based on an anti-essentialist construction of culture and are mostly inspired by social constructionism (Jørgensen & Philips 2002) argue that the social world (and thus culture) is constructed socially. This implies that its character is not predetermined or pre-given and culture is seen as consisting of multiple identities that are formed, negotiated and reconstructed in social interaction (Parker 1992).

A common scientific discourse that negotiates culture as "constructed" is one that puts forward the notion of identities constructed upon politics, laws, and other processes (Cederman 2001). One of the basic points of this rather normative discourse is the superseding of the nation-state (Soysal 2002). Several analysts have identified a decline in popular interest in national concerns and a diminishing need or relevance of national belonging in favour of an increasing identification with issues beyond national borders (Cerutti 1992; Soysal 2002; Croucher 2003). Additionally, given that nation states and nationalism are considered as inventions that constitute a myth (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983; Hobsbawm 1990), thinking beyond the nation state comes as a natural consequence of today's evolutions. The objective is to refrain deliberately from any attempt to establish a congruent relationship between culture and society (Kraus 2003: 669). As expected, this paradigm has been meticulously criticised for being utopian and highly normative, by the advocates of nation-states and nationalism (Cederman 2001).

The most eminent contribution is that of a leading social theorist, Jürgen Habermas, and his concept of "constitutional patriotism" (1987; 1995). This concept is the foundation for a European identity (Habermas 1992, 1996, 1998) as a "thin" political identity, detached from the nation that is substantiated by a legal dimension (Cederman 2001). To this end, European identity offers a post-national, transformative kind of identity (Delanty 2002; Croucher 2003), whose attachment, loyalty, and pride are focused on the political-judicial norms, principles and ideals of democracy (Habermas 1995). This type of identity becomes visible and real in the growing European public

sphere, measured in terms of growing links, discourses, and trans-national spaces (van de Steeg 2002).

Apart from Habermas, there are other theorists who subscribe to this paradigm proposing for Europe a civic rather than an essentialist culture. Initially, Tassin enforces the rationale of Habermas by designating that Europe will be substantiated as a European political community but will be created not from an idea of Europe but from a public space of fellow-citizenship capable of giving meaning to a non-national political community (Tassin 1992). Additionally, following a more constructivist and post-national rationale, Joseph Weiler (1998) speaks of the possibility of a *demos*, that is not an *ethnos*, built around shared civic values (Weiler 1997b; Weiler et al. 1995: 21). He refers to a co-existence of multiple “*demos*”, that presupposes a conceptual separation between nationality and citizenship (Weiler 1997b: 509)⁴⁶. Likewise, Eder (2001) considers Europe as a discursive medium rather than a reality as such. His main thesis, strongly influenced by Habermas, is that a citizenship based on a system of legal norms and rules might be the foundation for the construction of a European society beyond national societies (Eder & Giesen 2001).

Another scientific discourse focuses on pluralism in terms of citizenship within the frame of globalization and localization. This discourse identifies a variety of cultures existing in Europe, and particularly the EU, that bound several groups of people. This variety of cultures should be preserved through respective rights and duties. This is the proposal of multiculturalism. Kraus, (2003) in order to avoid common critiques of multiculturalism (Cesareo 2004; Sartori 2000; Kukathas 1992; Kymlicka 1995; Burayidi 1997; Lasch 1995), proposes for the EU the notion of intercultural pluralism or interculturalism. The latter emphasises the communication and relationships between cultures and the dynamic nature of cultural transformations (Zamagni 2000). These relationships generate a constructive intercultural dialogue facilitated by common institutional rules (as in the EU for example) so that cultural differences are not exacerbated (Kraus 2003). This discourse overcomes its rather weaker constructivist stance by proposing the maintenance of cultural diversity through common norms and rules in a form of a new community.

Moreover, the European integration theory of transactionalism associated with the work of Karl Deutsch (Deutsch 1953; Deutsch et al. 1957) is based on a constructivist conceptualisation of culture. The major point of this theory is that the development of social exchanges among individuals over prolonged periods of time would lead to the development of new communities with

⁴⁶ Weiler’s proposal adds a “civilisatory dimension” that is transcending the national and cultural level and enhances Europeaness and loyalty to Europe through a set of normative civic values such as commitment to democracy, liberty, tolerance, diversity and social models of political economy (1997b). Yet his proposal in his book “Un’ Europa cristiana: un saggio esplorativo” (2003) gets a bit diversified since he identifies Christianity as an essential component of Europe. Needless to say, such a claim enhances a rather essentialist notion of culture.

shared identity (in Stone Sweet & Sandholtz 1997). This identity may be the basis for increased mutual understanding, which would enhance a widespread sense of security (in Puchala 1981). Deutsch relied on the analytical separation of the legal state from the sociological nation, without necessarily considering that the formation of the state would precede the formation of common identities (in Rosamond 2000). Cultural elements are considered to derive from economic and social aspects of life and these then redefine the forms of collective identification. The latter are conveyed through a series of practices experienced at the level of popular culture as well as in the practices of everyday life (such as the growth of internal tourism, popular music, sports events and competitions (Borneman & Fowler 1997). Hutton (2002) following the same rationale emphasises Europe's social and economic model and Delanty (2002) points out that the Euro is also becoming gradually the basis of partial continuity of ways of life. Research within EU organisations has also shown evidence of the existence of a type of European culture and identity (Shore 2000), which Abélès et al. (1993) named "transactional". According to them, the idea of "transactional identity" highlights the process in which the individuals' cultural identities are the product of the web of relationships established and re-established every day.

Nevertheless, there are also some modernist theories of nationalism and particularly that of civic nationalism that endorse a rather constructivist vision of culture. Inspired by Benedict Anderson (1991) and the assumption that the modern nation constitutes an 'imagined community', the respective theorists believe that national identities take on an objective and clear character due to shared commitment to a set of political principles and institutions provided by the nation (Croucher 2003). The failure of the EU supranational institutions to form stable collective identities is because they lack certain policies and specific institutional mechanisms, such as state-organised education and language policies (Gellner 1983; Boxhoorn 1996) or modern media institutions (Schlesinger 1991; Anderson 1991).

In summary, the scientific discourses that proclaim constructivist notions of culture are grounded on the idea of constituting novel and truly "civic" types of values which transcend culture in the traditional sense (Kraus 2003). As a result, Europe is represented as a public space that includes multiple spheres and subjects created through the activities of a growing contingency of social and political actors.

B. The dilemma between particularism and universalism

Given the specificity of the European project itself –named by Jacques Delors as "an unidentified political object" – a central task for the EU is to define its *telos*. So the *telos* or vision of Europe becomes a crucial and controversial topic, which structures the second important dilemma that

various scientific discourses on Europe and the EU negotiate. More explicitly, this dilemma consists of two opposing views of Europe: the particularistic, which is centred around collectivities or groups and the universalistic, which is centred around the individual.

B1. Europe in particularistic terms

The particularistic visions of Europe usually construct boundaries of a specific group whose primary goal is to preserve the status quo and generate cohesive identities which tend to be exclusive and are often coded in terms of adversity against negative others (Delanty 2002). The basic principles are those of social cohesion, solidarity and distinction from “others” (Soysal 2002). Particularistic visions of Europe have dominated since the nineteenth century based on major dividing institutions, such as the nation or religion (Ifversen 2002).

A common scientific discourse presupposes a notion of community as cultural, historical and territorial that is based on an ethnos and includes a unified political community – the demos (Delanty 1995; Therborn 1995). Such an ideal type of community is the nation state and so Europe and particularly the EU, can only be conceived in terms of a nation state rather than a supranational construction. This is because the latter cannot offer the appropriate conditions for the perseverance of a community: these are a coherent vision for the unification of its populations, identity reproducing processes and political participation (Cederman 2001). The EU is considered to have failed to define recognizable membership criteria or a stable and clear sense of “we-ness”. The result has been ineffective governance and a lack of demos. To this end, it is suggested that Europe should consider the preservation of the autonomy of nation states in order to avoid controversies particularly in certain policy areas in which the nation states do better than the EU and can rely on their cultural legitimation (in Delanty 2000a). Yet, advocates of this discourse are not completely dismissive of the EU integration project provided that Europe in the future follows the model of nation states in order to generate solid collective political as well as cultural identities or the so-called ‘bounded identities’ (Cederman 2001).

Another scientific discourse, the Euro-federalist discourse, does not adopt such a pessimistic stance but instead represents European integration as a teleological process (Sidjanski 2000). This becomes feasible through the transformation of nation states into an EU superstate (Shore 1993, 1998; Delanty 2000a, b, 2002). More particularly, the latter emerges as a new cultural and political community based on a reconfiguration of some conventional models of membership in which continuous importance is attached to territorial, cultural and social boundaries (Croucher 2003). Central to this representation is the distinction of Europe and its identity from “others”, in particular America or Japan (Delanty 2002). The notion of “others” has been used by EU politicians and

bureaucrats as a cultural legitimation for the building of a “Fortress Europe” (Delanty 2002). Commonly this discourse refers to Europe as the “United States of Europe”. Such a reference entails a trans-state nation-building, which becomes obvious by the implementation of concrete EU cultural policies (Shore 1993, 1998; Delgado-Moreira 1997; Sticht 2000) as well as the adoption of signs and symbols of nationhood (e.g. the “Charlemagne Prize” and the “European Woman of the Year Award” (Shore 1993) or even the choice of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony as the EU anthem (Shore 1993) and the adoption of a Community flag (de Witte 1987)). These artefacts constitute the “Euro-culture”, which emphasises the principles of cohesion, integration, unity, community and security (Robins 1994: 94). Yet European culture and identity do not ignore Europe’s cultural diversity. This is evidently expressed in the official EU formula of “unity in diversity” (Boxhoorn 1996; Shore 1993).

This discourse, although it claims that nation states are transcended through a European supranational state, is still dependent ideologically on nationalism and mainly the modernist model of nation states (Croucher 2003). This is the reason that often this discourse is also called as Euro-nationalism. Likewise Europe is imagined as a “totality, either as a homeland itself or as a homeland of homelands. Either way, the ideological traditions of nationhood, including its boundary-consciousness, are not transcended” (Billig 1995:142). Inevitably this discourse has been criticized for entailing a degree of discrimination and cultural chauvinism (Shore 1998; Delanty 2000a, 2002). Additionally, it has been argued that this discourse entails a banal Europeanism. In particular, Michael Billig (1995) claims that “Europe” has to be “flagged”, symbolized, remembered, seen, heard, talked about, admired, whatever it takes to keep the idea of “Europe” relevant or even indispensable in the same ways as nations. But, as Billig argues, this reminding of the West European notion of nationalism “is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding. The metonymic image of banal nationalism is not a flag, which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building.” (1995: 8).

The representation of Europe as new community that promotes common goals while it recognises the right of cultural difference is promoted by a scientific discourse based on the work of Kymlicka, commonly known as liberal multiculturalism (Kymlicka 1995; see also Kymlicka & Wayne 2000). The ideological roots of this discourse are in the normative political theory of liberal communitarianism. The main thesis is the superiority of community rights over individual rights. Human rights are not denied, but are viewed as being subordinate to the rights of the ethnic or national community. This is because the ethnic group is perceived as having an essential role in

forming the personality of each single human being, since there is the need to be firmly anchored to the community (Kymlicka 1995).

Lastly another scientific discourse represents Europe as a pragmatic and instrumental concept since the focus is on the description of a distinctively European 'way of life'. The European project is seen as realisable and existent provided that it is based on particularistic values, such as social cooperation and collective problem-solving as well as "the art of associated living" (Anderson 1990). These values achieve to form Europe as an emerging community with unique practices and symbols.

B2. Europe in universalistic terms

Discourses built upon universalistic visions of Europe put forward the notion of transcendence of boundaries and the application of universal values applicable to every individual. In such visions, Europe does not constitute a community, so the notion of cohesion is not that crucial, and there are no identifiable boundaries between Europe and others. Focused on universalistic visions of Europe inspired by the Enlightenment, Europe has "thin" identities based on the values of pluralism, democracy and civil society (Wintle 1996b).

The ideological foundation of this discourse is found in the political tradition of liberal democracy (in Delanty 2002) associated in particular with the philosophical liberal democratic heritage of moral universalism. Following the basic premises of this tradition, Europe is based on universal moral values (like freedom, human rights, democracy, justice and arts), which are rooted in classical antiquity and Christianity (Ifversen 2002). Such a universalistic view of Europe is also found, according to Delanty (2002; 2003a), in Max Weber's famous opening words to *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, in which science was seen as the highest expression of the European heritage pointing, thus, to a representation of a "Europe of mind". In these terms, Europe is an amalgam of different people. Difference may refer to languages, religions or other "cultural traits" and even nation states, which nevertheless are not in conflict but instead they are crosscut by Europe's civilisation or spirit (Ifversen 2002).

The conceptualisation and representation of Europe in terms of moral universalistic values can be found in many debates on European integration, in a series of activities and projects developed in the EU as well as in documents and speeches of EU leaders (Delanty 2002). For example, Bellier and Wilson (2000) stumble on the proposal of the Forward Studies Unit of the Commission (1999) for "A European model of society", according to which, European identity is structured on democratic distribution of power, freedom of individuals vis a vis the state and family structures. Moreover, Marcelino Oreja Aguirre (1999), the Commissioner of Communication, Information,

Culture and Institutional Questions from 1995 to 1999, stressed three constituent poles of European identity: a) humanism, b) European diversity, and c) universalism “that is not only a European value but also Europe’s obligation” (Jansen 1999: 5). Additionally, the proposal of the “Charter of European Identity” by Václav Havel in 1994 represents a Europe based on the values of ‘tolerance, humanity and fraternity’, which became the foundation of democracy and which Europe spread throughout the world. Similar ideas have also been expressed by the Commissioner for Culture and Education, Viviane Reding (2000) and Romano Prodi (2000).

Yet this idea of Europe’s, spiritual heritage and mission entails a Eurocentric orientation that eventually limits its universality (Ifversen 2002). This Euro-centrism consists in a kind of superiority and responsibility of Europe towards the rest of the world. Bauman calls this tendency the “sin of ‘Europe-centrism’” (2004: 10).

Based on universalistic principles of the “civic tradition”, another scientific discourse is inspired by the virtues of a “cosmopolis”, close to the original Stoic idea of human beings as rational creatures with universal rights (Nash 2003). Although the main inspiration for defining European values comes from Kant’s analysis of cosmopolitan democracy, yet this normative scientific discourse is rather based on neo-Kantian understandings of cosmopolitan citizenship (Beck 2000). A neo-Kantian cosmopolitanism involves an emotional “coolness” as its basis is found in liberal-democratic human rights rather than in political community (Nash 2003). More particularly, a nation of citizens does not derive its identity from some ethnic and cultural properties, but rather from the praxis of citizens who actively exercise their civil rights” (Habermas 1992: 3). This form of cosmopolitanism proposed for Europe is secured by a commitment to autonomy that guides normative principles rather than by affective identification with one’s fellows (Nash 2003).

Along these lines, and closer to the debate of a European citizenship, we find the proponents of a new “citizenship” for Europe which is purged of its ethnocentricity and particularism (Habermas 1998, 2001). According to Meehan (2000), the notion of European citizen in the Maastricht Treaty is a formal recognition that the links between citizenship, nationality and the nation-state are not as necessary, as it was previously thought. Additionally, Soysal (1994) by referring to third state nationals claims that the latter enjoy social and economic rights as a consequence of a re-adaptation to the new emerging situation of the EU and the new forms of membership it generates.

C. Scientific Discourses in an attempt to deconstruct or reconcile the ideological dilemmas

In the section below there will be discussed two more scientific discourses which attempt to overcome the ideological dilemmas between essentialist and constructivist notions of cultures and identities as well as particularistic and universalistic visions of Europe.

C1. “Europe as an adventure”: A critical negotiation of the ideological dilemmas

This discourse rejects both particularistic and universalistic visions of Europe while it also criticises the construction of culture and identity in either essentialist or constructivist terms. It is heavily influenced by post-modernism. Despite many differences in its interpretation, there appears to be a consensus among theorists that at the end of the twentieth century there has been a series of economic, cultural and psychological changes, associated with a growing globalisation, which actually signify the end of modernity and the beginning of post-modernity (Billig 1995). According to Lyotard (1979), modernity was distinguished by certain meta-narratives of legitimation. The latter refer to theories and projects that justified human action in terms of a future state of liberation from oppressive structures. In other words, societies derived their legitimacy from their universality- i.e. the “good” that is promised such as freedom, enlightenment, socialism or prosperity. The promise of modernity was cosmopolitan and involved the dissolution of traditional communities and their realisation of the collective future (in Scruton 1996: 430). The post-modern condition is one in which those meta-narratives have lost their justifying force.

Post-modern discourses also reject particularistic notions of community and specifically nation states. The latter are represented as political and cultural artefacts, which were constructed in order to serve the needs of the modern industrial society (in Billig 1995; Bauman 1992). Post-modernist discourses conceptualise Europe within the changing context of globalisation, Europeanisation and immigration. Globalisation is seen as a challenge to the nation-state by its homogenizing effect and Europeanisation, closely connected to the latter, appears to lead to a post-national era. Hence, Europe cannot be denied to the ‘other’.

With regard to the dilemma of whether to promote an essentialist or a constructivist notion of culture and identity, post-modern discourses are critical of many contemporary identity projects which either build upon a civic or organic notion of culture and identity (Kohli 2000; Bauman 1992). More particularly, in a Derrida-inspired deconstructivism (Derrida 1992: 9–10), the self, in this case Europe, will never be able to close itself completely because it is conceptualised as multiple and fragmented (Bauman 1995). Accordingly, Brague’s (2002) insight is that Europe is constantly self-transformed and, for this reason, it does not belong to Europeans since the latter cannot be identified as a unified group. In short, Europe’s culture is without fixed points of uniform truths, being at the same time intrinsically expansive, critical and unfinished (Bauman 2004: 7).

C2. “Europe as a pluralized cosmopolitan reconstruction”: A reconciliatory negotiation of the ideological dilemmas

This scientific discourse developed by Gerard Delanty in an attempt to compromise the opposing views of the two ideological dilemmas that have been discussed so far. Delanty builds his theorisation on the premise that a coherent European identity that includes all Europeans is lacking (Delanty 2005).

Although he is opposed to old functionalist concepts of integration and cohesion, the neo-communitarian ideology and the vision of Europe as *Europe des ethnies*, he nonetheless attempts to reconcile the ideological dilemma between universalistic and particularistic visions of Europe (Delanty 2000a; Karlsson 1999). He views Europe as an expression of its dual structure of universal and particularistic values (Delanty 2005). Given that Europe is perceived as a part of new global discourses, the expression of a post-national identity is based on a culture of critique and reflexivity (Delanty 2000a). This is the so-called “particularisation of the universal” (Delanty 2002: 348).

Delanty addresses the dilemma of constructivist versus essentialist notions of culture and identity. by proposing the notion of multi-identification at both collective and individual level (Delanty 2000a; Castells 1997). Nonetheless, he considers it crucial to define the appropriate institutional balance between multiple identities. For this reason, he borrows the concept of constitutional patriotism from the normative theory of Habermas (1996, 1998) that stresses the idea of political culture as embodying a self-critical and reflexive sense of community, which is capable of discursively engaging itself with its cultural traditions. He also focussed on European history in terms of its conflicts, traumas and fears, proposing this way a more hermeneutic approach to it (Delanty 2002; Ifversen 2002; McDonald 1999). This can be used as a common denominator for making identities more salient. Finally, he also borrows the notion of “transactional identity” and particularly, the different kinds of loyalty that the variety of social and economic achievements of Europe generates. The combination of these concepts is based on their potential for cultural pluralisation and reflexivity, which allows for cultural fragmentation but also cultural innovation within a community (Connolly 1995).

D. Conclusion

The objective of this chapter has been to identify a series of prominent discourses that appear in the scientific and academic literature. Working on the basis that discourses are ideological, the analytical objective has been to attempt to unravel the dilemmas that are inherent in the scientific discourses about Europe and the EU. The scientific theories and paradigms that have been presented in this chapter have been analytically divided according to the way they negotiate two dilemmas:

firstly, whether culture is constructed in essentialist or constructivist terms and, secondly, whether Europe is constructed upon universalistic or particularistic values. Those discourses which negotiate culture in essentialist terms are informed by the ideology of nationalism and in particular ethno-nationalism. Culture is constructed as a historically given set of values that generate either bounding cultural and/or political identities, similar to the identities built by nation-states. On the contrary, the scientific discourses that negotiate culture in constructivist terms, in other words based on politics, laws and principles of democracy, are informed mainly by the Habermasian concept of “constitutional patriotism” or even by civic nationalism. The scientific discourses that are built upon particularistic visions for Europe construct the latter as a community with clear-cut boundaries that is characterised by social cohesion and is strongly influenced by modernist ideologies of nationalism. In contrast, the scientific discourses that are built upon universalistic visions of Europe, promote a universal model for Europe that is based on values of pluralism, democracy and civil society without identifying any boundaries with “others”. These discourses have their ideological resources in the political tradition of liberal democracy, moral universalism and the philosophy of Enlightenment.

The dilemmas that have been described in this chapter are so persistent that many of the scientific discourses that are focused on the elaboration of one dilemma, such as whether to promote culture in essentialist or constructivist terms, indirectly adopt a position also with regards to the second dilemma. So for example, many of the scientific discourses that promote an essentialist construction of culture promote either a universalistic or a particularistic vision of Europe. Accordingly, many scientific discourses that promote a constructivist theorisation of culture promote either a universalistic or a particularistic vision of Europe. Only two scientific discourses that have been reviewed attempt to transcend both dilemmas by either proposing to compromise their antitheses (e.g. the theoretical framework developed by Delanty), or by rejecting them totally (e.g. the post-modern theorisation of Europe as an adventure). The table 1 below summarises how these dilemmas organise the scientific discourses about Europe and culture discussed in this chapter.

The review of the dilemmas that underpin the intellectual ideology is seen as a necessary exercise in order to evaluate the dilemmas that subsequently emerge in the lived ideology and appear in the everyday discourses within the agencies. The intellectual discourses discussed in this chapter have been informed by the social realities in which they are constructed and which they attempt to explain (Baka 2004). The same occurs with the discourses of the individuals in the European agencies, which are similarly socially constructed. The two types of ideologies, intellectual and lived, interact with one another (Billig et al. 1988). This chapter has therefore paid special attention to the review of the dilemmas negotiated by the prominent scientific discourses since the latter

constitute important discursive resources that inform the lived ideology experienced in the agencies. The latter is discussed in greater detail in chapter nine which, apart from providing an analysis of the repertoires and dilemmas that pervade them, also searches for new ways of speaking about Europe and the practice of “working together” in the EU agencies.

Table 1. The most prominent scientific discourses on Europe and culture organised upon the two ideological dilemmas.

<i>Dilemmas:</i>	Particularism	Universalism
Essentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Europe as an ethno-national, cultural collectivity</i> (Cederman 2001; Smith 1992, 1995) ❖ <i>Europe as “United States of Europe” or as a federation</i> (de Rougement 1965; Sindjanski 2000; Delgado-Moreira 1997) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Europe as a moral heritage</i> (Brague 2002)
Constructivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Europe as a multicultural community</i> (Kraus 2003; Kymlicka 1995; Zamagni 2000) ❖ <i>Europe as a bounded political community</i> (Cederman 2001; Anderson 1991) ❖ <i>Europe as a way of life</i> (Deutch 1953; Deutch et al. 1957; Hutton 2002) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Europe as civic culture and ‘thin’ political identities</i> (Habermas 19987, 1992, 1998; Eder 2001; Eder & Giesen 2001; Weiler 1997b) ❖ <i>Europe as ‘cosmopolis’</i> (Nash 2003; Beck 2000) ❖ <i>Europe as a generating a new citizenship</i> (Meehan 2000; Soysal 1994)

Chapter 6. SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSES AND THEIR DILEMMAS ON EU AGENCIES

Following the same logic as in the previous chapter, the present one discusses how agencies have been understood in different theories dealing with the EU. It seeks to identify any specific ideological dilemmas that structure these theories and which may be used as discursive resources that individuals working in the agencies draw upon when they spoke about the role, nature and relation of the agencies to the EU. The EU view of agencies has been presented in Chapter two of the thesis. Here two more approaches - called the normative and the pragmatic – will be presented. The last part of this chapter will summarise the *problematique* around which the two approaches are structured, as well as the ideological dilemmas that pervade them.

A. Normative criteria applying for agencies

The justifications for the creation of national agencies are the difficulties of the legislative processes to deal with the growing complexity of issues that require regulation and the rapid development in highly technical and specialised policy areas (Kelemen 2002). As a result, discretionary rule-making and adjudicative powers are delegated to bureaucratic agencies that are able to provide the necessary technical expertise⁴⁷ (Kelemen 2002). Therefore, agencies are autonomous from their respective governments in order to enhance the credibility of their policy commitments.

The agencies are characterised as: a) operating at arm's length from the main hierarchical 'spine' of central institutions, b) performing public tasks e.g. service provision, regulation, adjudication, certification at a national level, c) consisting of public servants, d) subject to public administrative law procedures and e) financed by the state budget (Talbot et al. 2000).

Additionally, there is a common rhetoric regarding the agencies' purpose and supposed benefits in political, policy and administrative terms (Talbot et al. 2000). Politically, agencies are regarded as a method of enhancing the legitimacy of public institutions in the eyes of an increasingly sceptical and detached public. In policy terms, agencies are seen as a rational and strategic method for the definition of policy goals, means and outcomes. Finally, in administrative terms agencies are considered as less bureaucratic, performance oriented, consisting of flexible managers and motivated experts who are accountable to the central institutions so avoiding the diffusion of responsibility.

⁴⁷ White Paper on Governance, Report by the Working Group 3a "Establishing a Framework for Decision-Making Regulatory Agencies", Rapporteur A. Quero, June 2001, SG/8597/01-EN.

Reference is made often to the US agency model as the pioneer for the majority of public policymaking on both sides of the Atlantic and, indeed, there are some important parallels with the EU agencies (Majone 1996; Yataganas 2001). The creation of the agencies was not foreseen by either the US or the EU constitutions and their modus operandi was gradually developed thanks “to imaginative legislation and innovative legal rulings”⁴⁸ (Yataganas 2001: 36). Independent agencies emerged as a solution to problems of federal regulation in the United States⁴⁹. As will become obvious below, the establishment of EU agencies may appear to be a natural response to the expansion of the EU regulatory role in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

A1. The normative discourse on EU agencies: Independent EU Agencies with Power

Based on the above framework, Majone (1996; 2002a, b) and other scholars adopt a normative perspective for the Community agencies and their further establishment (Majone et al. 1996; Vos 2000a, b; Yataganas 2001). The basic principles have been presented in the White Paper on European Governance⁵⁰ and the reports of the European Commission governance groups⁵¹, in the Communication on the operation framework for the European Regulatory Agencies⁵² and more recently in the Communication on Building our common Future⁵³ which contains the proposals for the next financial framework 2007-2013.

These normative arguments about the nature and role of the EU agencies describe them as independent administrative entities that should have decision-making power of a regulatory (rule-making) or individual (adjudication) nature in a specific area of activity (Yataganas 2001). Majone defines an agency as “a part of government that is generally independent in the exercise of its functions and that by law has authority to take final and binding action affecting the rights and obligations of individuals” (Majone 2002b: 300). Hence, what characterises an agency is not its organisational form but its possession of legal authority to take a final and binding action. An agency status does not require that an agency exercises its power with complete independence (Majone 2001). Majone’s argument concerning the agencies as promoters of the European

⁴⁸ This is actually the reason that the EU agencies have provoked a debate that touches the constitutional foundations of the EU.

⁴⁹ Early examples include the Interstate Commerce Commission, while more recent examples include the Environment Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration. The last are important both because they have been politically highly contested and because they may provide a parallel for recent EU developments such as the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products (EMA), the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA).

⁵⁰ White Paper on European Governance, 25 July 2001, COM(2001) 428 final.

⁵¹ Everson, M., Majone, G., Metcalfe, L. & Schout, A. (2001), ‘The Role of Specialised Agencies in Decentralising EU Governance’, Report Presented to the Commission, (http://ec.europa.eu/governance/areas/group6/contribution_en.pdf).

⁵² Communication from the Commission on the Operating Framework for the European Regulatory Agencies of 11 December 2002, COM(2002) 718 final.

⁵³ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Building our common Future, Policy challenges and Budgetary means of the Enlarged Union 2007-2013 of 10 February 2004, COM(2004) 101 final.

governance is based on the condition that agencies are not subject to majoritarian redistributive pressures given that the purpose of regulation is micro-economic efficiency (Williams 2005; Everson 1995; Gerardin & Petit 2004).

Providing a more complete account of the normative case for the Community agencies requires a brief overview of the reasons for their creation as well as their advantages.

A1.1. Reasons for Agencies' Creation

The modus operandi for European regulation is based on the implementation of regulations through administrative decentralisation at the level of the member states. This has given rise to frequent problems such as the unequal transposition of directives, variable monitoring of their implementation, a variety of regulatory cultures, expertise and management skills across countries, failure to respect the principle of mutual recognition due to lack of mutual trust among the member states, variable certification procedures, different inspection procedures, and difficulties in the coordination of crisis management, such as the BSE crisis in 1996⁵⁴ (Yataganas 2001; Lafond 2001).

There were also other specific circumstances that occurred around the time that it was decided to establish the majority of the EU agencies. Dehousse (1997) points to the Single Market project and, in particular, the implementation of a high number of regulations without abandoning the decentralised model (in Kreher 1996). Furthermore, the fraud and mismanagement scandals within the Santer Commission and its resignation in 1999 revealed serious shortcomings in the capacity of the European Commission to deliver effective and legitimate policies (Majone 2000a, b; Vos 2000a, b). The progressive loss of influence by the Commission led to a lack of trust on the part of European citizens in national and European institutions⁵⁵ (Majone 2002b, c). At the same time, public perception of Community bureaucracy made it politically inconceivable to increase Community resources to enable it to carry out directly tasks that were decentralised to the national level⁵⁶ (Dehousse 1997).

These problems, along with the need for clearer identification of Community action to guarantee the objectives of European integration as well as improve the administrative structure of the EU in terms of efficiency, accountability and transparency gave an impetus to the founding of regulatory agencies⁵⁷ (Gerardin & Petit 2004).

⁵⁴ See footnote no. 51.

⁵⁵ See footnote no. 47.

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

A1.2. The Agencies' Benefits

In many respects, EU agencies, like their American counterparts, fulfil a very important public service function. The agencies' technical and/or scientific assessments and decisions are independent of political or contingent considerations, and this is seen as a way of securing policy consistency, consensus and credibility over time⁵⁸ (Kreher 1997; Ahredt 1998; Radaelli 1999). In this sense, agencies' operation contributes to better management of the scientific and technical expertise required in modern rulemaking procedures. Moreover, agencies, by addressing complex issues thrown up by market integration as well as rapid technological, economic and social changes, lighten the workload of other EC institutions and mainly the Commission which is able to concentrate on its core strategic functions (Vos 2000a, b; Kelemen 2002). To this end, the creation of European agencies is by no means a diminution of the Commission's power in the executive arena. The agencies perform functions that would otherwise not have been transferred to the European level at all, or that the Commission was happy to delegate such as some highly technical, labour- and resource intensive activities⁵⁹ (Kelemen 2002). Furthermore, the task of the agencies to collect scientific information across the EU improves the Community's monitoring capacity and provides the conditions for greater consistency in implementing policies. Also the agencies' administrative practices in their specialised policy area are spread across the member states (Gerard & Petit 2004). Additionally agencies are claimed to offer a greater clarity in budget management (activity-based budgeting) (Yataganas 2001). So agencies manage to address the implementation deficit of the EU with their knowledge, independence and credibility (Williams 2005) and intensify this way the Commission's political profile (Vos 2000a, b).

Agencies are considered to address also the EU's democratic deficit since they represent the European interest in certain sensitive and high profile areas by being non-majoritarian and devoid of political games⁶⁰ (Yataganas 2001). The EU agencies are seen as opening up a much more acute visibility of functions, which contributes to a better understanding of the EU, than what has been achieved by the Commission, Council and comitology (Vos 2000a, b; Yataganas 2001). This is because agencies as depoliticised bodies anxious to enhance their own public image and reputation based on the scientific correctness of their action and their outputs, seem better able to restore the credibility of the regulatory process and to regain public confidence in its reliability (Pollack 1997; Dehousse 1997; Williams 2005). Finally, the delegation of powers to agencies contribute to the development of European public service allowing for a greater degree of transparency in

⁵⁸ See footnotes no. 47 and 52.

⁵⁹ See footnote no. 51.

⁶⁰ White Paper on European Governance, Report by Working Group 3b "Decentralisation. Better involvement of national, regional and local actors", June 2001 (http://ec.europa.eu/governance/areas/group7/report_en.pdf).

Community affairs (Yataganas 2001). To this end, agencies are considered as intermediary institutions between state and civil society or as an instrument of state action which opens the door of governmental institutions to civil society⁶¹ (Kreher 1997).

The new European regulatory agencies are also likely to have a significant impact on regulation in the EU, through the formation of network cooperation between various participants and mainly competent national authorities. Such networks escape from conventional government charts since they consist of scientific and policy experts, government agencies of all sorts, non-governmental organisations, and all other informed knowledge and preference holders. The EU agencies have a key role in such network (Ladueur 1996; Majone 2002b) and they should interpret their role as co-ordinators of networks instead of small central regulators (Dehousse 1997: 259; Chiti 2001). To this end, regulation is no longer solely dependent on the willingness of national administrations⁶².

Finally, another positive characteristic is that agencies with detailed knowledge of a field may be more attractive workplaces for experts. Based on the example of national agencies, Majone (2002b) suggests that European agencies can be platforms on which the development of young cosmopolitan experts is promoted.

A2. The Limits of the normative discourse on EU agencies

The normative approach has been challenged not only with regard to the main source of inspiration and knowledge that derives from pre-existing national agencies and mainly the American ones, but also with regard to its feasibility and success for a more effective way of governance. Hence, several scholars express pessimism for an independent model of EU agencies that is justified by the general risks and dangers that the phenomenon of agencies may generate.

Regarding the concept of independence or autonomy that the current framework puts forward, two points have been raised. The first one refers to the meaning of this concept and its relevance inspired by the American context. The second element addresses the question whether an independent model of European agencies can be realised.

The notion of independence in the case of EU agencies refers to a separation of agencies' scientific and technocratic tasks from politics, yet independence in the US context is used in two different ways (Shapiro 1997). On the one hand, it is employed almost exclusively in budgetary terms: the agencies submit their budgets independently of the budgetary submissions of any of the cabinet departments. On the other hand, in the American case, independence refers to independence from the immediate control of either of the two major political parties and not from the control of the

⁶¹ See footnote no. 51.

⁶² See footnote no. 47.

three great constitutional branches. The US experience therefore has little relevance for the EU due to the peripheral role of political parties in the EU (Shapiro 1997).

Concerning the feasibility of US model of independent regulatory agencies at the EU level⁶³, a series of objections have been raised. From a legal point of view, Chiti (2004) supports the view that European agencies are specific organisational figures, which must be distinguished from other mechanisms of the Community system and whose role can only be understood in the context of a more general scheme of exercise of the European function. So the legal framework of the new administrative reality represented by the agencies is conceptualised inadequately (Chiti 2000). Hence the studies that identify decentralisation or delegation of power as the principal characteristic of the agencification process tend to neglect several other highly important legal elements of establishing regulations. More specifically, the decision to distribute tasks amongst several national and Community bodies is determined by the specific characteristics of the activity to be carried out (Chiti 2004). Therefore, “efficiency regarding the performance of this activity is the criterion for deciding a legislative intervention in a given sector which leads to the identification of competent national and Community authorities, a distinction between their respective powers and a definition of their area of interventions” (Chiti 2004: 415). Efficiency is a core concept of the normative paradigm, yet this is considered to derive automatically from the provision of regulatory powers to the agencies. But an agency’s function cannot be exercised in an autonomous manner, but in cooperation with other administrations by virtue of the specific tasks (Chiti 2004). In this respect, agencies are considered as auxiliary to the Commission but not independent from it. The latter may exercise certain powers over all European agencies, even if the intensity and actual content of the hierarchical relationship varies on a case-by-case basis.

Further problems of the normative agency model have been identified. Due to agencies’ regulatory power and independence from governmental powers, there is the risk of functional overlapping and incoherence of government policy, which can be eventually sources of coordination problems. These problems may be exacerbated firstly by rapid, economic, technological and social change, which make it impossible to separate among different spheres of governmental activity, and secondly, by the supervision of the agencies by intergovernmental management boards (Williams 2005). Coordination between different member states is expected to be problematic not only because national governments already face difficulties co-ordinating the policies of their own ministries but also because in many cases, policy issues emerge at the EU level before having been solidified and co-ordinated at national levels (Shapiro 1997). As a result, agencies need strong

⁶³ Ibid.

coordinating mechanisms in order not to increase the fragmented - if not “schizoid” – character of EU activity (Williams 2005: 92; Shapiro 1997).

Another problem concerns the fact that agencies are seen as capable of addressing the EU’s “democratic deficit” (Shapiro 1997). Yet independent regulatory agencies could be said to lack legitimacy because they are not democratically accountable (Sajó 2003). Even the legitimacy of their technocracy is doubted. This is due to a general reaction to technocratic government or alternatively a ‘legitimacy crisis’ of modern governments (Shapiro 1997). Given that information becomes highly relevant to policy and political outcomes and because scientific information and results cannot always be seen as unequivocal (e.g. perceptions of harm, benefit and risk are complex and highly variable), agencies and their output cannot be considered as neutral and objective (Shapiro 1997). Hence, it is doubtful whether independent agencies can be seen as offering credible information on the basis of their “independent expertise” and technocracy since opposing groups’ analyses and expertise interested in the same questions are inevitably produced (Shapiro 1997, 1996). As before, this argument is included in one of the basic lines of argumentation developed by the pragmatic discourse on agencies.

Moreover, agencies cannot be necessarily perceived by the public as a source for democratic legitimacy because- although they are accountable to many democratically legitimated bodies (Williams 2005; Curtin 2005), there is still the danger of being “captured” by some of the interests that they are supposed to regulate, following the American experience (Williams 2005). This issue becomes even more crucial in the case of agencies that develop networks and depend on cooperative relationships with the interested parties (Shapiro 1997). This is connected with the third problem of control, especially concerning the information agencies. In particular, the specialised information produced by the agencies cannot be controlled by politicians or any other responsible organ due to the latter’s lack of expertise (Shapiro 1996). So in many cases the Commission and Council may be constrained by the information produced by the agencies, since this can be problematic for the policy choices they opt for without having a way of controlling it (Shapiro 1997). In other words, the agencies’ functional interests can influence the territorial interests of the management boards or the Council. These problems are known to the advocates of the normative framework of independent regulatory EU agencies who nevertheless deny their importance.

Briefly it can be said that the above problems reflect perennial tensions between power, effectiveness and accountability. These tensions become more relevant since the agency’s ‘principal’ is not a democratic government but the *sui generis* agglomeration of the EU (Williams 2005).

A3. The ideological underpinnings of the normative discourse on EU agencies

From the basic arguments that have been previously presented and constitute the so-called normative discourse on EU agencies, we can identify its ideological underpinnings. Agencies as independent regulatory bodies presuppose the EU as a “regulatory state” (Majone 1996). Regulation seeks to prevent market failures and therefore leads to policy outcomes beneficial for all the involved actors without causing losses at anyone of them (Follesdal & Hix 2006). So regulation is not seen as producing policy outcomes that are redistributive or rewarding for some actors and damaging for others. Given that member states have delegated regulatory power to the EU level with success by protecting the respective policy areas from national majoritarian governments (e.g. the creation of single market, the monetary policy directed by the European Central Bank), then the EU as a regulatory state or agency can be also perceived as an efficient and successful model (Follesdal & Hix 2006).

Moreover, it could be said that such a representation of the EU moves beyond the traditional notion of a democratic state or democratic constitutionalism (Sajó 2003). This is due to the fact that decisions and policy outcomes are not taken by majoritarian institutions but from non-politicised bodies which are oriented to efficiency even at the cost of the majority. This is also the reason that this discourse is opposed to an EU dominated by the European Parliament which would lead to the non-desired politicisation of regulatory policy-making, and thus undermine the legitimacy of the EU (Majone 1998, 2000, 2002a, b; Dehousse 1995).

The emphasis on efficiency and mutual rewarding policy outcomes for all actors is consistent with a technocratic repertoire (Meynaud 1969; Putnam 1977). A core argument of the latter is that rational analysis and scientific scrutinising lead to unanimous consensus on policy solutions (Radaelli 1999). In contrast, political conflict, ideological debates and controversies on distributive issues of social justice are just obstacles for effectively achieving the pursued goals. Majone consequently believes that if the EU could increase the credibility of its policy-making through regulatory agencies, then the public would or should accept the EU as legitimate (Follesdal & Hix 2006).

Nevertheless, the vision of Europe as a regulatory state is criticised by other scientific discourses informed by different ideological views. It is argued that differences between member states in terms of their needs and preferences makes inevitable political decisions with redistributive effects. So, the delegation of regulation powers to independent agencies cannot be possible in all policy areas because of the need for democratic accountability (Joerges 1999).

B. EU agencies through a pragmatic analytical framework

The advocates of the normative framework for the agencies attribute the difficulties of the independent regulatory agency model to its inadequate implementation. Advocates of the more pragmatic approach, however, view the creation and expansion of the agencies as an outcome of multiple dynamics, which are inevitable in an entity such as the EU.

Following the pragmatic framework for the agencies, the goal is to identify the “pragmatic” reasons for the agencies’ creation, to provide a more “pragmatic” elaboration of the concept of independence as well as a more “pragmatic” account of the forms and structures of the existing agencies (Kelemen 2002). This framework is differentiated from the normative one in that it emphasises that the scope of agencies’ powers, their creation, role, function and management structures are not determined solely by considerations of administrative efficiency but rather by inter-institutional politics, intergovernmental dynamics and ultimately by issues relating to power (Kelemen 2002; Shapiro 1997). This discourse undermines the notion of independence and focuses on the reasons for the limited powers that are ultimately granted to the agencies. In contrast to the normative approach, the pragmatic discourse supports the argument that powers and autonomy are limited because of the interests and powers of various implicated actors.

B1. Agencies as dependent bodies with limited power

Delegation at the EU level cannot be conceived in terms of “a single principal delegating to a single or multiple non-competing agents” (Curtin 2005: 3). Instead there are often multiple principals involved (Curtin 2005). Principals may be member states (who delegate powers to supranational agents, typically the Council and the European Court of Justice), but also the Commission as well as the European Parliament (Kelemen 2002; Curtin 2005). According to Kelemen (2002: 95-96), principals delegate powers to the EU agencies to avoid two main risks. The first is the so-called bureaucratic drift, which occurs where a bureaucratic agent (e.g. an agency) develops and pursues a policy agenda different from that of its political principals. The second is the political drift, which occurs when holders of public authority direct a bureaucratic agency to pursue objectives different from those of the political coalition that originally delegated authority to the agency.

To this end, agency creators have attempted to design a structure that is shielded from future political interference by keeping a tight control of it. Control is a crucial issue since the various institutions need to keep a balance between protecting their own benefits deriving from the agencies without undermining the latter’s true value and role. The European Commission thought that by creating independent agencies it could in effect expand its powers. Member states consider the creation of agencies to be in their interest as they expect through agencies to wield more influence

and exert more control on EU law-making and implementation. The European Parliament sees its role regarding agencies as a way of establishing its influence in the EU policy activity. On the other hand, agencies are not only seen as beneficial for the various principals but also as a threat: the Commission loses some of its decision-making prerogatives, the Council loses direct control over the same part of regulatory activity, and member states feel that they lose the power of their respective national authorities (Yataganas 2001). These insecurities make the institutions exercise excessive controls over the agencies.

That said going through the reasons for the agencies' creation as well as the interests and interactions between the three main principals (Council, Parliament and Commission) is considered appropriate for better understanding of the pragmatic discourse on agencies.

B1.1. Reasons for Agencies' Creation

The setting up of agencies has not followed a coherent administrative method but it has responded to ad hoc circumstances, which explains also the agencies' differences in terms of their responsibilities and powers⁶⁴ (Geradin & Petit 2004). In view of that, some agencies were created as a response to an urgent situation (such as the European Agency of Reconstruction, the European Food Safety Authority following the BSE crisis and the European Maritime Safety Agency following the growing concern for maritime safety after the 'Erika' disaster) (Everson 1995). Other agencies emerged upon a Commission's proposal that intended to reduce its workload and extend its sphere of influence through controlling the created agencies. Additionally, some other agencies responded to the demand of member states to have a branch of the European public service in their territory⁶⁵. Therefore, this discourse perceives the reasons for the agencies' creation as rather political than functional.

B1.2. The Role of the Principals

B1.2.1. The role of Council

Member states in the Council of Ministers have long acted as political principals that delegate authority to bureaucratic agents at the EU level, primarily the European Commission. When the Council began delegating implementation powers to the Commission in the early 1960s, it established a system of oversight committees (Comitology) as a means to monitor the Commission's exercise of its executive powers (Joerges & Vos 1999). Accordingly, the Council has a key role in the establishment of the agencies. In particular, it has always been in favour of creating

⁶⁴ See footnote no. 52.

⁶⁵ Union Syndicale Fédéral (USF), *Organismes Décentralisées et Gouvernance*, Document de travail, Brussels, May 2003.

new agencies outside the Commission hierarchy on the condition that intergovernmental control is maintained, in order to minimise the supranational bureaucratic drift (Kelemen 2002). Therefore, like most EU committees and the Commission, agencies are not independent but act under the control of member states (Krapohl 2004).

In particular, member states control agencies' operating procedures and setting up of their goals through the management boards, which are designed on the principle of over-proportional representation of the member states⁶⁶ (Yataganas 2001; Kelemen 2002). Such a composition of the management boards reproduces the member states' representation structure of the Council itself, since national representatives act as defenders of their national interests, which many times are formed by the respective national agencies⁶⁷ (Shapiro 1997). Consequently, the Council does not promote the creation of powerful independent agencies, but instead bodies with limited power, which are unable to threaten the power of their national bureaucracies. This behaviour has made researchers consider the agencies as offices and branches of national administrations rather than as a promising solution to the problems of EU governance (Stevens 2002b).

The power of member states is also reflected in the common situation of derailing proposals for agencies. In other cases, the tensions between member states in the Council questions the degree of credible commitment of member states to the agencies' expertise. Research has shown that in certain policy areas, such as the food safety sector, member states are not committed to the agencies, which consequently undermines the agency's credibility (Krapohl 2004).

Furthermore, member states' power is expressed in the control of the agencies' budget that is related also to their struggle for influence on the overall EU budget (Yataganas 1998). This issue is also closely linked to the decisions about the geographical location of the agencies. The latter is the outcome of long and tense discussions, a fact that has attracted the attention of the press⁶⁸. Certainly, such discussions are not without disadvantages. Apart from undermining the credibility of the EU to bring the institutions closer to the citizens, the intergovernmental tensions also cause administrative and practical problems, particularly at the delicate start-up stage of the agencies'

⁶⁶ See footnote no. 47.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ 'European voice' drew emphasis on the struggle of Finland for having the Food Safety Agency in its territory against its competitors, Parma and Barcelona. It was stressed that "countries are lobbying in every big summit" (European Voice, 1 March 2001: 7). Similar to this issue the 'Financial Times' wrote: "Yet for all the optimism and hype surrounding the new body, the EU has so far failed to agree on one key element of the package- the small matter of where to base it. The sitting of the strong agency has fallen victim to the now traditional horse-trading between EU governments over who should pay host to myriad EU bodies. Additionally the location of the food agency that implies problems of recruiting the necessary expert staff is not going to be easy if they have no idea where they are going. Despite the need for a more focused and concerted approach to food safety is clear to everyone, this has failed to stop the kind of wrangling which has accompanied the award of EU agencies in the past." (Sep 5, 2001: 25); see also the <http://www.euractiv.com> under the title "Location and intergovernmental interests" concerning EFSA, Eurojust and EMSA.

activities. These include delays in selecting a provisional location, recruiting provisional staff and other practical difficulties in switching activities to the definitive location⁶⁹ (Geradin & Petit 2004). This is why in most cases a new agency has been provisionally located in Brussels⁷⁰.

Overall agencies are not seen as independent from Council politics, since the latter seems to work on a purely ad hoc basis inventing a new or modified formula for the establishing of each agency. This process contributes to overall structural opacity and reduces the credibility and the significance of the agencies (Curtin 2005).

B1.2.2. The role of the European Parliament

The Parliament played little role - just consultative or weak in legislative terms - in the design of the first agencies since until recently it had little oversight of the Commission⁷¹ (Kelemen 2002; Curtin 2005). In other words, the Parliament could not act as a political principal. Instead it has entrusted to the Commission the task to serve the “Community interest” in performing its regulatory activities through the agencies, as the most promising means for the expansion of the EU’s regulatory capacity⁷² (Kelemen 2002: 26).

After the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties, the Parliament gained legislative powers and became a co-equal legislator with the Council (Kelemen 2002). Moreover, the Parliament considered that member states’ representatives in the agencies undermined its own influence at the implementation stage. Consequently, it made certain demands over the design and oversight of EU agencies, the Commission’s executive activities and over policy outcomes in general (Curtin 2005). These demands were expressed by a request for a coherent approach to the “Community Agency model”. Due to the different rules governing the setting-up of agencies, their structure, relation to the Community authorities and issues related to the EU budget, the Parliament called for enhanced transparency, efficiency and accountability in the agencies’ activity and management. So, based on financial and administrative constraints as well as the need to avoid duplication of tasks⁷³, the Parliament has been more reluctant than the Commission and the Council concerning the creation of new agencies.

More particularly, the agencies’ funding and finances constitute a crucial issue for the Parliament. The new Financial Regulation⁷⁴ introduced provisions having direct effects on agencies’ founding regulations, which strengthened the Parliament’s role as being the agencies’ budgetary authority.

⁶⁹ See footnote no. 52.

⁷⁰ Such as the case of EASA.

⁷¹ See footnote no. 47.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dt/570/570838/570838en.pdf.

⁷⁴ N° 1605/2002.

The new Regulation spells out Parliament's competence to give discharge to all bodies receiving grants charged to the EU budget. So quite often agency budgets are placed on reserve (Curtin 2005)⁷⁵. The Parliament considers agencies very expensive so it recommends the search of other external resources outside the Community budget. Regarding the administration of the agencies, the Parliament has supported inquiries by the European Ombudsman into the administrative procedures of the agencies and has pressurised for adopting and publicising administrative codes of conduct and detailing procedures with citizens⁷⁶.

Another crucial issue for the Parliament is the direct monitoring of the regularity, relevance and accuracy of the information produced by the agencies. The basic idea is that agencies should behave as not only specialised bodies but also as political actors and thus the scientific information produced should always be diffused among public interest groups (Kelemen 2002; Curtin 2005). The Parliament also seeks to enhance a more harmonised framework for the status of agencies' staff⁷⁷.

B1.2.3. The role of the European Commission

The Commission is a supranational agent to which the Council and the Parliament delegate powers (Kelemen 2002; Curtin 2005: 25). Yet it acts as a principal in the case of European agencies, to whom it has delegated some of its powers and tasks. So the Commission can influence the agenda in the EU's legislative process regarding the design of new agencies. In many cases the Commission sees the agencies as a means for the expansion of its authority, so it delegates some of its implementation and administration tasks, particularly when these cannot be satisfactorily achieved⁷⁸ (Yataganas 2001; Kelemen 2002). But in many other cases the Commission may block delegation to agencies when it feels that these can take away its power in policy areas in which it has far-reaching and well-established competences (Kelemen 2002). In these cases, the Commission forms a rather hierarchical than a collaborative relationship with agencies, which often becomes confrontational. The Commission controls the agencies by imposing on them administrative procedures concerning the management of financial and personnel matters to such a degree that agencies are sometimes considered as being "Brussels" (Shapiro 1997). The result is that agencies usually find themselves forced to adapt their working methods to those of the Commission, without having though the same institutional weight or resources. Moreover, the Commission may not feel obliged to base its policies on the scientific results produced by the agencies. This fact leads to

⁷⁵ For instance, in order to deal with enlargement expenses, 50% of the agencies budget was put on reserve.

⁷⁶ See footnote no. 51.

⁷⁷ See footnote no. 73.

⁷⁸ See footnote no. 52 and 51.

some duplication of the work by the responsible Commission's department and creates frustration among the agencies' experts⁷⁹ (Yataganas 2001). Inevitably, such attitudes impede the overall governing efficiency while an image of agencies as a "tolerated anomaly" of the executive system dominates⁸⁰.

Therefore, the Commission's enthusiasm of delegating extensive competences to the agencies including the power to issue regulations in the early 1990s, has been substituted in the late 1990s - and after the Parliament's modified roles and demands - by the Commission's idea of expanding the EU's regulatory capacity without delegating extensive powers to agencies.

An example

The antagonism between the various actors regarding the powers delegated to the EU agencies is reflected in the form, function and power that the agencies acquire. A vivid example is provided through a comparison between the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Medicinal Agency (EMA) (in Everson et al. 2001 (see footnote no. 52); Kelemen 2002). With regard to the first one, the specialised policy area of environment is a sensitive one at both national and European level. The member states in the Council opposed the creation of a powerful EU-level regulatory agency. Moreover, the Commission already had extensive regulatory authority in the area of environmental protection. As a result, the agency's role was limited to information gathering and dissemination (Kelemen 2002).

By contrast, in the case of the EMA, there was much less conflict between the political principals over the delegation of regulatory authority. All member states shared an interest in speeding up the process of drug approval, and differences between their standards for drug approval had been significantly reduced through the proposal for a network structure that preserved a central role for national regulatory authorities. The Commission had little to lose from the delegation of regulatory authority to a European agency, as it had little authority in this area. To this end, the EMA was entrusted with regulatory power (Kelemen 2002).

B2. The ideological underpinnings of the normative discourse on EU agencies

It is evident that in the design of EU administrative structures, the European Commission, the European Parliament and member states that support an extensive supranational role in regulation must often compromise with member states that are more sceptical about delegating authority to supranational bodies. This need for compromise brings to the fore the fact that there is not a

⁷⁹ See footnote no. 47.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

common vision of the agencies' position in the EU architecture. The EU is seen as a polity with political powers fragmented between a number of veto players (Tsebelis & Garrett 2001).

The consequences of the described system are various, both negative and positive. With regard to negative outcomes, we could say that there is a lack of coherence and principles of good governance of the agencies⁸¹. Agencies are seen as operating in the “grey zone” between pure administration and politics. They also face serious difficulties in achieving their managerial, technical and information-gathering tasks and in contributing to policy-making (Vos 2000a, b). Moreover, agencies are said to be faced with non-transparent procedures of financial controls as well as unnecessarily strict supervision (such as daily interference and micro-management) that are detrimental to their smooth operation and make them prisoners of political interests (Yataganas 2001). This argument is usually raised by the advocates of the normative discourse since it confirms part of its argumentation for the provision of independent powers to agencies.

With respect to a more positive representation of the agencies in the pragmatic discourse, a couple of points can be raised. The increasing involvement of the EU authorities in the administrative action has not weakened the role of the national administrations and similarly the supranational authorities have not substituted the national ones in the EU policy implementation. Instead what has taken place is a partial fusion (or a “copinage technocratique”) between Community and national officials often assisted by national experts, private bodies and representatives of interest group (Chiti 2000). So in many respects the agencies' function is not exclusively seen in the supranational or the national order. They manage to escape from the interventions of multiple political interests by being oriented to the proper working of the internal market and to the provision of answers to technical problems that emerge from it. Therefore, as Chiti points out agencies operate in an “adespota arena”, a continuum of subjects (national and supranational public powers, social actors, lobbies) (Chiti 2000: 342). In this sense, the administratisation of the integration process through agencies involves the reduction in the national state's ordering function without, however, leading to the rise of a federal community as the new unitary and sovereign subject (Chiti 2000).

C. Summarising the dilemmas at stake

In an attempt to present the framework in which agencies operate, two basic lines of argumentation have been identified regarding the European agencies. The first adopts a normative stance and is informed by a particular conception of agencies based on insights from the US agencies. This conceptualisation of the agencies as ‘independent’ is predicated on a view of the EU as a regulatory state. The pragmatic approach, without ignoring the paradigm of US regulatory federal agencies,

⁸¹ Ibid.

challenges an independent regulatory agency model for the EU. Here the complex power politics of the EU are seen as constraining the development of a clear-cut and well-designed agency model.

Both frameworks are concerned with the scope of the agencies to wield some degree of power. According to the normative template, the greater the degree of autonomy an agency has from its political masters, the better. This is because under these conditions it is presumed to be more likely to achieve the functional tasks that have been set. This serves as the basis for a normative criterion, that of efficiency. Similarly, the pragmatic approach is more directly concerned with the particular power configurations that gave rise to the agencies. In this case, the empirical explanation relates to the power politics governing the creation of an agency. These power politics concern the agencies' function and whether they can be agents of Europeanisation or, instead, tools to preserve the status quo of the principals involved.

Following a post-structuralist, critical discursive perspective, one of the aims is to identify a key concept that lies at heart of the puzzle of the European agencies. Given that in the present chapter the dilemma of power emerges consistently, the concept that has been chosen is decentralisation or independence. In the empirical chapter that examines the everyday discourses of the individuals working in three European agencies the aim is to focus on the way agencies are constructed and investigate the meanings attributed to the notion of decentralisation or independence. We will investigate whether the scientific discourses for the explanation of the agencies are actually interacting with the everyday discourses in the agencies (Billig et al. 1988) and, furthermore, whether the dilemma of power is one that also pervades the everyday discourses in the agencies.

Chapter 7. METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1988). Discourse analysis does not consist of a prescribed analytic and methodological scheme, at least as this term is understood elsewhere in social psychology, - that is the implementation of a set of mechanical rules for processing data (Reicher & Hopkins 1996; Potter & Wetherell 1987; Edley 2001). Rather the variety of discourse analysis techniques and the diversity of phenomena under investigation make the form of analysis vary from study to study (Reicher & Hopkins 1996). Researchers adopt the analytical model that a) makes sense in light of the particular study, b) best brings out best the discourse of the participants or the texts studied, c) addresses their research questions and d) analyses better the type of data that is collected, given the contextual and interpretative sensibilities of the analysis (Phillips & Hardy 2002; Wetherell et al. 2001a). Evidently, the choice of analytical model should be justified in relation to the theoretical principles of the study (Phillips & Hardy 2002).

A. The analytical model of the present study

This study employs three different techniques including both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data were collected through standardised questionnaires, interviews and participant observation (Atkinson 1990; Edley & Wetherell 1999). The interviews constituted the main method for collecting the everyday discourses in the agencies. The participant observation⁸², as well as the collection of various other types of relevant documentation related to the selected EU agencies, served for building up a much fuller idea of the way the participants' linguistic practices are organised compared to one source alone (interview talk) (Potter & Wetherell 1987).

With regard to the standardised questionnaires, used to measure the cultural norms and expectations in various types of organisations, it should be noted that previous discourse analytic studies have also employed quantitative and qualitative methods. These studies were based on the premise that

⁸² Participant observation was carried out during one month of fieldwork in each of the three European agencies. Fieldwork included attending formal working meetings and participating in the agency's everyday activities, such as eating in the cafeteria and discussing with people their experiences in the agency. This facilitated the research process as a whole and provided a more conscious and theorised understanding of how to be a cultural member of the agencies or develop an insider's point of view (e.g. Sapienza 1985; Tunstall 1985). The reflexive consideration of local ethnographic knowledge was used to frame the overall social context in which discourses were constructed and interpreted.

It should be noted that part of the "ethnographic" work of participant observation was also the gathering of useful formal and informal material. Formal material included the agency's official documentation, such as its founding regulation and other legal documents, external evaluations and reports, annual and technical reports sent to the director or papers prepared from internal groups, staff committee documentation including requests, petitions and letters, electronic announcements etc. along with the agency's logos and symbols. Informal material included the non-recorded conversations and discussions with individuals working in the agencies. Both types of material were examined based on their relevance to the research questions (Marshall 1994).

data deriving from quantitative tools may give an impression of dominant tendencies within the population, for example when assessing the level of support for particular policies (Verkuyten 2004) or may get as much information as possible about the context (Wodak & Meyer 2001). The questionnaires used in the present research addressed crucial issues arising from earlier studies of other European institutions. In this sense, questionnaires can be seen as a separate analysis, that nevertheless have a complementary role. In addition, the information and results from the questionnaires were used to inform the social and cultural context in which everyday discourses in the agencies were interpreted.

The following section presents the two main tools that have been used in this study.

A1. Interviews

Within discursive psychology, semi-structured and unstructured interviews are the dominant methods of producing material as opposed to questionnaires or structured interviews (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). To this end, it is worth mentioning the differences that exist between interviews in discourse analysis and those of conventional interviews, as commonly used in positivist epistemology (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Potter & Wetherell 1987).

Interviews in positivist epistemology are usually structured with a set of standard, pre-formulated and ordered questions. Answers should be provided in such a way that they can be summarised or rather classified in categories constructed by the researcher with a view to producing results about underlying views concerning the individuals or the groups of the research. These can then be generalised to a wider population (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). Hence, importance is attached to enhance consistency in the interviewees' answers, which is considered as a measure of reliability in the way the phenomenon under investigation is captured (Potter & Wetherell 1987). Consistency is also important in discourse analysis yet as much as variation. Both consistency and variation refer to the identification of regularities of discursive patterns in language and not to the individuals' responses provided during the interviews (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Marshall 1994).

Another basic difference between interviews in discourse analysis and other traditional approaches concerns the role and task of the interviewer. In traditional approaches the interviewer should be as distant, neutral and uninvolved as possible, a position that ensures that the responses provided remain uninfluenced by the effects of social interaction (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). In this way, the reliability of the interview is enhanced. Furthermore, questions should be asked in a specific way and without variations and changes, a condition that is necessary for the validity of the interview (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

In contrast, the interview in discourse analysis is considered as a form of social interaction in which the interviewer is expected to be active and intervene (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Marshall 1994). The interviewer's questions are expected to influence the answers given – by raising topics and problems that the participants would not otherwise have considered. Alternatively the interviewer may discourage certain topics as unsuitable (Taylor 2001a). Additionally, the condition of reflexivity, which makes it look like almost an informal conversational exchange, is relevant for this type of interview (Potter & Mulkay 1985; Potter & Wetherell 1987). Discussing in such an interview context makes it easier for the interviewee to also influence the interview agenda and produce long accounts without having to follow the strict guidelines of conventional interview structures (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). In the analysis of the interviews, the contributions of the interviewee and the interviewer are both examined in an effort to identify all the interpretative resources on which they both draw in constructing their accounts (Marshall 1994; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Wetherell & Potter 1992).

This reflexive position adopted by both the interviewer and the interviewee does not necessarily mean that interviews in discourse analysis are without structure. Indeed, there are various techniques that are applied. These can include: a) to address an issue more than once in the course of a number of different general topics, in case there is a feeling by the interviewer that this has not been discussed enough or, in case the respective topic can be seen as sensitive (Potter & Wetherell 1987); b) to check that all the relevant themes of an interview are covered, even if not in the same order or with the same formulations (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002); and c) to take into consideration both aspects related to the themes and to the interaction throughout the interview (Kvale 1996). To this end, language is both a tool for and an object of analysis (Jensen & Janowski 1991: 32).

Interviews based on a discursive psychology approach are deemed as an appropriate way for gathering the discursive material in a concentrated manner for the analysis of this study. More specifically, interviews as informal social conversations are seen as especially suitable for the organisational context in which the research was conducted - since they address potential problems related to, for instance, issues of confidentiality and reluctance of participation (Phillips & Hardy 2002). Indeed, participants felt comfortable without being under strict interrogatory rules in which the notion of providing a correct answer often creates stress and a hesitation to speak.

A2. Questionnaires

The first part of the analytical design aimed at collecting information about the cultural norms and expectations of the individuals inside the agencies. This information is considered to represent “objectified” parameters regarding the role, practices and function of the agencies. The responses

gathered by the questionnaires were considered as a part of the contextual material, for thereby facilitating the interpretation of the discourses by taking into consideration the specific context of the European agencies as EU organisations.

A standardised questionnaire was distributed to the individuals working in the European agencies. This was the “Organisational Culture Inventory” (OCI)⁸³, - developed by Cooke and Lafferty (1989) and utilised by the “Human Synergistics” - that focuses on measuring culture within organisations. It seeks to assess behavioral norms and expectations, associated with shared beliefs and values held by the members of the organisation.

The OCI focuses on behaviors that facilitate fitting in to the organisation and meeting expectations of co-workers. It consists of twelve basic subscales (Humanistic/Helpful, Affiliation, Achievement, Self-Actualization, Approval, Conventionality, Dependence, Avoidance, Oppositional, Power, Competitive, Perfectionism), all of which are subsets of two fundamental dimensions termed “task-people” and “security-satisfaction”.

A more detailed description of the questionnaire will be presented in the following chapter in which the results will also be discussed.

B. Analytical Process

B1. Data Collection Process

The process of data collection took place in the period between the end of April until the end of September in 2001, excluding the months of July and August due to summer holidays. In EMCDDA, the questionnaire and interview data were collected from 20th April until 23rd May, in Ohim from 25th May until 26th June and in Cedefop from 10th September until 11th October. The distribution and collection of the questionnaires as well as the conduct of the interviews took place simultaneously. Yet the process of collecting the questionnaires was fulfilled in all three agencies before conducting the appropriate number of interviews. This allowed the researcher to start with the analysis of the questionnaires while interviews were still taking place. Inevitably some of the results of the questionnaires’ analysis informed the themes discussed in the interviews. Although this sequence of actions was not designed from the beginning, it turned out to be very useful for structuring the interviews.

⁸³ The creation of OCI follows after the development of “Life Styles Inventory” (Lafferty 1973), an inventory that assesses the individual’s self-perceptions regarding twelve styles which are related to managerial effectiveness, quality of interpersonal relations and individual satisfaction.

B1.2. Interviews

Individuals participated in the interviews either after the interviewer's invitation or upon their personal initiative. People who have been working in the agencies for a very short period of time, interns and some consultants or experts with external contracts were excluded from the interviews. A total of seventy interviews were conducted, of which nineteen took place in the agency in Lisbon, thirty-two in Alicante and nineteen in the agency in Thessaloniki.

The interviews took place during working hours within either the interviewees' and/or the interviewer's office or at the cafeteria during coffee breaks or lunch time. They lasted on average thirty minutes (ranging from one hour and fifteen minutes to twenty minutes). The duration of the interviews was an issue since these were taking place during working hours. The interviews were conducted in an informal atmosphere and interviewees felt free to express their views. Many interviewees reported that the interview was a pleasant and constructive break from their work. Nonetheless, due to this informal atmosphere, the discussions were subjected to occasional interruptions, such as phone calls, etc. The anonymity of the interviewees and the confidentiality of the discussions were guaranteed.

The interviews were conducted either in English, Italian or Greek, languages in which the interviewer was fluent. The choice of the language was usually made by the interviewee depending on his/her ease with one of the three languages. The majority of the interviews were conducted in English. Sixty-eight interviewees agreed to have their interviews tape-recorded, and these were all fully transcribed.

The themes discussed in the interviews, and the final list of questions that structured the interviews were refined and reworded a number of times throughout the design of the study (e.g. during the ethnographic work that was taking place in the agencies and in many occasions by the results of the analysis of the questionnaires that happened to be completed prior to the interviews). So, for instance, the same themes that were discussed in all agencies were adapted to events and situations that were closer to every agency's routine. The interview themes were organised on a detailed form that provided a basis for the interviewer to check whether all questions were raised during the interviews. Although the same questions were raised, they were not necessarily covered in the same order. This was particularly useful for the analysis as it allowed for the examination of variability in the use of different repertoires (Wetherell & Potter 1992).

The topics first discussed during the interviews concerned the reasons why the interviewees joined the agency: this was seen as a useful way of starting the discussion, developing a comfortable atmosphere and as a good basis for moving on to topics closely related to the research questions.

Secondly, the interviewees were asked to discuss the issue of “working together” with individuals from every country of the EU. In case there was the need for more clarification, it was suggested to the interviewees to comment on their communication with ‘others’, their working relations, practices etc. and also provide the reasons for their views. A third topic concerned the interviewees’ working routine as well as their opinions about future reform, that they considered appropriate for their agency. The fourth issue focused on the agencies’ creation, role, nature and relation to the broader EU. Interviewees were also asked to provide their views on why agencies are decentralised and the meanings and implications of this. Finally, and usually by the end of the interview, the interviewees were invited to speak about their expectations and plans for the future at a professional and personal level.

B1.3. Questionnaires

Respondents were asked to answer the 120 questions included in the OCI in terms of their organisation, and their sub-units, such as services and departments. Attached to the standardized questionnaire, there was another questionnaire⁸⁴ designed by the researcher that attempted to collect data concerning employees’ sex, nationality, languages, working positions, grade, working contract and previous working experiences in national or multinational organisational contexts and their significance. There were also questions inspired by the findings of previous researches within European organisations (see chapter three). These aimed at measuring the respondents’ motives for getting a job in the agency as well as the criteria applied in getting a job in the agency, the role of nationality in internal communication and whether there were national stereotypes. Respondents were asked to comment on working together with other Europeans, whether their work in a European agency has affected their beliefs on the EU in general, and their opinions about the degree of agencies’ independence and the reasons for its limitation, as well as the meaning of decentralisation and, finally, their perceptions about their task. Lastly, a set of other questions focused on the host city in which the agency is located, their degree of familiarity with the local language, and their views regarding relations with the local community⁸⁵.

B2. Research Sample

Following the premises of discursive psychology, the research sample was chosen according to the criterion of variety and differentiation rather than representativeness. The three agencies studied were selected from three different functional categories as discussed in chapter two (see table 1).

⁸⁴ This questionnaire is included and presented in the Appendix B.

⁸⁵ Not all the topics included in the questionnaire were analysed and discussed in the present thesis. It is planned that the issues that are not discussed here to be analysed and presented in a later paper.

The following sections discuss in detail the data collected from the questionnaires and the interviews.

B2.1. Questionnaires

The sample of questionnaire respondents was drawn with a view to size and representativeness. The goal was to collect a high number of responses from as many as possible categories of employees. However, a series of problems were encountered. These concerned employees' reluctance and/or tiredness to fill in the questionnaires, given that in all three agencies external and internal evaluations had either preceded the present study (such as in EMCDDA, Cedefop) or were taking place simultaneously (such as in Ohim), in which individuals in the agency were asked to fill in various types of questionnaires. Additionally, a series of recent internal problems and conflicts in some agencies implanted some fear and suspicion among the employees. Finally, filling in the questionnaires along with the request to participate in an interview turned out to be as problematic since it appeared as an extra task to the already heavy workload. The overall response rate in the questionnaires in all the three agencies was 40% (294 completed and returned questionnaires), which, given the described circumstances, was considered adequate.

In EMCDDA, questionnaires were distributed to sixty-one individuals and forty-seven questionnaires were completed giving a response rate of 77%. In Ohim, 182 out of 580 questionnaires were completed. This low response rate (31.4%) was due in part to the fact that a high number of individuals were absent because of missions or holidays when the research was taking place. Furthermore, the agency's personnel were situated in three different buildings and this did not facilitate the researcher developing close informal contacts with them. Hence, this led to a lack of an interest in the research on the part of some employees. In Cedefop, the questionnaires were distributed to 101 employees out of the 135 indicated in the personnel list. Out of the 101 distributed questionnaires, 65 were completed, giving a response rate of 64.4%.

B2.2. Interviews

Given that both tools, quantitative and qualitative, aim at fulfilling different goals, the samples of individuals for the questionnaires and the interviews were chosen according to different criteria. According to discursive psychology, the number of individuals participating in interviews is not really relevant. Discursive patterns can be created and maintained by just a few people (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Taylor 2001a). Indeed, it is argued by many analysts that small samples of texts, particularly interview transcripts, are quite adequate for conducting an in-depth exploration of discursive forms (Marshall 1994; Potter & Wetherell 1987). A wide range of interpretative repertoires can emerge and produce more valid information than hundreds of questionnaires or

survey responses (Potter & Wetherell 1987). Too much data may simply increase the labour involved without adding extra information to the analysis (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Taylor 2001a).

Researchers have normally conducted a wide range of interviews because important discursive patterns are not recognizable in advance (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984). In this study, when it was perceived by the interviewer that the same discursive patterns were repeated without new information being added, then this was taken as an indication regarding the sufficiency of the conducted interviews. This is a common practice in discourse analysis. But generally there is no correct natural limit and thus all participants who were offered to participate in an interview were welcome independently from the fact that a certain amount of interviews had already been achieved (see also Baka 2004).

As has already been mentioned, achieving variety in terms of linguistic patterns rather than individuals' characteristics is an important condition (Marshall 1994). Nonetheless, it is common in discourse analytic studies to build a sample that is balanced in terms of the various participants' characteristics, certainly those that are deemed relevant for the research (Wetherell 2001b). In other words, while the categories constructed by the researcher may not be the same as those that the participants identify for themselves, we need to make sure that all potential groups are included in the study (Wood & Kroger 2000). Thus, the sample may be designed to be broad and inclusive since the aim is to find participants who are "typical" as well as "exceptional" (Taylor 2001a).

The present study attempted to secure interviews with employees having various characteristics. Tables 1 and 2 below, present the individual characteristics of the interviewees within the three agencies. Information concerning the individuals' characteristics was gathered from lists of every agency's personnel in which their nationality, grade, working position and task were recorded. Although participation in the interviews was voluntary, the researcher kept a record of the interviewees and their characteristics. When there was a need to include interviewees with certain characteristics, the researcher invited those with the relevant characteristics to participate in the interview.

Table 1. Interviewees' individual characteristics

	EMCDDA	Ohim	Cedefop	Total	
<i>Number of interviewees:</i>	19	32	19	70	
<i>Characteristics of the interviewees:</i>					
<i>Sex:</i>	Male:	52.6% (10) ⁸⁶	53.1% (17)	61.2% (12)	55.7% (39)
	Female:	47.4% (9)	46.9% (15)	36.8% (7)	44.3% (31)
<i>Grade</i>	A:	57.9% (11)	56.3% (18)	47.4% (9)	54.3% (38)
	B:	21.1% (4)	25% (8)	31.2% (6)	25.7% (18)
	C:	21.1% (4)	18.8% (6)	21.1% (4)	20% (14)
<i>Working Position:</i>	Heads, managers, supervisors:	26.3% (5)	21.9% (7)	15.8% (3)	21.4% (15)
	Experts, Scientific administrators:	36.8% (7)	40.6% (13)	31.2% (6)	37.1% (26)
	IT, Translators, Specialised assistants	15.8% (3)	18.7% (6)	26.3% (5)	20% (14)
	Administrative/ technical staff:	21.1% (4)	18.7% (6)	26.3% (5)	21.4% (15)
<i>Age:</i>	20-30 years:	21.1% (4)	18.7% (6)	10.5% (2)	17.1% (12)
	31-40 years:	26.3% (5)	40.6% (13)	31.2% (6)	34.3% (24)
	41-50 years:	42.1% (8)	21.9% (7)	31.2% (6)	30% (21)
	51-60 years:	10.5% (2)	18.7% (6)	26.3% (5)	18.6% (13)

Table 2. The nationalities of the interviewees⁸⁷

Country of origin	Rate of participation
1. Austria	2.9% (2)
2. Belgium	11.4% (8)
3. Denmark	2.9% (2)
4. Finland	1.4% (1)
5. France	15.7% (11)
6. Germany	14.3% (10)
7. Greece	11.43% (8)
8. Italy	8.6% (6)
9. Netherlands	5.7% (4)
10. Norway	1.4% (1)
11. Portugal	5.7% (4)
12. Spain	10% (7)
13. Sweden	1.4% (1)
14. UK	5.7% (4)
15. Mixed Nationality	1.43% (1)

In EMCDDA and Cedefop, the interviewees came from ten different countries whereas the interviewees in Ohim come from thirteen different countries.

⁸⁶ The number in brackets indicates the number of the interviewees.

⁸⁷ The interviewees' nationalities are not presented in detail for every agency separately, since this could jeopardise the confidentiality of some of the interviewees' identities, who belong to categories including one or two interviewees.

B3. Analysis of the interview material

The analysis of interview material involves a series of steps (Potter & Wetherell 1994; Phillips & Hardy 2002; Taylor 2001b).

B3.1. Transcriptions

All the conducted and tape-recorded interviews were transcribed in their entirety including both the interviewer's and interviewee's talk (Wetherell & Potter 1992; Marshall 1994; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). According to Taylor (2001a), the transcription is an essential step in the analytic process of discourse analysis since it turns the oral talk into a written document, namely the transcript. Furthermore, it permits the continuous reading of the written documents and an elaborated analysis of the detail. It is because of this that the transcripts are valuable (Wood & Kroeger 2000; Taylor 2001a). The degrees and types of the details included in a transcript are linked with the specific research questions that a study aims to address, as well as the discourse analytic stance adopted by the researcher (Stubbe et al. 2003). Needless to say, different approaches to discourse analysis focusing on different research questions have developed their own transcription systems (Stubbe et al. 2003; Taylor 2001a; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002; Wodak 2001). The best known list of symbols has been devised by Gail Jefferson, and most researchers use this or a simplified version.

Transcription, even in its most basic form, is an extremely slow and time-consuming process⁸⁸ (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Marshall 1994; Taylor 2001a). In the present research the transcription of the conducted interviews in the three agencies turned out to be one of the most exhausting steps in the analysis. Several practical problems were faced some of which are considered to be common in the practice of transcription (such as the struggle to identify what exactly is said in instances when there is too much of external noise or speakers speak with a particular low voice) and some others that emerged due to the specific interview context (such as the use of different languages often by non-native speakers and the difficulty this posed for the transcriber in understanding what was said⁸⁹).

In the present study, the transcription style adopted is a shorter version of the Jeffersonian system. This limited version⁹⁰ includes symbols for indicating speech errors, long pauses, gross changes of volume and emphasis and laughs, but ignored most features to do with speed, breathing and intonation, which are details of oral discourse that are considered important for Conversation

⁸⁸ Estimates of how long it takes to transcribe an hour of recorded material range from about four hours for the simplest transcription of an audio-recording to perhaps more than twenty hours for a detailed transcription of video (Taylor 2001a).

⁸⁹ In cases in which it is not possible to understand and eventually transcribe what is said in the interviews, this has been indicated in the relevant extracts presented in the following chapters.

⁹⁰ The transcription system adopted is presented in the Appendix A3.

Analysis (Wetherell & Potter 1992). The adoption of a simpler version of Jefferson's transcription model is justified by the fact that the fine details of the sequence of the text are not crucial for the research questions since the focus is on identifying macro-discursive patterns (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1992; Stubbe et al. 2003; Taylor 2001b).

In the following chapters of the analysis, the extracts transcribed in Italian or Greek are also translated in English in order to facilitate the understanding of the reader. Yet the analysis of these extracts took place in the original material since every language has its own idioms, catch phrases etc.

B3.2. Interpretative Repertoires

After the transcription of the interviews, the analysis is focused on the identification of the interpretative repertoires, concerning both the concept of "working together" in an EU context and that of a European agency. This is achieved through constant, continuous and critical readings and re-readings of the transcripts until recurrent patterns are identified (Marshall 1994, Taylor 2001a, Potter & Wetherell 1987; Phillips & Hardy 2002). The latter are those which structure the interpretative repertoires. The analysis "often involves following hunches and the development of tentative interpretative schemes which may need to be abandoned or revised" (Wetherell & Potter 1988: 177). This way the analyst comes to reveal the different ways in which discourse is orientated to action (Wetherell & Potter 1992).

Searching for consistency or rather similarities or shared features in the emerging discursive patterns is not the only concern in discourse analysis. Nevertheless, consistency plays a role in the process of identifying regularities at the level of language and thus it is seen as an indication of the use of a particular repertoire (Marshall 1994; Potter & Wetherell 2001). Thus consistency is expected to emerge because the same repertoires will be used by different people (Burr 1995).

The search for variability is probably the single most important analytic principle in discourse analysis and especially in the process of identifying interpretative repertoires (Wetherell & Potter 1988, 1992; Burr 1995). Variability is understood as variations within the talk of a single speaker on a single occasion or different occasions⁹¹ (Wetherell & Potter 1988; Potter & Wetherell 1994) or between different repertoires (Marshall 1994). The notion of variability is structured upon the general premises of critical discursive psychology that discursive accounts do not reflect underlying attitudes or dispositions, and so a coherent individual discourse is not expected (Edley & Wetherell 1999). Instead, interviewees' talk is expected to vary as they draw on different repertoires to provide explanations and justifications in different contexts and to make their claims accountable

⁹¹ This type of variation is usually more analytically revealing (Potter & Wetherell 1994).

(Potter & Wetherell 1994). Besides, the general point is that discourse is a contingent, manufactured entity and so there is nothing natural or absolute about its particular form (Potter & Wetherell 1994).

In more practical terms, the starting point is the so-called “coding” which has conventionally been used for the classification of the research data into categories (Seale 1999: 102-105; Potter & Wetherell 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1992) or rather the “squeezing of an unwieldy body of discourse into manageable chunks” (Potter & Wetherell 1987: 167). Coding involves searching in the material several times in order to identify the thematic categories. The latter may emerge either because they are representative of the questions discussed in the interviews, which is a rather straightforward task, or because of other issues that emerged during the interviews’ discussions, and through continuous readings of the transcripts. In all cases, the identification of the respective categories is more complex and requires a cyclical process between analysis and coding (Potter & Wetherell 1987). The categories can be broad and overlapping in contrast to other qualitative approaches to data analysis which tend to use exclusive coding categories like those used in the analysis of survey data (Taylor 2001a). Potter and Wetherell claim that coding is not the analysis itself since its scope is not to find results but just a means through which the work of analysis is facilitated and a more intensive level of analysis is prepared (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1992).

The next step is to work on the content of the thematic categories. This involves selecting and copying relevant stretches of talk from the interviews to the thematic categories that have been identified earlier (Wetherell & Potter 1992). This process aims to identify common lines of argumentation (Wetherell 1998). Initially the process of classifying extracts in the thematic categories is as inclusive as possible and all borderline or ambiguous cases are included (Potter & Wetherell 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1992; Reicher & Hopkins 1996). This process was then repeated several times and each time extracts were placed under broad headings. After a continuous process of reading and rearranging, themes merged together while others were dropped as they seemed incoherent (Reicher & Hopkins 1996). In this long process the goal was to lose as little information as possible (Figgou 2002). For many researchers, the analysis finishes when they feel that accounts are being repeated and interviewees seem to be taking similar positions or making the same kinds of arguments as others previously interviewed (Reicher & Hopkins 1996; Wood & Kroger 2000). This involves a high degree of subjectivity but it does not mean that a reality cannot be explained and justified.

The process of identifying regularities in discourse is not a simple linear progression (Reicher & Hopkins 1996). Instead it is circular and iterative (Taylor 2001a; Wetherell & Potter 1992). It involves a constant dialogue between various texts, theory and data. The researcher is looking for patterns in the data without being entirely sure what these will look like or what their significance will be. Thus, data should be approached with a certain blind faith that there is something there but no certainty about what (Taylor 2001a).

B3.3. Selection of extracts

After the identification of repertoires, the next step in the analysis was to select extracts from the discourse of the interviewees. The selected extracts that were included in the presentation of the analysis fulfil a series of criteria, concerning comprehensiveness, content, length and variety. With regard to the first criterion, it is considered essential that the reader of an extract should be in the position to assess the plausibility and coherence of any interpretations (Reicher & Hopkins 1996). Subsequently the research questions and theoretical interests were the major factors for deciding upon the content of the selected extracts as well as the relevance of new issues that were posed by the interviewees themselves. To this end, the aim was to present illustrative examples of the various repertoires, exceptions or isolated discourse cases (Marshall 1994).

The extracts could not be too long given the broader constraints of the chapters' length. However, extracts were long enough in order to present the argument in understandable terms and in relation to the overall context, permitting the reader to assess the researcher's interpretative conclusions. Furthermore, following the principle of variation discussed above, extracts have been selected from the interviews from all the three agencies in every repertoire (or line of argumentation).

B3.4. Subject Positions

The analysis of the selected extracts was reorganised around the investigation of the subject positions adopted by the interviewees and attributed to others. A further concern was to discover what was achieved through the use of specific subject positions in the context of the interview. As Edley and Wetherell vividly point out, this analytical task concerns the investigation of the "identity work" done within the accounts included in the extracts (1999: 183). To this end, attention was paid to how the individuals working in the EU agencies position themselves in relation to the available interpretative repertoires of "working together" in Europe and the role of EU agencies. Along with the overall rationale of the analysis, intensive reading and experience with analysis of texts are considered as effective guidelines for uncovering the subject positions (Edley 2001). "The trick, if there is one, is to try to stay aware of *who* is implied by a particular discourse or interpretative

repertoire. What does a given statement or set of statements say about the person who utters them?” (Edley 2001: 210).

B3.5. Ideological dilemmas

Another step in the analysis concerns the identification of the ideological dilemmas underpinning the talk of the interviewees in the various repertoires. The analysis of ideological dilemmas is mainly based on the identification of competing or contrary themes and their structuring effects in the participant’s discourse (Edley 2001). Participants in negotiating the meanings of the relevant concepts are regarded as “doing things”. So they adopt various subject positions that they attempt to present as consistent and coherent for the purposes of sustaining their accounts. However, this is not to say that a homogeneous discourse is produced. Participants mobilise historically developed discourses and interpretative repertoires in their talk as they move backwards and forwards across the discursive field established by competing interpretations (Bozatsis 1999). This movement is evident in the process of arguing and puzzling that participants demonstrate in their talk (Billig et al. 1988). Accordingly, the rhetorical devices employed in an interaction cannot only be seen as a result of the exigencies of the interaction itself. The arguments and counter arguments that are presented in the interactive context of an interview are also designed for undermining or legitimising wider social controversies and debates. As Edwards and Potter (1992) point out, it is these wider controversies, disputes and contrasting interests that “open up the field for the rhetorical design of versions of events in local contexts” (in Bozatsis 1999: 173). These contrary themes create the tensions and eventually reveal the dilemmas that the interviewees are trying to negotiate in their discourse.

B3.6. Rhetoric

Although the theoretical framework of the present research does not focus on the linguistic accounts as such, yet language does play a crucial role and especially in the way it is employed by the speakers to describe their views. Thus, another task of the analytical process is to examine the rhetorical organisation of the factual reports (following Billig’s premises of rhetorical psychology (1991)). Following Edwards and Potter (1992), all speakers and participants should be considered as having a stake in their talk including their motives, interests, preferences and desires. Accordingly, people treat others as equally having motives, interests etc.; so everyone attempts to present his/her version as persuasive, factual, and not biased while at the same time undermining the other’s version as false (Wetherell 2001b). The emphasis on rhetoric draws attention to the fact that constructions are fabricated against alternatives. Each interpretation is inherently controversial because one interpretation can always be challenged by another. Therefore, the choice of an

interpretation is part of an argument to be defended – actual or potential – against alternatives (Verkuyten 2004). Argumentation, therefore, is part and parcel of interpretation (Billig 1987).

Given that there are constructed positions and counter positions, or arguments and their alternatives, when participants speak, they are faced with a dilemma known as the dilemma of stake. This dilemma concerns how to provide an account and, at the same time, prevent it from being challenged (Bozatsis 1999: 170). Rhetorical devices and techniques aimed at adding to the objectivity and veracity of descriptions are important because they attempt to present the descriptions independent from the interests and/or motives of the speaker (Potter 1996). For this reason, speakers need to enhance the objectivity or veracity of his/her descriptions and arguments while at the same time undermine the objectivity of the counter descriptions (Edwards & Potter 1992; Potter 1996).

Accordingly, this leads the analyst to inspect discourse both for the way it is organised to make a case, and for the way it is designed to undermine alternative cases (Billig 1991). To put it in another way, the rhetorical orientation draws attention away from questions about how a version relates to some putative reality and focuses instead on how a version relates to competing alternatives (Potter & Wetherell 1994). As Edwards and Potter point out, the dilemma of stake or interest can be managed successfully only when the reports/ accounts are accepted as factual or their rhetorical organisation makes them difficult to be rebutted or undermined. This is what calls for the facticity of reports and where the Discursive Action Model (DAM) becomes relevant (Edwards & Potter 1992; Bozatsis 1999: 170). The degree to which an account or a discourse is presented as truthful, convincing or objective depends not only on the content and commonality of a line of argumentation, but also on the rhetoric with which it is structured (Baka 2004; Figgou 2002).

Edwards and Potter (1992) specify nine techniques of fact construction which were employed by the participants in their own studies in order to manage the dilemma of stake and to make their own descriptions more truthful and render competing descriptions untruthful. Certainly these nine techniques are not supposed to cover the full range of possibilities by means of which reports may come to be constructed as factual. They are presented only as indicative of participants' fact construction practices. Furthermore, as far as their rhetorical effectiveness in managing the dilemma of stake is concerned, they cannot be taken as guarantees that reports will be taken as truthful and factual, since people, in practice, are competent and skilled in a range of methods for accomplishing different activities (Wetherell 2001b). The following techniques are used also in the analysis of the present study.

1. **Category entitlements.** In order to ensure the trueness of their reports, speakers very often employ specific entitlements or categories of membership they attribute to themselves. In this sense speakers, by presenting themselves belonging in particular categories, whether these are considered as formal- such as having a working position that is mentioned in the organisation's organigram or being the citizen of a specific country-, or informal- such as being a good and experienced employee or a democratic and open-minded citizen- are attributed with particular characteristics that derive from these categories. Such characteristics can be specialised expertise and knowledge or certain epistemological skills (in Edwards & Potter 1992). For example, Greek people are considered to be aware of speaking the Greek language, know the Greek history, etc. With regard to categories that are not formal, the category memberships are manufactured or constructed by the speakers. Category entitlements are basically convenient means for making inferences available either for the speakers themselves or for others and warranting a report or claim (Edwards & Potter 1992). For example, managers or directors are expected to have knowledge about their section of organisation. In this sense, characterizing a report as originating from a manager or a director is a way of providing a warrant for it (Potter & Halliday 1990).
2. **Vivid description.** This type of description is based on a provision of a wide range of contextual details and events to such a degree that the speaker appears as particularly perceptive of what is happening around him/her, capable of representing with precision precedent incidents and stories and as being gifted with special skills of observation. This technique may also be used to package contentious or problematic events (Edwards & Potter 1992). Finally, this technique can be detected as active voicing, which means that the speaker cites dialogues and spoken words "in such a way that it is created the impression of a verbatim recall mode of narration" (Bozatsis 1999: 171).
3. **Narrative.** This is closely linked to the previous one with the difference that the persuasiveness of a report is mainly based on a series of particular narrative sequences which are constructed as causal. As a result, the event described in the report is presented as expected, inevitable or even a natural evolution. That said, narrative provides a useful discursive opportunity for the description of an event with the provision of its causal, intentional and plausible sequential connections. This form of accounting has been employed extensively in literary studies as a way through which particular kinds of reality effects are produced while it only recently has started to gain attention as an object of study in social sciences (see Bozatsis 1999 e.g. Atkinson 1990).

4. ***Systematic vagueness.*** This rhetorical device is the complete opposite of the two previous ones. This is because systematic vagueness is based on providing the minimum amount of details in a report since details are considered as running the risk of being disproved. Instead, “vague and global formulations” are employed that can only be undermined with greater difficulty, while they also provide the necessary accounts for the formation of particular inferences.
5. ***Empiricist accounting.*** This is a discursive style or repertoire that is usually found in scientific talk and writing. In empiricist accountings facts are more important than the actual human actors since they dominate the formulation of an inference more than the opinion of the scientist him/herself. So the latter becomes a passive recipient of the events or facts.
6. ***Rhetoric of argument.*** This technique is based on constructing claims as logical arguments based on inductive reasoning or common arguments which can stand on their own as strong accounts released from the subjectivity of the speaker. In other words, the rhetoric of argument is a way of presenting facts in such a rational sequence that they appear to be independent from the interests and motives of the speaker due to their apparent rationality—no matter how valid they might be (see also Billig 1987; Wetherell & Potter 1988, 1992).
7. ***Extreme case formulations.*** Pomerantz (1986) has explored how extreme case formulations can be used to make a report or version more rhetorically effective through the use of some sort of exaggeration or hyperbole. Thus, the statement “in the EU institutions, everybody gets a working position through lobbying” provides a version of activities in a particular context which makes the speaker’s own effort to get a position through lobbying an entirely unexceptional and normalized event. The fact that certain events are exceptional is undermined and they come to appear as natural, expected or in a way thoroughly justified. The use of extreme case formulations is very common, often found in texts, combined with other devices and forms of factual accounting.
8. ***Consensus and corroboration.*** This common discursive device constitutes a crucial form of warranting the veracity of a report and is rhetorically presented as commonly accepted among a series of eye-witnesses or independent observers without any personal stakes (Edwards & Potter 1992). Frequently, this consensus shared among a series of witnesses is combined with a generalised normativity. As Bozatsis (1999) mentions this device is usually met in the form of “everybody in X position would agree with Y”.
9. ***Lists and contrasts.*** Studies on political rhetoric have demonstrated the rhetorical effectiveness of lists and contrasts (Atkinson 1984). Additionally, Jefferson (1990) has

emphasised that lists, particularly three-part lists, can be used to construct descriptions which are treated as complete or representative. Often a three-part list is combined with a contrast that creates the “factual” version in opposition to a threatening alternative, which is itself formulated in an unconvincing or problematic manner (see also Mulkay 1985). Contrasts can be employed in order to present what in attribution terms would be “distinctiveness information” (Edwards & Potter 1992).

Another important feature is the notion of “footing” (Goffman 1979). Footing highlights whether people in their talk speak as either the author of what they say, i.e. as the principal, or as the animator of someone else’s words (Wetherell 2001b). Footing plays a central part in the accountability of a speaker in reporting events.

Finally, attention in the analysis of rhetorical devices was drawn to the use of disclaimers. Disclaimers are verbal devices employed to discourage or even overcome in advance doubts and negative typifications of a particular type of identity that the speaker uses in his talk (Hewitt & Stoke 1975). An example of a disclaimer can be the phrase “I am not a nationalist as I have friends from all over Europe but I think that French people, we, are more informed about the EU than any other nationality”. In this phrase we can see firstly, the identity claim on the part of the speaker and the disclaimed negative typification as a nationalist. In addition, the above phrase contains a substantive claim regarding individuals with nationalities other than French who, in fact, are described as knowing less about the EU. Hence, speakers use disclaimers in order to secure the success of substantive claims, but without the negative implications for their identity claims (Hewitt & Stoke 1975). There are various types of disclaimers- such as hedging, credentialing, sin licences, cognitive disclaimers and appeals for the suspension of judgment- which reflect a different set of conditions of use.

Except from the aforementioned rhetorical devices and forms of talk, the following chapters will make clear that a series of other rhetorical devices are also identified and interpreted in the discourse of the interviewees- such as metaphors, metonymies, etc. These are considered to facilitate the overall comprehension of the analytical process and interpretation.

In short, the identification and analysis of the above and other rhetorical devices in the interview extracts shows that the analytical process of discourse analysis is not a superficial reading of a text or an abstract interpretative effort by the analyst (Billig & Schegloff 1999). Instead, the analysis of the linguistic and rhetorical devices is seen, on the one hand, as a way of identifying the interpretative repertoires and, on the other, of providing proof of the analyst’s interpretations and of the constructed objectivity of the accounts. To put it more simply, the identification and analysis of

the rhetorical devices parallels discussion and comment on the figures presented in a statistical table. Finally, the examination of the rhetorical devices provides information for the interview context in which the respective constructions were uttered, which, as has been said, plays a role in the way interpretations will be formed.

After having described the analytical design, the second part of the thesis will present the results that have emerged from the analyses of the data collected from the various methodological techniques. In the next chapter the results from the use of the standardised questionnaires will be discussed. Two subsequent chapters are focused on discourse analysis, based on the analytical process that has been presented in this chapter.

PART II: EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Chapter 8. THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURAL PROFILES OF THE EU AGENCIES

This chapter presents the results from the standardised questionnaires, including the Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI), that were distributed to the individuals working in the three EU agencies. OCI focuses on the assessment of the visible aspects of culture, the behavioural norms and expectations, which are associated with shared beliefs and values held by the members of the organisation. Normally this instrument is used by consultants for evaluating whether a culture of an organisation needs to be changed. However in the present case, it is used in order to provide an overall vision of the degree of consensus among individuals within every agency separately and across the three agencies together. This will be achieved through the examination of every agency's cultural profile as well as the overall cultural profile of all the agencies. The results aim at informing the context in which the employees' discourses in the agencies will be interpreted.

Norms are defined as collective understandings that make behavioural claims on individuals actors (Checkel 2001). In other words, they are learned aspects or cognitions of the social reality regarding others' expectations for their behaviour as members of a particular group or organisation (Fishbein & Aijen 1975). Expectations are described as "those normative beliefs that are held in common by the members of a group or organisation" (Homans 1950; Mils 1967 in Cooke & Lafferty 1989). Norms and expectations specify in what ways the members of an organisation or organisational departments (units) are expected to interact with others.

One way of assessing norms and expectations is in terms of their direction and intensity (Cooke & Rousseau 1988). Direction refers to the content of culture, which is understood as the collective understandings regarding the appropriate ways of thinking and behaving within an organisation group through a process of continuous interaction with the respective environment. The direction of culture is manifested by the actual scores of the twelve styles of OCI. Intensity, on the other hand, shows the strength of the culture's content. It measures the degree of consensus among groups within organisations according to the twelve styles of OCI. Cultures that differ in direction have different dominant behavioral norms while cultures that differ in intensity are characterised by many subcultures (Cooke & Lafferty 1989).

A. Operationalisation

Individuals who participate in the OCI questionnaire are asked to respond to 120 questions, each one rated on a 1-5 Likert scale⁹². These questions are then used to produce twelve scales of ten items (questions). Each scale measures one of twelve cultural styles that members of an organisation are expected to follow in their work. The twelve styles have been developed by Cooke & Lafferty (1989) and are related to organisational structural variables, reward systems and managerial styles.

The twelve cultural styles of OCI are the following:

1. Achievement style characterises efficient organisations that do things well and value members for setting and accomplishing their own goals. Individuals are expected to set realistic goals and pursue them with enthusiasm.
2. Self-Actualizing style values organisations' creativity, quality over quantity and both task-accomplishment and individual growth. Individuals are encouraged to develop themselves, and take on new and original activities.
3. Humanistic-Encouraging style is person-oriented and values participation. Individuals are expected to be supportive and constructive.
4. Affiliative style places a high priority on interpersonal relations so individuals are expected to be friendly, open and sensitive towards the satisfaction of their group.
5. Approval style is characterised by the avoidance of conflict and interpersonal relations that are superficially pleasant. Individuals feel that they should agree in order to gain the approval of others (mainly superiors) and be liked by everyone.
6. Conventional style is characterised by conservative, traditional, and bureaucratic orientations. Individuals are expected to conform, follow the rules and make a good impression.
7. Dependent styles characterise organisations that are hierarchically controlled and non-participative. A centralized decision-making process is prevalent and as a result individuals merely follow the decisions of their superiors.
8. Avoidance style exhibits the existence of a negative reward system that highlights mistakes more than good performance. Consequently, individuals shift their responsibilities to others and avoid the possibility of being blamed for mistakes.

⁹² Respondents indicate the extent to which people in this organisation are expected to act in the way the statements describe not at all (1), to a slight extent (2), to a moderate way (3), to a great extent (4), to a very large extent (5).

9. Opposition style is characterised by confrontation and negativism. Individuals gain status and power through criticisms and are encouraged to oppose others' ideas.
10. Power styles are non-participative and authority is inherent in employees' positions. The prevalent norm is that employees at high hierarchical levels should impose their decisions and control their subordinates, as an indication of their power.
11. Competitive styles emerge in a context of high competition. In particular, individuals believe that they ought to work against others in order to be noticed and promoted.
12. Perfectionist styles value perfectionism and hard work. Individuals are expected not to make mistakes, to be informed and aware of everything, while working extra hours is included in the daily program.

For this investigation, respondents were asked to answer in terms of the overall perspective of their organisation.

The first stage in analysing the data collected by OCI is to calculate each respondents' score on each of the twelve styles. These can then be used to compute the mean score on each style for the organisation as a whole. The twelve mean scores vary from ten, which is the lowest, to fifty, which is the maximum score.

The mean scores can be plotted on a circumplex or a "clock" to create a graphic profile of the organisation (see figures 2, 6, 11, 18, 19). The "clock" is divided into twelve equal segments that represent each of the twelve cultural styles. In addition, it contains six concentric circles in which the centre represents a lowest score (10). The highest score (50) is situated on the periphery of the "clock". However, the score for a given style may not be located at the same position in the circumplex as the same score on another style. For example, a mean score of 25 for the humanistic style is found nearer the centre than a score of 25 for the conventional style which lies closer to the outer circle.

The position of each style within the circle is based on the extent to which styles a) emphasise a concern either for People and Tasks, and b) promote behaviours for the fulfilment of Satisfaction and Security needs. Research on the hierarchical structuring of needs prompted a distinction between thinking styles directed toward the fulfilment of higher-order "satisfaction" needs versus those directed toward lower-order "security" needs. Similarly the leadership literature distinguished styles reflecting a concern for "people" from those concerned with "tasks" (Cooke & Rousseau 1988). These four orientations represent the categories in which the twelve styles are classified following the results of

previous studies. Styles relatively similar to one another are placed next to or close to each other on the circumplex.

Three major groups of similar styles have been identified, which signify three different types of organisational cultures:

1. Constructive cultures, in which interaction among individuals is encouraged and tasks are aimed at providing satisfaction. The cultural styles included here, are: achievement, self-actualizing, humanistic-encouraging and affiliative.
2. Passive/Defensive cultures, in which interaction with others is necessary but does not threaten anyone's personal security. The styles that consist this culture are: approval, conventional, dependent and avoidance.
3. Aggressive/Defensive cultures, in which tasks play an important role for the protection of status and the personal security of members. The styles that are included here are: Oppositional, Power, Competitive and Perfectionistic.

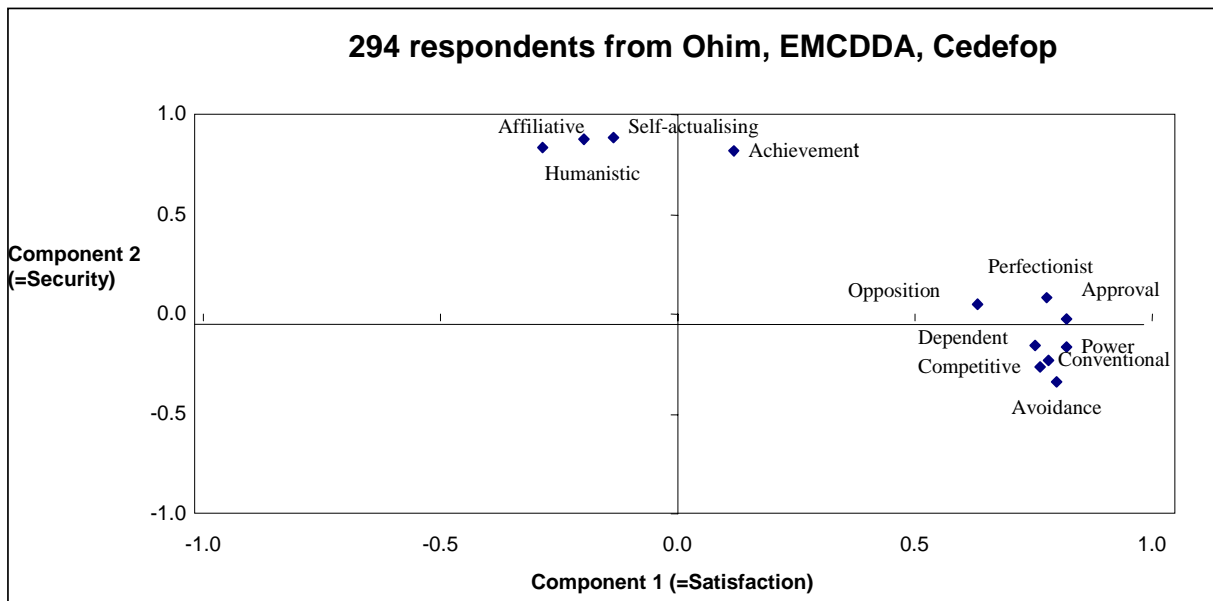
According to "Human Synergetics" (the research team that developed this instrument), in order to guarantee the reliability and consistency of the scales that the twelve cultural styles build, they implemented a factor analysis based on a sample of 661 respondents from different organisations. The results of a principal component analysis indicated that three empirical factors can summarize the twelve scales. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal reliability has been reported to range from .67 to .92. (Cooke & Dyer 1989). These factors are described as:

1. A culture oriented to People and Security
2. A satisfaction culture oriented to job satisfaction
3. A culture oriented towards tasks and job security

However, in the present study, after having applied a principal component analysis (with varimax rotation) (see tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in Appendix C1) on the data collected by a sample of 294 respondents from the three agencies, just two factors summarize the twelve cultural styles⁹³. Figure 1 presents a graph that shows the way the twelve styles are concentrated around the two broader cultures and table 1 presents the relevant values that emerged from the factor analysis.

⁹³ The same results emerge within the sample of every agency separately.

Figure 1. Component Plot in Rotated Space



Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Table 1. Rotated Factor Loadings for the Organisational Culture Inventory twelve Scales (N=294)

Twelve Cultural Styles	Commonality	Satisfaction (Component 1)	Task/People/Security (Component 2)
Achievement	,687	,820	,120
Dependent	,592	-,161	,753
Self-actualizing	,798	,883	-,135
Avoidance	,752	-,340	,797
Oppositional	,400	4,834E-02	,630
Conventional	,663	-,231	,780
Perfectionist	,609	7,939E-02	,777
Power	,702	-,167	,821
Affiliative	,813	,880	-,197
Humanistic	,782	,837	-,285
Competitive	,655	-,265	,765
Approval	,673	-2,362E-02	,820
- Variance explained:		21,187	46,534
- Cumulative Variance explained:		67,722	46,534

Therefore, in contrast to the original experimental (empirical) paradigm of the OCI research team, the consistency and direction of the cultural norms in the three European agencies are manifested in two broader cultural components:

1. A satisfaction culture, which includes norms and expectations for achievement, self-actualizing, humanistic-helpful and affiliative styles. This culture draws the attention on interpersonal relations and the way these affect the satisfaction of the agency’s employees.

2. A security culture oriented towards people and tasks that includes norms for approval, conventional, dependent, avoidance, oppositional, power, competitive and perfectionist styles. This culture describes mainly the way the leadership styles are functioning in combination with the security needs of the employees.

Reliabilities of the scales for the overall sample (N= 294), and for each agency separately were all high, larger than .70 and indeed very close to 1.

Table 2. Reliability analysis Cronbach a⁹⁴.

Satisfaction Culture (reliability coefficients 4 items)					
	N	Mean	Min	Max	Alpha
Alicante	182	24.4	23.4	26.3	.9688
Thessaloniki	65	22	20.7	23.7	.9814
Lisbon	47	24.8	23	26.3	.9688
All agencies' sample	294	24.1	22.9	25.8	.9705
Security Culture (reliability coefficients 8 items)					
Alicante	182	23.7	20.6	27.8	.9772
Thessaloniki	65	22.8	20.1	25.2	.9885
Lisbon	47	26.5	23.3	30.9	.9746
All agencies' sample	294	24	21.1	27.5	.9802

A1. Measuring intensity: What can be the sources for the creation of subcultures?

Two sets of measures were used to try to account for variation in the intensity of the cultural norms within each agency. These measures are called 'formal' and 'attitudinal' factors and are terms that have been mainly borrowed by previous research in organisation studies (Lawrence & Lorsch 1973 in Cooke & Rousseau 1988; Furnham & Gunter 1993a, b).

A1.1. Formal characteristics

i. Type of working contract

The type of working contracts that employees hold⁹⁵, as these are organised within the EU institutions in general, is expected to be important because it indicates the position and the status of the officials which may have implications regarding the way employees perceive their work. The most common working contracts can be permanent, temporary or auxiliary and each of these enjoys somewhat different conditions of employment (Stevens & Stevens 2001).

⁹⁴ See Appendix C2.

⁹⁵ Instead of the grade of the employees as a formal characteristic, the type of the working contract has been selected. The grades of the agencies' employees do not really correspond to their actual qualifications due to particular circumstances that apply within certain agencies, such as lack of resources or the absence of certain prescribed posts in the actual plan. Thus the working contracts are considered to be more accurate indicators.

Types of working contracts were coded into four categories: a) permanent officials, b) temporary agents, c) seconded national experts and d) local agents and consultants. These are represented by a set of dummy variables (typtemp1, typnexp1, typnat1); the reference group is the permanent officials' contract.

ii. Previous experience in public administrations

Behavioural norms and expectations at work may be learned in a variety of institutional settings: at work in the Commission, through previous job experiences in a national administration, in a particular political system, or in a political party (Hooghe 2001). This variable measures employees' socialization in their previous working experiences. In particular, it describes whether the employees' prior job had taken place in a national public administration, in the private sector or within a European public administration referring to the administrative organisations of the European Union.

This information is represented by a set of dummy variables (pr_priv: previous work in private sector, pr_publ: previous work in national public administrations). The reference group is the employees with prior working experience within European administrations. Our sample consists of 19.9% of employees with prior experience within EU administrations, 66.2% in private sector and 14% in national public administrations.

iii. Period of working within the agency

Different intensities in cultures can also be fostered due to different individual or collective perceptions and values that have been framed within every agency. An important consideration in this process of socialization is the period of time that individuals have worked in the agencies. According to socialisation theory, the more individuals spend time in institutional environments, the more they have internalised their norms (Hooghe 2001). Therefore, the better the employees are aware of the agencies' goal, the more likely they have internalised the norms and expectations in their agencies.

The indicator selected for time working in the agency is the number of months served as agency employees. Values range from 1 to 300 months (thus 25 years), with an average of 42.13 months (approximately 3 years and 5 months).

A1.2. Attitudinal factors

iv. The EU philosophy as a motivation for work in an agency

Individuals choose to work for an agency for a variety of motives. One of the most important motivations highlighted in previous researches is the ideological commitment to the European idea (Shore 2000). Besides, this is emphasised in the analyses of the recruitment processes for the European institutions which is based not only on the qualifications of the candidate but also on his/her allegiance to the “European ideal” (Stevens & Stevens 2001). These employees within the agencies are named as idealists and make up 31.3% of the overall sample of respondents. The rest of the respondents’ motivations include reasons, which are qualitatively different from the one above and can be described in more functionalistic terms, such as salaries, high status and privileges, a fact that coincides with the conclusion of previous studies (Willis 1982).

This variable takes the value 1 if an employee said that he/she chose to work in an agency because of adherence to the EU philosophy and 0 to those whose motivation was different.

v. Perceptions regarding the effect of nationality on working life

Another important issue is assumed to be the way employees in the three agencies perceive the influence of the different nationalities in their everyday working life. The data collected for this issue are the responses of the employees who participated in the relevant question included in the semi-structured questionnaire. This question asked whether or not people’s nationality affected, in a positive or negative way, the communication and cooperation with colleagues and superiors, the informal relations, the use of working language, the administrative style of the agency and the degree of centralisation of the authority within every agency. After having carried out a factor analysis, one important factor emerged. This was used to construct a variable (nation1) ranging from 1 as a minimum value, meaning that employees feel that their nationality affects their everyday working life in a very positive way, to 4 as a maximum value, meaning that employees perceive that their nationality affects their work in a negative way. The average score is 2.3.

vi. The European Union and working life within agencies.

The last aspect that is considered important for explaining variation within the agencies’ cultures is employees’ belief about the European Union in general and in particular, whether their work within the

agency affects their pre-existing perceptions and beliefs about the European Union in a positive or negative way.

By the respective analysis of the semi-structured questionnaire, it emerged that 43.3% of the respondents believe that their work in a European agency has affected their pre-existing beliefs about the EU in a positive way. On the other hand, 17.6% believe that working in an agency affects their previous beliefs about the EU in a negative way, since their representation of the institution was more idealistic than what was experienced in practice within the agencies. Finally, 39.1% of the employees feel that working in an agency is not a relevant issue regarding their beliefs about the EU in general.

This variable consists of two dummy variables (belpos1: employees whose beliefs about the EU have been affected positively, belneg1: employees whose beliefs about the EU have been affected negatively); the reference group stands for employees that remain indifferent.

A2. Measuring direction: Do the agencies share similar cultural norms?

The second part of the analysis is concerned with the direction of the cultural norms of the three agencies. Through a comparison of the dominant behavioural norms across the three agencies as these are described by OCI, the objective is to explore whether the agencies share similar cultural patterns.

Although similar organisational realities, such as the decentralized agencies, are compared, this does not necessarily mean that they will share the same behavioural norms. The three selected agencies belong to three different functional categories and thus they have a different professional and working milieu in spite of the overall philosophy upon which they were all founded. Besides, all agencies operate within different geographical contexts around Europe.

Following the conceptualization of the organisation as a social context, an important element that should be taken into account regarding the direction of the cultural norms in the three agencies is the external environment. Organisations or institutions are seen as microcosms (Bellier 1997). Their external environment including the political space that surrounds them plays a crucial role, as do the formal or informal characteristics of its employees and their relations within this environment.

In the case of the agencies, the external environment can be conceptualized on two dimensions: a) the social and geographical context in which the agencies are located and b) the professional environment and actors with whom the agency is dealing. For example, with regard to the second dimension, there is evidence from previous OCI studies that a federal agency may emphasise safety, dependability and perfectionism, or rather security oriented cultural norms, while a social agency emphasises public

service and humanistic behaviours, or rather satisfaction oriented cultural norms (Cooke & Lafferty 1989).

Given the formal characteristics and goals of the EU agencies as have been discussed in previous chapters, it is assumed that the agency of Alicante will differ from the other two concerning the direction of the cultural norms. The financial dependency of the two “information agencies” requires a constant verification of the agencies’ efficiency and performance by external evaluators. Additionally, the degree of control to which these two agencies are subject is so high that it does not allow any autonomy for them regarding their priorities or scientific goals - a fact that is linked with a high level of frustration.

With regard to security cultural norms, it is assumed that the agencies of Lisbon and Thessaloniki will score higher in security culture in contrast to the self-financed agency of Alicante. With regard to satisfaction cultural norms, it is assumed that Lisbon and Thessaloniki are probably characterised by more satisfaction oriented norms than the agency of Alicante. The latter has to deal with its clients while the EMCDDA and Cedefop can be seen as an instrument for bringing together different interest groups. Accordingly, the level of competitiveness in these two agencies is expected to be lower than in Ohim. Ohim is under greater pressure to achieve standards of excellence due to its responsibility to its clients. Furthermore, Ohim is the biggest of all the agencies and according to previous studies using OCI, bigger organisations are usually less oriented towards satisfaction norms. The degree of segmentation of the organisation into sub-units is high and as a result the homogeneity of the organisation, the flow of communication and the degree of coordination is limited. Individuals are assigned very specialised tasks, oriented to extremely specific objectives. As a result, individuals fail to set themselves goals and develop initiatives for the future, a fact that has a negative effect on their job satisfaction.

B. Results

B1. The Organisational profile of the three European decentralized agencies.

The table 3 below shows that the means in the two cultures within every agency look quite similar as do their standard deviations. Although the mean scores have almost the same values their interpretation is different, a fact that is demonstrated in their plotted positions in the OCI’s circumplex (see figure 2, 6, 11). Therefore, the mean score for satisfaction is plotted very near the centre of the “clock”, which means that is very low. This suggests that individuals are generally dissatisfied with their work. The

second culture, oriented mainly towards security is found in the fifth circle very near the outer frame of the “clock”. This means that the norms that describe individual and task security are dominant in all the three agencies. To this end, the amount of variation in each agency in every cultural dimension is quite similar.

Table 3. Mean scores of Satisfaction and Security Culture by the three agencies.

	N	Mean scores	Std. Deviation
Satisfaction			
Lisbon	43	27.1163	6.4144
Alicante	158	28.1377	6.2048
Thessaloniki	51	28.9510	6.4494
<i>Total</i>	252	28.1280	6.2901
Security			
Lisbon	43	28.9680	5.1802
Alicante	158	27.3125	5.1914
Thessaloniki	51	29.5931	5.5343
<i>Total</i>	252	28.0565	5.3310

The amount of variation or degree of consistency within every agency separately can be specified by the Eta squared statistics in the two culture scales (see below table 4).

Table 4. Variation within and between agencies in the two cultures

	Eta squared	F	p
Satisfaction	.008	.993	.372
Security	.034	4.402	.013

Individuals: 252 to 294, Agencies N=3

n.s.: .05*; .005**; .001***

In these results, the F tests indicate that variance across agencies is lower than that within agencies along the two constructed cultural scales. We also observe that the three agencies do not have significant differences between them with regard to satisfaction culture while they do differ significantly with regard to security culture.

In order to describe the satisfaction and security cultures within every agency and test the relative validity of the hypotheses concerning the intensity of the cultural norms, multivariate linear regression was implemented. The satisfaction and security cultural norms were regressed on two groups of predictor variables: the first includes the formal characteristics of the employees regarding their working roles and experiences and the second includes the attitudinal characteristics. By comparing the coefficients of the different characteristics, it becomes possible to identify whether there are any subcultures occurring within the agencies and whether these subcultures occur due to the formal or

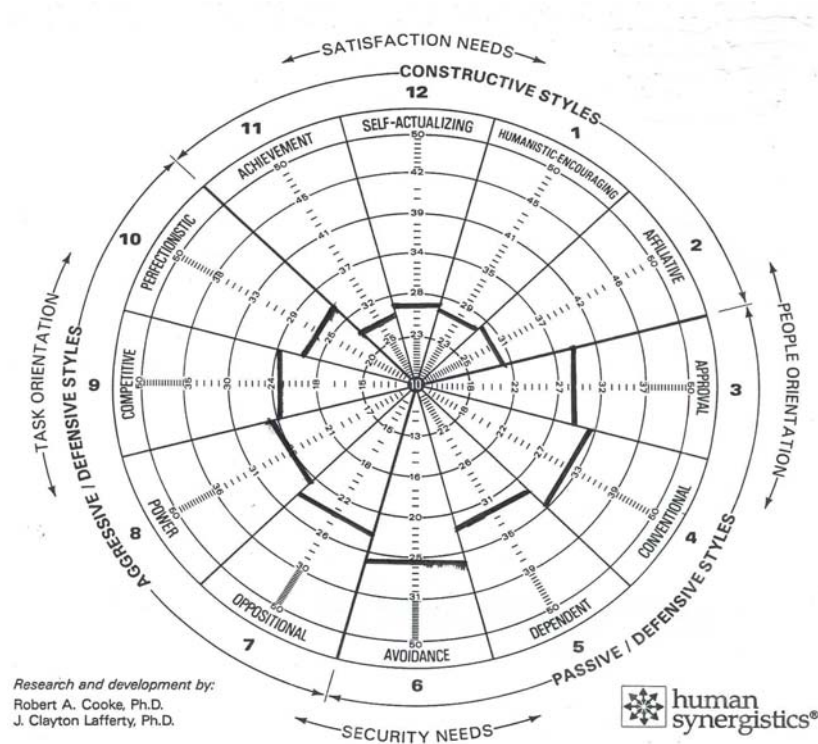
attitudinal characteristics or a combination of them. This will help in identifying possible similarities and specify the importance of some particular factors in the way cultural norms are framed within the agencies and the importance of the formal and informal characteristics within them.

B1.1. The Organisational Cultural Profile of Ohim

Direction of culture

Ohim has a low satisfaction oriented culture and a high security culture (see table 3, figure 2). Past experience with organisational assessments using the OCI suggests that organisations with such scores are characterised by a lack of opportunities for the development of constructive interpersonal relations. Furthermore, high scores in security cultural styles specify organisations that emphasise reliability, in which mistakes are expected to be avoided, and stability is sought through established practices.

Figure 2. The organisational Cultural Profile of Ohim



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These results coincide with the conclusions of the external evaluation of Ohim's processes and organisation, carried out by Deloitte and Touche (2001). This evaluation identified various problematic

characteristics of the agency's functioning which may give rise to the low level of satisfaction. These characteristics referred to a bad atmosphere in the working environment, linked with problems in internal communication (between departments or between staff and their superiors) and inadequate training processes. Communication was described as either personal or as unidirectional, non-existent or too formal, mainly because of the big number of divisions and departments, which created inflexibility (Deloitte & Touche 2001).

The same occurs concerning the levels of security in Ohim. The evaluators emphasised a high degree of bureaucracy, uncertainty regarding employees' mobility rights and limited career perspectives, phenomena that inevitably raised doubts regarding the security of work. This fact in the present analysis is clearly manifested by the high scores of security cultural norms.

Intensity and effects of formal and attitudinal characteristics

After having provided a short description of the cultural profile of Ohim, the next step is to examine how well the two groups of variables (formal and attitudinal characteristics) predict the satisfaction and security style scores. Table 5 below summarises the results from the multivariate regression analysis.

The analysis shows that the formal characteristics attributed to the employees of the agencies were not important for the creation of satisfaction cultural norms. On the other hand, there was a significant linear relationship between the satisfaction culture and two of the attitudinal predictor variables. As we can observe from table 5, model 2 explains approximately 29% of the variance of the satisfaction culture through two significant attitudinal predictors: idealist motivation and the degree of negativism that exists within a multinational working environment. The latter is also significant in model 3, which includes both the formal and attitudinal predictors.

Returning to model 2 we observe that the coefficient of the idealist variable ($B= 1.826$, $p= .056$) is significant, showing that employees who have chosen to work in an agency for their commitment to the EU's ideals score higher in satisfaction culture while the rest of the respondents score significantly lower (figure 3). A possible explanation may be that agencies represent the EU philosophy and thus employees with idealist vision identify themselves with the agency's "raison d'être".

Table 5. Multivariate Linear Regression⁹⁶: Explaining the formation of Satisfaction and Security cultures within Ohim.

	Correlation r		Model 1a		Model 2a		Model 3a	
	SAT ⁹⁷	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC
Formal characteristics								
<i>Type of working contract</i>								
Temporary agent	-.033**	-.056*	.969 (1.766)	-.521 (1.461)			5.881E-02 (1.672)	-.615 (1.508)
Auxiliary agent	.080*	-.149	3.247 (2.397)	-2.322 (1.984)			1.222 (2.366)	-2.146 (2.134)
Local agent and other	.024**	-.001***	2.591 (3.633)	-.279 (3.007)			.947 (3.530)	-.548 (3.184)
<i>Previous working experience</i>								
Private sector	-.015**	-.083	.122 (1.557)	-1.231 (1.289)			1.780 (1.478)	-1.189 (1.333)
Public sector	.092	-.050**	1.936 (1.961)	-1.908 (1.623)			2.495 (1.971)	-.491 (1.777)
Months of work in the agency	.011**	.140	3.466E-02 (.040)	1.277E-02 (.033)			1.465E-03 (.040)	-2.942E-03 (.036)
Attitudinal characteristics								
Idealistic motivation	.157	-.017**			1.826* (.949)	-.449 (.857)	1.624 (1.060)	-.869 (.956)
Degree of negativism towards multinational environment	-.505	.167			-5.036*** (.853)	.320 (.770)	-5.285*** (.916)	.262 (.826)
Positive belief of the EU after working	.238	-.289			.848 (1.077)	-2.260*** (.973)	.951 (1.209)	-2.447** (1.090)
Negative belief of the EU after working	-.100	.244			.584 (1.397)	2.191* (1.262)	1.191 (1.566)	1.968 (1.412)
R²			.026	.050	.285	.112	.314	.145
Adj. R²			-.029	-.004	.257	.077	.241	.054
F statistic (degrees of freedom)			.467 (8)	.928 (8)	10.128** (5)	3.195*** (5)	4.305*** (12)	1.594 (12)
Durbin-Watson			1.979	1.807	1.787	1.896	1.815	1.957

Note: a. Unstandardised regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets

*Significance levels (one-tailed) ***p< .01 **p< .05 *p< .10.

As we observe also from the negative coefficient of the predictor measuring the degree of negativism of the employees towards multinational environment (B= -5.036, p= .000), the more negative employees feel against multinational working experience the less satisfaction they gain (figure 4). This seems understandable given that the agencies operate with a high degree of diversity in nationality and language, which can be a source of various problems.

⁹⁶ The relevant plots of residuals of all the analyses are included in the Appendix C3.

⁹⁷ Acronym for the Satisfaction and Security cultures accordingly.

Figure 3. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between employees with idealist and non-idealist motivation.

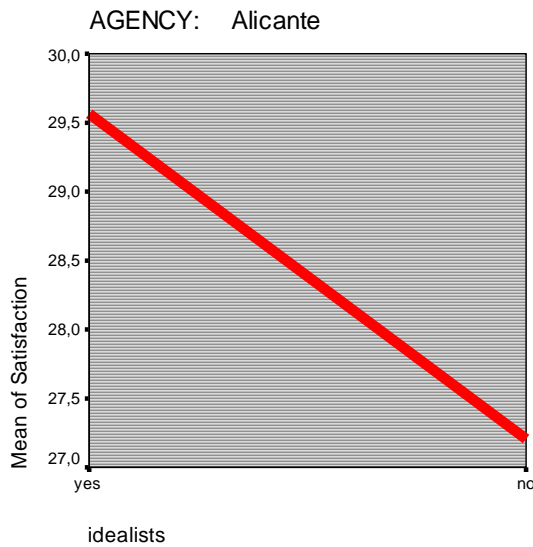
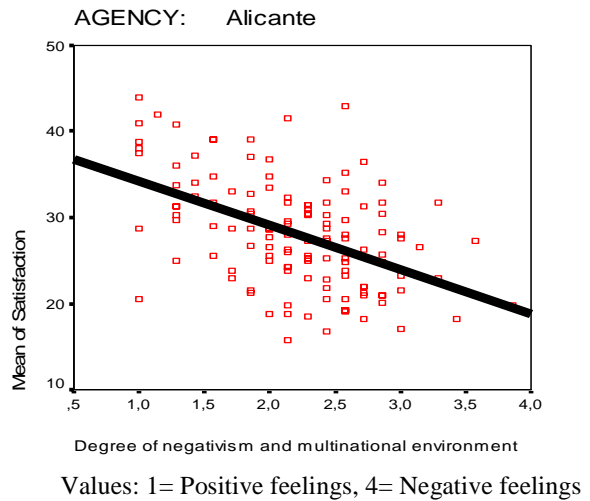
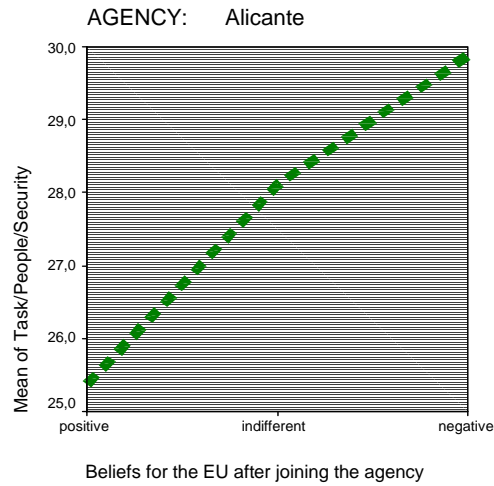


Figure 4. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between respondents who see multinational environment in a positive or negative way.



In relation to security cultural norms, we see again that the effect of formal characteristics is not significant while the attitudinal variables are the ones that are important. Focusing on model 2, we see that this explains almost 11% of the variance and the significant predictor is employees' opinion and values regarding the EU in general after their entry into the agency's working environment. The negative coefficient shows that employees who had a positive belief in the EU in general ($B = -2.260$, $p = .022$) score low on security cultural norms, while employees whose beliefs regarding the EU institutions in general were negative before and even after having joined the agency, express a higher degree of security norms ($B = 2.191$, $p = .085$).

Figure 5. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between respondents who perceive the European Union in a positive or negative way.



B1.2. The Organisational Cultural Profile of Cedefop

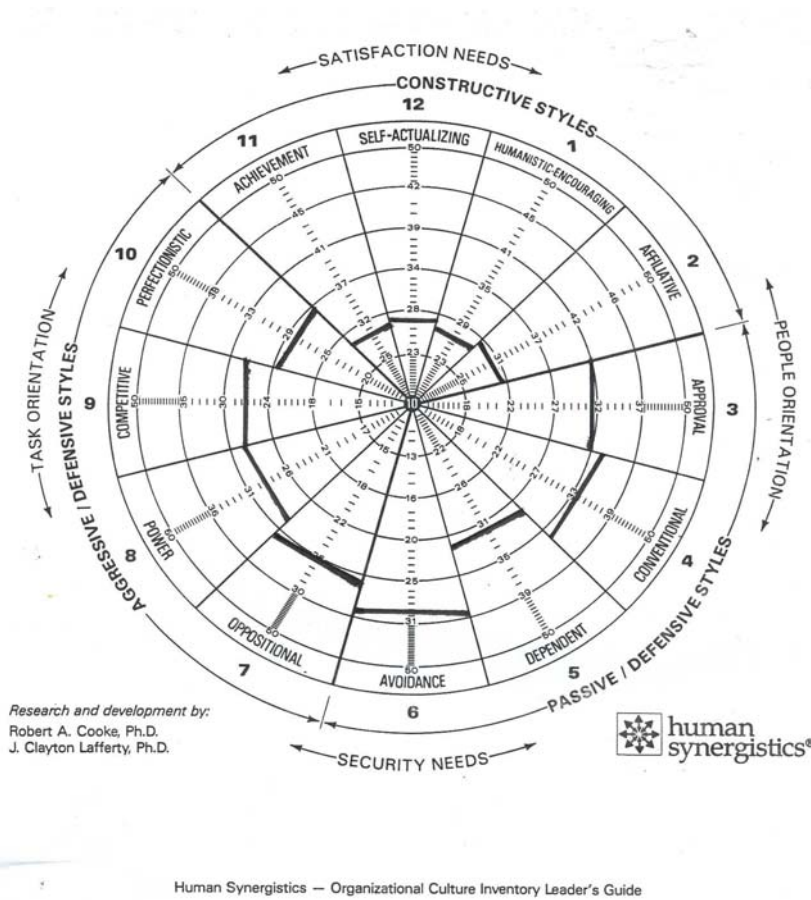
Direction of culture

As within Ohim, Cedefop displays low satisfaction norms and high security norms (see figure 6).

The results in satisfaction and security cultures are supported by the conclusions of the agency's external evaluation (PLS RAMBOLL Management 2000). The dependency of the agency on Community funds and its function are factors that do not leave much space for taking risks. There is also a tendency to follow externally imposed norms and there are various technical demands (such as the need to communicate its products in many languages and satisfy the needs of many interested groups). Together these considerations emphasise the need for reliability and stability which are achieved through the establishment of security oriented norms⁹⁸. On the other hand, the low levels of satisfaction are explained by the highly centralized organisation which is not flexible and does not facilitate individual development. A weak overall management system, (as has been characterised by the evaluation report) opaque procedures and limited opportunities for staff advancement all may lead to low satisfaction levels.

⁹⁸ The high security norms lead to a considerable level of efficiency, stability and consistency. This is reflected in the services provided by the agency, which were evaluated as good.

Figure 6. The Organisational Cultural Profile of Cedefop



Intensity and effects of formal and attitudinal characteristics

As we can see from table 6 below, there is a significant linear relationship between the satisfaction culture and three of the attitudinal predictor variables while no formal variables appear to have an effect.

Table 6: Multivariate Linear Regression⁹⁹. Explaining the formation of Satisfaction and Security cultures within Cedefop.

	Correlation r		Model 1a		Model 2a		Model 3a	
	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC
Formal characteristics								
<i>Type of working contract</i>								
Temporary agent	-.165	.006***	-2.844 (2.981)	-.680 (2.627)			-.643 (2.510)	-1.635 (2.168)
Auxiliary agent	-.137	-.012**	-3.499 (3.566)	-1.357 (3.143)			-1.234 (3.048)	-4.390 (2.633)

⁹⁹ The relevant plots of residuals of all the analyses are included in the Appendix C4.

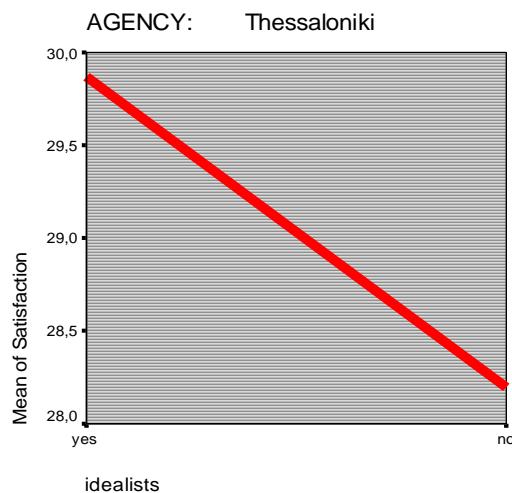
Local agent and other	.111	-.077*	.893 (3.673)	-1.824 (3.237)			2.488 (3.269)	-2.412 (2.824)
<i>Previous working experience</i>								
Private sector	.122	-.371	2.531 (2.738)	-4.155 (2.413)			1.695 (2.386)	-2.037 (2.062)
Public sector	.107	.097*	4.839 (4.048)	-.754 (3.568)			5.90 (3.628)	-1.041 (3.134)
Months of work in the agency	.165	-.078*	3.691E-03 (.018)	-6.884E-03 (.016)			7.983E-03 (.016)	2.372E-03 (.014)
Attitudinal characteristics								
Idealistic motivation	.152	-.070*			3.313* (1.686)	-.756 (1.506)	2.898 (1.842)	-1.778 (1.592)
Degree of negativism towards multinational environment	-.451	.341			-2.661* (1.500)	1.148 (1.340)	-2.370 (1.760)	-2.322 (1.521)
Positive belief of the EU after working	.343	-.580			-.397E-02 (1.958)	-6.112*** (1.749)	.125 (2.172)	-7.304 (1.876)
Negative belief of the EU after working	-.539	.425			-6.352** (2.348)	.570 (2.097)	-5.899** (2.675)	-.158 (2.285)
R²			.180	.153	.395	.405	.520	.568
Adj. R²			.016	-.017	.319	.331	.334	.401
F statistic (degrees of freedom)			1.098 (8)	.901 (8)	5.219*** (5)	5.445*** (5)	2.801*** (12)	3.396*** (12)
Durbin-Watson			2.082	2.442	2.215	2.170	2.135	2.299

Note: a. Unstandardised regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets

*Significance levels (one-tailed) ***p < .01 **p < .05 *p < .10.

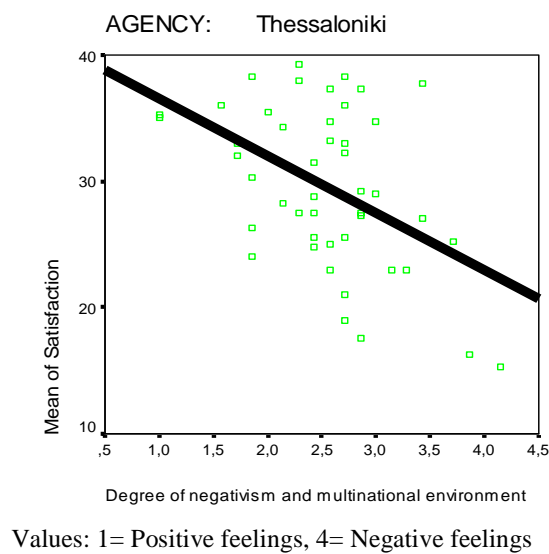
More specifically, the table above demonstrates that employees who have chosen their work in the agency because of their idealistic vision of the EU score higher in satisfaction norms compared to those who do not feel any specific commitment to the EU ideals (Model 2: B= 3.313, p= .056, see figure 7). This finding coincides with the results from the Ohim agency.

Figure 7. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between employees with idealist and non-idealist motivation.



Additionally those employees with a more negative attitude towards multinational working environment manifest lower levels of satisfaction norms than the ones with more positive attitudes towards multinational working environment (figure 8). The third significant predictor differentiates the employees with negative beliefs about the EU before and after their entry in the agency from the employees with positive beliefs. The negative coefficient indicates the low levels of satisfaction norms for the former (Model 2: $B = -6.352$, $p = .010$, Model 3: $B = -5.899$, $p = .033$).

Figure 8. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between respondents who see multinational environment in a positive or negative way.



In relation to the levels of security cultural norms, we see that again the attitudinal variables have a significant effect. In particular, focusing on model 2 that explains 40% of the variance in the sample (table 6), it becomes evident that the crucial factor is employees' positive belief in the EU in general ($B = -6.112$, $p = .001$). In this case, the negative coefficient indicates that the more positively the employees see the European Union as an institution the less security norms they need to develop.

Figure 9. Differences in scores for security culture between respondents who perceive the EU in a positive or negative way.

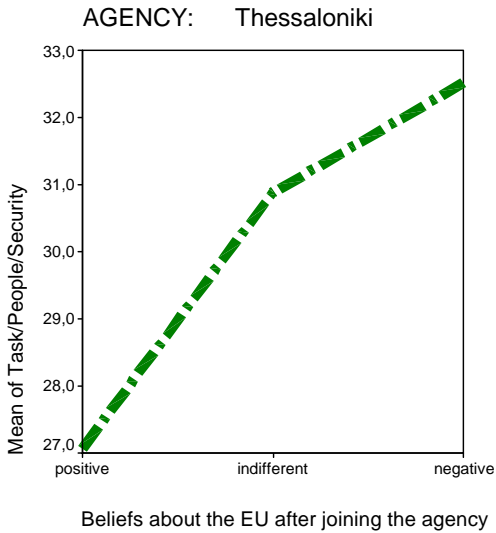
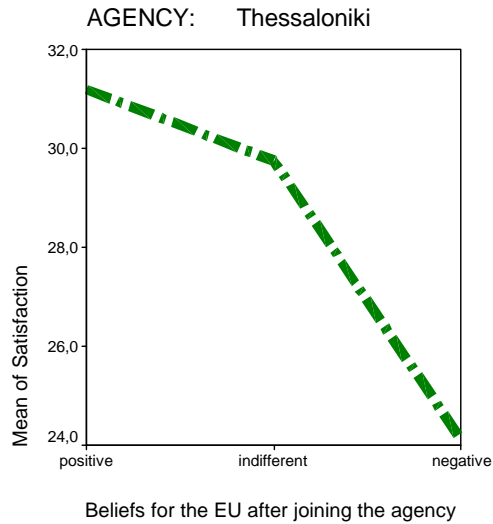


Figure 10. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between respondents who perceive the EU in a positive or negative way.



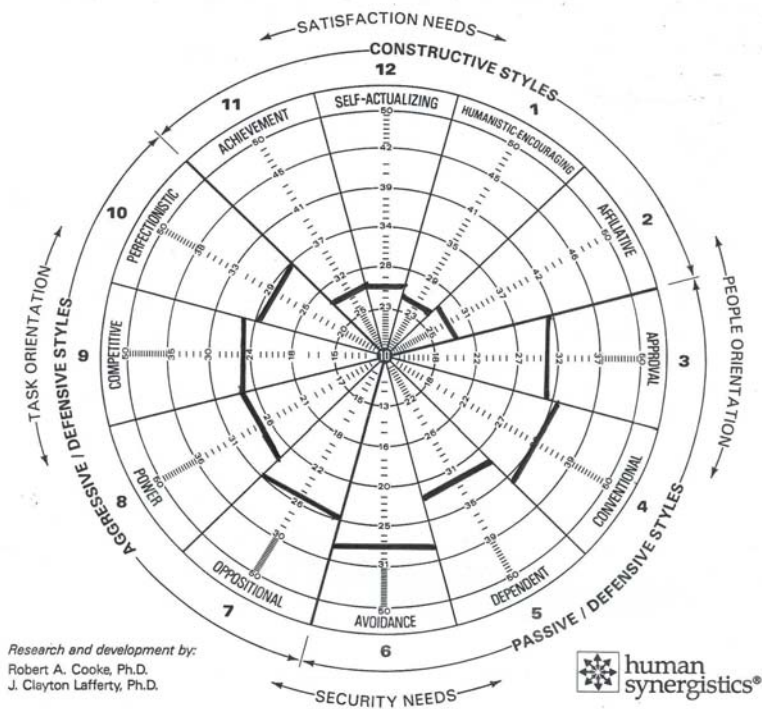
B1.3. The Organisational Cultural Profile of EMCDDA

Direction of culture

EMCDDA has the lowest score on satisfaction culture and the highest score on security culture. It can be argued that EMCDDA appears to be facing very many negative phenomena that influence the construction of its behavioural norms.

Again the characteristics represented by the levels of satisfaction and security cultural norms are in accordance with the findings of the external evaluation of the agency by Deloitte and Touche (2000). According to this, we distinguish two basic features: the limited training processes and a lack of internal communication. Moreover, rigid bureaucratic procedures do not facilitate communication but instead create fragmentation and a lack of cohesion in the understanding of the centre. In spite of the good cooperation between colleagues among the units, the levels of motivation are low. Yet most employees try to be effective in their specialised personal task, which provides them with a highly appreciated working experience. Finally, there is a climate of insecurity that is possibly connected with the fact that the agency is dependent on the Community's budget which is considered to be insufficient to meet the agency's needs.

Figure 11. The organisational Cultural Profile of EMCDDA



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Having these conclusions in mind, the overall picture that emerges from the description of the cultural norms in the agency of Lisbon shows the absence of possibilities for individual growth and advancement as well as diffused feelings of frustration and stress at all levels. It could be argued that given the conditions under which the agency operates, EMCDDA has the profile of a scientifically advanced specialised agency dominated by excessive bureaucratic procedures that are responsible for the creation of inflexibility and insecurity in the face of demands for change.

Table 7. Multivariate Linear Regression¹⁰⁰. Explaining the formation of Satisfaction and Security cultures within EMCDDA.

	Correlation r		Model 1a		Model 2a		Model 3a	
	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC
Formal characteristics								
<i>Type of working Contract</i>								
Temporary agent	-.316	.355	-.995 (4.207)	7.012** (3.100)			-2.982 (3.974)	8.346** (3.728)
Auxiliary agent	.185	-.318	8.754 (6.405)	-2.125 (4.720)			.747 (6.379)	1.783 (6.983)
Local agent and other	.159	.045**	5.839 (5.425)	4.959 (3.998)			3.019 (5.080)	6.598 (4.765)
<i>Previous working experience</i>								
Private sector	-.105	.139	-5.699** (2.732)	2.328 (2.013)			-3.279 (2.781)	2.329 (2.690)
Public sector	-.058	-.112	-3.022 (2.756)	-1.573 (2.031)			-3.329 (2.705)	-1.133 (2.537)
Months of work in the agency	.029**	-.048**	269E-02 (.055)	-1,097E-0 (.041)			1.074E-02 (.055)	1.884E-02 (.052)
Attitudinal characteristics								
Idealistic motivation	.267	-.157			1.385 (1.950)	-1.044 (1.862)	1.444 (2.017)	-1.268 (1.892)
Degree of negativism towards multinational environment	-.459	.272			-3.054* (1.632)	1.236 (1.558)	-.614 (1.770)	-1.240 (1.660)
Positive belief of the EU after working	.260	-.211			.852 (2.073)	-.948 (1.979)	3.306 (2.102)	-2.078 (1.971)
Negative belief of the EU after working	-.466	.217			-4.238 (2.847)	1.340 (2.718)	-5.482* (3.086)	2.116 (2.895)
R²			.247	.349	.347	.111	.549	.434
Adj. R²			.078	.211	.245	-.028	.324	.151
F statistic (degrees of freedom)			1.487 (7)	2.528** (7)	3.396** (5)	.801 (5)	2.438** (12)	1.533 (12)
Durbin-Watson			1.577	1.656	2.448	1.653	2.170	1.668

Note: a. Unstandardised regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets

*Significance levels (one-tailed) ***p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10.

Intensity and effects of formal and attitudinal characteristics

From the regression analysis (table 7), it appears that there are some formal characteristics that are important in the formation of satisfaction culture. In particular, we see that there is an effect of the employees' professional background on satisfaction cultural norms and, more specifically, those with prior experience in the private sector appear to be differentiated and less satisfied than the other two groups, with prior working experience in national public sector or other EU institutions. However, the

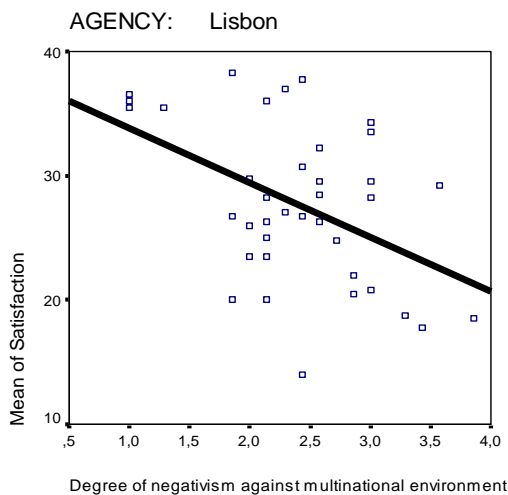
¹⁰⁰ The relevant plots of residuals of all the analyses are included in the Appendix C5.

relevant model 1 is not itself significant. Thus even in EMCDDA, the formal variables do not influence significantly the formation of the satisfaction cultural norms.

With regard to the attitudinal variables, there is a significant linear relationship between the satisfaction culture and a variable that was proven to be crucial within the other two agencies as well. This concerns the degree of negativism that employees feel that exists within a multinational working environment. This significant relation occurs in model 2, which explains 35% of the variance of this culture. The negative coefficient ($B = -3.054$, $p = .070$) of the significant predictor indicates that the more negative an employee is feeling towards its multinational working environment, the less satisfied he appears to be. This is represented more vividly in figure 12.

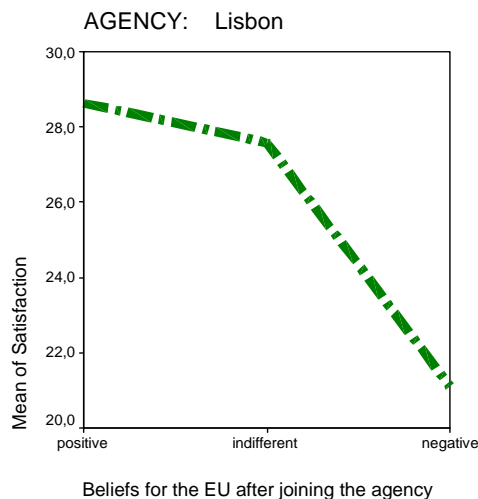
In model 3 which includes both formal and attitudinal variables, we see that there is another significant predictor. This represents the negative beliefs employees have for the EU in general. More particularly, there is significant differentiation regarding the level of their satisfaction cultural norms between employees with negative feelings towards the EU even after joining the agency and others who feel either positively or in an indifferent way. Employees with negative beliefs were less oriented towards satisfaction norms. These relations are represented graphically in figure 13.

Figure 12. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between respondents who see multinational environment in a positive or negative way



Values: 1= Positive feelings, 4= Negative feelings

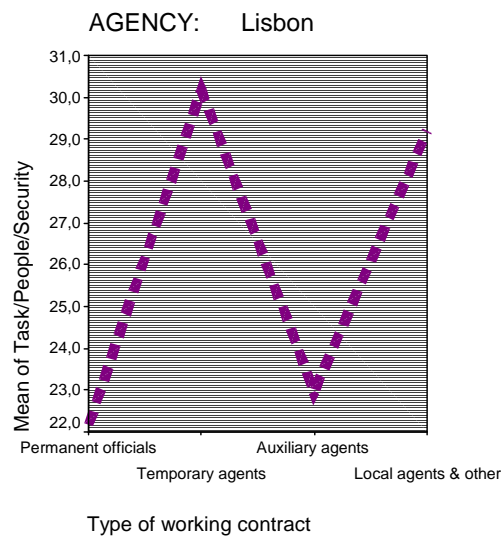
Figure 13. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between respondents who perceive the EU in a positive or negative way



With regard to security cultural norms, there is only one significant model (model 1: $F= 2.528$, $p= .034$). This is the first time in the analysis that we have a case, in which a formal characteristic appears to have a significant effect. In particular, the model's R square is .349 explaining approximately 35% of the variance of the security culture, accounted for by the employees holding a temporary contract.

These employees develop significantly higher security oriented norms ($B= 7.012$, $p= .030$). This particular behaviour on the part of temporary agents is justified since temporary agents in order to increase their possibilities for a renewal of their contract, avoid taking risks, which could jeopardise their future employment. Consequently, since the majority of EMCDDA's staff consists of temporary agents (68.1% of the overall sample), such a norm appears to be quite dispersed in the agency's culture. The difference in scores in security culture among the agency's groups with different working contracts is presented graphically in figure 14.

Figure 14. Differences in scores for security culture between respondents with permanent, temporary, auxiliary and local agents' contracts, as these have been calculated in model 1.



B1.4. Summary

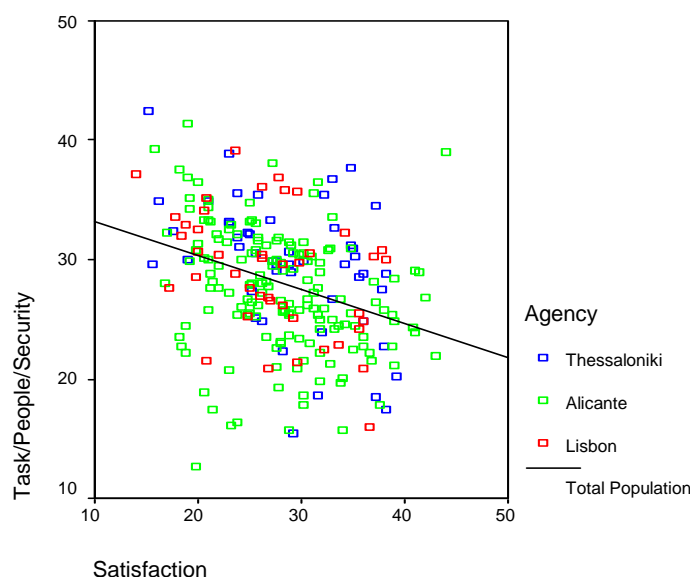
As was observed, the three agencies' scores on the norms of satisfaction culture are low. According to the literature of OCI, the low levels of satisfaction culture indicate limited interpersonal relations within the agencies. Furthermore, given the respective external evaluations of the three agencies, interpersonal relations are described as taking place implicitly and have the form of conspiracies, gossip and suspicion, phenomena that are known from previous studies to create either "a parallel administration" (Shore 2000), or an "informal system" (Abélès, Bellier & McDonald 1993) or even as outcomes of the practice of "parachuting" (Stevens & Stevens 2001). Needless to say, these phenomena

create a negative climate that certainly does not provide the conditions for the occurrence of satisfaction cultural norms. It is worth mentioning the relevance of Hooghe's (1998a, b, c, 2001) argument related to the significance of supranational or non- supranational ideals within the everyday working life of the European institutions. Likewise, in the present research employees' values and beliefs regarding the role of multinationalism and the EU project in general come out as crucial.

Another interesting point that emerges from the direction of the scores of the two cultures (satisfaction and security) within the three agencies is that the two compound factors do have a co-variance (figure 15). Knowing the score of one of them does significantly help to predict the score of the other. The higher a given agency scores on security culture, the lower it is likely to score on the satisfaction culture (the correlation coefficient -0.337 , $p = .000$); so there is a suggestion of a trade-off between security and satisfaction culture. Individuals who do not gain satisfaction from their work and working life in general, try to achieve as much security as they can in order to keep their position and protect their status with a view to acquiring future opportunities and promotions.

The analyses of the variables that are assumed to influence the satisfaction and security cultures showed that the results for every agency look reasonably consistent and that attitudinal variables are the crucial ones for the formation of the dominant cultural norms. That said there is still the possibility that there may be other factors or processes which have not been measured by the regressions and which may be significant. Moreover, it becomes clear that the respective scores in satisfaction and security cultures manifest phenomena, such as the lack of internal communication or the poor management that have not been measured and included within the present analyses.

Figure 15. Scatterplot of Satisfaction and Security Culture's index in the three decentralised agencies



B2. Differences between the three agencies

After having gone through the analysis of the cultural norms within every agency separately and by taking into account the fact that the three agencies manifest rather similar and consistent trends regarding the satisfaction and security cultures, this section examines the direction of the cultural norms within all three agencies together. The aim is to examine whether and in what ways agencies differ with respect to satisfaction and security culture.

In practice, the way this hypothesis is tested is by regressing the two cultures, on groups of individual characteristics of the respondents across the three different agencies as these have been described above. By comparing the coefficients for the agencies themselves before and after the influence of these factors, we can see the extent to which the differences between agencies are due to differences in the individuals within them. If the differences in the two cultures cannot be explained in this way, they can then be attributed to the effects of the agencies' function, size and, more generally, their institutional realities.

Hence, we use the same regression model specifications as before but we add two dummy variables for agencies (*agenalic*, *agenlisb*) to see if these variables explain the differences in the two cultures among the agencies. The reference group is the agency of Thessaloniki.

With regard to satisfaction cultural norms, we have seen before in table 4 that agencies do not have significant differences between them. However, once we control for formal and attitudinal characteristics in the regression, we see some significant differences between the agencies (table 8). Yet these are differences between the agencies that cannot be explained by the predictor variables. Model 3, which explains 56% of the variance, includes both formal and attitudinal characteristics. The significant predictors are the idealist motivation for joining the agency ($B = -2.049$, $p = .011$), the degree of negativism towards the multinational working environment ($B = -3.950$, $p = .000$) and the agencies themselves ($B_{Alicante} = -2.298$, $p = .052$, $B_{Lisbon} = -2.718$, $p = .038$).

The effect of these two attitudinal variables is consistent with the results produced within every agency's separate analysis. But significant differences also emerge between the agencies themselves. In particular, the coefficients indicate that Ohim and EMDDA are significantly different from Cedefop. This relation is represented graphically in the figure below (16). Nevertheless, although these differences are statistically significant they are substantively quite small – among those people with identical demographic and attitudinal scores; those working in Alicante and Lisbon will, on average, score around 1.4 lower on the satisfaction scale than those in Thessaloniki.

Table 8: Multivariate linear regression¹⁰¹. Explaining differences in Satisfaction and Security cultures within the three agencies.

	Correlation r		Model 1a N= 240		Model 2a N= 217		Model 3a N= 207	
	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC	SAT	SEC
Agency								
Alicante	.009***	-.149	.183 (1.215)	-2.457** (1.015)	-3.133*** (.963)	-1.665* (.870)	-2.298* (1.174)	-1.957 (1.055)
Lisbon	-.065*	.051*	-1.259 (1.420)	-1.171 (1.186)	-3.057*** (1.201)	-.259 (1.085)	-2.718** (1.298)	-.788 (1.166)
Formal characteristics								
<i>Type of working contract</i>								
Temporary agent	-.121	.045**	-.414 (1.148)	-.300 (.959)			-6.42E-02 (1.056)	.111 (.949)
Auxiliary agent	.047**	-.123	1.694 (1.593)	-2.514* (1.331)			1.083 (1.484)	-2.066 (1.334)
Local agent and other	.076*	.023**	2.693 (1.966)	-.745 (1.642)			1.890 (1.800)	-.807 (1.618)
<i>Previous working experience</i>								
Private sector	.010***	-.119	-.331 (1.149)	-1.247 (.959)			.160 (1.066)	-.936 (.958)
Public sector	.056*	-.036**	.822 (1.440)	-1.351 (1.202)			.909 (1.415)	-.222 (1.271)
Months of work in the agency	.076*	.056*	1.670E-0 (.013)	-4.688E-0 (.011)			1.242E-02 (.013)	-2.20E-03 (.012)
Attitudinal characteristics								
Idealistic motivation	.161	-.017**			2.032*** (.754)	-.628 (.681)	2.049** (.802)	-.986 (.720)
Degree of negativism towards multinational environment	-.452	.167			-4.193*** (.660)	.655 (.596)	-3.950*** (.709)	.485 (.637)
Positive belief of the EU after working	.266	-.289			1.114 (.849)	-2.653*** (.767)	1.272 (.902)	-2.993*** (.811)
Negative belief of the EU after working	-.259	.244			-1.648 (1.083)	2.094** (.979)	-1.680 (1.150)	2.141** (1.033)
R ²			.042	.069	.288	.178	.557	.218
Adj. R ²			.000	.028	.264	.150	.311	.161
F statistic (degrees Of freedom)			.996 (10)	1.685* (10)	12.096*** (7)	6.465*** (7)	6.182*** (14)	3.824*** (14)
Durbin-Watson			1.961	1.914	1.929	1.915	1.933	1.975

Note: a. Unstandardised regression coefficients with standard errors in brackets

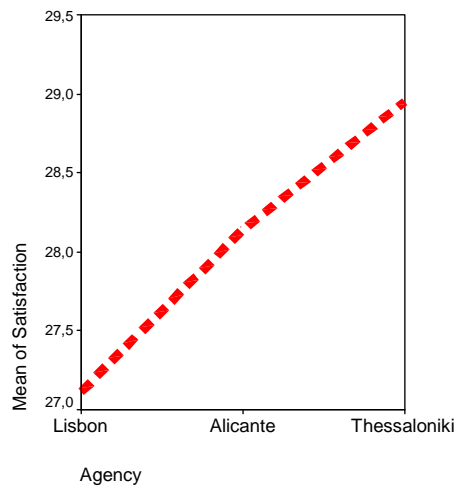
*Significance levels (one-tailed) ***p< .01 **p< .05 *p< .10.

A possible explanation for the low level of satisfaction culture in the agency of Lisbon is a general climate of dispiritedness and insecurity that was diffused among the individuals of the agency during the period that this research was conducted. Specifically, the agency was going through a process of reform after a period in which it had been afflicted by the criticisms generated by the results of the external evaluation, which was ordered by the Commission. Additionally, the employees were

¹⁰¹ The relevant plots of residuals of all the analyses are included in the Appendix C6.

expressing a feeling of de-motivation with respect to their work and an unwillingness to participate in the research since they had already been put through a similar and even more stressful process some months before the present study.

Figure 16. Differences in scores for satisfaction culture between the three agencies as these have been calculated in model 3.

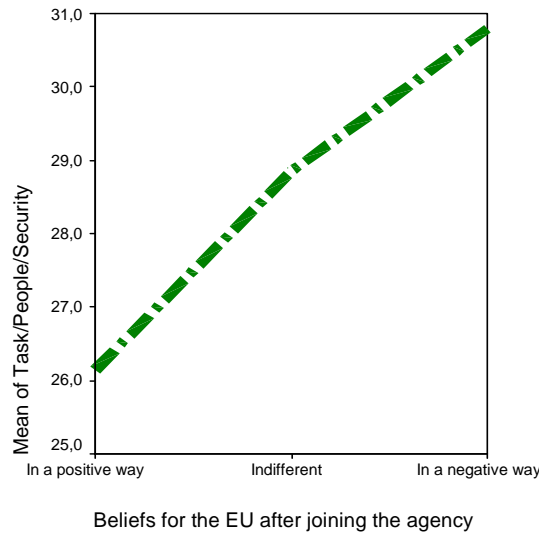


With regard to security culture, there are significant differences between agencies in the conditional analysis as was also the case in the analysis of variance (table 4). Formal characteristics are not significant while the attitudinal variables are – notably the employees’ positive and negative beliefs concerning the EU in general. Once the latter are included in model 2 ($F= 6.465$, $p= .000$, $R^2= .178$), as we can observe from the coefficients (table 8), the agency dummies become less strong. In the last model (3) ($F= 3.824$, $p= .000$, $R^2= .218$) in which both formal and attitudinal variables are included, no significant effect is attributed to the agencies themselves while the effect of the already significant attitudinal variables becomes stronger.

The significant factors explain 22% of the variance and the results are similar to those found in the agency-specific analyses. Those employees with negative beliefs regarding the EU score higher concerning the security culture, which is indicative of the need to focus on their task and, as a consequence, defend their position. On the contrary, the employees with positive beliefs for the EU score significantly lower. The employees who are indifferent concerning the EU score in medium level. A graphic representation among the employees with different beliefs for the EU is presented in figure 17. This suggests that the differences between agencies in their scores on the security culture are the

result of differences in the proportion of their employees whose beliefs about the EU have grown positive or negative.

Figure17. Differences in scores for Security culture between respondents who perceive the EU in a positive or negative way.



B2.1 Summary

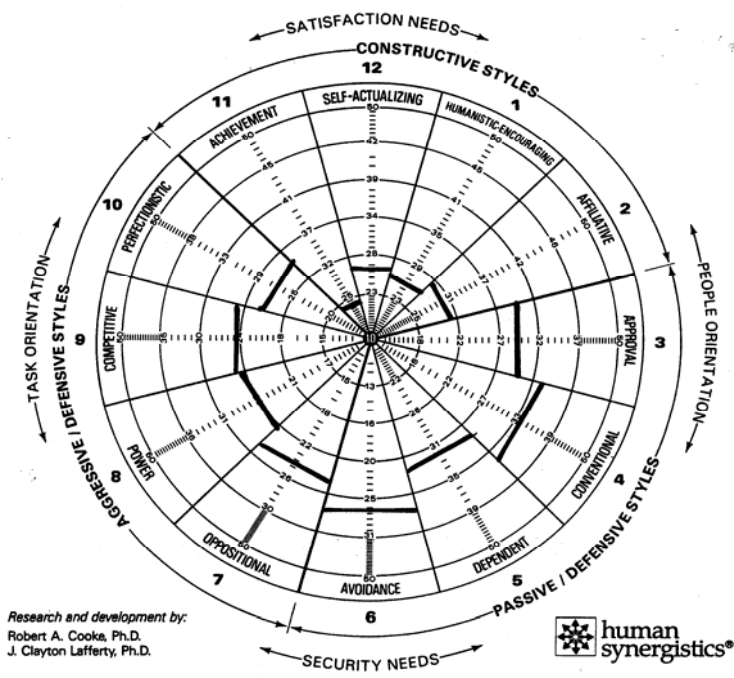
The results do not confirm the general hypothesis formed by organisation studies regarding the cultural uniqueness of every organisation due to the history, past decisions, leadership styles and the character of the organisational choices (Furnham & Gunter 1993a, b). Those studies in organisations that confirmed that hypothesis had included in their sample very different organisations, such as a multinational organisation with geographically dispersed subunits together with a small insurance company. On the contrary, a comparison between similar organisations, such as the decentralized agencies, may manifest a common direction regarding their cultural norms. In other words, agencies' similar institutional and organisational framework, such as the common administrative and bureaucratic processes and rules under which the agencies operate as well as the fact that they function within the EU framework can be considered to predispose the agencies to develop similar cultural norms and expectations.

The high level of consistency in the observed results implies that apart from the existence of an overall model of structural and formal norms, there are also common cultural norms, particularly those clustered around a satisfaction and a security culture. Nevertheless, there are some small and as yet unexplained inter-agency differences in satisfaction culture.

B3. The organisational cultural profile of the agencies

Given the high degree of consistency in the two dominant cultural styles within the agencies, they can be said to represent a certain type of organisations within the EU architecture. By summing the scores of the three agencies, we obtain a picture of this type of organisation as shown in figure 18. This manifests that the scores of the four constructive styles¹⁰² (indicated by the black thick line) are closer to the centre of the circumplex than the eight defensive styles. This means that the employees of the agencies who participated in the research perceive their organisation as more oriented towards the fulfilment of their security needs than the fulfilment of their satisfaction needs.

Figure 18. Cultural profile of the three decentralised agencies



The behavioural styles with the highest scores, which turned to be characteristic of the agencies' employees are the avoidance and the conventional style. An avoidance cultural style characterises organisations that fail to reward success; so there is generally a negative reward system. Greater value is placed on consistency and reliability than on creativity, a fact that creates non-committal norms

¹⁰² The cultural styles that comprise the satisfaction culture represented at the upper part of the circle are: i) Achievement, ii) Self-Actualising, iii) Humanistic and iv) Affiliative. The cultural styles that comprise the security culture and are represented at the bottom left and right sides of the circle as we look at it, are: i) Perfectionist, ii) Competitive, iii) Power, iv) Oppositional, v) Avoidance, vi) Dependent, vii) Conventional and viii) Approval.

among individuals, limits initiatives and produces a tendency to shift responsibilities to others. Therefore, a passive culture emerges as a means of assuring work security. Employees are not so willing to make decisions, take action or accept risks. To a great extent innovation is not encouraged because it is more important to avoid mistakes than to be successful.

High scores on the conventional style suggest that the agencies' culture is characterised by traditional and conservative elements, and that agencies are run on the basis of rules and regulations whose main objective is to try to maintain the status quo. In this style, organisations place importance on avoiding risks, conflicts or anything that might create disorder. Furthermore, the philosophy that supports this style of culture is consistent with the bureaucratic model - which is indeed the way agencies are organised and has its origins in the agencies' founders, such as the Commission. In conventional cultures, the one-way vertical communication and a strict hierarchy that blocks the circulation of information are also highlighted. The system is controlled by standard procedures and things are noticed only when they are inconsistent with these procedures.

One outcome of this conventional attitude is the high predictability and consistency that characterises the way things are done within the agencies. Accordingly, individuals in the agencies express high expectations for a change – an expectation that is relevant to the reform process which all agencies were going through at the time the present research was taking place. Nevertheless, the dominant belief was that there were minimum possibilities for a radical change due to the agencies' intricacy and a more general opacity of the overall system. As a result, individuals felt that any attempt at change seemed vain.

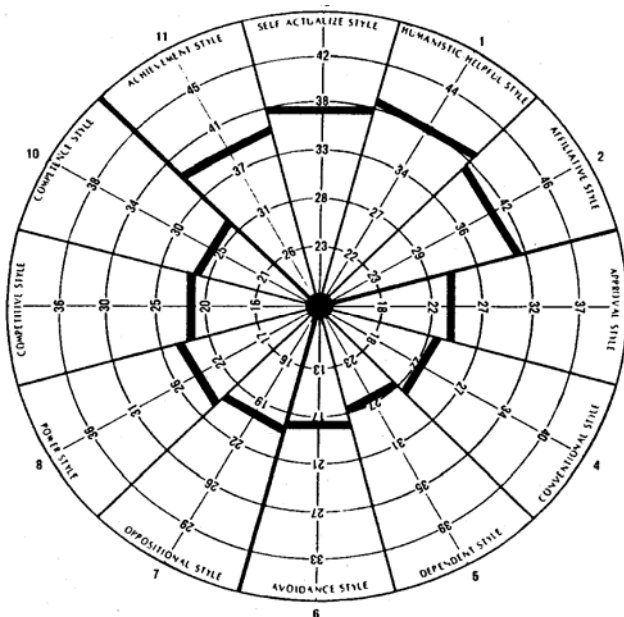
The low scores in satisfaction culture styles indicate limited participation in the decision-making process of the agencies or a lack of personal involvement of employees with the organisational goals. More particularly, a low score on the achievement style signifies lack of enthusiasm in relation to the execution of jobs and in the way individuals deal with the everyday working reality. Finally, low achievement norms highlight a difficulty in planning and, more specifically, in agreeing about effective short- and long-term goals.

It has been reported that there is an intense pressure for things to get done. Consequently, few opportunities exist for developing constructive interpersonal relations within the agencies. Furthermore, the fact that there is a high degree of diversity within the agencies makes it harder to develop a more open and satisfying culture. The low levels of satisfaction culture within all the three agencies suggest also a certain degree of ambiguity regarding the way their formal structures currently operate. This is

indicative of weak vertical communication, which seems to make members highly dependent on their immediate superior. In addition, as shown by the external evaluations and also expressed by individuals within the agencies, there is poor employee training. The issue of employee training is critical for the agencies' function given the high degree of complexity of the formal organisational processes. Moreover, it is a common situation within the three agencies to encounter managers with few incentives for developing their personal tasks and likewise for providing encouragement and support to their subordinates. This is considered as a source of high levels of stress and of unwanted pressures. Furthermore, the lack of effective promotion systems and career advancement opportunities tend to make individuals less motivated.

The profile of the three agencies can be compared to the profile of the ideal type organisation described by Cooke and Rousseau (1988: 263). This particular profile is constructed by the scores of 90 managers of geographically dispersed units. The ideal type organisation following the figure 19 below is an organisation in which the satisfaction oriented norms prevail and are considered to be the appropriate norms of an effective organisation. The organisational environment should be, according to this scheme, open and supportive with good interpersonal relations among the employees in various organisational levels. Cooperation and high performance goals are promoted. These conditions foster service-oriented values. In contrast, the security-oriented norms in the ideal type of organisation that is shown in figure 19 are low. Needless to say, the ideal cultural profile is exactly the opposite of the agencies' profile.

Figure 19. Cultural profile of an "ideal" type of organisation (Cooke & Rousseau 1988: 263)



C. Conclusion

In order to investigate the culture of the three European agencies, the OCI has been used as the appropriate standardised diagnostic tool. The respective analyses characterised the organisational culture of each agency and explored differences and similarities between them. More specifically, the similar direction of satisfaction and security cultures between the three agencies suggests the emergence of common cultural norms and common aspects of working within an agency that lead respondents to describe the reality of their agencies in a similar way. The assumption is that these common aspects are the rules, the procedures and the goals set and attempted to be achieved.

In terms of whether there is a culture in the agencies that could be named as EU organisational culture, the analysis using OCI suggests that the agencies operate as a microcosm of other bigger EU institutions. This was also the conclusion of several research studies undertaken within other EU institutions based mainly on anthropological insights (Shore 2000; Abélès et al. 1993; Abélès & Bellier 1996; Bellier 1997). The cultural characteristics of the agencies as a whole are very similar to some important characteristics of the European Commission: both the Commission and the agencies can be considered as bureaucratic and hierarchical administrations. Despite the fact that agencies are not administrative but rather specialised organs, they still present the same patterns of bureaucratisation, excessive legalism, hierarchies and rigid procedures that discourage personal initiatives, as has been described for the Commission (Shore 2000; Abélès et al. 1993).

The high degree of security norms in the agencies can be explained by the fact that individuals within the agencies have a high degree of specialisation that limits and constraints their further career prospects. Additionally, given the privileged status of the employees, these experts are reluctant to move to another job either in national or international working environments. This mainly applies to positions such as those held by managers or lawyers, which are considered even within the agencies as an elite, but it is not confined only to them. Accordingly, it can be said that the “golden cage syndrome”¹⁰³ pointed out by anthropologists concerning the Commission, applies also in the case of the EU agencies.

¹⁰³ The basic characteristics that this type of syndrome describes are boredom, dissatisfaction, low morale which is acute in managers due to the lack of political support to advance further (Shore 2000). As a result employees feel trapped in a dead end job. It is characteristic how Abélès et al. describe this syndrome: “*one has the impression of living in a cell of a big organism. [...] the individual has no sense of continuity in his work. Everything changes and it is only later that you discover that the course of action you recommended was rejected in favour of another. This creates a sense of insecurity and toughens the less sensitive*” (1993: 24).

Chapter 9. “WORKING TOGETHER” IN THE EU AGENCIES

Having examined the dominant norms in the internal life of the European agencies through the quantitative tool discussed in the previous chapter and having discovered that all three agencies operate in a rather problematic organisational context, this and the following chapter focus on the discursive constructions of the meanings of two key concepts for the agencies. The discursive constructions of these two key concepts, namely the notion of “working together” and the notion of “a European agency” will be interpreted in relation to the overall institutional and social context in which the agencies operate as well as in relation to the organisational context that has been portrayed by the analysis of the OCI.

“Working together” is the practice of the daily routine in organisations. Zabusky (1995), for instance, has investigated the practice of “working together” in the European Space Agency and concluded that the examination of this practice provides the opportunity to demonstrate the role of the overall cultural, social, political and ideological context of the agency as well as the contradictions and ambiguities that emerge in the actual practice of cooperation. More specifically, the practice of “working together” has been defined by Zabusky as a study of cooperation and “[...] a process that makes power available in collective action directed towards the production of artefacts, whether material or social; indeed it is a particularly powerful form of human association.” (Zabusky 1995: 26).

The analysis and interpretation of the meanings individuals give to the practice of “working together” facilitates the construction and deconstruction of a series of significant notions in their everyday working practice. In other words, the analysis of the everyday talk of the individuals in the agencies is expected to provide an understanding of the ideological and political processes and structures.

The interviewees were invited to discuss the concept of “working together” after a series of questions that were posed to them. The questions concerned the following issues:

- What does “working together with others” within a European agency mean to you?
- What are your views about the diversity among people working in the agency? or
- How do you find working together with individuals from different backgrounds within the context of a European agency?

The questions¹⁰⁴ raised two distinct issues: On the one hand, the definition and the meaning of the concept of “working together” and, on the other, an evaluation of this practice. This double request provided information that was eventually organised around two major dimensions: firstly, the identification of who is “working together” and, secondly, the evaluation of how “working together” in the agencies is experienced.

The analytical goal in the present chapter is threefold: a) to identify the interpretative repertoires and their content as well as the rhetorical techniques used by the interviewees in order to make their argumentation objective and undermine opposing views; b) to distinguish the subject positions the interviewees adopt for themselves and attribute to others in the agency when they describe the practice of “working together”; and c) to link the repertoires with the ideological frames which structure the concept of “working together”. The analysis also aims to identify the similarities and differentiation in the talk of the interviewees from the three agencies and uncover whether the various scientific discourses on Europe and culture, and the everyday discourse in the agencies are structured on similar ideological dilemmas. It also seeks to investigate whether there are new ways of speaking about “working together” in a European agency in an attempt to transcend existing dilemmas and dominating discourses.

In the presentation of the extracts, the latter are given a number according to the order they are presented. They are also labelled by a pseudonym of the interviewees in order to facilitate the reference to the particular extract as well as its discussion. Given the emphasis placed on working with contextualised utterances as well as also the notion of reflexivity, in some of the selected extracts the interviewer’s question or comments are also included. The latter are analysed as a constituent of the respective social interaction that contributed and oriented the interviewee’s arguments.

A. The repertoire of “working together” with different working roles in order to achieve a common task

The first repertoire consists of two symmetric lines of argumentation based on the evaluation of the practice of “working together” in the agency. In the selected extracts analysed below, the interviewees construct “working together” in the agency as working with different people where difference is constructed in functional and attitudinal, rather than national, terms. The reason that these two lines of

¹⁰⁴ Interviewees were initially asked to respond to the first question. In case the interviewer observed some difficulties faced by the interviewees expressing their views, then the rest of the questions were posed in order to clarify the requests and provide the interviewees with more incentives for discussion.

argumentation are considered symmetric is because difference is represented in both positive and negative ways. Where difference is evaluated positively, it is because cohesion is achieved that leads to the successful accomplishment of working tasks; where difference is evaluated negatively, this is due to conflict and fragmentation of the working activity.

A1. “Working together” with different personalities as cohesive

In the extracts below, the discourse does not attach importance to nationality or culture with respect to “who” takes part in the practice of “working together”. Instead, the focus is on the participants’ ability to do the job, their personal preferences or personality differences. Difference constructed in these terms is not represented as posing problems. Differences are therefore viewed as “normal” and the agency a “normal” working place with no particularities or conflict.

Extract 1¹⁰⁵

Alexander (A)

Question: How do you find working together with different people in terms of nationality (.) language (.) with different backgrounds (.) cultural and professional=

- 1 =I don’t really have any problem. I mean (.) on the whole I find people here
- 2 very reasonable because most of them are motivated. It’s a new office so
- 3 people come here (.) because they wanted to come here. Yeah. So for most
- 4 people it’s a new start and they want to be here (.) and they are coming
- 5 because they want to do the job (.) so I would say we are quite lucky in this
- 6 respect really e::: (.) Most people are very motivated and it’s the normal
- 7 working process which is good.

The question posed by the interviewer allows the interviewee to express his opinion on the idea of “working together” in an agency as well as on national or other type of cultural differences. The interviewee provides his personal opinion by stating that “working together” in terms of cultural differences is not a problem. He bases his opinion on his colleagues’ attitude to work and, more specifically, on their mental constitution (“reasonable” in line 2) and motivation (“motivated” in line 2). He repeats the phrase “they wanted to come here” (line 3) and “they wanted to do the job” (line 5) emphasising peoples’ personal choice to work in the agency. In formulating his account, he takes the

¹⁰⁵ In every line of argumentation there are included three extracts, each deriving from the material within every agency separately. Each extract comes with a ‘postscript’ identifying the agency in which the interviewee is working. The three agencies are symbolised with the letters L, A or T which stand for the city in which every agency is situated (L for Lisbon and the EMCDDA, A for Alicante and the OHIM and T for Thessaloniki and the Cedefop). This letter is put in brackets next to the pseudonym in every extract in order to help the reader identify the agency and understand the respective context in which the discussion took place.

position of an external observer, speaking about people without including himself. This kind of rhetoric adds objectivity to his argumentation.

Another important argument concerns the fact that the agency is “new” (line 2) and joining the agency is a “new start” (line 4) for the individuals. These two aspects indicate that the work in the agency is represented as a novelty that is sustained by the interviewee’s knowledge or experience about working in “older” EU organisations. Hence, the novelty is significant for both the agency as an organisation and the individuals working there.

Additionally, the interviewee characterises himself and all the others who work in the agency as “lucky” (line 5). The attribution of peoples’ willingness and focus on their job to factors such as luck, indicates Alexander’s awareness of a counter discourse, according to which “working together” in an organisation may take place with problems. Nonetheless, this is not the case for the agency. This view becomes even stronger by the use of “we” (line 5). Until this point the interviewee was speaking about others and the deployment of “we” indicates a change in his position which shows his commitment to the agency, and also presents his view as more objective since it is shared.

Finally, his argument is summarised in the last phrase of the extract in which he describes “working together” in an agency as “the normal working process which is good” (line 7). This phrase highlights the interviewee’s desire to present the agency as “normal”. Normality is constructed as “good”, a generic moral judgment that attributes to the agency legitimacy.

Extract 2

Florence (T)

- 1 Working together in an agency is like working in the Commission (.) very
- 2 similar very similar. For me I find it very similar and in the Commission there
- 3 are twenty thousand employees and here there what fifty (1) for me it’s very
- 4 similar. So I wouldn’t say that it [working in an agency] raises any particular
- 5 questions. It is always a question of who you like. And you tend to
- 6 communicate much easier with the people with whom you have a friendship
- 7 (.) a contact. But in end you do the work without any problem.

In this extract, Florence compares the working process in the agency with that of the Commission. This comparison represents the agency as a regular EU working environment based on an established legitimating discourse characteristic of the Commission. This argument is supported by the interviewee’s explanation about working relations in general which are, she says, always a matter of personal preferences. The emphasis is thus drawn on the informal relations within the agency rather

than on the actual work. The latter is constructed as a taken-for-granted duty that is achieved without any problem.

In this extract the interviewee, like the earlier one, does not make any reference to differences or cultural differences and constructs the practice of “working together” in the agency as not problematic. Meanwhile the emphasis is placed upon the actual task, which is reported to be executed properly. The new element in this extract is the reference to the existence of informal relations in which individuals’ personal preferences play the most crucial role. Florence adopts the position of an informed speaker presenting her argument as truthful while she also deploys the second person that presents her opinion as common sense.

Extract 3

Kate (L)

- 1 I think we all work in the context of the EU and I think that e:: one of the
- 2 positive the stimulating thing is that you work to achieve this goal in your
- 3 work. So everybody has his own experiences his own luggage has his own
- 4 habits (.) it’s a question of getting to know each other so you know (.) and I
- 5 don’t really think it’s a question of difference of identity (.) of culture because
- 6 you can be of the same country and be completely different you know (.) so
- 7 it’s more a question of difference of personalities.

Kate mentions the overall “context of the EU” (line 1) as one of the most important elements in the practice of “working together” in the agency. As in the extract above, the EU context is considered to be given and, without specifying its particular characteristics, it is represented as already known. A more specific attribution to this context is actually described as the achievement of the “goal” (line 2) assigned to the agency, which is expressed as a generally accepted view (indicated by the use of “you” in line 2). Kate also presents this goal as collective with the use of “we all” (line 1) showing her commitment to the agency and the importance she attributes to the agency as a whole.

In the following phrases she provides her account about the constituents of this whole. She identifies that apart from the common working goal, the participants are differentiated. This differentiation is represented through the use of the metaphor as “luggage”, whose content is a set of previous experiences and habits (lines 3-4). Nonetheless, these differences do not pose problems since they can be overcome when individuals get to know each other.

In lines 5 and 6, there is a clear reference to differences among the individuals in the agency constructed in cultural terms. This tends to undermine the concept of cohesion promoted in this line of

argumentation. Kate expresses her view on an issue that has not been posed by the interviewer showing that she is aware of the repertoire in which differences in identity and culture are constructed as the major obstacle (“a question of difference of identity, of culture” in line 5). However, she discounts the validity of this argument by providing a rationalisation in which the importance of cultural differences is undermined since differences are presented as normal and existent even within “the same country” (line 6). This is because “within the same country” as well as in the multicultural context of the agency, differences that matter are understood as personality traits.

The attribution of difference to personality rather than to nationality is not new and is actually a dominant way of speaking about “working together” within the European institutions. As McDonald (1997) claims, Commission officials describe an “esprit europeen” and the occurrence of personality differences in “working together” in the Commission. Accordingly, the attribution of differences to personality traits reflects an immensely positive discourse because the construction of differences occurring in the EU institutions as personality differences do not undermine the idea of European unity (McDonald 1997; Jacobs & Maier 1998).

Discussion

In the extracts above, the key issue of “working together” is constructed by focusing principally on the actual work and the achievement of the agency’s working goals. Differences are downplayed by being presented as “normal” and not posing any problems. They are principally attributed to the employees’ different personalities. Personality traits are thus used as a legitimate and normal source of differentiation among the individuals working in the agency. This might then be described as a ‘meritocratic’ view inasmuch as ascribed states, like nationality, which should not be relevant to how one performs in a job, are, indeed, stated not to be relevant: people are, instead, assessed on how well they do their job. In order to sustain their argumentation, the interviewees adopt the position of employees focused on the task, which nevertheless allows them to share a common vision of their agencies’ goals.

A2. “Working together” with functional and hierarchical differences as fragmented

The second line of argumentation in this repertoire constructs “working together” in terms of functional and hierarchical differences. However, the present extracts differ from the previous ones in that they evaluate the functional and hierarchical differences among individuals in a negative way.

Extract 4

Katerina (A)

1 I think that in respect we have the: two aspects (1) I think the office as such (.)
2 has two different kinds of people. One is operative forces (.) people who are
3 actually doing the process like the CTM¹⁰⁶ (.) like myself (.) Everybody who
4 is working in the examination opposition cancellation registration [divisions]
5 we are all one bloc (.) we are actually doing the work. Another bloc of people
6 is the administration which in very general terms means (.) all the people who
7 do something else but actively participate in the process (.) meaning the trade
8 marks. And in my opinion (.) people working in the operative parts we are
9 more aware of this supranational thing. Thus meaning that (.) we more aim at
10 harmonization we more think that we should we should a:: create something
11 that is a new legal community system in industrial property. Whereas I think
12 more in terms of administration (.) this is typical to say [on the issue] where I
13 actually base my opinion (.) it's intuitive very much (.) it's difficult for me to
14 point out why I think so but I don't think that people in administration think
15 about these things [e.g. supranational system in industrial property] so much.

Katerina mentions “two aspects” (line 1) or categories of individuals (line 2) working in the agency and then identifies them on the basis of their functional roles. The first category of individuals constitutes the “operative forces” (line 2). Katerina makes clear that she is a member of this group by a declaration of her occupational identity (line 3) through the use of the personal pronoun “we” (lines 5, 8 and 9). The functional role of this group is to “do the actual job” (line 5). So, the “operative forces” are the *doers* who are conscious of their role to contribute to the supranational goal of harmonisation (lines 8-9) as well as to the agency’s specific aim of creating a new legal system in the field of industrial property (line 11).

The second category of individuals is the administration. They are attributed with the role of “actively participating” (line 7) in the working process but their actual task is not specified (“in very general terms” in line 6). This utterance, having a rather contemptuous tone, undermines the contribution of this group to the agency’s function compared to the details provided concerning the “operative forces”. The tension between the operative part and the administration becomes obvious in the use of the word “bloc” (line 5), which suggests confrontation between a bloc united with common goals in opposition to another bloc with different goals and interests.

Katerina, avoids the responsibility for the way she presented the administration by deploying a set of low modality phrases (such as “intuitive” in line 13, “difficult to point out why I think so” and “I don’t think” in line 14). These, according to Potter (1996), indicate a sense of uncertainty or a dilemma on

¹⁰⁶ CTM: Community Trade Mark

the part of the speaker and, as a result, reduce the validity and the responsibility of the accounts (e.g. the attribution of blame). Finally, in her effort to speak about the role of the administration, Katerina uses the following disclaimer: “it’s difficult for me to point out why I think so but I don’t think that the administration think about these things” (lines 13-14). People usually use disclaimers in order to secure the success of substantive claims, but without the negative implications for their identity claims (Hewitt & Stokes 1975). This way Katerina avoids her personal responsibility in attributing blame to a group in the agency, which also minimizes the possibility of her views being seen as biased.

Extract 5

Jim (T)

1 There is unfortunately conflict (.) between the administration and other parts.
2 Perhaps (1) a::: there are also some discussions that are a part because the
3 administration is not working effectively. That would be the our point of view.
4 The administration would have a different point of view (.) I’m sure. But yes
5 (.) there are points and times (.) where certain procedures do put you into
6 conflict with the things you wanted to do. And there are times (.) when you
7 feel that the administration is they and it has a job to do (.) but its job should
8 be to support you (.) and you don’t feel that is the case. A::m: other conflicts
9 (.) if you check the operation side and the experts for example (1) our job [is]
10 to produce the publications (.) to get the scientific information for the website
11 (.) to make it accessible and readable and to disseminate it as widely as
12 possible. That also includes translation and etc. Now there are a lot of steps
13 involved and during that (.) people that are in scientific side do not necessarily
14 appreciate. Or understand. They (1) or some people seem to think that they
15 can write a four-hundred pages document and it can be translated into five
16 languages within a week. And it doesn’t work that way. We are trying to
17 [address] it (1) but we think that is something common to a lot of
18 organisations.

From the outset, Jim constructs the differences occurring among the individuals “working together” in the agency in terms of functional categories (“the administration and other parts” in line 1). He describes the relation between these functional groups as one of “conflict” (line 1), which is not a desired situation as the use of the adverb “unfortunately” (line 1) shows.

In order to explain the conflict, Jim develops his arguments with a degree of uncertainty and doubt highlighted in the defective sentence of “perhaps” (line 2) and the hesitation “a:::” (line 2). This is interpreted as an attempt to reduce the intensity of his previous statement that describes an unpleasant situation in his work. With this tone of doubt, and by adopting a more careful and moderate position, in lines 2-3, Jim provides the reasoning for the conflict, namely that the administration does not work

effectively (line 3). It is worth noting that the interviewee does not attribute responsibilities to the administration but instead reports rumours about this issue (“some discussions” in line 2). This is the device of “footing” which releases the speakers from the position of denunciators particularly in accounts which attribute blame.

Jim, in order to make his argumentation more convincing, presents himself as cognizant of two different points of view: the administration’s and the others’ (lines 3 and 4). This makes his comments more valid since he appears to be rational and aware of the subjectivity involved in attributing blame. This is also reinforced in the next phrase (line 5) in which Jim attributes the blame not to the administration themselves but to their working procedures, which are represented as being responsible for the creation of conflict.

Until this point, the interviewee attempted to present himself as an objective participant and speaker about “working together” in the agency, but now, by informing us about his working position and his occupational identity, he also presents himself as a participant in the conflict (lines 5-6). For him and for the rest of the agency, there is a feeling that the administration is “they” (line 7) indicating the distance that the members of his group feel towards the administration.

Apart from the conflict between the administration and other functional parts of the agency, the interviewee constructs another type of conflict. This occurs between the “operation side” and the “experts” (line 9). The interviewee belongs to the operative side (indicated by the use of “our” job in line 9). He describes in great detail the actual tasks of the “operative side” demonstrating his personal involvement and also the process through which his group comes in conflict with the experts.

Following the description of the tasks of the employees’ functional categories in the agency, we can identify not only a differentiation constructed in functional/horizontal terms but also in vertical/hierarchical ones. Therefore, from the whole extract we understand that the administration stands at the top level of the agency, followed by the experts who operate above the “operative parts”. Furthermore, given that the interviewee belongs to the lowest level, he avoids adopting extreme formulations regarding the responsibilities of every part in order not to undermine or bias the significance of his accounts. This becomes evident in his final phrase where he legitimises the conflict by presenting it as common in many organisations (lines 17-18).

Extract 6

Dimitris (L)

1 I think there is this conflict (.) and probably it is going to exist and e:: I see (1)
2 well I can't imagine any organisation without any certain level of conflict. But
3 but the solution of this conflict has been (.) well (1) [the] marginalisation (.)
4 well I think to some extent is [...] the marginalisation of the scientific part
5 instead of I think to be honest it's the responsibility of the top management of
6 the centre (.) because well for these matters the responsables are the top
7 managers to integrate the others that I admit that (.) ourselves are not very
8 easy to deal sometimes (.) we may be a bit a:::h I mean esoteric for these other
9 people and but (.) well (.) I think because I've been in other organisations (.)
10 these top managers [in other organisations] manage to to establish a
11 communication and here because I think well many reasons a::h I mean a:
12 strategies of political games personal interests personal difficulties of
13 communication the the strategy has been to reinforce all these a:: political part
14 and and marginalise the scientific part. I don't know what is going to be the
15 outcome (.) I think that it's a very bad evolution.

Dimitris describes “working together” in the agency by introducing the notion of conflict from the very first line. As with the previous extracts, he nonetheless downplays its importance firstly by using low modality phrases (“I think” in line 1 and “probably” in line 1), which reflect a lack of confidence, and secondly, by representing the conflict as a common situation in all organisations (line 2). In addition, Dimitris makes a prediction regarding the evolution and future of the conflict in his agency by presenting it as an inherent characteristic of the agency that cannot be altered. His failure to specify the conflict to which he refers gives the impression that the conflict is well-known at least to the interviewer (as can be seen in the use of “this” in line 1).

By presenting all organisations as facing some degree of conflict, Dimitris attempts firstly, to “decriminalise” the agency since it is not unique in having conflicts, and, secondly, to introduce its real problem. This, in particular, is devised through the use of a credentialing disclaimer (“But but the solution of this conflict has been well marginalisation” in line 3) (Hewitt & Stokes 1975). Therefore, the real problem of the agency is the marginalisation of one of the two groups implicated in this conflict, namely “the scientific part” (line 4).

As with the previous extracts, the practice of “working together” is described as conflictual due to the functional differences between the agency's groups. The two groups constructed in this extract are the

“scientific part” (line 4) and “the top management of the centre” (line 5) (or “the top managers” in lines 6-7).

In line 5, he assigns the main responsibility for the conflict to the top management, which fails to integrate all the functional groups in the agency. The marginalisation of the scientific group in the agency is a sign of the agency’s fragmentation. In order to make his account more objective, Dimitris also attributes responsibility to the scientific group to which he belongs (“I admit” and “ourselves” in line 7). More specifically, the scientific group is described as consisting of scientists who “are not very easy to deal” (lines 7-8) and a bit “esoteric” (line 8).

However, while the interviewee tries to provide a fair accounting regarding the ascription of responsibilities for the occurrence of the conflict within the agency, his position is certainly against the top management. This is reflected by the weak attribution of blame to the scientific group, which is said to be due to idiosyncratic or behavioural characteristics. In contrast, the responsibility of the top management rests on its inability to do its job of integrating the groups in the agency. The distance the interviewee feels from the top management is also expressed by the phrase “these other people” (lines 8-9). Dimitris uses also his personal experience in order to support his argument regarding the role and efficiency of the managers. Once again, he uses a cognitive disclaimer “but well I think because I’ve been in other organisations” (line 9) in order to anticipate doubts that may be expressed concerning his capacity to recognize the empirical facts of the situation in which he finds himself. Dimitris in the last lines of this extract attributes blame to the managers but not because of their role or function but because of their particular “personal interests” (line 12) “personal difficulties of communication” (lines 12-13) and “strategies of political games” (line 12).

The extract finishes on a note of pessimism: Dimitris wonders about the future of the agency and its outcomes. This pessimism becomes obvious in the use of the strong adjective “bad” (line 15) to refer to the conflict and the fragmentation that this causes in the agency’s working process.

Discussion

In the three extracts above, “working together” is constructed as consisting of two main components and, in particular, of two distinct organisational groups. The two groups are attributed with various names and roles -depending on the relevant jargon that dominates within every agency -, nonetheless they are all based on similar occupational and/or professional characteristics. More specifically, there are those who actually do the work and the managers. So differences are also constructed in

functional/hierarchical terms representing a differentiation concerning the division of labour in the agencies.

The interviewees in the three extracts take the position of “doers” in confrontation with the administration. The latter is blamed for the conflict within the agency. Hence the interviewees disavow the responsibility for the agencies’ fragmentation by presenting themselves as committed to the execution of agencies’ common goals. They construct the existence of a cohesive professional identity whose central element is the expertise that is linked to education and experience and which cannot be replaced or controlled by management. Another strong element in this type of professional identity is that individuals’ expertise can lead to an understanding and achievement of the central purpose of the organisation, which other groups with a different identity and role do not have. So the use of their occupational or professional identity are useful resources that allow the interviewees to comment on the inabilities of others and celebrate the expertise of self (Parker 2000).

The constructed notion of expertise and its significance is common among various types of organisations similar to the agencies. For instance, the occupational categories constructed within the European Space Agency are characteristic of the conflict that has been found to occur between scientists and engineers (Zabusky 1995). Similarly, anthropologists in their studies in the European Commission identify two types of logic: the logic of reflection attributed to experts and the logic of execution attributed to managers (Abélès & Bellier 1996). Furthermore, various studies within the EU organisations, and particularly the European Commission, point to a discourse of compartmentalization or fragmentation that is attributed to a series of dividing mechanisms, such as horizontal or sectoral and vertical differences (Abélès et al. 1993; Abélès & Bellier 1996; McDonald 1996, 1997; Cini 1997; Trondal 2001a, b). Hence, in the European Commission perceived differences between “horizontal” and “vertical” directorates or units are often linked to notions of “thinkers” and “doers”. These categories are represented as “ideal types” in a Weberian sense and are interpreted not only as functional or social distinctions but also as generating a cultural opposition (Zabusky 1995).

Categorisations derived from occupational roles and professional identities have been largely discussed in organisations theory literature too (Parker 2000). In functionalist approaches, they are often mentioned as structural, hierarchical or occupational differences (Alvesson 2002; Parker 2000; Van Maanen & Barley 1985, Sackman 1992; Furnham & Gunter 1993a; Frost et al. 1991, 1985). These are considered to be the causes for the organisation’s fragmentation in terms of its performance (Schein 1990, 1992) and internal communication (Furnham & Gunter 1993a) or for the creation of

differentiated organisational identities and cultures (Martin 1993). This differentiation is usually seen as problematic and leads to a redefinition of organisational roles in order to achieve cohesion and unity.

Discussion of the repertoire

This repertoire consists of two symmetric lines of argumentation regarding the concept of “working together” in the agencies. “Working together” is represented as consisting of differences constructed either in terms of personalities or functional roles. In the first case, the notion of differences is generally undermined and, as a result, “working together” is represented as a cohesive practice based on the execution of the agencies’ task. In the second case, “working together” is constructed as a conflictual practice due to the different functional and hierarchical roles of the individuals, which in effect are considered responsible for fragmentation in the execution of the working task. According to Edwards and Potter (1992), personality and self are considered as discursive resources that people draw on to do particular sorts of interactional work. These resources provide sets of rights and duties, which are seen as “natural” and thus legitimate (Hilbert 1981; Potter et al. 1984).

The dilemma around which the discourse of the interviewees is structured in this repertoire is whether differences among individuals working together in the agency can be a source of cohesion or fragmentation. The interviewees opt for constructing cohesion as significant for the agencies. This is manifested through the representation of “working together” in positive terms when unity or cohesion in working together is achieved and accordingly through the representation of “working together” in negative terms when cohesion is disrupted and is substituted by fragmentation. The two lines of argumentation contain a series of rhetorical devices, which are characteristic of the type of the argumentation employed by the interviewees. Regarding the effectiveness of the rhetoric used in the two lines of argumentation, it can be said that the rhetoric accounts in the first line of argumentation are more effective. This is attributed to the combined use of devices (such as the use of second person and the construction of the respective views as common sense, the repetitions that draw emphasis on the importance of the agency’s working task and the provision of details from an insider’s point of view). The combination of these devices aims at bringing to the fore the significance of achieving the agency’s common working objective. In this sense the cohesion in working together is promoted. In contrast, the second line of argumentation is seen as less effective rhetorically given that it is structured upon low modality verbs, disclaimers and devices such as footing. The use of these devices mitigates the effectiveness of the descriptions as they manifest uncertainty on behalf of the speakers. In particular, the combined use of such devices is considered to be common in attributing blame for a

problematic situation in which speakers attempt to disavow any personal bias, interest or responsibility so that their accounts are constructed as more objective. However, the most characteristic rhetorical device is the normalisation either of the individuals' differences working together or of the conflict occurring due to these differences. The normalisation of the process of working together, whether represented in positive or in negative terms, actually sustains the choice of the interviewees to construct cohesion and unity in the agency as more important and desirable.

The notion of unity and coherence as described here is connected to what anthropologists have named "culture of expertise", which makes the identification to a European entity viable (Abélès & Bellier 1996). In general, the officials in the EU institutions identify themselves with their task based on the idea that this brings them close to the Union's services. This way they are allowed to think of "others" not in national terms or other cultural differences, which generate divisions, but as their colleagues. This interpretation is also sustained by the subject positions adopted by the interviewees. In particular, the interviewees present themselves as technocrats, devoid of cultural characteristics, who either identify themselves with the working goals of the agency or with the more specific goals of their department or hierarchical level in which they operate.

Balibar (1991) supports the view that defining differences in terms of organisational roles and functions helps the individuals internalise the frontiers of the EU and identify themselves with the organisations rather than with the political entity. Certainly, the functionality of this system is not always straightforward since the Commission, for example, is also characterised by fragmented professional identities, similar to the arguments presented in the second line of argumentation.

In order to have an overall view of this repertoire that can be distinct and comparable to the repertoires that follow, table 1 below summarises its basic characteristics regarding the content and the rhetorical organisation.

Table 1. "Working Together" with different roles and tasks aiming at cohesion

<i>Dilemma</i>	<i>Whether differences among individuals working together in the agency can be a source of cohesion or fragmentation</i>	
	A1. "Working together" with different tasks and personalities leads to cohesion	A2. "Working together" with functional and hierarchical differences leads to fragmentation
Content	Individuals are defined according to their working task Differences among individuals working together are undermined and constructed as unimportant.	Individuals are defined according to their working tasks Differences among individuals working together, are constructed as functional or hierarchical.

	<p>Cohesion is constructed as significant.</p> <p>Cohesion is represented as achieved, thus</p> <p>“Working together” is evaluated as positive.</p>	<p>Differences are constructed as significant sources of conflict.</p> <p>Conflict is constructed as problematic and responsible for the fragmentation of the agency’s function.</p> <p>“Working together” is evaluated negatively since the agency’s cohesion is perturbed.</p>
Subject Positions	<p>Technocrats, committed-to-the-agency and, in particular, to the overall organisational goal.</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates that individuals identify themselves with the agency and its function.</p>	<p>Technocrats, as committed-to-their-specific task/division/team or department.</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates that individuals identify themselves with their (horizontal or vertical) division. They are differentiated from “others” within other divisions.</p>
Rhetorical Devices	<p><i>Objectivity:</i></p> <p>Provision of the insider’s point of view in order to provide proof for their descriptions</p> <p>Use of second person that presents views as common sense</p> <p>Presentation of similarities between the agency and the Commission, in order to draw legitimacy for the agency’s function</p> <p>Repetitions and repetitive references drawing emphasis to the actual working tasks</p> <p><i>Normalisation:</i></p> <p>Normalisation of differences as well as the agency’s working environment in order to undermine their importance and emphasise the occurrence of cohesion</p>	<p><i>Objectivity:</i></p> <p>Provision of the insider’s point of view based on personal experiences and details in order to provide proof for the description of their tasks</p> <p>Attribution of blame to opposing groups in order to undermine the opposing views.</p> <p>Low modality verbs, disclaimers, footing: devices that unfold uncertainty on behalf of the speakers. But these devices aim also at presenting the views as devoid of personal interests which would make the views biased and subjective.</p> <p><i>Normalisation:</i></p> <p>Normalisation and commonality of conflict by referring to other organisations from where legitimacy for the agency is drawn</p>

B. The repertoire of “working together” with different nationalities, languages and cultures

In the second repertoire the practice of “working together” is structured upon the construction of differences in terms of cultures or nationalities. As in the previous repertoire, the present one consists of a series of symmetric lines of argumentation, which are organised around the positive or negative evaluation of cultural and/or national differences regarding the practice of “working together”. On the one hand, there are two lines of argumentation that evaluate working together with different nationalities and cultures positively, and, on the other hand, there is an antithetical line of argumentation, which evaluates “working together” negatively due to the conflict caused by the inherent and unchangeable nature of nationalities. We address each in turn below.

B.1 “Working together” with national diversity as a rich and learning process

The first line of argumentation constructs the national and cultural differences as a significant and positive component of the practice of “working together”: working with national and cultural diversity is a rich, gainful and profitable working process given that participants are learning from others’ national and/or cultural differences.

Extract 7

Adrianna¹⁰⁷ (L)

- 1 I find it positive being able to work with people who are different
- 2 from you. Basically you learn very many things (.) [such as attitudes of
- 3 closure towards foreigners] because you learn how a Danish operates (.) how
- 4 an Italian operates (.) how the Greek operates towards the foreigner (.) you
- 5 become much more (1) yes (.) more open (.) you see things in a completely
- 6 different way. Me when I return to Greece and I see these things (.) they
- 7 disturb me. My children let’s say hear my parents and they say, you are racist.
- 8 But I am not racist. No you are racist (.) you cannot speak this way. You have
- 9 a completely different view for things [being open with differences in culture]
- 10 and you can gain this only by having worked with people (.) who are different

¹⁰⁷ Original text transcribed in Greek :

- 1 εγώ το βρίσκω θετικό το να μπορείς να δουλεύεις με ανθρώπους που είναι διαφορετικοί
- 2 από σένα. Βασικά μαθαίνεις παρά πολλά πράγματα (.)
- 3 διότι μαθαίνεις πως λειτουργεί ένας δανός (.) πως
- 4 λειτουργεί ένας ιταλός (.) πως λειτουργεί ο έλληνας στον ξένο (.) γίνεσαι
- 5 πολύ πιο (1) ναι (.) πιο ανοιχτός (.) βλέπεις τα πράγματα τελείως
- 6 διαφορετικά. Εγώ όταν γυρνάω στην Ελλάδα και βλέπω τέτοια πράγματα (.) μ’ ενοχλούν.
- 7 Τα παιδιά μου ας πούμε ακούνε τους γονείς μου και λένε (.) “είσαι ρατσιστής”.
- 8 Μα δεν είμαι ρατσιστής. Όχι είσαι ρατσιστής (.) δε μπορείς να μιλάς κατ’ αυτόν τον τρόπο.
- 9 Έχεις μια τελείως διαφορετική άποψη για τα πράγματα
- 10 και αυτό μπορείς να το κερδίσεις μόνον έχοντας δουλέψει με ανθρώπους (.) που είναι
- 11 διαφορετικοί από σένα (.) που έχουν θρησκεία διαφορετική (.) έχουν κουλτούρα διαφορετική
- 12 (.) έχουν τα πάντα που είναι διαφορετικά. Δηλαδή δεν μπορώ να συγκρίνω έναν Έλληνα μ’
- 13 έναν Νορβηγό ή έναν Σουηδό ή μ’ έναν Δανό. Σε τίποτα. Παρ’ όλα αυτά, η καλύτερη μου
- 14 φίλη στις Βρυξέλλες είναι Δανέζα. Το πώς κρατήσαμε τη φιλία μας? Είναι γιατί και οι δυο
- 15 κάναμε υποχωρήσεις (.) και κάνοντας και οι δυο υπό (.) όχι υποχωρήσεις
- 16 (.) και οι δυο μάθαμε η μία από την άλλη και μάθαμε πώς μπορούμε να
- 17 επικοινωνούμε καλύτερα (.) δηλαδή στην αρχή όταν της έλεγα:
- 18 θα φάμε εντάξει μαζί ας πούμε λέμε (.) θα φάμε (.) ναι θα φάμε εντάξει. Έρχεσαι
- 19 και μου λες (1) ξέρεις φεύγω γιατί έχω ένα ραντεβού
- 20 ή μου είπαν αυτοί πρέπει να φύγω. Εάν της το ‘κανα εγώ αυτό (.) δε θα μου μιλούσε
- 21 ας πούμε στην αρχή (.) διότι εφ’ όσον
- 22 έχουμε ραντεβού (.) έχουμε ραντεβού (1) Είναι στην ατζέντα μου δηλαδή το ‘χω γράψει στην
- 23 ατζέντα (.) δεν μπορώ να το βγάλω απ’ την ατζέντα αφού το ‘χω γράψει. Πως έρχεσαι εσύ (.)
- 24 πέντε λεπτά πριν (.) και μου λες ξέρεις εγώ φεύγω γιατί με πήρε ο τάδε? Δεν γίνεται αυτό το
- 25 πράγμα. Και έτσι μάθαμε και οι δύο και τώρα όταν κλείνουμε ραντεβού (.) μου λέει
- 26 είναι αλά ελληνικά (.) είναι φλου. Ναι είναι φλου (.) αλλά
- 27 θα έρθω [γέλια].

11 from you (.) who have different religion (.) who have different culture (.) who
12 have everything different. In other words, I cannot compare a Greek to a
13 Norwegian or a Swedish or a Danish. At no level. Nevertheless, my best
14 friend in Brussels is Danish. How have we kept our friendship? It is because
15 we both made compromises and by making both com... (.) no compromises
16 (.) we both leaned one from the other and we learned how we can
17 communicate better (.) that is to say in the beginning when I was saying to
18 her: we will eat together (.) ok let's say (.) we will eat (.) yes we will eat. You
19 come and say to me (1) you know I am leaving because I have an appointment
20 or they said to me that I should leave now. If I had done this to her (.) she
21 wouldn't have spoken to me let's say in the beginning (.) because since we
22 have an appointment (.) we do have an appointment (.) it's in my agenda that
23 is to say that I have noted it in the agenda (.) I can't take it out of the agenda
24 since I have written it. How can you come five minutes earlier and you tell me
25 that I am leaving because this guy phoned me? This thing cannot happen. And
26 this way we both learned and now when we arrange an appointment (.) she
27 tells me it is the Greek way (.) thus it is uncertain. Yes it is uncertain (.) but I
28 will be there [laughter]

The extract starts with the interviewee's gist formulation (Heritage & Watson 1979) regarding the practice of "working together" in the agency concerning who takes part in this practice as well as how this is evaluated. With regard to the first aspect, Adrianna informs us that "different individuals" (line 1) work together in the agency and this difference is evaluated positively. The use of second person (line 1) creates a pivot for taking the position of an external observer and present the reasoning for her 'gist' as common sense.

Difference is constructed in terms of nationalities. Nationalities are represented as the basic element that determines individuals' action ("how a Danish operates, how an Italian operates, how the Greek operates" in lines 3 and 4) and also as the binding element of a group of individuals, differentiating them from others. The objectivity of this account is enhanced by the use of a three-part list ("Danish, Italian, Greek" in line 3-4) (Edwards & Potter 1992). The boundaries of the categories defined by nationality are clear since it is inferred that the ones who do not belong in a category defined by one nationality are mentioned as "foreigners" (line 4). The positive aspect of "working together" with different nationalities is represented as a learning process through which individuals become open and see things from a different angle (lines 4 and 6).

Since difference refers to different nationalities, it becomes clear that Adrianna takes the position of a national subject who perceives herself different from other individuals with different nationalities. Operating in a context of "different" individuals is constructed as an asset compared to other individuals who operate in a purely national context. This interpretation derives from the example the

interviewee offers from her personal life. Adrianna in narrating instances from her family life attributes the openness she has described in the previous lines not only to herself but also to her own children. Therefore, “working together” with different nationalities is constructed to have a positive impact on the individuals’ lives even outside the working context and also on others with whom they are connected, such as their family and children. The parents of Adrianna are put in the position of national subjects who do not experience the diversity of nationalities, a fact that is evaluated negatively. Through the use of active voicing of the words of her children and parents, Adrianna attributes to the latter strong characteristics such as “racist” (line 7). The use of such a strong adjective emphasises the degree of difference between the two groups. Active voicing adds vivacity in descriptions, especially those based on biographic information that cannot be disputed. After the example, the interviewee repeats the main argument that “working together” with different people is a gainful and enriching process, but now she also refers to difference in terms of religion and culture.

The interviewee’s arguments are juxtaposed with the provision of another example from her personal experience. This second example has the form of a narration and in combination with her vivid description, two goals are fulfilled: First, to show her expertise in describing the qualification of national differences, so providing an eyewitness account (Goffman 1981). Second, to make her account more truthful through the presentation of her analytic description in the form of a causal narrative.

Extract 8

Eleni (A)

- 1 Well (.) sometimes it’s a little bit difficult because (.) you know you have
- 2 different opinions. And then you don’t understand how can they the (.) think
- 3 that because they come from a different country. But then it’s I also find it’s
- 4 very enriching (.) you know. Because you understand their point of view and
- 5 say well I haven’t thought of that way of speaking you know so (1) so
- 6 sometimes it’s a bit difficult ok? But in general (.) I find it very enriching.
- 7 Yeah (.) I think you feel (.) you know (.) when you start having relation with
- 8 others (.) you understand more and you feel like closer to their countries in a
- 9 way.

In the second extract, the interviewee constructs “working together” in terms of the “different opinions” (line 2) held by the individuals in the agency. These opinions are then seen to refer to “different countries” (line 3). Therefore, as with the first extract, differences are constructed in national terms, which subsequently are represented as different ways of thinking (line 2), points of view (line 4) and different ways of speaking (line 5).

Eleni in her talk deploys strong modality verbs and expressions (“I find” in line 3 and 6) which demonstrate certainty and confidence, that strengthen her account. At the same time, she speaks in general terms, a fact that makes her argumentation commonly accepted. In particular, she makes an appeal to common sense with the use of the phrase “you know” (line 1, 4, 5 and 7), on which the veracity of her opinion is built.

With regard to “working together” in the agency, Eleni describes it as “difficult” (line 1 and 6) and “enriching” (line 4 and 6). While the first adjective may have negative connotations, it does not undermine her positive evaluation of “working together”. Instead, it is used as a generally accepted attribution that increases the interviewee’s conciliatory spirit and openness and so constructs her opinion as more objective. The second adjective (“enriching” in line 4 and 6) is qualified as “understanding different points of view” (line 4) and a way for enhancing cultural proximity between individuals from different nationalities (lines 7-9). In sum, working with different nationalities refers to the interaction and socialisation among the individuals with different nationalities.

Extract 9

Anastasia¹⁰⁸ (T)

- 1 Look I believe ok it is a very big advantage to work with individuals from
- 2 different nationalities and even more I believe in Greece. For me it is very
- 3 fundamental (.) because probably I couldn’t work for a Greek employer. They
- 4 are very authoritarian (.) authoritarian but no I believe it is a big advantage and
- 5 I see that my English has been better and it is very interesting because you
- 6 have many ideas you have prejudices on nationalities and while you
- 7 experience them [the differences between nationalities] e:h you put them in
- 8 order a bit more and you say (.) a::: yes indeed this is how Germans are (.) a:h
- 9 this is what I thought but in the end they are not.

Anastasia expresses her personal opinion regarding the practice of “working together” directly and in clear terms, as is manifested by the frequent use of a strong modality verb (“I believe” in lines 1, 2 and 4). She constructs the participants of “working together” in terms of “different nationalities” (line 2) -

¹⁰⁸ Original text transcribed in Greek:

- 1 Κοίτα πιστεύω εντάξει είναι πολύ μεγάλο πλεονέκτημα να δουλεύεις με άτομα από
- 2 διάφορες εθνικότητες κι ένα παραπάνω πιστεύω στην Ελλάδα. Είναι πολύ για μένα
- 3 βασικό (.) γιατί μάλλον δεν θα μπορούσα να δουλέψω για Έλληνα εργοδότη. Είναι
- 4 πολύ επιβλητικοί (.) επιβλητικοί αλλά όχι πιστεύω ότι είναι μεγάλο πλεονέκτημα και
- 5 βλέπω ότι έχω βελτιώσει και τα αγγλικά μου και είναι πολύ ενδιαφέρον γιατί έχεις
- 6 πολλές ιδέες έχεις προκαταλήψεις απάνω σε εθνικότητες κι ενώ όταν
- 7 τα ζεις ε: τα βάζεις λίγο πιο σε
- 8 σειρά λες (.) a::: ναι όντως έτσι είναι οι Γερμανοί (.) a:::
- 9 έτσι νόμισα αλλά όχι εντέλει δεν είναι

qualified as a “very big advantage” (line 1). Common nationality is represented as having a binding and unitary character that determines individuals’ attitudes, perceptions and working styles. This becomes obvious in the example Anastasia uses of the Greek employer as “authoritarian” (line 4). While national differences in the previous extracts were constructed as differences in religion and culture (Extract 7) and different points of views and ways of speaking (Extract 8), in this extract, national differences are further constructed in terms of different leadership styles.

Similarly, Anastasia in this extract evaluates “working together” with individuals from different nationalities positively. She bases this evaluation on her personal experience. Working together with different nationalities helps improve her abilities and qualifications as an employee, such as her linguistic skills (line 5) and allows her to acquire knowledge regarding other nationalities (line 6). The “advantage” of working together with other nationalities is interpreted as the substitution of pre-existing stereotypes with the adoption of new perceptions and a reconsideration of others based on personal interaction and experience. Finally, it should be noted that Anastasia deploys in her talk the second person (lines 5-8) which shows the speaker’s attempt to present her accounts as a generalised opinion.

Discussion

In these extracts “working together” in the agency is constructed as consisting of different nationalities. Nationalities are presented as the most significant cultural category of differentiation among the individuals in the agencies. Moreover, nationalities are represented as a unified set of shared elements such as culture, religion, opinions, perceptions and ways of acting and speaking for the individuals in the agency. But, although national and cultural diversity is constructed as insuperable and significant, it is seen as an asset. Working together with different nationalities is constructed as a positive, rich and learning process. The interviewees, faced with the dilemma of how to deal with different nationalities, given that this has been said to be a difficult process, undermine the problems that national differences might pose by focusing on a process of realisation, acceptance and respect. The interviewees present themselves as participants as well as receivers of the positive outcomes which derive from their participation in the practice of “working together” with different nationalities. National diversity is further valued by the use of the rhetorical device of “we”, which includes the interviewees and “others” (extracts 7 and 9), who are represented as individuals who operate in purely national contexts. Of the two groups the one consisting of various nationalities working together is constructed as having an advantage. It can be said that the ideological resources of this argumentation are found in discourses of

multiculturalism in which cultural diversity is equally appreciated and constructed as a positive element that enriches individuals as well as the entire community through learning, personal development and mutual understanding (Verkuyten 2004; Cesareo 2004).

Moreover this type of discourse is well-known within other European institutions such as the Commission. It is considered to be the standard positive repertoire that is either promoted by the official discourse of the institutions or is preserved and advertised by the individuals who embody them (McDonald 1997). As the Commissioner Marcelino Oreja Aguirre (1995-1999) stated “European diversity [consisting of different nationalities is] Europe’s true richness” (Jansen 1999: 5). Needless to say, such an argumentation promotes the notion of European unity.

B.2 “Working together” with different nationalities and cultures as part of a European identity

As in the extracts above, in the ones below “working together” is constructed as working with different nationalities, but now they are evaluated as significant only in coexistence with a European identity or as a constituent of a wider European culture of “working together”. Thus, cohesion represented through a “European identity” is the key element for the positive evaluation of “working together” in the agency.

Extract 10

Zoe (T)

- 1 I think we are closer together (.) probably than the we could be with Africa or
- 2 Asiatic people (.) I think it must be much more difficult to work e:: maybe it
- 3 forces you to be very clear if you work with people from very far away (.) I
- 4 mean from the culture or they are far away very far away I think you have to
- 5 be extremely clear to do things also that there is not misunderstandings (.) I
- 6 think I think in Europe we have a sort, we have of course differences in
- 7 cultures and nationalities but we have already (.) we have built a sort of
- 8 common culture of working together. I think maybe:

Zoe begins her talk by constructing categories of groups which show how she conceptualises difference. On the one hand, she mentions the existence of the “we” group (line 1), in which she includes herself and, on the other hand, the group of “Africa” or “Asiatic” people (lines 1-2). The deployment of these categories refers to the common conceptual and rhetorical device of “us” and “others” that dominate in identity construction processes as various theorists have shown (Tajfel 1978; Billig 1995). In the present case, since the interviewee deploys geographical continents and constructs the “other” groups of Asians and Africans, the “we” group becomes the Europeans.

According to DAM¹⁰⁹, categorisation as a fact construction device relies on the assumption that some features of social categories relate to people's supposed knowledge, experience or skills. Thus one important way of warranting a report or claim is to draw on social categories which have particular knowledge entitlements (Edwards & Potter 1992; Potter & Halliday 1990). In this sense Europeans may know about European culture, Asians about Asian, Africans about African and so on. So, Zoe's argumentation is based on the construction of assumed similarities that Europeans share among them and differences that they have with individuals from different continents with distinct cultures, such as Asian and African. Culture is constructed as a set of values with a unitary force for people who share it and which can also differentiate them from those sharing a different set of values. The interviewee attempts to support her view through a hypothetical reasoning. Her conditional sentence reflects certitude, manifested by the strong modal verb "must" (line 2), when she describes the action that should be pursued. Furthermore the adverbs "much more" (line 2), which characterise the degree of difficulty in working with people that are not from Europe, enforce this certainty. The phrase "people from very far away" (line 4) represents the difference between Europeans, Asians and Africans not only culturally but also in terms of geographical distance between the three continents. This is a tangible element that cannot be easily disputed and thus the validity and objectivity of her general argument is increased.

Following Zoe's argument, working with non-Europeans forces Europeans to do a series of actions in order to avoid misunderstandings. The verb "forces" (line 3) contains the notion of imposition and obligation and conveys the problems it causes to Europeans when working with non-Europeans. What is constructed as the unavoidable outcome of this process is the need to be "very clear" (line 3). Yet Zoe represents Europeans working together being released from misunderstandings and the need to be 'clear' with each other.

Zoe summarises her account by taking for granted the occurrence of cohesion among Europeans since the latter share "a sort of common culture of working together" (lines 7-8). However, cohesion does not preclude the existence of differences in terms of nationalities and cultures among Europeans. The phrase "of course" (line 6) confirms the fact that national and cultural differences among Europeans are not only constructed as real but also as taken-for-granted. Nevertheless, these differences are included in a common culture that binds Europeans "working together".

¹⁰⁹ Discourse Action Model (see chapter seven).

It is the use of the category ‘European’ that permits us to make an inference regarding a common culture. The subject position adopted by the interviewee is at once that of a European sharing with her colleagues a common culture of “working together” but also that of an individual with her own national and cultural differences compared to other Europeans. So the idea of coherence and commonality of European culture that contains different nationalities and cultures has its ideological resources in a type of European nationalism reflected also in the EU motto “unity in diversity”. Such an interpretation can also be supported by the use of the discursive categories “we” and “others” and the fact that European culture and identity is represented as more visible when compared to non-European others.

Extract 11

Tasos (A)

- 1 There is a strong sense by many people here (.) that there is we are a European
- 2 institution. And that is an important thing. And it is a contribution to the
- 3 development of the European Union as it is here. There is a sense of European
- 4 identity organisation. It doesn’t stop people being partially Greek or German
- 5 or whatever and as soon as somebody criticises your country there is
- 6 something you tend defending it no matter how much you agree or disagree
- 7 with the point of view at stake. But I think it is a good thing that people from
- 8 the different member states (.) from different backgrounds are put together to
- 9 work together.

The extract starts with the provision of a general opinion shared by people in the agency that the latter is a “European institution” (lines 1-2). The interviewee pivots to the position of an external observer, as the phrase “there is a strong sense by many people here” (line 1), highlights the distance he takes from these people rather than presenting himself as one of them.

The agency is presented as a European institution, since it contributes to the “development of the European Union” (line 3). The agency has a European organisational identity. This is juxtaposed to the national identities of the individuals working in the agency. Thus, Tasos constructs nationalities and national differences as real and always present alongside a European identity. The coexistence of European and national identities is represented through the adverb of degree “partially” (line 4).

The role of nationality is negotiated not only in relation to the practice of “working together” in the agency but also in relation to the individual him/herself. The verb “tend” (line 6) signifies a routinised process, a norm that people follow. Nationality has a very important effect on every national subject since the latter defends it in any case even if the argument at stake is not in his/her interest (lines 6-7).

Tasos supports his arguments through the use of the second person (“your country” in line 5 and “you tend”, “you agree” in line 6). This way he attempts to warrant the factuality of his account by depicting it as agreed with the interviewer who becomes a witness and by describing it as a common fact (Edwards & Potter 1992).

At the end of the extract, the interviewee expresses his personal opinion by providing a vague expression of a normative statement regarding “working together”. In this way he more accurately constructs the individuals working in the agency as people “from different member states” (line 8) and “from different backgrounds” (line 8) who work together within a “European identity organisation”. By maintaining the position of a distanced speaker, he does not disavow his personal implication since his argument is presented as a general phenomenon. It is worth mentioning the emphasis given to the words “different” and “together” (line 8) as they are both repeated twice and deployed somehow symmetrically. The particular structuring of these words reveals the dynamic relation that exists between them.

Extract 12

Frank¹¹⁰ (L)

- 1 I will speak about me. I I I I consider myself a creation of the Commission.
- 2 Because I will tell you (1) I owe a lot to the commission not because it has
- 3 allowed me to work for the first time (.) but also because for me it has been a
- 4 professional school and a school for life. Like I will tell you (1) the sense of
- 5 responsibility to make dialogue with all the nationalities (.) to understand the
- 6 sensibilities of one and the other (.) you can't say a phrase just like this.
- 7 Maybe to you it makes you laugh but the other comes on to you saying what
- 8 have you said for me [laughter]. No? The [importance of] multicultural
- 9 multilingual environment. Yes (.) I would say the function of pluri pluri-
- 10 culturalism or of yes I think that this is an aspect that goes for everyone (.) all

¹¹⁰ Original text transcribed in Italian:

- 1 Ti parlerò di me. Io io io mi considero una creatura della commissione.
- 2 Perché io ti dirò (1) io devo molto alla commissione non perché mi ha
- 3 permesso di lavorare per la prima volta (.) ma anche perché per me è stata una
- 4 scuola professionale e una scuola di vita. Tipo ti dirò (1) Il senso della
- 5 responsabilità di dialogare con tutte le nazionalità (.) di capire la
- 6 sensibilità di uno un altro (.) non puoi dire una frase così.
- 7 Magari a te ti fa ridere quel altro ti viene addosso ti dice che
- 8 hai detto per me [laughter]. No?
- 9 L'ambiente multiculturale multilinguistico. Sì (.) direi il funzione di pluri
- 10 pluriculturalismo o di si penso che questo è una cosa che va per tutti (.) tutte
- 11 le società insomma pluriculturali m:.. Sì. Io sono europeo convinto
- 12 da nascita ma sono italiano. Un'identità europea totalmente (.) sì totalmente. Dunque
- 13 sono italiano (.) un perpetuo italiano. L'inno di Mamelli mi alza
- 14 e basta [laughter]

11 the societies in other words pluri-cultural m.: Yes. I am European convinced
12 since I was born but I am Italian. A European identity totally (.) yes totally. So
13 I am Italian (.) a perpetual Italian. The anthem of Mamelli makes me stand up
14 and that' it [laughter]

The interviewee starts his talk by stating that he will speak only of himself. This statement attempts to establish a level of validity given that the provision of personal opinions at least presupposes a sense of sincerity and subjectivity. Therefore, Frank starts speaking about “working together” with a personal declaration of identity. He presents his identity as being in a causal and hierarchical relationship with the European Commission (“I consider myself a creation of the Commission” in line 1). The latter is constructed as a significant source of incentives, values and opportunities for the construction of Frank’s identity. The relationship between Frank and the institution is also represented in hierarchical terms in which the provider is the Commission. This becomes obvious by the phrase “it has allowed me” (lines 2-3) as well as by characterising the Commission as a “school” (line 4). The receiver, Frank, benefited not only at a professional level - he was offered a job and professional training - but also at a personal level given the life experiences he also acquired. The Commission has taught Frank a sense of responsibility in making dialogue with multiple nationalities and has given him a greater understanding of peoples’ sensibilities (line 6). With regard to the first aspect, it becomes clear that Frank represents nationality as real and significant and describes the appropriate way of dealing with individuals with different nationalities through dialogue. With regard to the second element, differences among individuals are constructed in terms of sensibilities, which is a rather encompassing description. He provides an example, with a humorous tone, in order to make his meaning more vivid. So sensibilities are represented as different perceptions and ways of understanding, which makes it necessary for people to be attentive. The phrase “you can’t say a phrase like this” (line 6) indicates the degree of effort that people have to exert while they interact with others. In his example, the use of the second person (in line 6) engages the listener as a witness who can agree with the speaker’s accounts.

Subsequently, Frank mentions “multicultural and multilingual environment” (lines 8-9) as another element that he was taught by the Commission. In this way, the presence of different cultures and languages in the EU working environment is constructed as significant. He also deploys the notion of “pluriculturalism” (lines 9-10) that is assumed to be more inclusive and representative of his argument. He explains the function of this notion in normative terms, which signifies the way of dealing with a plurality of taken-for-granted national, linguistic or cultural differences through dialogue. Therefore, the interviewee constructs a universal model of society - namely pluriculturalism - that is based on the

way the European Commission functions, which in this case is constructed as a microcosm of an ideal society. Frank's views on the Commission reveal his ideological position regarding Europe and the EU. It can be said that Frank's argumentation regarding the Commission is very much like a discourse that dominates within the Commission and which is structured on the fact that the Commission's working groups, hierarchies and structures as well as its character are constructed as plurinational, plurilinguistic and multicultural (Abélès & Bellier 1996).

At the end of the extract, the interviewee summarises all his argumentation in repeating the declaration of his identity. He attributes to himself a European identity expressed in rather primordial and essentialist terms since he claims that his Europeanness existed when he was born. Nonetheless his European identity is disclaimed by his national identity ("but I am Italian" in line 12). At the same time European identity is constructed in parallel with his national identity. In other words, European identity is constructed as dependent or inextricably linked with the interviewee's national identity, which is highly significant. Frank constructs his national identity by using very typical modes of national expression, such as the Italian national anthem, which is used as a proof of his loyalty and identification with his nation.

Discussion

In the three extracts above, "working together" is constructed as consisting of national and cultural differences, which are said not to cause a problem or conflict in the agency but instead are constructed as real, significant and positive. The key element is that while national diversity exists, it is qualified positively through the achievement of unity provided by a European identity that is formed within the agencies.

The subject positions adopted by the interviewees are those of national subjects as well as Europeans. The interviewees construct themselves as Europeans by employing various rhetorical devices, and at no point do they discard their national identities, which they attempt to construct as equally significant in all the three extracts. In this respect, different nationalities are represented as a necessary constituent for a European identity, which is ultimately based on them. That said, European identity is constructed as a cohesive set of values that unifies Europeans as individuals working together in an agency or as a common culture of "working together" against 'others', such as Asians or Africans.

The ideological resources of this discourse are found in the ideology of nationalism. Applied to Europe, this ideology promotes a particularistic European identity, which distinguishes Europe from "others",

non-Europeans. EU politicians and bureaucrats have frequently advanced this vision. This conception of European identity contrasts a homogeneous notion of Europe to America, as in Huntington's conception, and can take the form of Euro-nationalism (Huntington 1993). Another central concept of this ideology is vividly reflected in the motto "unity in diversity". This represents Europe as internally cohesive through a celebration of its cultural heterogeneity (Boxhoorn 1996; Shore 1993; Wodak 2004). Culture is conceived in essentialist terms and cultural diversity refers to nationalities, religion and history, necessary components of a European identity (Boxhoorn 1996; Altes 1999). With reference to the EU institutions and organisations, it has been pointed out that national identities are synthesized and incorporated within a uniquely "European" model,-a mosaic of different nationalities - whose unity is contained within and expressed through its cultural diversity (Delanty 2002; McDonald 1996; Zabusky 2000; Shore 2000). Hence, the complementarity of national and European identities is used as Europe's "official doctrine" (Kohli 2000).

"Working together" in the European agencies is constructed as the main process through which 'Europeanness' is taking place, with the agencies themselves as facilitators for the emergence of this identity. Additionally, European identity is able to accommodate national differences and coexists with the latter on a basis of respect, dialogue and understanding of different languages, nationalities and cultures. To this end, the way European nationals work together and, in general, the values generated by the European institutions can be seen as a model for every society. This discourse unfolds a top down approach for the creation of a European identity that has been pointed out by many researchers (Shore 2000; Zabusky 2000; Lewis 2000; Trondal 2001b). This top down approach becomes obvious in the discourse of the interviewees and also in the fact that the values generated within the agencies, such as pluri-culturalism, are proposed as appropriate for every society. This proposal is informed by the ideological resources of the discursive paradigm of moral universalism in which a universalistic notion of Europe and European identity is promoted as a prototype of every society, based on pluralism, democracy and civil society (Wintle 1996a). Yet as has been already mentioned, the universality of this discourse is challenged by its Euro-centric vision of the world. This is interpreted as imposing a hegemonic system of values that is an exclusive production of Europe as an entity, and that has to apply to "others" (non-Europeans). It has been criticised as Euro-nationalism (Billig 1995).

B3. "Working together" with different nationalities as generating rivalry

In the following extracts, "working together" is constructed in negative terms because of the conflicts and fragmentation provoked by the problematic co-existence of different nationalities. Nationalities are

constructed as insuperable and eventually as the most dominant constituent of the practice of “working together” in the agency.

Extract 13

Nikos (A)

- 1 If you look at the cafeteria (.) you will find Greeks together (.) you will find
- 2 Anglophones sitting together (.) you will find the Latins and the Francophones
- 3 sitting together. People tend to group around basically a common language.
- 4 Th: that’s the way it is. And there will always be a certain national rivalry
- 5 because of that. Because it’s not the person (.) they also represent a
- 6 nationality. So there is always that. But the only way to have a common
- 7 attitude to that is that people work (.) together. See (.) the only way
- 8 you can do it. And I think that a lot of progress is done in that area. But you
- 9 never will convince. You will never convince.

The description of the interviewee is centered around the presence of national groupings which become visible in the cafeteria of his agency. The cafeteria has been described by anthropologists and political scientists in studies inside the European institutions, as a crucial site of informal relations in which it is possible to uncover the “true” relations between individuals working together and the dominance of national groupings (Abélès et al. 1993; Zabusky 1995; Hooghe 2001).

Nikos’ main argument concerns the formation of groups “around a common language” (line 3), which actually describes the norm upon which “working together” in the agency is constructed (“Th: that’s the way it is” in line 4). The interviewee mentions some examples of groups while he invites the listener to test empirically his argument. These examples are presented in a list and refer to categories of individuals defined by their spoken language such as “Greeks” (line 1), “Anglophones”, “Latins” and “Francophones” (line 2). So he warrants his report by drawing on social categories formed by a language (Potter & Halliday 1990). In particular, individuals speaking the same language are expected to communicate better based on their linguistic knowledge, which is described as the basic criterion for the formation of a group.

Furthermore, Nikos constructs a close relation between language and nationalities, which are then described as the cause for the occurrence of national rivalries between the various groups (line 4). Moreover, he represents this rivalry as constant, through the use of some extreme case formulations, such as the adverb “always” (line 4), a rhetorical device that makes an account more effective (Pomerantz 1986).

Subsequently, Nikos provides the reasoning for his opinion, which is that individuals represent a nationality. Nationalities are constructed as categories to which individuals belong and they contain characteristics that define their behaviour to a greater extent than do their personality or other traits. The interviewee strengthens his argument further by repeating the adverb “always” (line 6), which emphasises a kind of determinism.

Nonetheless, the interviewee disclaims (“but” in line 6) the fatal situation of fragmentation and conflicts caused by different nationalities in the agency by providing a unique way of adopting a common attitude (“the only way to” in line 6). The latter can be constructed through the practice of “working together”, whose value is further emphasised by repeating the uniqueness of the solution it offers in practice (“See the only way you can do it” in lines 7-8). His conviction regarding the potential of “working together” is confirmed by his personal experience regarding what has already been achieved in the agency (“And I think that a lot of progress is done in that area” in line 8) that is a warrant for his account.

The interviewee’s talk is very similar to an empiricist type of discourse, which is usually characteristic of scientific talk and writing. More particularly, Nikos treats phenomena themselves as agents in their own right, such as different languages initially and subsequently the rivalry generated by the different nationalities. Therefore, the facts force themselves on the human actors who have an entirely secondary role (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984; Mulkay 1985). This empiricist accounting is usually accompanied by utterances, which seek to confirm the central argument and establish a conclusion (Edwards & Potter 1992). Indeed, in the last phrase of the extract the interviewee emphatically repeats that the rivalry between different nationalities will never change, and this is a confirmation of his overall argument.

Although Nikos represents himself as devoid of any nationality (since he does not attribute any nationality to himself), he takes the position of a participant in the practice of “working together” with various nationalities as well as in the ongoing rivalry. In this sense, he avoids the accusation of enforcing the negative role of nationalities since he also emphasises the value of “working together” in trying to achieve a common attitude.

Extract 14

Peter (L)

- 1 There is a British subculture (.) there is a Nordic subculture (.) very strong
- 2 national subcultures. Very strong ones (.) very strong ones of course the quota
- 3 of seconded national experts is quite high it’s quite high so that’s it’s visible.
- 4 At least you feel it that there is a bias as to British speaking people. Where is

5 the rest of Europe? What happened to France? There is a subculture as to the
6 use of languages. We are dominated by British. So the language itself is due to
7 the language to to the British (.) the subculture the problem developed. I have
8 no chance sending a note in German to everybody (.) I have no chance to send
9 a note in French to everybody no chance.

The interviewee constructs the practice of “working together” as consisting of several national subcultures such as “British” and “Nordic” (line 1). The term subculture indicates the existence of a unitary culture that is subordinate to an overall culture (Parker 2000). Given this argument, as well as the fact that subculture in the present extract is defined as national, it is assumed that individuals sharing the respective subculture are unified by their common nationality.

The presence and function of national subcultures are described as “strong” (lines 1-2) in the practice of “working together”, and this is repeated three times by the interviewee, to underscore its significance. In order to sustain his argument empirically, Peter mentions the existence of a high “quota of seconded national experts” (lines 2-3), which is described as a manifestation of the persistence of national groups. This element cannot be disputed due to its factual visibility (“so that it’s visible” in line 3). Peter attempts to render the interviewer as a witness to his accounts by deploying the second person (“you feel it” in line 4), which is an evocation of common sense. Peter, like Nikos in the previous extract, constructs language as a significant element in the practice of “working together” and particularly as a mechanism that divides individuals in different linguistic groups (lines 5-6).

His protest against the privileging of the English language is clearly expressed in a rhetorical question posed in a very vigorous way (“where is the rest of Europe? What happened to France?” in lines 4-5). The category “Europe” as more inclusive than the “British” aims at pointing out the inequality caused by the dominance of one nationality and language. Following the same logic, France is deployed in order to emphasise the illegitimate dominance of Britain given that France is represented as another country that could dominate. Nonetheless the fact that another big member state like France is under the domination of the British subculture, highlights the unjustified nationalistic bias created in the agency. The interviewee criticises the dominance of the British subculture not because of his personal rivalry with Britain itself, but because of his concerns at the fragmentation of the agency’s culture caused by the dominance of British or Nordic subcultures.

Earlier researches in organisation studies considered the existence of subcultures to presuppose the fragmentation of a single, organisational level culture (Schein 1990, 1992; Sackman 1992, 1997; Alvesson 2002, Martin et al. 1983). Today most scholars emphasise the presence of subcultures in

organisations which coexist with the organisation-wide cultures (in Alvesson 2002). In the present extract, the interviewee constructs the existence and dominance of national or linguistic subcultures as a negative element that fragments the agency's cohesion. This argument is sustained by the use of the interviewee's personal experience (his communication problems and the fact that he is deprived of the use of other languages), a device that enhances the validity of his argument since personal experience cannot be doubted. In sum, in this extract the interviewee reproduces the classical conflicts existing among powerful nation states in Europe, which are said to undermine the meaning of "Europe" and its diversity.

Extract 15

Christopher¹¹¹ (T)

- 1 Unfortunately some certain groups or certain nationalities preserve the
- 2 ethnocentric culture and I would say [an ethnocentric] intra-work behaviour
- 3 and cooperation (.) but also outside [the working environment]. This certainly
- 4 has to do with the mentality of various peoples and nations that consider
- 5 [themselves] to be superior than others.

In the last extract of this section, the interviewee formulates his gist that the practice of "working together" consists of groups and nationalities. He additionally makes a distinction between nationalities or groups, which do or do not preserve their ethnocentric culture. So, some national groups are represented as having undergone a change, which refers to the abandonment of their ethnocentric culture, while others preserve it. These are evaluated negatively, and this becomes obvious by the use of the adverb "unfortunately" (line 1), which indicates Christopher's position.

"Ethnocentric culture" (line 2), entails an essentialist representation of cultural values centered around an "ethnos". This generates inherent sets of values that unify their members and influence their working attitude and cooperation with others as well as their lives in general.

Christopher does not make any reference to particular nationalities or groups, thus employing the rhetorical device of systematic vagueness (Edwards & Potter 1992). The interviewee, by using vague and global formulations, offers just the essentials as the basis of his particular inference. He therefore

¹¹¹ Original text transcribed in Greek:

- 1 Δυστυχώς κάποιες ορισμένες ομάδες ή ορισμένες εθνικότητες συντηρούν την
- 2 εθνοκεντρική κουλτούρα και ενδο-εργασιακής θα έλεγα συμπεριφοράς
- 3 και συνεργασίας (.) αλλά και έξω. Αυτό βέβαια
- 4 έχει να κάνει και με την νοοτροπία των διάφορων λαών και εθνών που θεωρούνε
- 5 ότι είναι υπέρτεροι κάποιων άλλων.

avoids the leverage that vivid detail provides and which could be used to undermine his account. Additionally, Christopher constructs the relations between various nationalities as guided by notions of their superiority towards others. This is one of the basic arguments of modern (and also primordial) theories of nationalism, the ideology of which informs the construction of Christopher's account.

Although Christopher does not attribute a specific national belonging to himself, he presents himself as a witness of the significance and dynamics of the various national groups. Thus, without presenting himself devoid of a nationality, he distances himself from the groups who consider themselves superior to others.

Discussion

“Working together”, as with previous lines of argumentation, is constructed as working together with different nationalities. Nationalities are represented as an inherent set of common characteristics attributed to individuals, which determine their behaviour, communication and cooperation with others. Nationalities create a deterministic system that does not change and from which individuals cannot escape. This is represented by the subject positions that the interviewees adopt in their talk. In particular, they speak about the problems and rivalry that different nationalities create in the agency without, however, attributing a particular nationality to themselves. Yet they present themselves inevitably as participants in the inherent conflict among nation states without having the possibility to change it.

The ideology that informs this line of argumentation is that of nationalism and in particular ethno-nationalism. Ethnonationalism is based on an essentialist assumption of the nation-state and assumes that political and cultural identities depend directly on their “own” pre-modern cultural communities (Cederman 2001). Nationalities and national cultures are constructed in the respective theories as “invented permanencies” despite the fact that have been created historically in the age of modernity (Billig 1995). Furthermore, the taken-for-granted and deterministic nature of national cultures is emphasised by Balibar (1991) as a precious genetic inheritance of nation states, to be transmitted uncontaminated and unweakened.

Many analysts have claimed that language is a prime determinant of national identity. In other words, individuals speaking the same language are liable to claim a sense of national bond. Thus, various models of nationalism have been constructed around the importance of speaking the same or different languages. For example, Edwards observed that “language is still commonly taken to be the central of

ethnic identity” (1991: 269). Similarly, within the Commission Abélès et al. (1993) observed that national units and the boundaries of language were often created together. This idea is reflected in the extracts above in which the link between nationality and language is taken for granted.

The conflict created by various nationalities leads to a fragmentation or disruption of unity that is represented as forms of national or linguistic subcultures and a battle for dominance, which lead to a constant rivalry. This has negative effects on the practice of “working together” given that it creates an inequality that is structured on the imposition of certain patterns of communication, such as the use of particular languages in both formal and informal relations by national groups, which are considered more superior than others. The juxtaposition of different nationalities and of different cultures thus appears to be a source of instability and unease within the agencies. The meeting of inherently different national systems of cultural values in a working process has been shown to lead to incongruence and disorder in other EU organisations too, in which officials blame national and cultural differences for problems encountered at work (Abélès et al. 1993; McDonald 1997). In sum, within the European integration project, differentiation due to national background plays an important role in the creation of identity (Abélès et al. 1993; Egeberg 1996; Zabusky 1995, 2000; Hooghe 2001; Trondal 2001b; Trondal & Veggeland 2003).

Discussion of the repertoire

This repertoire constructs “working together” as consisting of national differences. In other words, nationalities or national cultures and languages are considered to be the major source of differentiation between the individuals who work together in the agency. Nationalities are cultural categories in which participants are classified and attributed with a set of characteristics that determine their communication, cooperation and, in general, their behaviour. Thus, national differences are constructed as real and insuperable.

The dilemma that is negotiated by the interviewees is the same as in the first repertoire. Indeed, it can be framed as whether national/cultural or linguistic differences among individuals working together in the agency can be a source of cohesion and unity or fragmentation and diversity. The dilemma is elaborated by three distinct lines of argumentation that, nonetheless, all construct the achievement of cohesion as significant and a positive condition. More specifically, all lines of argumentation are built upon constructing cohesion and/or unity as an important outcome not only in the process of “working together” but also for Europe. Thus, in two lines of argumentation working together is represented in positive terms where cohesion is achieved either through a learning process generating recognition and

respect of national diversities or through the formation of a European identity. The latter is represented on the one hand as coexisting with national identities and differences and, on the other, as generating a distinct and cohesive culture shared by Europeans counter to non-Europeans. By contrast, the last line of argumentation represents cohesion as not being achieved due to the prevalence of conflict between individuals of different nationalities. Eventually this leads to the formation of subcultures, inequality in the ways of communication and cooperation, and ultimately rivalry. Described in these terms, “working together” is constructed in negative terms whereby nationalistic attitudes and cultures are considered responsible for the problematic situation of conflict occurring in the agencies.

Rhetorically, all three lines of argumentation are considered equally successful and are structured on the use of rhetorical devices that manage to construct the accounts in an objective way. More specifically, we have observed that all lines of argumentation are structured upon the use of the second person and the provision of personal experiences embellished with vivid descriptions and examples. However, the most crucial rhetorical device in this repertoire is the use of the so-called empiricist account¹¹². The use of an empiricist account draws attention on the facts as undutiful, objective and beyond the stakes of the speakers (see table 2 below). This underscores the undutiful nature and role of nationalities.

The present repertoire is informed by the ideology of nationalism according to which the differences between people from different nations are definite and given. Nationalism is the ideology by which the world of nations has come to seem the natural world-as if there could not possibly be a world without nations (Billig 1995). National identity is not only something, which is thought to be natural to possess, but also something natural to remember. They are rooted within a powerful social structure, which reproduces hegemonic relations of inequity. Nationalist thinking involves more than commitment to a group and a sense of difference from other groups (Billig 1987). This ideological position is also reflected in the subject positions adopted by the interviewees in this repertoire. While in the first repertoire the interviewees spoke mostly as technocrats, in the second one they speak as national subjects, as well as Europeans. In sum, nationalism aims at the achievement of a particularistic form of community and, in the context of the repertoire analysed, the preservation of national particularism constitutes an unquestioned element albeit one that is qualified in various forms.

¹¹² It is presented as a normative jargon combined with other rhetorical devices such as strong modality verbs that add confidence and certainty in the accounts (B1, B2), lists and systematic vagueness (B3).

Table 2. “Working Together” with different nationalities, languages and cultures

<i>Dilemma</i>	<i>Whether national, linguistic and cultural differences among individuals working together in the agency can be a source of cohesion and unity or fragmentation and conflict</i>		
<i>Lines of Argumentation</i>	B1. “Working together” with different nationalities as a rich and learning experience	B2. “Working together” with different nationalities and cultures as part of a European identity	B3. “Working together” with different nationalities as generating rivalry
Content	<p>Individuals are defined according to their nationalities, cultures and religions</p> <p>National/cultural differences among individuals working together are constructed as existent, significant and insuperable.</p> <p>Cohesion is constructed as significant and taken-for granted among individuals sharing a nationality</p> <p>Cohesion is achieved in the agency based on the recognition of the importance of national and cultural diversity.</p> <p>Working together is evaluated positively as it is constructed through a learning process that accommodates national/cultural diversity.</p>	<p>Individuals are defined according to their nationalities, cultures and religions</p> <p>National/cultural differences among individuals working together are constructed as existent, significant and insuperable.</p> <p>Cohesion is constructed as significant and taken-for granted among individuals sharing a nationality and also among individuals working together in a European institution.</p> <p>Cohesion is achieved through the construction of a) a common European identity of working together, based on a similar construction like national identities, and b) a common culture that includes or coexists with national identities. This is also named as “pluriculturalism”.</p> <p>“Working together” is evaluated as positive due to the emergence of a common European identity, which is represented in causal relation with the work within European agencies and institutions. Thus Europeans working together are differentiated towards non-Europeans working together</p> <p>Individuals as national subjects as well as Europeans bounded by a common identity.</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates that individuals construct themselves as members of a common European culture and identity while working together in an</p>	<p>Individuals are defined according to their nationalities, cultures and languages</p> <p>National/cultural and linguistic differences among individuals working together are constructed as existent, significant and insuperable, represented as subcultures.</p> <p>Cohesion is constructed as significant and taken-for granted among individuals sharing a nationality since the latter generates binding elements among those who share it and a boundary to those with different nationalities and languages.</p> <p>Cohesion in “working together” cannot be achieved due to the national/cultural and linguistic differences. The latter create rivalries and antagonism which leads to conflict, which is constructed as inherent, dominant, problematic and responsible for fragmentation in the agency.</p> <p>“Working together” is evaluated negatively due to the disruption of the agency’s cohesion and the incapacity to overcome the conflict caused by different nationalities.</p>
Subject Positions	<p>Individuals as national subjects who work together in an EU agency.</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates that individuals construct themselves as members of a nationality and culture while it also</p>	<p>Individuals as participants of the conflict in working together with different nationalities due to the unchangeable and powerful role of national cleavages.</p> <p>Individuals as witnesses of the significance of nationalities and the rivalry and problems caused</p>	

	<p>differentiates them from “others” with different nationalities and cultures.</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates also that individuals working together in an agency share common characteristics, such as the experience and learning from others’ different nationalities compared to “others” outside the agency that lack this experience.</p>	<p>agency whereas it also differentiates them from “others” within other continents ascribed with different cultures and identities, such as Asians or Africans (“us” and “they”).</p>	<p>because of them.</p>
<p>Rhetorical Devices</p>	<p><i>Objectivity</i> Use of vivid description (including active voicing, lists, examples from personal experiences) that presents the speaker as capable of representing with precision precedent incidents and stories and as being gifted with special skills of observation.</p> <p>Use of strong modality verbs and gist formulations which attribute to the speaker confidence and certainty and increase the veracity of the accounts.</p> <p>Use of second person that presents views as common sense through an eyewitness account.</p>	<p><i>Objectivity</i> Use of normative jargon and consistent sequences of events accompanied with the use of strong modality verbs. The combination of these rhetorical characteristics achieves to attribute a normative tone to the accounts and present the fact that national and European identities exist and coexist is a general and well-accepted phenomenon.</p> <p>Use of personal experiences and personal declarations of identity in order to warrant for the veracity of the provided accounts</p> <p>Use of second person that presents views as common sense.</p>	<p><i>Objectivity</i> Use of empiricist account as well as other rhetorical techniques, such as lists and systematic vagueness, that aim at presenting an account based on facts that cannot be disputed. In this sense the significance of nationalities and the conflict caused because of them is constructed as a deterministic fact.</p> <p>Use of personal experiences to warrant for the veracity and increase the validity of the provided accounts</p> <p>Use of second person that presents views as common sense</p> <p>Use of extreme case formulations (such as the use of the adverbs “always” and “totally”) in order to emphasise the stability and persistence of the dominance of nationalities.</p>

C. The repertoire of “working together” as post-national and pluralistic

This last repertoire constructs the practice of “working together” as pluralistic and it is one in which differences among individuals are constructed beyond the notion of nationalities. In particular, in the extracts below, the interviewees construct “working together” in the agency as a positive, novel, post-national and pluralistic experience. The most salient characteristic in this repertoire is the importance of diversity which is represented as indispensable in “working together” in the agency.

Extract 19

Aphroditi (A)

- 1 oh I like it (.) yeah very much working here. The ambience (.) the atmosphere
- 2 is very pluralistic. I always liked it. Let’s say I don’t mind being different but
- 3 with my friends in Spain (.) I was always this different person (.) a mixture (of
- 4 nationalities) (.) so and here am just normal [laugh]

Aphroditi attributes her personal positive evaluation of working in the agency to its pluralistic ambience and atmosphere (lines 1-2). The latter, although uttered in vague terms, is constructed as significant and a central constituent of working in the agency. In theories of political science pluralism refers to a condition in which numerous distinct ethnic, religious, or cultural groups are present and tolerated within a society or state (Hirst 1997). As a consequence, such a condition is deemed desirable or socially beneficial. Accordingly, a pluralistic ambience and atmosphere in the agency is interpreted as a context in which various types of differences, mostly constructed in terms of culture or nationalities, exist (line 3). Aphroditi expresses her opinion about this condition as a constant, indicating that it is rather her ideological position than a temporary experience formed in the agency (“I always liked it” in line 2).

She uses her personal experience with her friends in Spain (lines 2-3) in order to strengthen her argument. In particular, she represents herself as being different compared to her friends in Spain. Being different is constructed as not having one nationality but a mixture of them, a fact that does not constitute a problem for the interviewee herself (“I don’t mind being different” in line 2) but is rather significant for her friends in Spain. In particular, Aphroditi’s friends are represented as being part of a nationally homogeneous group while the interviewee has a mixture of nationalities. The antithesis becomes more effective by the extreme case formulation “always” (line 3). So it can be said that the importance of nationalities is undermined given that individuals are not attributed with features representative of a particular nationality. Individuals working in the agency are seen as having a mixture of nationalities and this is the defining aspect in the practice of “working together”. In this sense, differences are legitimated and normalised. Finally, through her comparison

between her previous experiences with her friends in Spain and with her present situation, Aphroditis attempts to describe the agency as a pluralistic context beyond nationalities that accommodates every type of difference.

Extract 20

Despina (L)

- 1 I like it a lot e:h I think that's the best part of the work (.) working with diversity. You
- 2 now get a lot of people, the colleagues are really interested (.) and everyone has a
- 3 different story. Italian father and a Spanish mother but lived in Germany all their life.
- 4 There's a lot of them e:h same story. That's the value to be so different (.) so the others
- 5 forget what you are and you are everything.

Like the interviewee above, Despina's main argument is that she actually likes the fact that she works with "diversity" (line 1). Her opinion is presented as a norm shared among a lot of people in the agency, a device that adds objectivity. Diversity is constructed in terms of "different" stories of individuals of combining varying nationalities. In order to make this argument more salient, Despina provides examples of different stories referring to individuals with a random combination of a series of nationalities. In her example, Despina employs a three-part list- that consists of two nationalities and one country- ("Italian", "Spanish" and "Germany" in line 3). This list is considered a significant discursive device used to construct a description as complete or representative (Edwards & Potter 1992; Potter 1996: 195-196).

Paradoxically the high degree of diversity in the agency renders people oblivious to their national differences. In this sense, nationalities are represented as not significant in "working together", since people forget about them or do not take into account the national differences of others. Similarly, there are no particular characteristics that can be attributed to individuals given that the latter do not belong to a single category with clear and known identity characteristics. This process makes people be "everything" ("and you are everything" in line 5) a notion that actually summarises the absence of divisions and acceptance of all kinds of differences. As a result, it is implied that this hybrid condition creates new kinds of identities. These identities are more inclusive than exclusive (a condition on which a single national identity is based). This representation is very similar with what Zygmunt Bauman has labeled a "palimpsest identity", which is "the kind of identity which fits the world in which the art of forgetting is an asset no less, if no more, important than the art of memorizing". It is the kind of identity "in which forgetting rather than learning is the condition of continuous fitness, in which ever new things and people enter and exit without rhyme or reason." (Bauman 1997: 25).

The talk of Despina suggests a way to overcome the importance and influence of nationalities by providing an alternative ideology. Although she does not present herself as an individual with a different story she equally does not include herself in a particular group. She adopts an alternative position than that of a national subject and this is represented through her experience in the agency.

Extract 21

Raphael (T)

1 a::: I find it fascinating (.) I find it very fascinating to find something that I don't know
2 whether it's been conferred by you or whether you have ever looked at it. It is quite
3 fascinating that a substantial part of the people who are here are even more international.
4 They are either married to a girl or a man from another country or from different
5 nationality or children of people who have moved. That's a step forward and generally
6 speaking it seems to be rather in a de-national (.) amalgamation of people and I enjoy
7 that.

As in the previous extracts, “working together” is also constructed as a positive experience in the this extract. This is evident by the repetition of the word “fascinating” (line 1). For Raphael “working together” in the agency is fascinating because of the identities of the participants, which are constructed beyond the meaning of the term international. “More international” (line 3) is constructed as a novel characteristic attributed to the individuals in the agency and refers to the creation of families whose members are of various nationalities, thereby rising above the traditional norm according to which individuals in a country marry and live there. It should also be noted that the attribution of “more international” does not refer exclusively to working practice, given that Raphael focuses rather on the fact that individuals create non-national or rather more international families. Raphael thus unfolds his ideological position with respect to the role of nationalities in general, since the role of nationalities is not constructed as significant even in the way individuals act outside their working environment. This novel characteristic is attributed to a “substantial” (line 3) part of the people in the agency, a quantitative adjective that is used as a warrant for sustaining the truthfulness of an account.

Therefore, individuals who work together in the agency are not represented as traditional national subjects but instead as individuals who have managed to move beyond their nationalities. Raphael evaluates positively this characteristic as progressive (“that’s a step forward” in line 5). The progress taking place in the practice of “working together” is summarised in the phrase “it seems to be rather in a de-national, amalgamation of people” (line 6). Having said this, the individuals “working together” are different but they manage to combine all their differences into a whole. Furthermore, this amalgamation is qualified as de-national, meaning devoid of national connotations. As Raphael has described before, this has been achieved by the individuals who do

not consider nationalities a significant element. The subject position of the interviewee is as a participant in this de-national amalgamation of people working together. Although he has not included himself in the group of “more international” people, he clearly supports and enjoys (line 6) the creation of the amalgamation that undermines the role of nationalities.

Discussion of the repertoire

This repertoire presents a positive evaluation of the practice of “working together” in the agency. This is constructed on the notion of pluralism, hybridisation and de-national amalgamation. These concepts are employed by the interviewees as a transcendent solution of the dilemma whether differences within the group of individuals working in the agency leads to cohesion and unity or fragmentation. Hence, it can be said that interviewees manage to construct an innovative type of repertoire in their discussions of “working together”. This is interpreted as an effort to transcend existing dominant discourses, which are common either in the respective academic theories or in the official documentation and discourses produced by the EU and its institutions. Such an interpretation is in accordance with the premises of discursive psychology that people are both ‘masters’ and ‘slaves’ of language (Barthes 1972). People use existing discourses as resources and create new constellations of words and meanings, which may result in new hybrid discourses. Through producing new discourses in this way, people function as agents of discursive and cultural change (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). In this way, this repertoire can be seen as a new form of speaking about “working together” in the EU context and in due course about Europe as well.

More specifically, the interviewees focus on the significance of hybrid types of identities that are formed through the process of “working together” in the agency. These identities are represented as a post-national, random mixture of different nationalities. Therefore, diversity is the key element in “working together”, defined in a more pluralist sense than in the second repertoire. The practice of “working together” entails the notion of continuous change and transformation as well as forgetfulness of the past. In order to sustain their argumentation the interviewees employ rhetorical devices that aim at presenting their descriptions not only as objective but also as difficult to be disputed, such as personal experiences and examples from their everyday life. These devices focus on providing empirical proof to sustain what constitutes the novelty in the agency which refers to the application of pluralism and the creation of hybrid identities. Moreover, these devices present the expressed views as if they were ideological positions and norms. The use of extreme case formulations (see table 3 below) extenuates how the interviewees experience their working reality as established.

This repertoire raises similar arguments to those found in the ideology of post-modern theorisations of identities and cultures in the EU. These theories propose a post-modern cosmopolitan culture, which is a disordered mix of cultures, eclectic in nature, disinterested in place and time, ignorant of history and with no concern for ethnic or national origins. Additionally, post-modern discourses are based on the notion of deconstruction of existing identity categories with particular reference to nationalities, which are represented as bounded political and cultural artefacts intolerant of difference (Bauman 1992).

Table 3. “Working Together” as post-national and pluralistic

Dilemma	<i>Whether differences among individuals working together in the agency can be a source of cohesion or fragmentation</i>
Content	<p>Individuals are defined according to their random mixture of various nationalities.</p> <p>National differences in this sense lose their stereotypical or traditional meaning as well as their division power since new cultural categories emerge without negative preconceptions</p> <p>Cohesion is constructed as insignificant given that the new form of diversity is constructed as important and dominant</p> <p>Pluralism and diversity are constructed as significant without creating any conflict</p> <p>“Working together” is evaluated positively as it is constructed as the source of hybridisation that leads to a “de-national amalgamation”</p>
Subject Positions	<p>Individuals as committed-to-the-agency and, in particular, to the overall organisational goal.</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates that individuals construct themselves as members of the agency who identify with its function but also as participants in a context beyond national identification (in case they do not directly attribute to themselves hybrid identities).</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates that individuals working together in an agency share common characteristics such as the experience of a de-national context and new hybrid identities compared to “others” outside the agency who lack this experience.</p>
Rhetorical Devices	<p><i>Objectivity:</i></p> <p>Presentation of opinions as ideological norms along with the use of extreme case formulations (always, everything) draws emphasis and provides warrant for the insignificance of nationalities.</p> <p>Use of lists with particular reference to nationalities to provide warrant for the random mixture of nationalities as components of the new post-national identities.</p> <p>Use of personal experience or examples of other employees in order to provide warrant for the hybrid identities that have been framed.</p> <p>Repetitions and repetitive references to the working process</p>

D. Summary

This chapter focused on the analysis of the everyday discourses of the individuals working together in the European agencies. The main goal was to identify the interpretative repertoires constructed

regarding the practice of “working together” in the agencies. Additionally, another goal was to identify the rhetorical techniques that interviewees deploy in their talk in order to construct their argumentation objectively. Furthermore, it aimed to show the subject positions of the interviewees and ideological dilemmas that inform their talk about the practice of “working together” within an EU context. The analysis in this chapter investigated whether the everyday discourses in the agency are structured upon similar ideological dilemmas to those found in the scientific discourses. Finally, the analysis searched for new ways of speaking about Europe and “working together” in an agency that transcend existing discourses.

Three repertoires emerged regarding who is “working together” in the agency. In the first one individuals who work together are defined according to their organisational roles as well as their personality differences. In the second repertoire, national, cultural and linguistic differences are rendered significant for the practice of “working together”. In the third repertoire, individuals were defined by a post-national differentiation¹¹³. The second repertoire is based on an essentialist conception of differences and identities whereas the other two construct them in constructivist terms. According to the literature, both nationality and occupation have been employed as common and significant resources for negotiation, conflict, and consensus in working together in other agencies (Zabusky 1995).

One of the most pervasive patterns in the interviews turned out to be the presence of two competing evaluations (or interpretations) of “working together”. These are evident throughout the interviews and show clear similarities to the cluster of arguments employed in the scientific discourses. In particular, the repertoires are organised around the dilemma of unity or diversity and the evaluation of “working together” is represented in either positive or negative terms on the basis of achieving unity and cohesion or diversity. While the first two repertoires, consist of two symmetric lines of argumentation (positive and negative) that evaluate the presence or the absence of particularistic visions and cohesion in “working together”; the third repertoire attempts to overcome this dilemma by providing constructions that move beyond the dilemma between particularistic and universalistic visions. This concerns the construction of a novel discourse that promotes pluralisation at a post-national level.

¹¹³ This term is borrowed from the respective theories discussed in chapter five, which mainly refers to groups’ and individuals’ representations and perceptions that transcend the traditional notion and boundaries of nation-state.

Chapter 10. THE EU AGENCIES, THEIR ROLE, POWERS AND FUNCTION IN THE EU ARCHITECTURE

This chapter focuses on the analysis of small and representative extracts selected from the interviews with individuals in the three EU agencies who discuss the meaning of an agency. The extracts also address the ways in which agencies' creation, roles, powers and functions are constructed. More specifically, the interviewees were asked to answer the following questions posed by the interviewer:

- What do you think about the role of the European decentralised agencies within the EU architecture?
- What is the role of the agency in which you are working? Is it achieved?
- Why do you think agencies were created and what is their function?
- What do you think about the fact that agencies are referred to as decentralised or independent bodies of the EU? What is the meaning of this characteristic?

The questions were posed in such a way that the interviewees were invited to give their personal opinions on the role, functions and powers of their agencies as well as to evaluate them either by speaking about the agency where they work, providing an "insider" point of view, as well as about the phenomenon of the agencies, providing an informed but more general view. The questions did not refer to specific views and opinions concerning the EU agencies such as those discussed in various theories or official working papers and reports. In this way, the interviewees could provide their opinions with the minimum degree of influence or predisposition imposed by the questions. In some interviews not all questions were raised because the interviewees covered the relevant topics in their answers, whereas in others, similar topics that are not included in the above questions were raised.

Agencies' independence and decentralisation have been extensively discussed by various scholars as controversial elements in relation to agencies' powers and their positioning in the EU institutional architecture. As discussed in chapter six, the phenomenon of the agencies has been explained, either by normative or pragmatic discourses in addition to another discourse, known as the official EU framework on agencies, which is also relevant for the purposes of this investigation. Although the EU discourse relies heavily on the normative approach, it differs from the latter with regard to the extent of agencies' powers, which it claims are limited by the special judicial and institutional constraints of the EU. The analysis of conversations dealing with agencies'

independence aimed at investigating whether the differences identified among the various scientific discourses on the agencies also appear in the everyday talk of the employees within the agencies.

Three major ways of speaking about the agencies emerged in the analysis that actually draw on the repertoires deployed by the three aforementioned major frameworks: 1) the agencies as “Community agencies”, informed mainly by the official EU discourse, 2) the agencies as “independent bodies”, informed by the normative discourse and finally, 3) agencies as “political agents”, whose ideological resources are drawn from the so-called pragmatic discourse on agencies. These three interpretative repertoires discussed below are structured upon various types of arguments such as the reason for the agencies’ creation, the interpretation of decentralisation and independence, their positive and negative effects, and the everyday working experiences in an agency.

In sum, the analysis focuses on a) the content of the repertoires on which the interviewees draw in order to describe the agencies and support their views; b) the identification of the subject positions that the interviewees adopt in their talk in order to speak about the role of their agency or the phenomenon of the agencies more generally; c) the detection of the rhetorical devices and techniques deployed in the talk by the interviewees so as the latter build a convincing and objective argumentation and, finally, d) the examination of the ideological resources which inform the repertoires on agencies and which also build and sustain the position adopted by the interviewees in their talk.

A. Agencies as “Community Agencies”

This first repertoire contains lines of argumentation which represent the agencies as “Community agencies”. In the selected extracts below, agencies are constructed as specialised EU bodies and are attributed with a function that is complementary to the rest of the EU institutions and the overall EU integration project either through the agencies’ specialised task or by being close to the citizens of various member states. In three of the four lines of argumentation, agencies are represented positively, while in the last one they are described negatively mainly because they operate at a distance from the EU and in an independent way.

A1. Agencies as being closer to Europe and its citizens

The first line of argumentation constructs agencies as carriers of the EU and, more broadly, the European idea. This normative goal should be to disseminate the meanings of Europe in the country or city where each agency is situated. Thus, agencies are represented as a transmitter of European ideals and values.

Extract 1

Stratos¹¹⁴ (T)

1 I think that not only the existence but also the function of the decentralized organisations
2 in various member-states (.) contributes for sure potentially to the dissemination of the
3 European idea. And I repeat (.) and it depends certainly on the nature of every
4 independent organisation (.) the fact that seminars (.) conferences and whatever
5 fermentations are taking place let's say in different countries (.) I consider it
6 undoubtedly as something very positive and constructive for the idea of Europe.

Extract 2

Anestis (L)

1 Agencies help (the project of European integration) because I mean if you tend to
2 concentrate everything on one place (1) let's say Luxembourg, Brussels of e:h what is
3 the other other (.)
4 Interviewer: Strasbourg
5 Strasbourg (.) yes that's correct e:h you tend to concentrate all these (.) everything stays
6 centralized and the tendency is more (.) and more for decentralisation. On the other hand
7 (.) the rest of Europe the other European countries don't feel really connected because
8 they feel they are left out since they are not any European institutions in their country (.)
9 and you have to allow these member states to actually to share a bit of this feeling and
10 decentralised organisations do actually help. So I think it's ok for so I think it's quite
11 good for European integration.

Extract 3

Kostas (A)

1 First of all there are (.) a quick result there are immediate results from the creation of
2 these agencies (1) the possibility with people and also with the citizens and then for
3 Alicante (.) people for Thessaloniki people for the London people or for Bilbao, Angers
4 and so on. They know they know that the Community (.) the European Community
5 exists. This is because at least there are some bodies or at least there are bodies (.) there
6 is one body in the need of citizens which a:h there are European civil servants (.) there
7 are European bureaucrats working here and they are doing something not just earning
8 money.

In the three extracts above the interviewees represent the agencies as agents of Europeanization. In particular, agencies' role and functions are constructed as contributing to Europe, expressed either in terms of the European idea (extract 1, line 3) or European integration (extract 2, line 11). In the first extract, Stratos' gist formulation (Heritage & Watson 1979) is that the agencies are able to disseminate the European idea through their activities, such as the organisation of conferences and

¹¹⁴ Original text transcribed in Greek:

1 Νομίζω ότι όχι μόνο η ύπαρξη αλλά και η λειτουργία των αποκεντρωμένων οργανισμών
2 στις διάφορες χώρες-μέλη (.) δυναμικά βεβαίως και συμβάλλει στη διάδοση της
3 ευρωπαϊκής ιδέας. Και επαναλαμβάνω και εξαρτάται βέβαια και από τη φύση κάθε
4 ανεξάρτητου οργανισμού το γεγονός ότι γίνονται συνεδρίες (.) συνδιασκέψεις και τα λοιπά
5 ζυμώσεις ας πούμε στις διάφορες χώρες (.) το θεωρώ
6 αναμφισβήτητα κάτι το πολύ θετικό και επικοδομητικό για την ιδέα της Ευρώπης.

seminars, forming in this sense a type of dialogue in the various countries where the agencies are located. This element is described as positive and constructive for the idea of Europe in general. In extract 2, Anestis insists more on the notion of agencies' physical decentralisation. Decentralisation is presented as normatively desirable ("the tendency is more and more for decentralisation" line 6) and through the use of an if-clause, its opposite, namely centralisation in Brussels", is undermined as 'weird or deviant' (in Potter 1996). Thus, decentralisation contributes to Europe's physical distribution particularly in places where there is no institution acting as a representative of the EU. The presence of an agency helps to bring the EU closer to member states, thereby enhancing the visibility of the EU among the people in various member states and their respective cities. In this sense, the contribution of the agencies is represented in rather symbolic terms.

While the first two extracts focus on the contribution of the agencies to the countries hosting them, in extract 3 Kostas describes the positive effects of the agencies on the member states' citizens, especially by increasing their knowledge about the European Community. The effectiveness and generality of his argument is achieved through the provision of a list of cities such as "Alicante", "Thessaloniki", "London", "Bilbao", "Angers" (line 3) in which different agencies are located. In addition, repetitions highlight the importance of the existence of European bodies to the citizens ("there are some bodies or at least there are bodies, there is one body" in lines 5-6). Furthermore, in order to provide proof of the agencies' contribution, Kostas employs active voicing, speaking on behalf of the people of the cities where an agency is located. This device predisposes the listener in favour of the argument of the speaker avoiding also preconceptions that could undermine the latter's account (Potter 1996). Finally, in his effort to strengthen his argument regarding the positive contribution of the agencies to citizens, Kostas represents the individuals working in the agencies as representatives of the EU rather than just employees earning money (lines 7-8). This last argument is constructed in antithesis to another view that considers "European civil servants" (line 6) or "European bureaucrats" (line 7) as "just earning money" (lines 7-8). Kostas undermines this counter argument regarding the role and function of European civil servants by providing proof that European employees in the agencies, as well as the agencies themselves, respond to the needs of the citizens.

The decentralisation of agencies and their physical distribution throughout the EU member states increases the visibility of the EU, disseminates the European idea, responds to the needs of the citizens, and increases the citizens' knowledge about the EU. In this sense, decentralised agencies are considered to be "good" for European integration (extract 2, line 11), forming thus a moral and normative argument. The position adopted by the interviewees in the extracts are those of external observers and informed speakers. These positions help in constructing the agencies as a generalised

and objective phenomenon devoid of the bias of the interviewees' personal stakes. In particular, Stratos in extract 1 deploys the rhetorical device of systematic vagueness, avoiding the provision of details in which every new piece of information can be considered as a confirmation of the general argument (Edwards & Potter 1992).

The ideological context that informs this line of argumentation is one of a hierarchical model of Europeanizing Europe, depicted in the motto "bringing the Union closer to its citizens". In the present case this can be seen to operate through the agencies. More particularly, analogous arguments are put forward in the official EU philosophy about agencies in which their goals, among others, are to: introduce a degree of decentralisation and dispersal to the Community's activities, and to physically distribute the EU¹¹⁵. These goals are claimed to help the opening of a much more acute visibility of EU functions, face the EU democratic deficit¹¹⁶ and respond to the needs of the European citizens¹¹⁷.

A2. Agencies as promoting integration through their specialised task

In the extracts below, the agencies are presented as contributing to European integration. This is done mainly in terms of the harmonization of different areas of interest through cooperation, the exchange of information, and the production of outputs. The value of the agency's task, which is the harmonisation of information and action in all member states, is evaluated positively within the overall EU framework and objectives.

Extract 4

Dora (L)

Question: What do you think is the role of the agency?

Answer:

- 1 We are collecting information from fifteen countries (.) fifteen countries of the European
- 2 Union and in effect we try to come to one report which tries to analyse this data and
- 3 compares this data (.) that fact only makes the way we are European. I mean the fact that
- 4 we are bringing together this data (.) analysing them together (.) comparing them and
- 5 publishing one report with the view of the state of the drugs problem (.) that fact well (.)
- 6 is European integration.

¹¹⁵ http://europa.eu/agencies/community_agencies/history/index_en.htm

¹¹⁶ White Paper on European Governance, Report by Working Group 3b "Decentralisation. Better involvement of national, regional and local actors", June 2001 (http://ec.europa.eu/governance/areas/group7/report_en.pdf).

¹¹⁷ Union Syndicale Fédéral (USF), *Organismes Décentralisés et Gouvernance*, Document de travail, Brussels, May 2003.

Extract 5

Lisa¹¹⁸ (T)

Question: What do you think is the role of the agencies?

Answer:

- 1 Look (.) because firstly I don't believe that the commission can deal with all the issues
- 2 in detail (.) and in a deep way that's why it makes agencies. I believe (.) yes
- 3 that an integration is occurring yes because since I am working for vocational training (.)
- 4 and I am telling you that I deal with participants from various member states and I am
- 5 giving them the only (.) and the most basic of all (.) I am giving them a piece of
- 6 information that (.) e.g. one employee who goes to Spain (.) only the fact that I am
- 7 providing him with the information of how Spain is (.) and how the professional system
- 8 is (.) already this is an effort that he does integration. A:h the Italian system is this way
- 9 (.) what the differences are (.) what the similarities are (.) and there is already the effort
- 10 for an integration to occur (.) for us to understand the system of the others (.) the
- 11 problems of the others in order to be able to compare them to ours. I believe yes (.) (an
- 12 integration) is occurring.

Extract 6

Dionisis (A)

Question: What do you think is the role (.) the function of the agencies?

Answer:

- 1 We are meant to serve economic integration. When you have witnessed law on patents
- 2 (.) a uniform law on trademarks (.) then you automatically have a very intensive fact of
- 3 integration because the moment industry e::h is used to just fill one patent filing one
- 4 trade mark (.) then decentralised agencies are normal. Take for example the Federal
- 5 Germany. The thing is that when it comes to integration a: there are different levels (.)
- 6 different aspects. The major aspect is integration in political terms (.) in general and we
- 7 add greatly. Integration just by running a central trademarks office. It could be at the
- 8 north pole (.) it would be the central industrial property office of the first of the EU. This
- 9 is a major fact in terms of the single market because we treat the territory of the
- 10 European Union as one state. So you get one trademark right for the territory of the
- 11 European Union full-stop. [...] The other the other the recite of ours at the Community
- 12 market (.) is a major fact of the Community integration (.) full-stop.

¹¹⁸ Original text transcribed in Greek:

Ερώτηση: Ποιος πιστεύεις ότι είναι ο ρόλος των agencies?

Απάντηση:

- 1 Κοίτα (.) γιατί πρώτα δεν πιστεύω η επιτροπή να μπορεί να τα χειριστεί όλα τα θέματα
- 2 σε λεπτομέρειες (.) και έτσι σε βαθύ σημείο γι' αυτό και κάνει agencies. Πιστεύω (.) ναί
- 3 ότι γίνεται μια integration ναί γιατί από την στιγμή που εγώ δουλεύω για την επαγγελματική κατάρτιση (.)
- 4 και σου λέω έχω να κάνω με συμμετέχοντες από διάφορες κράτη-μέλη και τους
- 5 δίνω το μόνο (.) το πιο βασικό (.) τους δίνω μια
- 6 πληροφορία που και (.) π.χ. ο ένας υπάλληλος που πάει στην Ισπανία (.) μόνο που του
- 7 δίνω την πληροφόρηση πώς είναι η Ισπανία πώς είναι το επαγγελματικό σύστημα (.)
- 8 ήδη είναι μια προσπάθεια για να κάνει αυτός integration. A: το ιταλικό σύστημα είναι έτσι (.)
- 9 ποιες είναι οι διαφορές (.) ποιες είναι οι αναλογίες (.) υπάρχει κιόλας η προσπάθεια να
- 10 γίνει μια integration (.) να καταλάβουμε το σύστημα των άλλων (.) τα
- 11 προβλήματα των άλλων ώστε να μπορούμε να τα συγκρίνουμε με τα δικά μας. Πιστεύω ναί (.)
- 12 (integration) γίνεται.

Agencies in the three extracts are constructed through their actual specialised task. This is described by Dora in extract 4 as the collection, analysis and comparison of relevant information and data from the fifteen EU member states with the aim of producing an overall report. Dora repeats the phrase “this data” (in lines 2 and 3) in an attempt to stress their significance. The EU member states are represented as producing diverse information in the specialised field in which the agency operates. Thus, the fact that the agency manages to deal with this diversity, described through the contrast between the numbers “fifteen countries” (line 1) and “one report” (line 2), underscores the integrative task of the agency (lines 4-5). Additionally, this task is described as one way that makes the agency and its employees “European” (line 3). Dora repeats the process through which the agency achieves its task by providing more details. Repetition and the provision of extra details are rhetorical devices that aim at constructing the arguments as a general phenomenon (Edwards & Potter 1992).

The integrative role of the agency’s task is also pointed out by Lisa in extract 5. She provides an example where integration through the agency’s function in the particular field of vocational training is explained in detail. As in the previous extract, the agency’s task is described as consisting of the provision of relevant information to interested participants from the various member states. Integration is constructed as an exchange of information and “reciprocal help” between interested parties in the specific field in which the agency operates. Yet this process is initiated by the agency and puts employees into everyday contact with a variety of national experts. This instills a better understanding of differences and similarities while potentially enabling them to acquire more knowledge on the specific scientific issues. These aspects are constructed as significant because of the cognitive enrichment that is achieved through the agencies’ specialised task.

Another important issue regarding the agency’s role and contribution to the EU integration project is the interdependence between the agency and the Commission. This arises because agencies deal with issues that the Commission cannot. However, it is the Commission who is described as their founder. Lisa’s talk is based on a series of rhetorical devices, such as examples (“e.g.”...in line 6), lists (“Spanish professional system” in line 7 and “the Italian system” in line 8) and lists of indirect questions (“how Spain is how the professional system is” in line 7 and “what the differences are what the similarities are” in line 9). All these devices aim at emphasising the task of the agency and the exchange of specialised information, making her description more explanatory, which ultimately builds her overall argument as more truthful and thus harder to dispute (Potter 1996).

Finally, Dionisis in extract 6 constructs the agency as contributing to integration in a more elaborated way, since he specifies integration in legal (line 2), technical and economic (line 3), and political terms (line 6). This is articulated by a series of facts that are presented as established and having causal relations (such as “the existence of a law on patents, a uniform law on trademarks” in lines 1-2, because of the needs imposed by the “industry” in line 3). These facts are blended in with normativity in terms of regularity (“decentralised agencies are normal” line 4), which is a common rhetorical device known as consensus and corroboration (Edwards & Potter 1992; Potter 1996). The interviewee uses the case of Federal Germany as an example that backs up and confirms his normative argument about the EU agencies (“take for example the Federal Germany.” in lines 4-5). Moreover, he uses an extreme case formulation that presents the creation of an agency as inevitable (“It could be at the north pole it would be the central industrial property office of the first of the EU.” in lines 7-8) (Widdicombe & Wooffitt 1995).

The important integrative role of the agency (this is a major fact in lines 8-9) is further emphasised by being presented in the frame of “the single market” (line 9), and this argument is repeated (“Community market” in lines 11-12). More particularly, the agency’s function is appraised on the basis that it treats “the territory of the European Union as one state” (lines 9-10), a phrase repeated twice that reveals Dionisis’ ideological position regarding not only the agencies but also the EU. The latter is constructed as one state with its distinct territory aiming at achieving harmonisation and unity. This notion (“one state” in line 10 “one trademark” in line 10) constitutes a central element in this line of argumentation and refers to the agency’s main output which is the issuing of one trademark, for example.

The integration task of the agencies is thus presented in functional terms rather than in physical or symbolic terms as in the previous line of argumentation. It could be said that while in the previous line of argumentation agencies were part of an hierarchical model, in the present line of argumentation Europeaness or European unity is achieved in cooperation with the member states. Nonetheless, in this exchange model agencies are still constructed as initiators and managers of the process of European integration through harmonisation in specific areas. Such a description of the agencies’ task is very similar to the notion of networks that has been asserted by theorists who propose a normative regulatory model for EU agencies as well as by those who support the EU vision of agencies as “Community agencies”. The normative discourse represents the network coordination by agencies in efficiency terms while the Community discourse emphasises the harmonising value of the outputs¹¹⁹. So it can be claimed that the arguments in the present extracts are closer to the paradigm of the “Community agencies” than that of regulatory agencies. In other

¹¹⁹ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm

words, what is constructed as more significant is the agencies' contribution to the EU integration in administrative (Kreher 1997) or functional terms (Chiti 2001) through the provision of a pan-European perspective that is based on trusting relations between the national and European level. This is achieved by a coherence in gathering and disseminating reliable and comparable information based on the same measures and standards¹²⁰ (Kreher 1996). Similarly, one of the agencies' goals is to promote the social dialogue in Europe, integrate different interest groups and so bring "Europe closer to its citizens" (Groenleer 2005).

The subject positions adopted by the interviewees are those of committed-to-the-agencies employees, who identify their functional tasks with the tasks of their agencies. This position permits the interviewees to present their accounts regarding the agency's role, function and task with objectivity and validity because they use their personal experiences and tasks in the agency as a shared account through the deployment of "we". Moreover the factuality and generality of the accounts is also warranted by the use of second person ("you have witnessed" in line 1, "you automatically have" in line 2 etc. in extract 6).

A3. Agencies as maintaining the balance in the EU

The interviewees in the extracts below focus on representing the agencies as European public bodies or services putting forward, firstly, their link with the EU and, secondly, their actual function. With respect to the first aspect, agencies are contrasted with the notion of a private company. Emphasis is placed on their links with the Commission and, in particular, the fact that they are under the Commission's control. This is actually constructed as a necessary condition for their effective operation. With respect to their function, this is described as the provision of "objective" information in their respected area of interest, by operating as an "interface" between various actors.

Extract 7

Kate (L)

- 1 I think personally that is good that there is a link with the institutions. At the same time
- 2 it's a question of finding the balance so (.) e: but I think it's very important to have the
- 3 link with the institutions to remain European atmosphere e: not atmosphere but e::h to
- 4 have the link with the institutions where the European policy is also made. If not (.) then
- 5 we are a private business here and we are a public European institution organ body (.) so
- 6 I think it is important that we have the link at the time that (.) I think decentralised
- 7 agencies means that there is an executive director who has a large amount of e:h of
- 8 decision power within the meetings of the management board and so on you know. But

¹²⁰ White Paper on Governance, Report by the Working Group 3a "Establishing a Framework for Decision-Making Regulatory Agencies", Rapporteur A. Quero, June 2001, SG/8597/01-EN

9 there is a kind of independence here executing the task e:r or the task decided by the
10 management board and it has to be executed in this (1) I believe you are quite free and
11 e:h so I think it's a perfect balance between the independent and not being independent.
12 So we are not independent cause our finances coming from but I don't find there's an
13 obstacle in that.

Extract 8

Andreas (A)

1 But we are in the middle of a very big debate (.) because e:: some people want they think
2 that it's more in (.) to transform us into a modern company which gives us what the hell
3 with that (.) we are not a company (.) we could never be a company (.) we are public
4 service public service we have to to (.) I mean I have to apply the regulations the (.)
5 some wherever so efficiency on the one hand of course but (this) goes with the European
6 with the public function you know. Prodi gave a speech in November and I think in the
7 European Parliament and he told that agencies should be (.) they have to be under the
8 strong manner of the Commission. A:m:: strong (.) they mean they want more control
9 of the agencies and I think it's necessary as well. It's necessary you know because
10 otherwise we will have fifteen agencies which are working around and doing whatever
11 they want because for example (.) yeah (.) but it's (.) where do you draw the line e:h.
12 Because we are more really kind an interface of...like a peacemaking force it's more
13 like this. Member states are having problems with each other (.) we are in the middle of
14 it to keep to keep things objective.

Extract 9

Marco (T)

1 We are first pillar area we try to promote the: (1) But we don't have the same power
2 in the in our field I mean like the Commission. EU has the the member states (.) (they)
3 cannot well they can be they can disagree but they can't really do anything in the case
4 that the European union did that or whatever they do. These are the words of the
5 Commission that's the power of the Commission to say so. And maybe that makes a
6 difference also (.) I don't know. That (.) not having the power over over the national
7 over the member states (1) maybe we have this sort of mentality that we are just sort of
8 an agent in the middle of Commission and EU and agencies and member states but
9 anything sort of top coming down. Functionally yes.

The interviewees in the extracts above reveal, for the first time, a dilemma regarding the role and function of the EU agencies. This is introduced as “a big debate” (extract 8, line 1), between two conceptions of the agencies, albeit uttered in a variety of expressions. Agencies are described as “private business” (extract 7, line 5) or “companies” (extract 8, line 2) in contrast to “public service” (extract 8, lines 3-4) and a “public European institution organ body” (extract 7, line 5). This duality is more evident in the first two extracts in which Kate and Andreas respectively undermine the notion of an agency as a private company in favour of an agency as a European public service. Kate describes the agency as “a public European institution organ body” (line 5). This characteristic is uttered with the use of two adjectives and three nouns, which manifests her

effort to underscore the agency's public character and its function as a European institution. Moreover, Kate represents as significant the agency's need to have "a link with the institutions" (line 1), which is repeated three times and is attributed with a moral tone ("it's good" in line 1). By "institutions" she means the rest of the EU institutions (line 4), which are important mainly due to their "policy-making" task (line 4) and also their "European atmosphere" (line 3). The latter, although expressed in vague terms, is considered to be positive for the agencies in general. She explains the meaning of the agencies by describing some of their formal characteristics such as the presence and role of the agencies' director (line 7) in juxtaposition with the tasks of the management board (line 8). This argumentation is drawn from the official discourse on EU agencies regarding the structure and organisation of the agencies (see chapter two), and is presented as an aspect common to all agencies.

Andreas in extract 8 attributes blame for the occurrence of the controversy regarding his agency's role to "some people" (line 1), who want to transform the agency into a company. The significance of the latter is undermined by Andreas (as was the case with Kate) through a series of rhetorical devices, which also make his talk more persuasive. Thus, he firstly represents a distance and eventually a contrast between those who see the agency as a modern company, – by referring to these people as "they" (line 1)- and the agency - by referring to it as "we" (line 3). In addition, the explosive tone of the phrase "what the hell" (line 2) underscores how unacceptable the view of an agency as a company is. Finally, the interviewee repeats that the agency is not a company and uses also an "extreme case formulation" ("we could never be a company" in line 3), which maximises the impossibility of such an attribution ("never" in line 3) (Edwards & Potter 1992). Instead, Andreas constructs the agency as a "public service" (lines 3-4), which is emphasised through a double repetition. The agency as a "public service" is uttered in normative terms as Andreas describes the agency's task as a normal duty ("we have to..." in line 4). Moreover, in order to add validity to this statement, he presents his agency duty as his personal duty as well ("I have to apply the regulations" in line 4). Andreas supports his opinion through the deployment of the device of footing (Goffman 1979) to present Prodi's argument of increased objectivity, since Prodi is considered a reliable witness. Prodi's argument is described as a normative plan for the agencies, according to which they should be under the "strong manner of the Commission" (line 8). This is interpreted by Andreas as the Commission's plan to gain "more control" of the agencies (line 8), something which Andreas supports in opposition to the model of an independent agency. The latter is represented in negative terms with the use of if-clauses, which emphasise its irregularity (Potter 1996). The vague formulation that describes agencies "working around and doing whatever they want" (lines 10-11) draws further attention to a notion of mess or even chaos.

Although the interviewees describe a rather normative role for the agencies in the form of European public services, they negotiate the tension between the two opposing views by also attributing a compromising role to the agencies. More specifically, Kate manages to explain in more detail “the question of finding a balance” (line 2) between independence and non-independence (lines 11) that she has constructed as significant from the beginning of her extract. Independence is interpreted as having freedom in executing tasks even though this is nevertheless decided by the management board. Non-independence arises because agencies are under the influence of the member states, being financially dependent on Community subsidies (lines 11-12). Nevertheless, this argument is discounted as Kate normalizes it and constructs it as non-problematic (“I don’t find there’s an obstacle in that” in lines 12-13). Despite his opposition to the construction of an agency as a company, Andreas negotiates the tension by describing the agency as serving the “European public function” (line 5), while also achieving “efficiency” (line 5). Andreas, by presenting his agency as combining efficiency and the European public function, achieves a compromise between the two antithetical representations of the agencies. This argument has a parallel with Kate’s argument in extract 7 regarding the agency’s role in “keeping the balance”.

Moreover, Andreas characterises the agencies as an “interface” (line 12) or “a peacemaking force” (line 12). Such a representation underlines the existence of other actors or entities that could be in opposition. That said, the interviewee mentions oppositions between the “member states” (line 13) referring in this way to a well-known EU debate concerning inter-governmental differences and tensions. The agencies are represented positively since they resolve these tensions by providing objectivity (line 14).

The negotiation of the “independence” dilemma by the interviewees appears also to be based on the notion of power as a central element in the system of relationships among various actors at the EU level. This notion of power relations is accepted as given and is not attributed with negative connotations. Although agencies are described as keeping a balance between being independent or dependent on various actors, they are also described as having limited powers, compared to the rest of the actors. Yet this characteristic is undermined by their balancing role that permits them to be objective towards the Commission and the member states. But in all of these descriptions agencies are named as “European public services” indicating their affiliation and close link to the EU.

Marco in extract 9 constructs the agency by negotiating the notion of power between the Commission, the member states, and the agencies. More specifically, power refers to decision-making power in specialised fields of action that belong to the first pillar (lines 1-3) and, on this basis, Marco provides an ordering of these three actors in which agencies come last as they cannot

impose their views either on the Commission or the member states. The Commission is the most powerful because its decisions dominate the other two actors. This sort of jargon, as well as the use of terms such as “pillars”, illustrates the interviewee’s knowledge on the EU. Hence, although Marco shows his attachment to the agency (use of “we” in line 1), he still manages to add objectivity to his account by mentioning that his description is attributed to the Commission (“These are the words of the Commission that’s the power of the commission to say so.” in lines 4-5), through the use of footing (Goffman 1979). This also renders the interviewee devoid of any responsibility for his argument. Although Marco attributes clearly less power to the agencies, he seems to accept this situation as given and he even qualifies it as an indication of the agencies’ role. This relationship is described using graphic terms as a linear relationship built upon functional rather than hierarchical factors (“but anything sort of coming down. Functionally yes.” in lines 8-9). Such description adds realism to the overall account since it confirms that agencies are not represented negatively due to their limited power. Instead, their role of providing objective information is seen as contributing to the attaining of a balance between the various actors.

In negotiating the role of the agencies, the interviewees adopt the position of committed-to-the-agencies employees who identify themselves with the role, function and mission of the agencies through the repeated use of the personal pronoun “we”. At the same time, they present themselves as informed speakers by speaking for all agencies in general, and by frequently deploying standard terms from EU jargon.

A4. Agencies as isolated organisations due to extreme specialisation and independence

This line of argumentation differs from the ones above in that it constructs agencies in negative terms. Agencies independence and autonomy from the EU institutions are evaluated as problematic because they lead to the agencies’ isolation from the EU. This produces a lack of visibility and a loss of their European mission. In other words, the interviewees evaluate the agencies negatively because they deviate from their appropriate role as European public bodies inextricably linked to and dependent on the bigger EU institutions.

Extract 10

Virginia (A)

- 1 When you work for the Court or you work for the Commission or you work for anything
- 2 that’s may be (.) for places which are more directly in (.) you have this feeling that you
- 3 are part of a whole European set of institutions. [...]. A::m it was maybe of a (.) too
- 4 much of an independent because they (.) well it’s been the office is been partially
- 5 because of course it’s been self financing. It’s been run almost like a private company
- 6 but not quite (.) so you’ve got this thing which (.) it isn’t and of course which they

7 wanted always to show their independence (.) so the attitude basically was that we are
8 not really an agency because they are not really an agency but they are not a fully
9 fledged institution. So it's this exactly so so you've got this whole feeling that it's we are
10 not really part of them we want to maintain our independence and we want to be
11 independent and don't want to be a part of them and (.) you don't (.) it doesn't convey
12 [...] I think it's sad in you don't feel part of this whole [...] because you are not there to
13 make money. You are there to serve Europe and of course really the office is not there to
14 make money either it is still a service to Europe which is (.) it's lost:: this whole whole
15 thing because of the independence they had. I think I am quite in favour of the fact that
16 the commission is taking all of control because for me that will bring into the fore (that)
17 we are not an independent (.) we are a part of a whole EU (.) we are part of a European
18 structure (.) the part of the European structure.

Extract 11

Dimitris (L)

1 Here we are e::h (.) because this type of agencies are in a in a in: I mean autonomous or
2 independent agencies and been hatched in a corner of Europe such Lisbon (.) a::h I
3 mean from an:: I mean I am talking from a distance point of view e:h I think we are
4 working in a certain form of isolation (.) at least I think myself in a a lot of (.) our work
5 is (.) has some (.) I feel in many cases as a bit autistic a bit of isolated I mean (.) I am
6 communicating a lot of colleagues from other countries by email and in meetings and so
7 on m:: but I have some feeling that we are too much in a corner. It could be because we
8 are an agency we are very far away from Brussels because the peculiarity of many jobs
9 here [...] I think. We are in that sense (.) I have the feeling of isolation a lot of
10 professional and personal isolation. We are here but we don't have very good connection
11 the:: there professional scientific circles a:: this well we are quite (.) we are working
12 quite a lot in isolation from a professional point of view.

Extract 12

Paul (T)

Question: What are the agencies (.) their role (.) their function=

Answer:

1 =Agencies are European without acting like this. But it is no one's responsibility. Maybe
2 because they become too much decentralized (.) too much specialised and in this manner
3 independent. They only have contacts with scientists without really being interested in
4 Europe or EU. Certainly it is clear that they wouldn't exist if EU didn't exist (.) because
5 they are also funded by it. But it is an issue (.) because some of them they have already
6 started to be even financially independent. So it can be a serious problem.

In contrast to the previous three lines of argumentation, the present one provides a negative representation of the agencies. This is evident in extract 10 in which Virginia names the agency as “private company” (line 5) in contrast to the rest of the European institutions. This attribution is uttered by Virginia in strong normative terms (“which it isn't” in line 6) as non-appropriate. This is all more evident by the distance she takes and her avoidance of naming it (“this thing” in line 6).

The incompatibility of this characteristic with the normative role of the agency results in a representation of the EU agency as non European (“So the attitude basically was that we are not really an agency” in lines 7-8). Although Virginia has expressed her disagreement regarding the agency’s independence, she nevertheless considers such an attitude accurate (“because they are not really an agency but they are not a fully-fledged institution” in lines 8-9) as it confirms her normative argument regarding how and what an EU agency should be. Virginia uses her previous working experience as a warrant to compare working in the agency and with the bigger European institutions such as the Court of Justice or the European Commission (line 1). Through this comparison she manages to provide evidence for the reasons why the agency does not function properly. Likewise Dimitris, in extract 11, classifies agencies in a category named as “autonomous or independent” (lines 1-2). This category generates negative characteristics such as the distance from “Brussels”¹²¹ (in line 8). The latter is represented as the centre in contrast to the “corner” (line 2) where the agency is located. He makes it clear therefore that it is the lack of relations with “Brussels” that creates a problem.

In extract 12, Paul evaluates the agencies based on his characterisation of them as “European” (line 1). He represents the agencies negatively because they do not act as European (line 1). The reasons for this are listed: “too much decentralised, specialised and independent” (lines 2-3). Paul avoids attributing responsibility to anyone in particular for the agencies’ actions (“But it is no one’s responsibility” in line 1) in contrast to Virginia who attributes the blame for the agency’s problem to the leadership (“it’s been run” in line 5). She distances herself from these people by referring to them with the pronoun “they” (line 6 and line 8; “they are not” in lines 7-8) avoiding any relation or affiliation with them, which releases her from any involvement or responsibility for the agency. By the phrase “they wanted always to show their independence” (lines 6-7), Virginia attempts to show the kind of tension or antagonism that ‘these people’ have with other EU institutions.

In order to support their arguments, the interviewees attribute to the agencies further negative characteristics associated with the agency’s erroneous self-representation as a private company. Such characteristics include the agency’s ability to finance itself (extract 10, line 5, 12-13). Thus Virginia, like Paul in extract 12, represents the fact that an agency generates its own resources as a symptom of the agency’s problematic role and function, which springs ultimately from a lack of contact with the EU institutions and the intention to be a profit-making body instead of a public service to Europe. This last argument is further elaborated by Dimitris in extract 11, who mentions

¹²¹ The latter is a metonymy for the EU institutions and organisations situated there and symbolised by the city of Brussels. In rhetoric and cognitive linguistics, metonymy is the use of a single characteristic to identify a more complex entity or more simply a part for the whole.

it as a significant consequence his agency's isolation. The notion of isolation is framed in terms of the agency's physical location and in picturesque terms ("been hatched in a corner of Europe such Lisbon a:h" in line 2). Nonetheless, isolation is not only described as a consequence of the agency's physical location but also in terms of the agency's independence or autonomy. Therefore, Dimitris describes isolation as a general condition of the agency ("we are working" in lines 3-4), which affects him personally ("I feel" in line 5). The use of personal experience adds validity to his claim since it cannot be disputed. He even represents the notion of personal isolation as a feeling of being "autistic" (line 5). Afterwards, Dimitris deploys a credentialing disclaimer (Hewitt & Stokes 1975) ("I am communicating a lot of colleagues from other countries by email and in meetings and so on mmm but I have some feeling..." in lines 5-7) in an attempt to show his purpose and personal effort in order not to be isolated. In this way, he makes his account even more credible. Finally, in the last part of the extract Dimitris repeats the fact that isolation is experienced at both professional and personal level. This repetition emphasises the central notion of isolation, which is described as the basic problem for his agency (lines 10-12).

The interviewees in this last line of argumentation present their ideological/political position through their views on the bigger debate on EU agencies of which they demonstrate their awareness. Virginia, for example, legitimises and supports the Commission's effort to bring the agencies under its control. This is considered as helping the agencies acquire an appropriate role that could encourage their staff to feel part of the EU whole.

Moreover, the talk of the interviewees, especially in extracts 10 and 12, is uttered in highly normative terms with paternalistic aspects. One central element is that feeling a part of the EU whole is positive, but, due to the agency's independence from the bigger EU institutions, this has been lost. This is considered a negative outcome. The normative role for the agencies that the interviewees advance requires the agencies to have a greater sense of Europeanness. One important element of this is that the agencies owe the EU, as their founder, an obligation. Agencies' independence undermines the European ideal by orienting the people working there away from the mentality of a European public service and closer to a profit-oriented mentality. Thus, decentralisation/independence is described as a cleavage that relegates agencies to the political periphery.

The argumentation deployed by the interviewees is similar to the critique that the EU official discourse has developed against a normative independent model for agencies put forward by the so-called normative discourse. According to this official EU rhetoric, agencies with increased independence can turn into entities dominated by technocracy. This understanding of an agency's

role is in contrast to the EU ideals and signifies a loss of coherence and uniformity of the decision making process (Shapiro 1997). This eventually leads to a lack of legitimacy in the eyes of the public due to the danger of agencies being “captured” by some of the interests that they are supposed to regulate, as the American experience shows (Williams 2005; Curtin 2005; Shapiro 1997). The potential problem is the lack of control of the agencies, which arises because of the expertise developed by the epistemic communities that are developed within the agencies and which are difficult to control by politicians or higher political authorities due to their lack of specialised knowledge. The solution is the monitoring of the work of the agencies to ensure the clear subordination of them to the core EU institutions (Coleman 2004).

The interviewees adopt the positions of distanced, external-to-the-agencies speakers, a position that helps them avoid any responsibilities for the agencies’ problematic role and function. Furthermore, such a position permits and legitimises the interviewees’ support for the Commission’s plan to make the agencies dependent on it. Nonetheless, the interviewees change their position and present themselves as committed to the agency when they talk about the negative consequences of the agency’s function as a private company. This position reinforces the veracity of their arguments since they present themselves as personally experiencing the negative effects. In this sense, the interviewees present themselves as Europe’s public servants who suffer from isolation in which their European mission has been lost.

Discussion of the repertoire

The lines of argumentation discussed in this repertoire construct the EU agencies as agents of Europeanization whose goal is to diffuse the European idea to the member states either through their symbolic or technical role. The dilemma negotiated in this repertoire is whether agencies are dependent and close or independent and distant from the EU and, in particular, the EU institutions. The antithetical components of the dilemma were expressed in a series of dualities such as public versus private, service versus company, European versus independent. The interviewees built their argumentation by choosing the characteristics of these dualities that built the agencies as “Community agencies” (European, decentralised, public services, subsidised by the Commission) as normative, undermining at the same times the antithetical characteristics (non-European, independent, private companies, self-financed and profit oriented). The construction of the agencies as “European public bodies” is further reflected in the subject positions adopted by the interviewees. The latter, in order to construct their accounts objectively, presented themselves as European civil servants, EU functionaries and experts. This position entailed a commitment, on the part of the interviewees, to the vision of agencies as Community bodies. These subject positions

were built in contrast to those presenting employees as technocrats, oriented towards profit-making. Indeed, in the last line of argumentation in which the interviewees represent the agencies in negative terms due to the absence of the link with Europe, they were presenting themselves as distanced speakers, disavowing in this way any responsibility for the problematic operation of the agencies.

It is interesting to note that the rhetorical organisation of this repertoire is consistent throughout all four lines of argumentation. More particularly, we see that all extracts are based on the use of vivid descriptions along with a combination of other rhetorical devices that aim at providing warrant for the basic argument that agencies are European public bodies and are part of the EU institutional architecture. At the same time, the variety of the rhetorical devices used had a similar function (see in detail Table 1 below); that was to undermine the counter argument that agencies are independent from the EU institutions and function as profit-making companies. However, the most crucial rhetorical device was the use of a normativity jargon (organised either upon systematic vagueness, consensus and corroboration or footing). This normativity jargon presents the arguments on agencies' role as a normative reality that cannot be disputed, with reference not only to the agencies themselves but also to the overall functioning of the EU. So anything that does not fulfil the criteria of this normativity is evaluated negatively since it is considered to be "abnormal" in relation to the well-established agencies' reality. Needless to say, this is the case in the last line of argumentation in which agencies are presented operating as profit-making bodies, a role which is constructed as an irregularity.

This repertoire is informed by the official EU discourse on "Community agencies". The arguments deployed in this repertoire are similar to those put forward in the official EU discourse. These include the goal of the agencies to disperse the Community's activities¹²², to develop scientific or technical expertise in specific fields, to integrate different interest groups and thus to facilitate the dialogue at a European (between the social partners, for example) or international level. Moreover the notion of integration constructed in the extracts above coincides with the definition of integration as provided by the official website of the EU. Integration is about "building unity between European countries and peoples. Within the European Union it means that countries pool their resources and take many decisions jointly. This joint decision-making takes place through interaction between the EU institutions (the Parliament, the Council, the Commission, etc)"¹²³. Additionally, agencies are represented positively because they are auxiliary to the rest of the EU institutions, particularly to the Commission, and are operating under principles designed by the core

¹²² http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/history_en.htm

¹²³ <http://www.europa.eu.int/abc/eurojargon/index/en.htm>

EU institutions. In this sense, agencies do not operate in an autonomous manner. This has been pointed out in the literature on the agencies and is supported by researchers who adopt the EU official discourse (Chiti 2004). This is also an argument for why the EU agencies cannot be compared to the American agencies and the degree of independence they enjoy. Therefore, when agencies are described in negative terms in this repertoire, particularly in the last line of argumentation, it is not because they follow the appropriate system designed for them but, instead, because they function too independently.

Table 1. Agencies as “Community Agencies”

<i>Dilemma</i>	<i>Whether agencies are independent from or dependent on Brussels (political or technical role of the agencies)</i>		
<i>Lines of Argumentation</i>	A1. Agencies as being closer to Europe and its citizens	A2. Agencies as promoting integration through their specialised task	A3. Agencies as maintaining the balance in the EU
Content	<p>Agencies are defined as European decentralised agents of integration in symbolic rather than technical terms.</p> <p>Integration or decentralisation is constructed as Europeanisation which is represented as distributing Europe and the European idea to the people, the cities and the countries where agencies are physically situated, generating a “we” feeling and increasing the visibility of the EU.</p> <p>Agencies are evaluated positively as a part of an hierarchical model of Europeanising Europe (“bringing Europe closer to its citizens”).</p>	<p>Agencies are defined as European decentralised agents of integration through their specialised task</p> <p>Integration is constructed as harmonisation of data and the dissemination of it to member states.</p> <p>Integration is also constructed as legal, political and economic Europeanisation, which is further represented as a cognitive enrichment of the employees working in the agencies.</p> <p>Agencies are not independent from the EU institutions, since the Commission is their founder, but auxiliary to them through a relation of interdependence.</p> <p>Agencies are evaluated positively as a part of an exchange model of Europeanising Europe, in which agencies have the leading role.</p>	<p>Agencies are defined as EU public bodies which are in direct link with the core EU institutions and function as an objective interface – or “peacemakers” – between the EU and member states.</p> <p>The agencies’ public function is constructed in parallel with efficiency and in contrast to private business (or modern companies).</p> <p>Agencies are not independent from the EU institutions, since their powers are limited compared to the Commission, they are financially dependent on the EU they are also controlled by the Commission in order for them to operate effectively.</p> <p>Control of the Commission is considered as a crucial issue for differentiating between agencies as private companies through an independent model and agencies as public services.</p> <p>Agencies are evaluated positively as dependent bodies on the EU institutions since this goes along with their normative role.</p>
Subject Positions	<p>Individuals as European civil servants in the need of citizens. This position is adopted in</p>	<p>Individuals as committed to the agency. The use of “we” indicates that individuals construct themselves</p>	<p>A4. Agencies as isolated organisations due to extreme specialisation and independence</p> <p>Agencies are constructed as independent, autonomous, private companies because of their leadership in contrast to their European normative role which is to be public services.</p> <p>Independence is constructed as being self-financed and oriented to profit-making as well as lacking EU visibility and a European mission.</p> <p>Independence and autonomy are negative because they create antagonism between the agencies and the Commission and professional and physical isolation of the agencies from the rest of Europe and “Brussels”. The latter is represented as the centre of Europe and the agency as its periphery.</p> <p>Agencies are evaluated negatively as independent bodies from EU institutions, a role that is in contradiction with the agencies’ normative role as EU public service.</p> <p>Individuals as committed to the idea of the agency as a European public service. They construct themselves as European</p>

<p>contrast to the vision of EU bureaucrats who just earn money.</p> <p>Interviewees as distanced speakers or external observers as they describe a well-known phenomenon that is released from their personal interests, affiliations etc.</p>	<p>as members of the agency as a European specialised body with the goal to contribute to the European integration goal.</p> <p>Individuals as European civil servants specialised in a sector, who work on European integration and harmonisation process.</p>	<p>as a European public service in contrast to “others” who view the agency as a company.</p>	<p>public servants.</p> <p>Interviewees as informed but detached speakers as they disavow the responsibility for the agencies’ problematic status of independence.</p>
<p>Rhetorical Devices</p> <p><i>Objectivity:</i> Use of vivid description (including gist formulations, active voicing, lists and repetitions) that presents the speaker as gifted with special skills of observation, capable of representing reality with precision and veracity.</p> <p>Use of normative jargon structured on the use of systematic vagueness that enforces the normative role of agencies as EU bodies in the need of the citizens that contribute to the European integration. Vague formulations cannot be undermined easily while at the same time they provide the essential elements to found a particular inference, such as the role of the agencies in Europe.</p>	<p><i>Objectivity:</i> Provision of details, contrasts, examples, lists and lists of indirect questions in order to construct the agency’s role as a general phenomenon and make the description robust, difficult to dispute, explanatory and emphatic regarding the agencies’ task to harmonise and disseminate specialised information.</p> <p>Use of normative jargon structured on the use of consensus and corroboration (embellished with the provision of examples and extreme case formulations). Consensus is linked with normativity presenting the role of decentralisation through agencies as a regularity</p> <p>Use of second person that contributes to the factuality and generality of the descriptions.</p>	<p><i>Objectivity:</i> Provision of details on agencies’ structure and on the EU institutional structure.</p> <p>Use of emphatic tone, extreme case formulations, if-clauses and vague formulations in order to undermine the opposing views, according to which agencies should be working as companies, and underscore the irregularity of these views.</p> <p>Use of normative jargon structured in the use of footing in order to describe the roles of the agencies and the other institutions. Footing presents the accounts as devoid of the speakers’ personal stakes, which increases the objectivity of the accounts.</p>	<p><i>Objectivity:</i> Use of personal experiences insider’s point of view to warrant for the veracity and increase the validity of the provided accounts</p> <p>Repetitions draw emphasis on the normative role of the agencies as European public service.</p>

B. Agencies as “Independent Agencies”

The second repertoire contains three lines of argumentation which are structured on the core argument that agencies are specialised, independent and decentralised. The reference to “Brussels”, and in particular to the Commission, plays a crucial role in this repertoire. “Brussels” is represented as closely linked with politics, political interests, bureaucracy and other negative characteristics that usually accompany the notion of a public administration. Agencies are frequently compared to them in order to be presented as differentiated, distant and independent, specialised, efficient and better organisations. Therefore, agencies’ positive representation is structured upon their efficiency and lack of politics. Following this argument, agencies are only represented negatively in the last line of argumentation where they are depicted as operating without independence, autonomy and flexibility.

B1. Agencies as specialised and efficient organisations compared to other EU institutions

The first line of argumentation presents the agencies as specialised and task-focused organisations. Agencies are evaluated positively in terms of their efficiency, which is the crucial characteristic that differentiates them from Brussels and, in particular, the Commission. Therefore, agencies contribute to the EU institutional formation through being better and more efficient bodies than other EU institutions.

Extract 13

Christopher¹²⁴ (T)

- 1 I believe that someone could characterise most of these centres
- 2 independent (.) as tanks of thought (.) as think tanks. The European Commission
- 3 assumes the legislative initiatives (.) which it sets for approval to the
- 4 Council. The Parliament decides upon the reckoning of the costs and poses its own
- 5 requests. The agencies I can say that they are a part (.) of a think tank that puts forward
- 6 ideas-proposals (.) which are not certainly binding for the Commission (.) but
- 7 they provide however according to my opinion (.) a valuable fuelling of viewpoints (.)

¹²⁴ Original text transcribed in Greek:

- 1 Πιστεύω ότι θα μπορούσε κανείς να χαρακτηρίσει τα περισσότερα από τα κέντρα αυτά
- 2 Ανεξάρτητα (.) ως δεξαμενές σκέψης (.) ως think tanks. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή
- 3 αναλαμβάνει τις νομοθετικές πρωτοβουλίες (.) τις οποίες θέτει προς έγκριση στο
- 4 Συμβούλιο. Το Κοινοβούλιο κρίνει τους υπολογισμούς και ζητάει και αυτό τα δικά του.
- 5 Οι agencies μπορώ να πω (.) ότι αποτελούν μέλος δεξαμενής σκέψης και υποβολής
- 6 ιδεών-προτάσεων (.) οι οποίες δεν είναι βέβαια δεσμευτικές για την επιτροπή (.) αλλά
- 7 ωστόσο είναι κατά τη γνώμη μου (.) πολύτιμη τροφοδοσία με απόψεις (.) γνώμες (.)
- 8 προοπτικές (.) εναλλακτικές προτάσεις (.) τις οποίες στη συνέχεια τις επεξεργάζεται η
- 9 επιτροπή και τις διοχετεύει για εκτέλεση (.) μέσω του συμβουλίου σε όλες τις χώρες-
- 10 μέλη. Οι ιδέες βέβαια που παράγουν τα agencies σαφώς είναι προϊόντα σκέψης και
- 11 δουλειάς ανεξάρτητης από πιέσεις (.) και πολιτικά συμφέροντα. Γι’ αυτό και είναι
- 12 χρήσιμα. Επίσης νομίζω ότι υπάρχει λιγότερη γραφειοκρατία στα agencies από ότι στην
- 13 Επιτροπή (.) είναι πιο (.) έχετε πολύ περισσότερο ελιγμό (.) πολλή περισσότερη ευθύνη
- 14 (.) πολλή περισσότερη ποικιλία γιατί πρέπει να αναλαμβάνεις πολύ περισσότερα.

8 opinions(.) perspectives (.) alternative proposals (.) which subsequently the Commission
9 examines and channels for implementation (.) through the Council in all member
10 states. Certainly the ideas that the agencies produce are products of thought and
11 work independent from pressures (.) and political interests. And that's why
12 they [agencies] are useful. I think also it's [there is] less bureaucracy in the agencies than
13 the Commission (.) it's more (.) you have much more manoeuvre (.) much more I think
14 responsibility (.) much more variety because you have to take on much more [tasks].

Extract 14

Lefteris (A)

1 Certainly for [an] agency [...] we are very specialised (.) not closely related to the task
2 that the European Commission does (.): [it] sets and executes policies of the Parliament
3 (.) [or to what] the Council does. I think it's a model (.) which is useful to let's say.
4 Whether it was to be done exactly this way or some other way (.) but I think the notion
5 that you have to administer the public duties or deal with specialised tasks that came
6 [...] by a central administration located in Brussels (.) it's not the same. So it's terrible in
7 the long run (.) you can't do (.) you have to find the means of outsourcing or delegating
8 or doing something that has been here founding an agency which does it (.) you (.) you
9 can check for example European space administration. European space administration
10 [is] partly a thing done by member states but if you would to entrust this [specialised
11 task of the agency] to [other] Community organisation[s] there is no way [you will find
12 others appropriate]. The Commission cannot do it because it needs specialised
13 staff (.) you know something about specialisation (.) so you create an agency here. [...]
14 If there are tasks that for one reason or another the Council has decided that they
15 should be done by European institutions (.) which in our situation they are not natural
16 tasks for the Commission (.) because the Commission has no natural tasks of arranging
17 intellectual property right.

Extract 15

Mario (L)

1 The satellite bodies like us (.) we are more efficient than the others (.) we are important
2 [...] We know this reality we are concentrated on our task (.) that kind of activity (.) we
3 are more efficient we are more (.) quicker than the other big boys. That happened not
4 only at the European level you know that happened also at national level [with the
5 agencies]. We are more task [oriented] [...] than big e:h agencies and this is also one of
6 the consequences of our small and micro-size. Ok it's easy (.) it was easier for all (.) for
7 instance what happens [is] we are respecting our goals our tasks and so on.

In the three extracts agencies are defined as “think tanks” (extract 13, line 2) focused on their respective scientific areas of interest (“we are very specialised” in line 1, extract 14, “we are concentrated” in line 2, extract 15). Christopher (extract 13) provides many details about the agencies' role. Agencies are constructed as having a very important role, complementary to that of the other institutions. He repeats the metaphor that the agencies are “think tanks” (line 2) that emphasises not just their role and function, but also their distinctiveness compared to the other institutions. Lefteris (extract 14) goes a step further and presents his agency as a specialised “centre

of excellence” (“we are very specialised” in line 1), whose task is not related to the task of the EU or, in particular, the Parliament or the Council. Moreover, the differentiation between the agency and the rest of the EU institutions is emphasised by the argument that the agency’s tasks are not “natural” for the Community (line 15). This adjective also entails the notion of a physical order according to which intellectual property rights is a topic that can be dealt by the respective agency and not by other EU institutions. The major distinction between the agency and any other EU administrative entity lies in the fact that agencies do not deal with administrative public duties but instead focus on specialised tasks. The necessity for the agencies’ specialised task is described as the main reasons for their creation. It is also the reason for their incompatibility with a “central administration in Brussels” (lines 5-6) which could deal with administrative tasks.

Christopher, in extract 13, constructs a functional model of the European institutions as well as of the European agencies. This model is like a system in which every part has its own well-defined and specialised role. This account appears in line 1-4 by listing agencies, the European Commission, Parliament and Council and by ascribing to each one of them a distinctive and mutually inter-dependent role (e.g. the European Commission submits its proposals to the Council whereas the Parliament takes care of the budgeting issues). Moreover, Christopher presents the agencies’ output in a list (Potter 1996). In the process described, the role of the agencies is to submit ideas and proposals, which are not binding to the Commission. This underscores the nature of the agencies’ specialised task that is differentiated from tasks of an administrative or political nature (“viewpoints, opinions, perspectives, alternative proposals” in lines 7-8). The use of lists presents the account as complete and draws attention to its generality (Potter 1996).

Equally, Lefteris (extract 14) describes the way the agency functions as forming a “useful model” (line 3) which attributes a more general characteristic to the agency. The objectivity of this argument is made through the ‘rhetoric of argument’ (Edwards & Potter 1992) consisting of a syllogism (e.g. the use of the deductive conjunctive “so” in line 6) in which the European institutions address their needs by outsourcing, delegating specialised tasks or creating the agencies (see the three-part list in lines 7-8). The use of this rhetoric presents his argument as factual, commonplace and normal (Jefferson 1990; Potter 1996).

The complementarity of agencies to the EU institutions is mentioned here as well as in the first repertoire. Yet the difference in the present repertoire is that agencies are not attributed with any other tasks (e.g. integration) apart from their technical ones. In this sense, the tasks of the EU institutions are in a way undermined both in terms of efficiency as well as in terms of their content.

Such a tension is evident obvious in extract 15, where scientific knowledge is constructed as more important than the EU knowledge.

The distinctiveness of the agencies from the rest of the EU institutions is not represented just by their specialised task but also by the way they operate. In particular, agencies are attributed with characteristics, such as efficiency, flexibility, task-orientation, responsibility, small size and better communication flow. In extract 15, Mario describes the agencies as part of the category named as “satellite bodies” (line 1) described by a list of positive characteristics such as more efficiency, importance, knowledge of reality, concentration on the task and speed (lines 1-3). In this way, agencies are described as superior to “others” (line 1), a claim that highlights the use of a common device, “us” and “others”, which brings to the fore the formation process of a strong organisational identity. The “others” are the other EU institutions, whose importance is undermined with the use of irony (“big boys” in line 3). Irony usually has the role of pointing out the untruthfulness of general accounts, in this case the effectiveness of bigger EU institutions. Afterwards, Mario repeats that his agency (including himself) is focused on its task, something which he attributes to the small size of the agency.

Christopher (extract 13), on the other hand, stresses the qualities of his agency in comparison to the Commission by using another list for emphasising the agencies’ absence of bureaucracy, the existence of flexibility, responsibility and variety. The repetition, as well as the deployment of the lists in both extracts (13 and 15) make the arguments about the agencies’ qualities rhetorically effective and emphasises their generality (Potter 1996; Atkinson 1984).

In order to establish the truthfulness of their accounts and confirm their arguments Lefteris and Mario make use of examples. Lefteris uses the European space agency as an example of an organisation with delegated specialised tasks. Although the European space agency is not included among the Community agencies because it has been founded by an intergovernmental agreement (“done by member states” in line 10), the interviewee manages to uphold his argument by pointing out that the task undertaken by this specific agency cannot be “entrusted” to other Community bodies. Mario, on the other hand, deploys national agencies and the general perception of them to warrant his support for the European agencies. Hence, this whole argument regarding the national and European agencies being better than the central European institutions is based on the rhetorical device of consensus. Consensus is usually linked with normativity (see also Edwards & Potter 1992): in this case, it defines what the role of any agency - national and European – should be.

Finally, the superiority of the agencies is represented by the notion of independence (delegation or outsourcing in extract 14) particularly from “pressures and political interests” (extract 13, line 11).

Independence of the agencies' scientific assessments and outputs from vested, political interests and pressures, is one of the normative criteria for the definition of an agency (Talbot et al. 2000). At the European level, this argument has been discussed thoroughly by the advocates of an independent regulatory agency model. Such a model is said to ensure, among other things, objective knowledge, neutrality and efficiency¹²⁵ (Majone 1996; 2002b; Radaelli 1999; Yataganas 2001; Ahredt 1998; Kreher 1997). The present construction of the agencies as independent, specialised and efficient bodies is informed ideologically by the normative discourses on agencies that see them as less bureaucratic, performance oriented and responsible for their actions (Talbot et al. 2000). In addition, agencies are specialised in a specific issue-area, which inevitably becomes an attraction for managers and motivated experts with detailed knowledge of a field (Majone 2002b). This appears to be a central characteristic for the interviewees in the present extracts, who take the position of committed-to-the-agency experts. In particular, the interviewees identify themselves with the specialised task of the agencies, (particularly in extract 14 and 15 in which Lefteris and Mario use repeatedly the pronoun "we"). In extract 13 Christopher describes the agencies by speaking in general terms constructing in this way a kind of established reality. Both types of positions adopted by the three interviewees aim at establishing their agencies as specialised and efficient organisations.

B2. Agencies as independent from "Brussels"

As in the previous line of argumentation, in the extracts below agencies are constructed as specialised bodies, independent from Brussels' politics. In this case, however, independence is related to financial autonomy. This line of argumentation is found only in the talk of the interviewees in the agency of Alicante. This is hardly surprising given that this is the only self-financed agency of the three.

Extract 16

Alexander (A)

- 1 For me we are a trade mark office and the things are happening in Brussels are quite
- 2 irrelevant for me (.) really. I am doing more or less the same work that I was doing in
- 3 Britain but there we were talking about a trade mark with a British imprinting right and
- 4 here we are doing the same work but we have the European imprinting right. Really (.) I
- 5 have very little interest in Brussels politics (.) Brussels' affairs yeah academic interest
- 6 which anybody could have anyway. I don't feel it is very blatant in my work now (.) this
- 7 is a trade mark office (.) just this. Yeah we feel very distant from Brussels. I feel very
- 8 distant from Brussels. And also I don't think the fact that we have this office (.) it's
- 9 really very very important for the people of Alicante I must say that (.) I don't think.

¹²⁵ Everson, M., Majone, G., Metcalfe, L. & Schout, A. (2001), 'The Role of Specialised Agencies in Decentralising EU Governance', Report Presented to the Commission, (http://ec.europa.eu/governance/areas/group6/contribution_en.pdf).

Extract 17

Despina (A)

- 1 I'm happy that that this institution is not in Brussels and that we can be (.) don't (.) I
- 2 mean being not so close to Brussels I meant we don't feel it so much (.) I see it [the
- 3 agency] as a company rather than a European institution also because it makes its own
- 4 money. I think it's the only one.

Extract 18

Aris¹²⁶ (A)

- 1 Here already the fact of being a technical agency let's say [...] because people are
- 2 mainly identified with business. If we have to, have to provide a service e::h for and also
- 3 I don't know whether it is adapted for Europe because the problem here is that your
- 4 service here has as clients all the countries of the world. For our case let's say (.) I do not
- 5 see this phenomenon that you can identify with clarity and explain in a coherent form.

Alexander in extract 16 describes his agency as a specialised office, namely “a trade mark office” (line 1). In lines 3 and 4, he explains his working task in the agency by drawing a parallel between the agency's task in general and the national specialised agency on trade marks in Britain. In order to present his argument more convincingly, he uses his personal experience (Baka 2004). In extract 17, Despina describes the task of the agency as equal to “a company” (line 3) and different from the role ascribed to “a European institution” (line 3). Similarly in extract 18, Aris constructs the role of the agency as technical and the people working in it as identifying themselves with employees working in private profit-oriented companies (“business” in line 2). Furthermore, he points out that the services of the agency are not wholly adapted to Europe, thereby undermining the importance of the agency's service as European. He supports his argument by presenting the agency's target group as including not just Europe but all the countries of the world.

What becomes salient in the present extracts is the representation of the agencies in opposition and distance from “Brussels”. The distance from Brussels is represented in various forms. Alexander constructs the task of his agency as irrelevant to what is happening in Brussels (line 1, 5, 8). By comparing his agency to the respective national agency, he identifies as a difference just the trade mark itself. This is British in the national agency and European in the European agency. This lack of substantive difference undermines the agency's connection with the EU. Apart from constructing “Brussels” with a contemptuous tone and negative attributions (“Brussels' politics” in line 5 and

¹²⁶ Original text transcribed in Italian:

- 1 Qui già il fatto di essere un'agenzia tecnica diciamo [...] perché la gente è
- 2 piuttosto identificata con col business. Se dobbiamo dobbiamo fornire un servizio e::h per anche
- 3 non so adatto per l' Europa perché il problema qui è che il tuo
- 4 servizio ha come clienti tutti i paesi del mondo. Per il nostro caso diciamo (.) non vedo
- 5 questo fenomeno che si possa identificare nettamente e spiegare di forma coerente.

“Brussels affairs” in line 5), he also discounts its value by not constructing the knowledge of it as necessary and important, but rather as personal and of “academic interest” (line 5). The distance of the agency from Brussels is also mentioned in lines 7-8 (“we feel distant”, “I feel very distant”) in which Alexander presents it not just as his personal feeling but as a shared feeling in the agency. Finally, the agency’s specialisation and independence is also constructed by its relationship with the local social context of the city where it is situated. The agency and its task are described as not important (line 9) for the citizens of Alicante. This tends to sustain and enforce the argument that the agency is just focused on its specialised task. This is in contrast to the argument in the previous repertoire regarding the importance and integration effect of the European agencies on the cities, citizens and the member states where they are situated.

The notion of distance from Brussels is also depicted vividly by Despina in extract 17, who expresses her satisfaction with this distance articulating also this feeling as generalised and shared. The phrase that she deploys (“being not so close” in line 2) indicates on the one hand, the physical distance of the agency from the other EU institutions in Brussels and, on the other, the differentiation of the agency’s task and role. Moreover, the particularity of the agency is also pointed out by the fact that the agency is self-financed and without need of subsidies from Brussels. This characteristic is therefore significant for establishing the agency’s distinctiveness and uniqueness (“it’s the only one” in line 4). Aris in extract 18, similar to Alexander in extract 16, does not attribute any particular links between the agency and Europe or European institutions. Moreover, like Despina, Aris explains his agency’s particularity through the absence of any direct identification with Europe.

While the notion of European public service was constructed as important for the agencies in the first repertoire, in this line of argumentation, the opposite is put forward. In particular, agencies as private, profit-oriented companies with clients are evaluated positively and the capacity of an agency to be self-financed is deployed as a warrant for its independence, autonomy, specialisation and business orientation. This specific element functions as an important mechanism for the representation of the agency as an independent and technocratic body.

This line of argumentation, as well as the first one, is informed by a technocratic discourse, in which the notion of Europe or the EU institutions are constructed as inferior to the agency’s task. The subject positions adopted by the interviewees are those of committed-to-the-agency subjects, who share common representations and adopt a “technocrat” talk. The interviewees use the interspersions of “I” and “we” in order to present their arguments not just as their personal opinions – attributing validity - but also as shared by the whole agency, - attributing objectivity.

B3. Agencies as executive and bureaucratic organisations without power

In this line of argumentation, agencies are attributed with negative characteristics mainly due to the lack of the independence, autonomy and better operational principles such as flexibility. Therefore, this line of argumentation is the antithesis of the two previous ones. Although agencies are evaluated negatively, the aforementioned characteristics (independence, autonomy and flexibility or lack of bureaucracy) are considered to be necessary, significant and positive. In fact, it is the absence of these characteristics that generates the critique of the way agencies operate. To this end, this line of argumentation draws ideologically on the normative discourse, according to which agencies being dependent, bureaucratic and without power does not constitute an appropriate model.

Extract 19

Manolis¹²⁷ (A)

1 Look I believe that the problem is that in the project [of the agencies] that for example
2 (.) there is a Prodi's white paper on governance in preparation (.) about which you might
3 have heard speaking (.) in which agencies are discussed and in which practically the
4 decision is this (1) the problem is that the agencies have functions simply executive.
5 Because it is that the Commission can delegate its powers (.) in other words the
6 Commission can delegate solely executive powers and for this (.) and the community
7 can delegate executive functions to the agencies so this creates necessarily a different
8 spirit [in the agencies] because in Brussels you decide for things because in reality you
9 as a fonctionnaire (.) behind this desk (.) you are taking a decision because you know the
10 organ to which you propose is (.) you understand [telephone] I am saying that already
11 the function of an agency already starts meaning already cuts down a bit (.) I am
12 speaking from the inside from the point of view of the fonctionnaires [...] I am telling
13 you what I am narrating to you now is from a personal point of view. I believe that in an
14 agency the personnel is less motivated as personnel (.) because clearly you have only
15 executive functions and you don't have any decision-making power (.) even if it is
16 indirect which on the contrary in the Commission you have.

¹²⁷ Original text transcribed in Italian:

1 Guarda il problema che io credo è che nel progetto che per esempio
2 (.) c'è un libro bianco in preparazione di Prodi sulla governabilità (.) di cui forse
3 hai sentito parlare (.) in cui si parla delle agenzie e in cui praticamente
4 la decisione è quella (1) Il problema è che le agenzie hanno delle funzioni semplicemente esecutive.
5 Perché la Commissione non è che può delegare i suoi poteri (.) cioè
6 la Commissione può delegare soltanto funzioni esecutive per cui (.) e la comunità
7 può delegare funzioni esecutive alle agenzie quindi questo necessariamente crea uno spirito diverso
8 perché a Brussels tu decidi delle cose cioè in realtà tu
9 come funzionario (.) dietro questa scrivania (.) stai prendendo una decisione perché sai
10 che l'organo alla quale la proponi (.) capito e (.) [telephone] io dico che già
11 come funziona l'agenzia già comincia cioè già toglie un po' questo (.) io te lo sto
12 dicendo dal punto di vista dai funzionari [...] io ti dico
13 quel che ti sto raccontando è dal punto di vista personale. Io credo che in una
14 agenzia sia meno motivati come personale (.) perché chiaramente hai soltanto
15 funzioni esecutive e non hai nessun potere decisionale (.) sia pure
16 indiretto che invece alla commissione hai.

Extract 20

Sotiris (T)

Question: What do you think is the role of the agencies?

Answer:

1 The American agencies are a good example (unclear phrase) created for [being] public
2 enterprises that needed public control (.) and they created the so-called administrative
3 agencies. There is a whole doctrine that has developed in American law (.) how to do
4 these agencies' supervision, who gets involved in the setting of public services. There is
5 no experience in Europe of this (.) nothing. There is though developed an interest for the
6 EU but not [at] the desirable level and many times people in the agencies are frustrated
7 due (.) mainly to bureaucracy and to the amount of papers they have to fill in for doing
8 something they need. Therefore the degree of frustration is related to exactly this. And
9 then agencies cannot be as independent and flexible as they were supposed to be. So
10 people wonder why shall we bother learning (.) and being interested in something that is
11 so much bureaucratic.

Extract 21

Michael (L)

Question: What do you think about the role of the agencies in the EU architecture (.) with other EU institutions?

Answer:

1 It's the same relationship like between being Christian and loving the Pope. I mean
2 the Commission it's the kind of Pope (.) it says that represents the European idea but it
3 does represent as well the idea as the Pope represents Christianity. That's the same
4 thing. Agencies the same. Because they are kind of (.) often they are kind of small
5 replicates of Brussels and this [agency is a] serious a big replicate of Brussels (1) Yeah
6 (.) I think that it's not a problem of Brussels. It might (.) it's a good idea to do the
7 decentralisation but it could (.) it depends on what (.) if the culture pushes around inside
8 the agencies and if the agency is run by Brussels and is strongly depending on
9 Brussels and all its values. And there is no way of changing it (.) if you don't change the
10 people inside (.) the attitudes (.) there is no way of changing anything. Even (1) it's (1)
11 b:h this (.) and even it's some rumours people say (.) Brussels you are freer Brussels it's
12 more at least (.) rules more democratic (.) applies at least to everybody. Here
13 sometimes it's exactly like in the faraway colony (.) like colonies where defects to law
14 exist from the mainland which has been implemented according to wish or non
15 wish and the caprices of: of the governor.

In the three extracts, agencies are described as dependent on “Brussels”, having only executive functions and lacking power. In extract 19, Manolis' construction of agencies as “simply executive” (line 4), and therefore problematic, is based on the ‘white paper on governance’ (line 2). Moreover, in extract 20, by using the US agency model as a prototype (“good example” in line 1) Sotiris attributes to the agencies normative characteristics, such as independence or autonomy. Yet the latter do not apply in Europe and, as a consequence, European agencies are not functioning properly. In addition, through an extreme case formulation (“There is no experience in Europe of

this, nothing.” in lines 4-5) Sotiris manages to make his account more persuasive by maximizing the value of his description (Pomerantz 1986; Potter 1996). In extract 21 Michael uses a credentialing disclaimer (“It might, it’s a good idea to do the decentralisation but it could” in lines 6-7) which not only demonstrates his knowledge regarding the notion of decentralisation in general, but also provides him with the opportunity to explain why decentralisation is not working in the case of the agencies. Michael, in this way, avoids making only generalising comments while his account is accredited with greater validity (Hewitt & Stokes 1975).

A rhetorical device that pervades this line of argumentation is the deployment of an empiricist account with the use of references and citations, such as the White Paper on governance by Prodi (extract 19), the model of the American agencies, and the terminology such as outsourcing or delegating of tasks (extract 20). This kind of account is based on data, which are considered as complete, minimising the involvement of the speakers or actors. Accordingly, the interviewees in the three extracts adopt the positions of informed but detached speakers whose personal stake is minimised in what they describe, so establishing their argumentation as objective. In this way, they also manage to disavow any responsibility for the agencies’ negative representations. In using the empiricist accounting, the speakers stress the importance of the facts that force themselves on human actors (Gilbert & Mulkay 1984; Mulkay 1985). For instance, the phrase “it speaks about” (extract 19, line 2) is a grammatical, impersonal form with reference just to the report itself that minimises Manolis’ personal involvement. In this respect, the specific description of the agencies is uttered as a general phenomenon (Potter 1996).

The problematic situation in which only executive powers are delegated to the agencies is attributed to a structural incapacity, or rather the impossibility, of Brussels and, in particular, the Commission to delegate powers to the agencies (extract 19 and 20). The notion of “delegation of powers” is borrowed from the overall debate on agencies, in which it plays a central role and generates the dilemmas regarding the definition and distribution of power in the European context. Michael, in extract 21, does not use the term delegation but instead decentralisation to refer to the agencies’ powers. The success of decentralisation is based on a series of conditions presented in “if clauses” and articulated in such a way that they are undermined as problematic and deviant from the decentralisation process (Widdicombe & Wooffitt 1995). The problematic conditions for his agency are a) its surrounding local culture, b) the fact that it is run by Brussels, which results in c) making the agency and its values strongly dependent on it. Therefore, the construction of decentralisation, despite the fact that is considered to be positive as a general process, is represented as a failure since it leads to the reproduction of the attitudes and values that exist in the institutions of Brussels. This

situation is described as a given and unchanging reality (extract 19 and 21) while Brussels is not attributed with blame for the agencies' situation (extract 21).

The agencies' lack of decision-making power is represented in terms of an hierarchical relation between the agencies and Brussels in which the former are under the full command of their centre. Brussels is therefore represented as an external source exercising power over the agencies (extract 21). More specifically, in extract 21 Michael deploys a metaphor representing the Commission as the Pope and the European idea as Christianity (in lines 1-3). Metaphors make the descriptions more performative and interesting (Potter 1996). This metaphor has a rather ironic tone that undermines how well Christianity is represented by the Pope and, in effect, the European idea by the Commission. In this context, agencies are described as being similar to the Commission ("Agencies the same" in line 4 and "small replicates of Brussels" in lines 4-5), and are attributed with negative characteristics. Furthermore, in order to add validity to his argument, Michael makes a particular reference to his agency by referring to it as a "serious replicate of Brussels" (line 5), thereby emphasising his negative description of the agencies.

The agencies' executive powers and dependence on Brussels (not independent as "as they were supposed to be" in line 9, extract 20) generate a series of problems such as bureaucracy, lack of flexibility and employees' lack of motivation. In extract 19, as a corollary of the executive functions of the agencies, Manolis describes the low level of motivation of the individuals working in the agencies. In addition, he mentions the creation of a different spirit within the agencies compared to what is happening in Brussels (extract 19). By using the second person ("you decide" in line 8 and "you as a fonctionnaire...you are taking a decision" in line 8) and a vivid descriptive narrative ("behind this desk" in lines 8-9), as well as the deployment of the insider's point of view (line 10-11), Manolis attempts to construct as a general truth the fact that people working in Brussels take decisions. In contrast, the agencies' executive functions are described as an obstacle to individuals' decision-making rights and abilities. Similarly, in extract 20 Sotiris describes a shared feeling of frustration, caused by bureaucracy and paperwork, which is one reason why the EU agencies do not function properly. In order to achieve objectivity, he deploys the rhetorical device of active voicing by reproducing what individuals working in the agency talk about ("why shall we bother learning and being interested in something that is so much bureaucratic" in lines 12-13). In extract 21, Michael deploys in line 10 the rhetorical device of footing ("what other people say" and "rumors" in line 11) (Goffman 1979) in which he takes the position of an external observer in order to present "Brussels" as operating under more democratic rules than the agencies which apply to "everybody" (line 12) whereas everybody is "freer" (line 11). In contrast to Brussels, Michael's agency is represented through a very lively simile, as a "faraway colony" (line 13). Yet this does not

undermine the relationship of dependency between the two parts since Brussels is characterised as the “mainland” (line 14). More particularly, a “faraway colony” is a colony in which there are legal defects (line 13) due to the manipulation of the rules and the implementation of practices that satisfy the “governor’s” personal interests. The word “caprices” (line 15) expresses vividly the interviewees’ disapproval.

Despite the negative representation of the agencies that is being presented in this line of argumentation, the ideological resources of the current constructions are the same as in the rest of the previous extracts. Agencies, according to a normative model based on the American experience, are independent from political interests and have their regulatory power. In the present line of argumentation, the normative vision of independent agencies is also presented as important but agencies are evaluated negatively because they do not live up to this vision. This line of argumentation is rooted ideologically in the critique developed by theorists who advocate a normative model of independent agencies. In particular, it has been often claimed that in some cases the Commission influences the agencies to such a degree that although agencies execute highly technical tasks, they are considered as being “Brussels” (Shapiro 1997). The Commission is seen as the “*mère*” institution, whereas the agencies are seen as the “*fil*” institutions (Mény 2002¹²⁸). This metaphor vividly represents the relation of control and dependency between the Commission and the agencies. In sum, agencies are seen as a “tolerated anomaly” of an executive system that influences the perception of both the agencies and the Commission regarding the nature of their relationship¹²⁹. When this is expressed in the form of a hierarchical relationship rather than one of partnership, relations become confrontational.

Discussion of the repertoire

The dilemma negotiated in this repertoire is the same as in the first repertoire concerning whether agencies are independent from Brussels or dependent on the latter. The dilemma was resolved in the first repertoire by opting for constructing the agencies as dependent on Brussels and assigned with a mission of helping the EU integration process. This normative role was sustained by undermining the antithetical argument according to which agencies are independent and autonomous bodies. We see exactly the inverse occurs in the present repertoire. The interviewees advance the construction of the agencies as independent bodies from politics and interests of “Brussels”, specialised on their task, undermining, thus, the construction of agencies that was advanced in the first repertoire.

¹²⁸ Characterisation that Yves Mény employed in his welcome speech of the “Meeting of the Heads of EU Agencies” in Florence, 28th-29th October 2002.

¹²⁹ http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/history_en.htm

This repertoire appears to be based on the normative discourse on agencies advanced by several academic researchers (Majone 1997, 2002b; Everson 1995; Vos 2000b; Yataganas 2001). Agencies are constructed as having distinct tasks from the rest of the EU institutions or as operating at arm's length because the bigger EU institutions lack the skills and abilities to undertake the agencies' specialised tasks¹³⁰ (Kelemen 2002; Majone 2002a; Talbot et al. 2000). Moreover, in both the everyday discourses in the agencies, as well as in the normative scientific discourse, agencies are constructed as independent from political interests and pressures¹³¹ (Yataganas 2001; Kreher 1997; Radaelli 1999). This notion of independence from the bigger EU institutions makes the agencies better organisations in administrative and organisational terms since they are attributed with efficiency, expertise, quality, financial, personnel and organisational flexibility (Majone 1997, 2002b; Talbot et al. 2000; Dehousse 1997).

To this end, the agencies' role is seen in positive terms given that their independence, and the effects this generates, are considered as assets. Nevertheless, this repertoire also contains a negative representation of the agencies as just executive bodies, lacking decision-making power and being dependent on Brussels. These issues are actually raised by the normative discourse as a critique against the vision of the agencies promoted by the EU official discourse and mainly against the Commission's legal service. This last line of argumentation therefore represents the agencies in negative terms due to the non-implementation of the normative model for independent European agencies.

In sum, it can be said that this repertoire employs a technocrat discourse in which specialised knowledge is the critical resource in regulatory policy-making (Radaelli 1999). The aim of the agencies constructed in these terms is efficiency. The emphasis on efficiency is consistent with the essential thrust of this technocratic discourse (Meynaud 1969). The technocrat believes that rational analysis and scientific examination of facts will bring about unanimous consensus on policy solutions. At the same time, however, the technocrat feels uneasy under conditions of political conflict, ideological debates, and controversies on distributive issues of social justice. Therefore, regulatory powers or the autonomy to take decisions, as described by the interviewees, is considered ideal for the needs of technocracy. Similarly, we also observe that the interviewees speak as committed-to-the-agency technocrats, a position that is more obvious in the first two lines of argumentation. In the last line of argumentation, the interviewees adopt a detached position thereby avoiding any commitment to the agencies as dependent on Brussels.

¹³⁰ Everson, M., Majone, G., Metcalfe, L. & Schout, A. (2001), 'The Role of Specialised Agencies in Decentralising EU Governance', Report Presented to the Commission, (http://ec.europa.eu/governance/areas/group6/contribution_en.pdf).

¹³¹ Ibid

The rhetorical organisation of this repertoire is very similar to the first one, which consists of vivid descriptions and the deployment of a normative jargon (see table 2). The consequence of such a rhetorical formation is the construction of the agencies as independent bodies as a normative reality that cannot be doubted. The same, nevertheless, occurs in the first repertoire, a fact that illustrates how two complete antithetical versions of reality (agencies as community bodies and agencies as independent) are constructed as real based on the use of similar rhetoric.

Table 2. Agencies as “Independent Agencies”.

<i>Dilemma</i>	<i>Whether agencies are independent from or dependent on Brussels</i>		
<p><i>Lines of Argumentation</i></p> <p>Content</p>	<p>B1. Agencies as specialised and efficient organisations compared to the EU</p> <p>Agencies are defined as think tanks, centres of excellence focused on a specialised task.</p> <p>Agencies' focus on specialised tasks differentiates them from the rest of the EU institutions whose focus is on administrative tasks of public nature or political tasks.</p> <p>Specialisation was the reason for the agencies' creation and this makes agencies' roles distinct and independent from the other EU institutions.</p> <p>Independence is constructed as significant, in terms of independence from political interests and pressures.</p> <p>Independence through specialisation makes agencies superior from the EU institutions, since agencies are efficient whereas the rest EU institutions are bureaucratic.</p> <p>Agencies as independent bodies from the EU institutions and politics are evaluated positively.</p>	<p>B2. Agencies as independent from “Brussels”</p> <p>Agencies are defined as specialised bodies, oriented to a market, profit making, similar to a company, without any role in the EU integration.</p> <p>Agencies are differentiated and independent from the EU institutions as they are identified with the specialised sector in which they operate like any other agency (e.g. national).</p> <p>Independence is constructed in terms of self-financing, technocracy, distance and autonomy from Brussels' affairs and politics.</p> <p>Agencies are not defined as part of the EU institutional setting and thus as not European, since they are oriented towards business, serving clients from all over the world.</p> <p>Agencies as independent bodies from the EU institutions and politics are evaluated positively.</p>	<p>B3. Agencies as executive and bureaucratic organisations without power</p> <p>Agencies are defined as executive bodies, dependent on Brussels without decision-making powers.</p> <p>Agencies are represented as not fulfilling their normative role as independent agencies with delegated powers from the Commission following the example of other agencies - such as the American or national -, due to a structural incapacity of the Commission to delegate some of its powers.</p> <p>The lack of independence is constructed as significant since the absence of it causes problems in the agencies such as bureaucracy lack of motivation and extensive control from Brussels.</p> <p>Agencies as dependent bodies on the EU institutions are evaluated negatively</p>
<p>Subject Positions</p>	<p>Interviewees as committed to the agency. The use of “we” indicates that individuals construct themselves as technocrats, members of independent and specialised agency in contrast to “others” thus the European technocrats.</p> <p>Interviewees as committed to the agency</p> <p>Interviewees as informed but detached speakers from the agencies as they disavow the responsibility for the agencies' lack of independence.</p>		

institutions.

Rhetorical Devices

Objectivity:

Provision of details, contrasts, examples, analogies, lists in order to construct the agency's role rhetorically effective as a general phenomenon and make the description robust, difficult to dispute, explanatory and emphatic regarding the agencies' role as independent, autonomous and effective organisations.

Use of normative jargon structured on the use of consensus and corroboration as well as the rhetoric of argument. This rhetorical combination enforces the normative role that agencies as independent bodies from politics and EU affairs and makes the descriptions factual, normal and commonplace.

Objectivity:

Use of vivid description that presents the speakers as gifted with special skills of observation, capable of representing reality with precision and veracity.

The use of metonymy "Brussels" for referring to the EU institutions. This device aims to reducing the meaning of the EU institutions by using the city where the majority of them is located thereby undermining the tasks and importance of them.

Use of personal experiences from the actual work in order to provide warrant for the veracity and increase the validity of the argument that agencies' distance from Brussels.

Use of second person that presents views regarding the agency's clients as common sense.

Objectivity:

Extreme case formulations and disclaimers that emphasise the maximisation of the agencies' dependence on Brussels as a problem.

Use of vivid description (including active voicing, similes, metaphors, irony) that presents the speakers as gifted with special skills of observation, capable of representing reality with precision and veracity. The combination of those rhetorical devices undermines Brussels' role as dominating agencies and eventually agencies as dependent on the latter.

Use of normative jargon structured on the use of empiricist account as well as other rhetorical techniques, such as lists and systematic vagueness, specialised jargon, grammatical impersonality and footing that aim at presenting an account based on facts that cannot be disputed. In this sense the agencies' lack of powers is constructed in deterministic terms a problematic situation.

Use of second person that presents views regarding the agency's problematic status as common sense.

Use of personal experiences from the actual work in order to provide warrant for the veracity and increase the validity of the argument that agencies' lack of powers.

C. Agencies as “Political Agents”

The last repertoire contains two lines of argumentation in which agencies are represented in negative terms and are described as not being able to fulfil their goals. This is through no fault of the agencies themselves however. Instead, they are portrayed as the victim of inter-institutional politics and inter-governmental interests operating within an ineffective system that lacks strategic planning. The dominant concept that explains interviewees’ discontent is the lack of agencies’ power to act on their preferences. This inability is the result of power wielded by different and diverging interest groups. This is an argument that has been advanced by a pragmatic discourse on agencies.

C1. Agencies as victims of the conflicting interests of their multiple principals

In the first line of argumentation, agencies are presented in negative terms mainly because they are not able to accomplish their assigned tasks. The responsibility for this is attributed to EU inter-institutional tensions and inter-governmental politics and interests, which put into question the reasons for the agencies’ creation and the success of their overall mission.

Extract 22

Frank¹³²(L)

¹³² Original text transcribed in Italian:

1 il fatto è che (.) se facciamo se permettiamo un po’ di storia nel senso che tutto
2 questo conflitto di interesse di vari attori (.) proviene dal fatto che e:h quando si è creato
3 il fenomeno delle agenzie è stato creato il modo un consiglio europeo che faceva questo
4 show off (.) senza poi vedere pensare cosa sta dietro di conseguenza. E non parlo di
5 questa agenzia (.) parlo di tutte le agenzie. Il che è successo che e:h la commissione
6 come entità umana (.) ha visto un nemico nel fatto di fare agenzie. Perché sia detto
7 stiamo prendendo un alto (.) ci stiamo prendendo pezzettini tirandosi fuori da Brussels o
8 da Lussemburgo spezzatine di nostra competenza per fare agenzie più veloci autonome
9 rapide etc. Questo no va (.) dunque ci hanno sovra-carricato di burocrazia. Capisci? E in
10 genere e:h ci sono organismi di controllo come li chiamo io che secondo l’entità
11 dell’agenzia (.) dunque secondo l’entità di lavoro di soggetto del lavoro dell’agenzia è
12 più che meno forte. Vedi per esempio prendiamo il caso l’agenzia e:h di Alicante. Fa un
13 po’ quello che gli pare. C’ha un potere (.) risorse economiche. Troppe (.) una parte
14 troppe. [...] Non è la stessa cosa per cedefop (.) il contrario (.) non è la stessa cosa per
15 Torino e non è la stessa cosa per noi e anche non sarà ancora almeno per le altre.
16 Dunque questo conflitto d’interesse (.) il fatto che ci sono tanti attori è dovuto anche a
17 direi riluttanza a dare un po’ di lesto alle cose. [...]. Dunque è soprattutto (.) c’è anche
18 secondo me ma questo è totalmente personale (.) e:h una certa e:h ambivalenza
19 ambiguità contro al potere come come lo vuoi con UNDCP nel senso che fino a quel
20 momento UNDCP era la parola franca. Sono loro che sono gli specialisti. Creando
21 questa agenzia sulle droghe prima in commissione come entità e poi creando un’agenzia
22 (.) il potere si è squilibrato un po’. [...] Dunque questo fa un: e che ci sono molte
23 sensibilità (.) molte. A parte di stati membri che di una parte lavorano col UNDCP di
24 una parte con noi e stanno un po’ in mezzo.[...]. Adesso secondo me paghiamo come
25 agenzia in genere il fatto di una piccola guerra (.) tra Commissione Parlamento
26 Consiglio perché (.) se tu vedi un po’ la storia dell’unione da tre quattro anni c’è sempre
27 questo potere più del Parlamento. E il parlamento ha acquisito più potere autonomia è
28 diventato di fatto il vero organo legislativo. La commissione mette in atto (.) propone in

1 The fact is that (.) if you permit [me] we will make a little bit the story in the sense that
 2 all this conflict of interest of the various actors (.) derives from the fact that e:h when
 3 there was created the phenomenon of the agencies there was created a way that the
 4 European Council was doing this show off (.) without then seeing thinking what stands
 5 behind as a consequence. And I don't speak of this agency (.) I speak of all the agencies.
 6 What has happened is that e:h the Commission as a human entity (.) has seen an enemy
 7 in the fact of creating agencies. Because it was said that we are getting at the top (.) we
 8 are taking small pieces pulling them outside Brussels or Luxembourg parts of our
 9 competence for making agencies more quick autonomous rapid etc. So this is not ok (.)
 10 so they have [...] they have loaded with bureaucracy. You get it? And in general
 11 e:h there are organs of control as I call them which according to the entity of [an] agency
 12 (.) so according to the entity of work of the subject of work of the agency is more than
 13 strong. Take for example we are taking the case of the agency eeh of Alicante. They are
 14 doing a bit whatever they want. It has power (.) financial resources. Too many (.) from
 15 one part too many. [...] It is not the same thing for Cedefop (.) the contrary (.) it is not
 16 the same thing for Torino and it is not the same thing for us and it won't be still at least
 17 for the others. So this conflict of interest (.) the fact that there are many actors is due also
 18 to I would say reluctance to give a bit speed to the things [...]. So and principally there
 19 is also according to me but this is totally personal eeh a certain ambivalence ambiguity
 20 regarding the power as as you want with UNDCP¹³³ in the sense that until this moment
 21 UNDCP was the parola franca. It is they the specialists. Creating this agency on drugs (.)
 22 before in the Commission as an entity (.) and then creating an agency (.) the power has
 23 been unbalanced a bit. [...]. So this makes a: and there are many sensibilities (.) many.
 24 On the part of the member states that on the one hand they work with UNDCP and on
 25 the other with us and they stand in the middle. [...]. Now according to me we pay as an
 26 agency in general the fact of a small war (.) between the Commission the Parliament and
 27 the Council because (.) if you see a little bit the story of the union since three four years
 28 there is always more power of the Parliament. And the Parliament has acquired more
 29 power autonomy it has become indeed the true legislative organ. The Commission puts
 30 [proposals] for action (.) proposes for action (.) who decides is the Parliament. The
 31 Council has had a more limited role it has lost a lot. And so there is this war between
 32 always the three entities this way or another.

Extract 23

Aggelos (A)

1 I am sceptical about the whole idea of agencies because I think that the idea to
 2 explain the decentralisation by the promotion of European integration was actually
 3 an excuse to to give some bits of the cake to to to the peripheral countries. An
 4 excuse (.) I have the impression because also some agencies went to Luxembourg as
 5 well (.) so it's not peripheral (.) only to to smaller countries which don't have an
 6 agency or an institution yet. So that's I think (.) it's it's even in the European level (.)
 7 it has been at least partially an excuse.

Extract 24

29 atto (.) chi decide è il parlamento. Il consiglio ha avuto un ruolo minore ha perso molto.

30 E dunque c'è questa guerra tra sempre le tre entità in un modo in un altro.

¹³³ UNDCP: United Nations Agency responsible for Drug Control Activities. "the United Nations International Drug Control Programme" whose aim is to strengthen international action against the production and trafficking of drugs.

Vassilis¹³⁴(T)

1 Why do you think [...] agencies are outside Brussels? For being closer to people?
2 No. No. Absolutely no. This is a reason that is given. The real reason is not this. The real
3 reason is politics. So you have an agency in various member states. This is just politics.
4 And the maximum advantage of a government (.) is to have a European institution in his
5 country in the geographical territory in order to have a weight (.) afterwards at the level
6 of community responsibility in the European Council. This is pure politics. No no you
7 should not make this mistake (.) this is the underground reason. [...] And as as you
8 know that (.) Cedefop was in Berlin however there has been a big battle (.) they [people
9 working in Cedefop] didn't want to leave as they have said to them that they had to go to
10 Thessaloniki (.) and I think that 75% of the personnel was discharged. They have said
11 no. [...] Therefore what is the sensation eh? You have to think the Greek government of
12 Papandreou who says we have won. We have a new agency. Eh? While me (.) from my
13 side that I see things (.) I cannot say that they have lost. I can say that they have not won
14 absolutely anything. They have given them a present (.) they have told you why
15 Germany couldn't understand because already by that moment it was making an effort
16 for the central bank. [...] It is all all politics behind but also underground. Here the
17 reason is according to me (.) there is a big stifling control on part of the management
18 board. The member states.

In this line of argumentation agencies are represented in negative terms because their mission, functions and roles are disputed. Agencies are constructed as being in the middle of conflicting intergovernmental and inter-institutional politics and interests.

In extract 22, the conflict of interests is represented by Frank as something that is well-known ("this conflict of interests" in line 2). Subsequently, through a historic narrative, this conflict is linked to the creation of the phenomenon of the agencies and, more particularly, to the way in which the Council was "show[ing] off" (line 4) in creating the agencies without fully considering the consequences. The Council's careless attitude led the Commission to see the agencies as an enemy. The personification of the Council and the Commission facilitates and animates his narration.

¹³⁴ Original text transcribed in Italian:

1 Perché tu pensi che ci sono agenzie fuori Brussels? Per avvicinare alla gente? No. No.
2 Assolutamente no. Questa è una ragione che si da. La vera ragione non è così. La vera
3 ragione è politica. Dunque hai una agenzia nei vari stati membri. Questa è solo politica.
4 E il vantaggio massimo di un governo (.) è di avere una istituzione europea nel suo paese
5 nella base geografica per avere un peso (.) dopo al livello di responsabilità comunitaria
6 al consiglio europeo. Questa è pura politica. Non no non ti devi sbagliare (.) questa è la
7 ragione sotterranea. [...] E come come tu sai che (.) Cedefop era a Berlino comunque c'è
8 stata tutta una battaglia (.) non volevano partire come gli hanno detto che dovevano
9 andare a Thessaloniki (.) e penso 75% del personale sia dimesso. Hanno detto no. [...]
10 Dunque la sensazione quale e? Tu pensi il governo greco il governo di Papandreou che
11 dice abbiamo vinto. Abbiamo una nuova agenzia. Eh? Mentre che io (.) dal mio lato che
12 vedo le cose (.) non posso dire che hanno perso. Posso dire che non hanno vinto
13 assolutamente niente. Gli hanno dato un regalo (.) te l'hanno detto perché la Germania
14 regge a capire già questo momento faceva lo sforzo per la banca centrale. [...] è tutta
15 tutta politica dietro però sotto. Qui la ragione è che secondo me (.) c'è un un una grande
16 asficiente controllo da parte del management board. I member states.

The relationship between the agencies and the Commission is represented as antagonistic since agencies were seen as taking away parts of its competence. Frank uses active voicing and vivid descriptions in his argument (“we are getting at the top we are taking small pieces ...” in lines 7-8), devices which attribute objectivity since they create the impression of a perceptual re-experience of what the interviewee describes while the interviewee appears to be endowed with particular skills of understanding and observing (Potter 1996; Edwards & Potter 1992). Throughout this antagonistic relationship agencies are presented as better organisations through the use of a three-part-list (“quick, autonomous, rapid” in lines 8-9). However, agencies are also presented as less powerful than the Commission because it has managed to impose on them bureaucracy and other strong control mechanisms (“loaded” in line 10 and “organs of control” in line 11). In this regard, the Commission is represented not only as jealous of the agencies but also as vindictive and powerful enough to intervene and reduce their power. In order to confirm his argument, Frank provides the example of various agencies (Cedefop, Torino and the one in which he is working). He also includes the agency of Alicante as an exception that confirms the rule, since the latter managed to escape the Commission’s control thanks to its ability to generate its own resources.

In line 17 Frank adds another dimension in the respective conflict of interests by inserting another actor. This is the UNDCP, the international organisation which until the creation of the EU agency held the monopoly of expertise on drugs (“parola franca” in line 21). The creation of the EU agency is described as having challenged its competence and expertise on drugs, a fact that eventually led to a reconfiguration of the balance of powers. This change of powers, that is vividly expressed as the emergence of a power imbalance (line 23), affected not only the international organisation itself but also the member states, which are presented as working with both the international and EU agency. So the position of the member states is constructed as being difficult by being in the middle of another tension, this time between the agencies and the UNDCP (line 24).

In the last part of the extract, Frank summarises the conflict within the EU institutional setting by adding distinct roles and interests for the core EU institutions (the Parliament, the Commission and the Council). This conflict is constructed as a “war” (line 26), a strong word that emphasises intensity and significance. Consequently, despite their knowledge and expertise, agencies are constructed as victims of these inter-institutional tensions (“we pay” in line 25). The use of the first plural makes his argument more valid since Frank identifies himself with his agency showing that the consequences of this conflict apply also to him.

Aggelos in extract 23 also expresses his scepticism regarding agencies in general. He focuses on the interpretation of decentralisation as the “promotion of European integration” (line 2). This

interpretation has been put forward in the first repertoire in this chapter. Nevertheless, in the present case the interviewee undermines its significance as he describes it as “an excuse” (line 4) for the satisfaction of intergovernmental interests. The importance of this argument is further supported by its relevance at both national and European level. The reasons for agencies’ decentralisation are uttered through a metaphor which makes his opinion more performative and interesting (Potter 1996). The metaphor represents agencies as “some bits of the cake” whereas the cake is the EU and its institutions. So agencies are represented as significant actors in the EU project.

Aggelos manages to provide evidence for his claim by demonstrating an inconsistency. This occurs in the case of “Luxembourg” (line 4) which, according to him, is not a “peripheral” (line 5) country although it has an agency.

The meaning of decentralisation as a basic reason for the agencies’ creation and their aim to be close to the citizens is also significant in extract 24. The limited validity of this argument is enhanced by the deployment of a series of rhetorical questions as well as their ironic tone.

Vassilis interprets the agencies’ location in different member states on the basis of “politics” (line 3 and “pure politics” in line 6). Politics are represented as significant and are constructed as “the real” (line 2) but not obvious (“behind” in line 16) and/or hidden (“underground” in line 7) reasons for the agencies’ creation. In this way Vassilis exposes an “underground” reality (line 7). The notion of politics has a negative connotation in the ways in which it is presented and related to some kind of conspiracy, as the adjectives above indicate. These adjectives suggest a conspiracy theory – that is something, which is antithetical to commonsense but is, nevertheless widely known (Billig 1991).

Like Aggelos in extract 23, Vassilis considers the presence of an agency in a member state to yield an advantage to the respective government by providing the latter with political influence or extra power at the community level and, particularly, within the European Council. This advantage is described through an extreme case formulation (“the maximum advantage” in line 4) which strengthens its validity (Potter 1996). In an attempt to warrant the truthfulness of his argument that politics is the real reason for the agencies’ creation and function, Vassilis provides the example of Cedefop by specifically referring to the fact that this agency has moved from Berlin to Thessaloniki (lines 7–9). He deploys a series of devices such as detail (for example “75% of the personnel was discharged” in line 10), vivid description (e.g. “there has been a big battle” in line 8) as well as narrative. These devices, apart from offering rich contextual information, increase the plausibility of the argument by embedding it in a particular narrative sequence (Edwards & Potter 1992). Vassilis deploys similar rhetorical devices to Frank, such as the attribution of human qualities to national

governments (German and Greek) in order to show vividly their intentions and justify how politics work.

The interviewees adopt the positions of well-informed and distanced speakers without manifesting their personal stakes, which would bias their negative accounts. Moreover, this detached position helps the interviewees differentiate themselves from those involved in the process. Their position as informed speakers allows them to show the falsity of common sense by presenting a hidden yet logical alternative version, namely the “real” reasons for the fact that agencies are in between politics and interests. Nevertheless, they show an affiliation and sympathy for the agencies’ situation in general, which nevertheless does not prevent them from understanding what really is happening.

The present argumentation deployed by the interviewees has its ideological resources in the pragmatic discourse on agencies according to which the creation and functions of the EU agencies are the outcome of politics (Kelemen 2002). In particular, the arguments raised by the interviewees regarding the decisions taken for the location of the agencies are described by the pragmatic analyses as an outcome of long intergovernmental debates in which the various member states have ulterior motives for having a branch of the European public service in their territory¹³⁵ (Geradin & Petit 2004). Moreover, the conflict between the Council, representing inter-governmental interests, and the Commission, representing the Community interest (Coombes 1970), refers to a common tension within the literature of EU studies and emphasises the dilemma of the distribution of power in the EU. Similar points are raised by President Prodi’s speech to the European Parliament just before the informal European Council meeting in Biarritz (13-14 October 2000). Prodi saw agencies as “conflicting centres of power” due to the intergovernmental interests which confer executive powers on the agencies. Moreover, he suggested that agencies should operate “under the authority of the Commission, and which is answerable to [the European Parliament] for their actions”. Consequently, he characterised the creation of agencies as a threat to the EU system, particularly due to their fragmented nature (Lafond 2001: 50).

C2. Agencies as operating in a system that does not work

In the extracts below agencies and their objectives, mainly those regarding the need to be closer to the cities and member states where they are situated, are negotiated in negative terms. This is attributed to a general lack of planning or a deficient system designed and implemented by those who take important decisions about the agencies’ creation and function.

¹³⁵ Union Syndicale Fédéral (USF), *Organismes Décentralisés et Gouvernance*, Document de travail, Brussels, May 2003.

Extract 25

Irene¹³⁶ (T)

1 The agencies have this rationale (.) to be closer to the countries. Look (.)
2 there is (1) it is a big discussion (.) because their presence. I don't think that in
3 our case at least (.) I don't think that it is sufficiently (1) visible (.) to the extent
4 that maybe we don't try enough to come closer with (people) here (.) because there is
5 a logical discrepancy. If you want (.) in other words on the one side we say that
6 they decentralize the organisations in order to be closer to the citizen (.) to be more
7 visible in the member states. Nonetheless on the other there is no planning regarding
8 how you will have specific relations with the member state. If you don't do this (.) then
9 whether you are in Brussels (.) or whether you are in Thessaloniki (.) whether you are in
10 Turin (.) has very small impact on your immediate environment. This is to say we have
11 not done any conferences in common for Thessaloniki (.) for Greece things like this (.)
12 in order to help especially Greece and I think that in our case we should have done this
13 (.) because we are also an organisation that is focused on vocational training (.) a topical
14 issue for Greece. As is widely accepted (.)Greece is a bit behind regarding these issues.

Extract 26

Spiros (L)

1 The official is that the agencies have been created with two main objectives. One is that
2 decentralisation in the sense of (.) or specialisation to create a specialised body to more
3 or less to deal with specialised problems and the other one is to bring the administration
4 closer to the citizens (.) to decentralize. That was not the main of the legislature (.) it was
5 to have a European administration whatever in each country. So you can see the flag of
6 the Union. Closer to the citizens in that sense to avoid the idea of centrality of Brussels.
7 The community is not Brussels (.) the community are fifteen member states (.) we are all
8 together the Community (.) that was the idea. At the end of the day e:h I don't know if it
9 is a success or not e:h I think that the second generation of the agencies had a lot of
10 problems of efficiency (.) of functionality and so on. That the need to avoid a centrality
11 made in Brussels exist and I think the Community will process [proceed] this way and
12 with the decentralisation (.) it is a still a challenge for the Commission.

¹³⁶ Original text transcribed in Greek:

1 Τα agencies έχουν αυτό το σκεπτικό (.) να είναι πιο κοντά στις χώρες. Κοίτα να δεις (.)
2 εκεί υπάρχει (1) είναι μεγάλη συζήτηση (.) γιατί η παρουσία τους δεν νομίζω ότι στην
3 περίπτωση μας τουλάχιστον (.) δεν νομίζω ότι γίνεται αρκετά (1) ορατή (.) στο βαθμό
4 που δεν κάνουμε ίσως αρκετές προσπάθειες να πλησιάσουμε τους εδώ (.) γιατί υπάρχει
5 μια λογική ανακολουθία. Αν θέλεις (.) δηλαδή από την μια μεριά λέμε ότι
6 αποκεντρώνουν τους οργανισμούς για να είναι πιο κοντά στον πολίτη (.) για να είναι πιο
7 ορατή στα κράτη-μέλη. Απ' την άλλη όμως δεν υπάρχει καμία πρόβλεψη για το πώς θα
8 έχεις ιδιαίτερες σχέσεις με το κράτος-μέλος. Εάν δεν το κάνεις αυτό (.) τότε είτε είσαι
9 στις Βρυξέλλες (.) είτε είσαι στην Θεσσαλονίκη (.) είτε είσαι στο Τορίνο (.) έχει πολύ
10 λίγη επίπτωση στο άμεσο περιβάλλον σου. Δηλαδή δεν έχουμε κάνει κοινά συνέδρια για
11 την Θεσσαλονίκη (.) για την Ελλάδα τέτοια πράγματα (.) για να βοηθήσουμε ιδιαίτερα
12 την Ελλάδα και νομίζω ότι στην περίπτωση μας θα έπρεπε να το κάνουμε (.) γιατί
13 είμαστε και οργανισμός που ασχολείται και με την επαγγελματική κατάρτιση (.) θέμα
14 μείζον για την Ελλάδα. Δηλαδή κατά κοινή ομολογία (.) η Ελλάδα είναι λίγο πίσω σ' αυτά
15 τα θέματα.

Extract 27

Andreas (A)

- 1 there's still this problem that nobody knows exactly what an agency is. You go to (.)
- 2 down down down to see (.) the bottom line and you don't see the bottom line. Because
- 3 they are spread around (.) and you know it has been a hastily (.) and in big meeting like
- 4 for a year last last agreement signature at the end everybody is tired and then they create
- 5 fifteen agencies you know (.) which were necessary some of them but very different
- 6 areas very different (.) no clear regulations and so on.

The interviewees above build their account by deploying a common “official” (line 1 in extract 26) argument articulated in the first repertoire of this chapter regarding the agencies’ function and goals. These goals are explained by the concept of decentralisation (functional or physical) which is constructed as significant. Agencies are said to have been founded in order to “be closer to the countries” (extract 25, line 1) and to the citizens (“to bring the administration closer to the citizens” in lines 3-4 in extract 26) and to be also specialised organisations focused on their tasks (extract 26). Yet the accomplishment of the agencies’ goals is undermined by the talk of the interviewees. The interviewees speak of all the agencies without a special reference to any single agency in particular. They thus present their accounts as a general truth.

In extract 25 Irene discounts the effectiveness of the normative mission of the agencies. She brings in the example of the agency where she works (“in our case at least” in lines 2-3) and her personal experience in order to add validity to her argument that agencies do not succeed in being close to people. Additionally, she deploys the ‘rhetoric of argument’, constructing claims which are logical and syllogistic. Whether her arguments are valid or not, this form of argument provides a reassuring sense of rationality (Edwards & Potter 1992). Therefore, Irene explains the ways in which agencies cannot fulfil their objectives to be close to citizens and visible in the member states (line 6). She attributes such failure to a “lack of planning” (line 7).

This notion, and the vagueness with which it is uttered, indicates that Irene avoids attributing blame to anyone in particular but, instead, refers to a more general distribution of responsibility, namely the system of the agencies. She presents a three-part-list of cities (“Brussels”, “Thessaloniki” and “Turin” in lines 9-10) in order to warrant her argument that the choice of a city and its functional needs was not made on the basis of a coherent plan.

In extract 26, Spiros presents in detail the “official” objectives of the agencies’ creation and function but undermines their effectiveness by mentioning that these are incongruent with the law. While he does not doubt the necessity to provide a solution for the problem of Brussels’s centralisation, he undermines the effectiveness of the agencies’ system by presenting a list of

problems such as “efficiency” and “functionality” (line 10) and repeats that the issue of decentralisation persists as a challenge for the Commission (Potter 1996).

In the third extract (27), Andreas develops a differentiated argumentation, which nevertheless points to the same conclusion. This is related to a general problem of the agencies (the use of the adverb “still” in line 1 exacerbates its duration and persistence) concerning the lack of knowledge regarding “what an agency is” (line 1). This argument is uttered with vivid descriptive elements such as repetitions (“bottom line” in line 2), extreme case formulations (“nobody knows” in line 1) and the deployment of second person (“you go to” in line 1, you don’t see” in line 2). All of these devices aim at presenting the argument as a generalised and commonly-accepted truth (Potter 1996). As in the previous two extracts, Andreas equally undermines the process of the agencies’ creation and physical distribution in various locations: the phrase “spread around” (line 3) highlights a process without planning. Moreover, Andreas describes the process of decision-making regarding the agencies as having taken place in a rush without the appropriate thought (“hastily” in line 3, “at the end everybody is tired” in line 4). Such a description, therefore, discounts not only the decision-making process itself but also the importance of the agencies. The difficulties in reaching an agreement in the respective meetings, as well as the long discussions to decide the agencies’ location, are common arguments that have also been appeared in the press. Although Andreas, like the two other interviewees, identifies the necessity for the creation of some agencies, he nevertheless criticises their creation as fragmented and without clear regulations. Andreas’ negative view on the agencies is based on his belief that they were instituted without a proper design.

The argument that the failure of the agencies is due to a lack of a system are also found among theorists who pursue a more pragmatic analysis of the agencies. In particular, it has been pointed out that the creation of agencies has not followed a coherent administrative method. This created functional, procedural, institutional and technical problems that unfolded the lack of a common vision for the agencies’ role in the EU architecture¹³⁷ (Geradin & Petit 2004). Consequently, agencies are perceived as lacking the coherence and principles of good governance¹³⁸. In addition, similar arguments have been brought to the fore by agencies’ trade unions¹³⁹.

The negativity and doubts about the agencies are also reflected in the subject positions adopted by the interviewees above. In particular, the interviewees adopt the position of well-informed subjects who identify with the agencies’ official goals and tasks, while they nevertheless keep a distance

¹³⁷ White Paper on Governance, Report by the Working Group 3a “Establishing a Framework for Decision-Making Regulatory Agencies”, Rapporteur A. Quero, June 2001, SG/8597/01-EN.

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Union Syndicale Fédéral (USF), *Report on the Kinnock reform and its impact on the Statute*, Luxembourg, March 2001.

from the problems they describe, thereby disavowing themselves of any responsibility for the agencies' ineffectiveness.

Discussion of the repertoire

The third repertoire, apart from representing the role, function and, in some cases, the agencies themselves in negative terms, offers an alternative negotiation of the dilemma whether agencies are independent or dependent on the EU. More specifically, the focus is structured upon the notion of politics and interests. Agencies in this repertoire are constructed as not operating properly, independently of the normative role attributed to them (whether agencies are represented as independent from the EU institutions or as "Community bodies"). The dilemma in other words, is negotiated by an argument that moves beyond the appropriate role and function of the agencies because this is attributed to factors and actors outside the agencies. Agencies, in other words, are presented as helpless and weak for addressing their problems. Inevitably, such ideas are drawn from theories and explanations of EU agencies which are claimed to offer a pragmatic point of view concerning not only the agencies but also the EU in general. Following the arguments discussed in the present repertoire, agencies cannot fulfil their goals because of politics, which result in the formation of an ineffective system consisting of various actors, such as the EU institutions and the member states. Consequently, agencies are described as lacking the power to escape from or alter this problematic situation. More than in any other repertoire, the notion of power and its distribution is negotiated as a principal concept. Power is, therefore, the source of the conflicting situation occurring in the agencies and explains to a large extent the struggle of every implicated actor. Rhetorically this repertoire differs from the two previous ones as it is structured on devices that provide evidence for the agencies' malfunctioning based on vivid descriptions and the use of historical narrative. In this way, the accounts are organised around the provision of truthful and objective facts that verify the problems occurring in the agencies (see table 3 below).

As was mentioned in chapter six, this argumentation is very similar to the pragmatic discourse on agencies. According to this, agencies are perceived to operate in the "grey zone" between pure administration and politics and are faced with serious difficulties for the achievement of managerial, technical and information-gathering tasks and for their contribution to policy-making (Vos 2000a). Nevertheless, the pragmatic discourse does not represent agencies only in negative terms. It also sees them as creating a new complicated order, offering a different organisational, functional and political point of view, which has its negative but also positive and innovative aspects. However, such arguments are not found in this repertoire.

Table 3. Agencies as “Political Agencies”

<i>Dilemma</i>	<i>Whether agencies are independent from or dependent on Brussels</i>	
<p>Lines of Argumentation</p> <p>Content</p>	<p>C1. Agencies as victims of the conflicting interests of their multiple principals</p> <p>Agencies are defined as victims of intergovernmental and inter-institutional politics (the Council used agencies to show off its power to other institutions, antagonism with the Commission and other international organisations) and intergovernmental interests (conflicts between the member states).</p> <p>Independence, decentralisation or specialisation has not been the reason for the agencies’ creation but politics.</p> <p>Politics is constructed as significant so as independence, yet not applicable.</p> <p>Agencies are not able to fulfil their goals since they are blocked by bureaucracy which is the consequence of being dominated by politics.</p> <p>Agencies are evaluated negatively as dependent bodies on inter-institutional politics and interests.</p>	<p>C2. Agencies as operating in a system that does not work</p> <p>Agencies are represented as being part of a system without planning, clear regulations and vision.</p> <p>Physical or functional decentralisation, integration, dissemination of the European idea as normative objectives of the agencies are not achieved due to the ineffective system in which agencies operate.</p> <p>Responsibility of the agencies is attributed to the Commission and other actors which do not have decision-making power.</p> <p>Agencies are evaluated negatively as ineffective bodies operating in an obscure system.</p>
<p>Subject Positions</p>	<p>Interviewees as detached speakers from the agencies as they disavow the responsibility for the agencies’ problematic status.</p> <p>The use of “we” indicates that individuals construct themselves as members of an agency that does not work properly due to politics and thus, they themselves are also presented as victims of this problematic situation.</p>	<p>Interviewees as informed speakers as they know about the normative role of the agencies but also as detached speakers as they disavow the responsibility for the agencies’ problematic status.</p>
<p>Rhetorical Devices</p>	<p><i>Objectivity:</i></p> <p>Use of vivid description and provision of details (including the use of active voicing, examples, lists and three-part lists, metaphors personification of the EU institutions and bodies and irony) that present the speakers as gifted with special skills of observation, capable of representing reality with precision and veracity. In addition, this rhetorical organisation constructs the agency’s role in general and normative terms and makes the description performative, difficult to dispute, explanatory and emphatic regarding the agencies’ failure and the role of politics as part of a conspiracy theory (hidden underground).</p> <p>The use of historic narrative increases the factuality and plausibility of reasons why agencies have problems in a sequence of events.</p>	<p><i>Objectivity:</i></p> <p>Use of vivid description based on extreme case formulations that present the speakers gifted with special skills of observation, capable of representing reality with precision and veracity.</p> <p>The use of second person that presents the normative role of the agencies and their failure as common sense.</p>

D. Summary

As emerged from the analysis of the interview material regarding the nature and role of the EU agencies, it is striking that agencies are described in very different terms regarding their roles, tasks, missions and powers. This shows that there are many ways of speaking about EU agencies and not just a single dominant discourse. Accordingly, three repertoires were presented. In the first, agencies are constructed as “Community agencies” that serve the ideals and principles of the EU and operate under the control and guidelines of the core EU institutions. Furthermore, they are oriented towards the achievement of European integration. Agencies are described as managing to achieve their goal and so are seen positively. The second repertoire builds the exact opposite representation of the agencies but, nevertheless, still describes them in positive terms. Agencies are constructed as independent from the EU, specialised and effective organisations. The third repertoire is the only one according to which agencies are represented in negative terms, either due to the failure of the system in which they operate or because of the dominance of intergovernmental and inter-institutional politics. In both cases, agencies are considered as being unable to achieve their goals and mission either because these are represented as spurious, or because agencies are without power, and, largely, the victims of the conflict between various actors.

In sum, it is evident that the notion of an agency is used as a discursive resource that is crucial for the subject positions adopted by the interviewees, which are, in turn, consequential for the ways the overall context of the EU is defined as well. Moreover, another significant concept whose meaning is negotiated by the interviewees in either positive or negative terms in the three repertoires is the notion of decentralisation or independence or, in other words, the relation between centre and periphery. In the first repertoire, decentralisation is constructed as a physical distribution of the EU institutions into various member states with agencies as agents of Europeanization in the host member states. Both centre and periphery, namely the core EU institutions and the agencies, are represented in positive terms since they both manage to achieve their goals. Accordingly, the interviewees in this repertoire adopt the positions of being agents of Europeanization or as European civil servant bounded by the common mission to contribute to Europe through their tasks in the agencies. In the second repertoire, decentralisation is constructed as task delegation and signifies the agencies’ independence from their centre. In other words, decentralisation is constructed in opposite terms to the first repertoire since the centre and its periphery are distant, a condition that generates autonomy for the agencies. Such a representation is equally constructed as positive for the agencies, yet not for the centre, which is attributed with negative characteristics, such as bureaucracy, inefficiency and lack of flexibility. The interviewees take the positions of

technocrats focused on their task. Only in the third repertoire, is the notion of decentralisation viewed negatively as an excuse deployed by powerful actors to serve their interests. In this sense, both the centre and its periphery are represented as having a problematic hierarchical relation, in which the more powerful centre suppresses the periphery, namely the agencies, which are incapable of acting or reacting.

To this end, the repertoires are in a constant dialogue and tend to construct and undermine similar concepts such as agencies' independence and powers. It could be argued that the present repertoires are informed ideologically by the intellectual ideologies on agencies given that they reproduce similar arguments. Additionally, the dilemma of power that pervades and structures the respective scientific discourses, as were discussed in chapter six, is also negotiated by the interviewees within their everyday discourses. This dilemma is presented in various forms. Mainly it is presented as dualities that view the agencies as public entities versus profit-oriented organisations, or European institutions versus independent/autonomous specialised bodies. In the first of these dualities, agencies have limited power whereas in the second they are attributed with power deriving from their specialised knowledge and their self-financing ability. Finally, the present analysis has demonstrated the absence of a dominant discourse concerning the role and nature of the agencies. Moreover, we see that there is a strong interconnection between the lived and intellectual ideologies. All of this underscores the significance of the dilemma of power that informs the everyday discourses in the agencies.

PART III: CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 11: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

This thesis analysed the everyday discourses in the EU agencies through the theoretical lens of discursive psychology. Studies following discursive psychology aim to explore the ways in which peoples' selves, thoughts and emotions are formed and transformed through social interaction. Therefore, these studies attempt to cast light on the role of such processes in social and cultural reproduction and change. Following this intellectual tradition, this thesis explored the ways in which employees used common sense knowledge of social and political reality as a means to construct their social world and their position in it. Although the focus was on people's everyday discourses, the analysis constantly implicated larger societal structures on which individuals drew. Accordingly, the core of the research was on the social dimension of two crucial concepts that were selected –namely 'working together' and the 'meanings of the agencies'- acquired in the everyday talk of the interviewees in the agencies.

The two central concepts were identified and selected from a literature that spans various disciplines on the study of the EU institutions and their cultural aspects, as well as the rather more limited literature on EU agencies. The selection of the first concept, that of "working together", was based on the conclusions of Zabusky's (1995) study of the European Space Agency (ESA). According to Zabusky, the notion of "working together" is a useful analytical device that captures various ideas that are important to Europe, such as the integration and diversity that characterise the practice of cooperation not only in the ESA but also in the EU. Based on the ideas of Durkheim, Zabusky argues that cooperation emerges as a meaningful form of social interaction, political action, and moral suasion. Put simply, "working together" is considered a useful concept that, in very general terms, can summarise culture in an organisation. As aforementioned, the second concept concerned the actual "meaning" of the EU agencies. Over the past decade, EU agencies have become ever more politicised and this has been reflected in the increasing academic interest with regard to their role and function. Nevertheless, this second concept was also selected because of the embryonic nature of the agencies as sites of contestation over the meaning of Europe and not just because of increasing academic attention.

The research goal throughout this thesis has been to identify consistencies in the discursive patterns regarding the two concepts, as well as to bring out the variation of individuals' talk during the interviews. This was set against a backdrop of scientific theories that were used by the interviewees as resources for informing their talk in the agencies. At the same time, however, it was shown that

the scientific discourses were structured upon and guided by certain ideologies and that the latter eventually may influence and constrain the everyday discourses in the EU agencies.

Throughout the analysis the importance of consistency in the identification of regularities in discursive patterns, as well as variation in the latter, has been underlined (Potter & Wetherell 1987). To this end, the analyses of the talk of the interviewees brought to the fore similarities or shared features in the emerging discursive patterns. This allowed us to focus and identify the uses of particular repertoires. The same repertoires were used by different people in all the three agencies. In other words, the same discursive patterns appeared in all the three agencies. The content of the identified repertoires will be summarised briefly below in an effort to bring together and discuss analytically the results from both the discourse analysis and the findings of the standardised questionnaires. Finally, the last part of the chapter will offer some tentative conclusions which may be relevant for future research on the agencies and the process of European integration more generally.

A. Discussion of findings

A1. The concept of “working together”

We begin by focusing on the major ideological dilemmas that have emerged in the analysis of discourses related to the notion of “working together”. In this regard, it has been shown that in their talk, the interviewees used similar arguments employed by the broader scientific discourses about Europe (and its future). This is of considerable significance and underscores how the micro-level discursive interactions studied in the within agency context reflect the much broader (macro) ideological dilemmas that were addressed in chapter 5. In the repertoires concerning ‘working together’, the interviewees were shown to negotiate one major dilemma that was also identified in the scientific theories. This was particularistic versus universalistic visions of Europe. This dilemma was negotiated in the talk of the interviewees in terms of cohesion versus fragmentation. Three repertoires were identified where the first constructed “working together” as a cooperative engagement while the second as cultural practice. By contrast the third repertoire consisted of a novel type of framing which was described as a de-national pluralistic amalgamation.

It is noteworthy that the first two repertoires opted for constructing cohesion as more important than diversity. In fact, diversity tended to be represented as the cause of fragmentation. Where “working together” was constructed as a form of cooperation, the objective was the achievement of cohesion as a means to accomplish the agencies’ respective missions. This type of discourse has also been identified in the so-called culture of expertise (Abélès & Bellier 1996). Ideologically, this talk was informed by a rather Durkheimian vision of cooperation as a form of “social integration” based on

the development of solidary relationships (Zabusky 1995). When cohesion was not achieved due to certain structural or functional differences among the individuals working together, then the outcome was represented in terms of fragmentation that tends to lead to conflict. Not surprisingly, this outcome was evaluated in rather negative terms. This can be contrasted with the second repertoire where “working together” was described as a rich and gainful activity involving the exchange of experiences of “others” with different nationalities. Thus, despite the fact that there were national and/or cultural differences, the agency’s unity was not disrupted. “Working together” was described as a positive experience that helps to forge an overall European identity. Furthermore, this European identity can co-exist with diverse national identities and cultural and linguistic differences. European identity was described as accommodating diversity within a new cohesive whole. This, it should be noted, provides a stark contrast to the repertoire where “working together” was represented as a cultural practice characterised by conflict caused by the dominance and incompatibility of the variety of national and cultural identities. In this case, “working together” was constructed as a practice that did not result in unity and cohesion because of pre-determined rivalries generated by the dominance of national differences. Finally, in the third repertoire the dilemma between cohesion and diversity was resolved in a rather innovative way. Here, ‘working together’ was described in terms of a pluralism in which both unity and diversity were seen as inevitable but at the same time welcome.

It was also possible to note a second dilemma in the discussions of the interviewees on the notion of working together. This one was less dominant than the universalism versus particularism however. Instead, it concerned the definition of “who” is working together in the agencies. In a similar vein to the first dilemma, it drew on the broader scientific discourses and was framed in terms of essentialist versus constructivist values. Although less dominant, this dilemma was negotiated and brought to the fold by the subject positions the interviewees adopted in their everyday discussion or talk within the agencies. With regard to this second dilemma individuals were represented either in ‘constructivist’ terms based on their occupation or personality characteristics, or in ‘essentialist’ terms where the inherent categories of nationality and culture dominated individuals. Whereas in the former interviewees were specialized experts devoid of national characteristics, in the latter nationality, or Europeanness, generated a series of binding characteristics for its members.

The construction of the selves in either constructivist or essentialist terms was, nonetheless, secondary to the achievement of cohesion and unity. Interestingly, the dilemma about whether to construct essentialist or constructivist identities was overcome in the third repertoire by the construction of new, hybrid identities that were post-national and allowed for various forms of belonging. Indeed, such identities were used as an example of moving beyond the problematic

boundaries posed by the nationalities. Here, “working together” was represented as a new condition devoid of the “banal” problems and conflicts caused by national and/or cultural divisions. Thus, although the first two previous repertoires merely reproduced traditional discourses, the third repertoire advanced new ways of speaking about “working together” in an EU agency. Apart from this last repertoire, no other original discourses were produced in the everyday talk in the EU agencies. This was mainly because of the antagonism between the various ideologies and discourses that limit the production of innovative discourses. Antagonistic ideologies include, on the one hand, neo-communitarianism and its promotion of a “United States of Europe” which has strongly influenced the EU official jargon (the motto “unity in diversity”) and, on the other hand, the ideology of nationalism that promotes a vision of “Europe of nation-states” and is predicated on nationality as a determinant for the unity of a group. All of this suggests that Europe and its organisations are still negotiated by traditional antagonistic discourses.

In sum, repertoires one and two are not antithetical. Instead, they merely constitute different types of argumentation that tend to support cohesion. At this point it is worth recalling what Zabusky has revealed about the talk in the European Space Agency that is consistent with the findings identified in the thesis. She has argued that

“harmony and conflict are the alternative cultural trajectories that a commitment to diversity can take. [...] These cultural trajectories resonate with the social tendencies of integration and dispersal, which they resemble, in that integration and harmony both involve connection, while dispersal and conflict both involve autonomy” (1995: 117-118).

“Europe”, it emerges, is not a neutral reality but rather a “contested concept” the meaning of which is not yet fixed (Connolly 1983; Schaffner et al. 1996:4). The novelty introduced by the last repertoire on “working together” highlights a change in speaking about Europe, one that adds another vision of Europe and which is consistent with Eric Hobsbawm’s claim that “there has never been a single Europe” (1997: 393). This innovative repertoire is perhaps the early phase of the construction of a new discourse. Such new discursive constructions can eventually bring about social change. In fact, this is the basic claim of theories influenced by social constructionism. When discourses change, or when individuals attribute new meanings to contested concepts, then social change can be realized. Speaking about Europe beyond the traditional cleavages of nationalism or communitarianism, therefore, constitutes a new construction that could ultimately give way to a new existing reality.

A2. The EU agencies' roles and functions

The second concept that was analysed concerned the construction of the actual 'meaning' of the agencies. As with 'working together', we also see that the everyday discourses in the agencies was informed ideologically by the respective scientific discourses on agencies. In this case, however, the three repertoires were antithetical and tended to promote normative representations of Europe by undermining each other. Here the dilemma that was negotiated by the interviewees was the dilemma of power and, in more concrete terms, the dilemma about whether agencies are constructed as 'independent from politics' or as 'public services'.

The first repertoire drew its argumentation from the official EU discourse on agencies and represented agencies as "Community agencies", i.e. as EU public services. They were seen as agents of Europeanisation that contribute to European integration either by disseminating their EU knowledge to citizens, or by enabling and managing information networks. In this respect, agencies were attributed with symbolic as well as functional roles and with a normative role that was closely related to the EU institutions. Nevertheless, agencies were also described as distant organisations that were functionally and financially independent from the EU institutions. This representation however, was undermined and considered as negative for the agencies given that it was in contrast to the normative role of the agencies as "Community bodies". The interviewees adopted the identities of motivated members of the agencies and as European civil servants who work in their specialised field. In all their descriptions, their position was constructed in antithesis to employees working in other EU institutions, who were commonly represented as Eurocrats receiving generous remuneration.

The second repertoire on agencies as "independent agencies" undermined the notion of agencies as public services. In contrast to the notion of public services, agencies were described as operating like companies, independent from the EU institutions and politics. Moreover, agencies were constructed as being superior to the rest of the EU bodies. Their superiority was represented in terms of efficiency, flexibility and lack of bureaucracy. However, as in the previous repertoire, this repertoire contained an antithetical line of argumentation that represented the agencies negatively due to their lack of independence from EU institutions, their lack of decision-making power, and the overwhelming presence of bureaucracy. In constructing the agencies as independent, the interviewees adopted the identities of technocrats who were committed to their agency's goals, without any affiliation or links with the EU institutions. Such lines of argumentation parallel scientific discourses such as the debates on the so-called independent regulatory agency model discussed by a number of scholars (Majone 1997, 2002b; Yataganas 2001).

The third repertoire, however, was based on a rather negative construction of the agencies. Although the agencies were represented normatively as specialised bodies and agents of Europeanisation, their roles were undermined due to the dominance of inter-institutional politics and intergovernmental interests. As a result, agencies were described as incapable of changing the problematic system in which they operated. In this repertoire, the interviewees adopted the position of European experts who were entrapped by political and intergovernmental interests. They considered themselves, as well as the agencies, to be victims of the power that 'other', external actors exercised upon them. This repertoire, apart from being structured on the same argumentation as the pragmatic scientific discourse on agencies, also challenged the argumentation of the two previous repertoires. This was due to the construction of the "power politics" at the EU level as the major constraint for the development of a clear-cut and well-designed agency model. Nevertheless, in the interviewees' discussions agencies were presented solely in negative terms, whereas the pragmatic scientific discourse suggested the potential of the agencies to develop as a new type of organisation. These new organisations were seen as being able to overcome both their supranational or national constraint in order to create new forms of cooperation between the relevant actors (Chiti 2001). Nevertheless, this scientific discourse did not appear in the everyday discourses in the EU agencies.

The variety of ways in which the agencies were described showed that their role was negotiated in relation to their overall context, which is formed by the bigger EU institutions and member states. In addition, the variety of roles attributed to the agencies revealed the absence of a hegemonic discourse concerning not only the agencies but also the overall EU. However, the variety of ways in which agencies were constructed and the similarities with the respective scientific theories, revealed the absence of a new discourse that could be transcended or substitute existing ones. In trying to understand this, the conclusion drawn is that the ideologies informing the everyday discourses in the agencies and the dilemmas these generated, constrained the production of a new discourse. We could say that since the dilemmas studied reflect our present society (Billig et al 1988), the constant search for an appropriate role of agencies in the everyday discourses brought to the fore the antagonism between various ideologies: a) the ideology of Europe as a federal state similar to the US and b) the ideology of a Europe of nation states. These dilemmas are a common feature of discussions on the EU and are rooted in the 'dilemma of power' between the centre and the periphery. Similarly, these dilemmas also pervade the scientific theories on agencies as well as the everyday discourses of the agencies thereby limiting the representation of agencies in novel ways.

In summary

Based on the premises of discursive psychology, the interviewees in the agencies were expected to draw on a variety of interpretative repertoires in order to construct the meanings of “working together” in the agency as well as the roles and functions of the EU agencies. Indeed, the analysis of the selected extracts from the three EU agencies confirmed this expectation. These findings reinforce the argument that discourse is a contingent entity without any taken-for-granted, natural or absolute components (Potter & Wetherell 1994).

Despite the fact that in the everyday talk in the agencies there was no direct reference to specific theories (even though in some cases the interviewees deployed scientific terms and references), the analysis nevertheless allowed us to identify similar repertoires to the ones included in scientific discourses. This was relevant to both the notion of “working together” as well as the “role of the agencies”. Such similarities confirmed that scientific discourses and their ideologies were reproduced and informed the everyday discourses.

Variation in how the respective concepts were constructed suggests that there is not a hegemonic discourse. Moreover, given that everyday discourses about the EU agencies, as well as the notion of “working together”, engage broader societal discourses (Hardy & Phillips 2002), we see that reality as presented by the EU in official documents cannot be considered as objective or unique. Accordingly, the variation of interpretative repertoires and subject positions concerning the EU agencies’ roles, and the ways individuals work together, undermines the dominating idea that we are all Europeans coming together in a new form of state or a federation of states (Bramwell 1987). It also contradicts the perception that European officials, EU civil servants, or the experts of the agencies are the new “true Europeans”, who are metaphorically referred to as “architects”, “experts” or “engineers” of the European integration project and who are often credited with having a collective definition and clearer idea of what Europe means in cultural terms (Bellier & Wilson 2002). Finally, it can be said that the representation of the agencies as new and promising organisations in the EU institutional architecture is contradicted since the agencies are also constructed as traditional public services.

A3. The agencies’ profile by the Organisational Cultural Inventory

This thesis used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data gathering and analysis. The complexity of the organisational and socio-political context of every agency invited the use of additional methodological techniques. Therefore, apart from the interviews, a standardised inventory (known as OCI) was used to measure the cultural norms and expectations in every agency. These analyses did not reveal significant differences between the three agencies. This

suggests that the cultural norms and expectations of the three agencies form a common cultural profile, one which is characterised by low levels of satisfaction values and high security norms. Such a profile is frequently found in organisations that do not operate within a competitive environment.

Low levels of satisfaction values are interpreted according to the OCI in terms of a lack of communication between the different functional and hierarchical levels and limited opportunities for constructive interpersonal relations. In addition, the low levels of satisfaction culture within all the three agencies suggest a certain degree of ambiguity regarding the way their formal structures operate, which is an indication of weak vertical communication that causes high level of stress and unwanted pressures. The description of low satisfaction values is similar to the way “working together” is constructed as fragmented due to the conflict caused by the differences between the variety of functional and hierarchical levels. Additionally, low level of satisfaction values are a sign of limited participation in the decision-making process of the agencies and a lack of personal involvement of employees with the organisational goals. Furthermore, the agencies were characterised by a high degree of complexity in terms of formal organisational processes which results in further limiting individuals’ motivation. The description of those cultural values for the agencies is similar to the interpretative repertoire of the agencies as “independent bodies” and, in particular, the line of argumentation that constructs the agencies in negative terms due to the lack of independence and due to the control of the central institutions.

The OCI showed that the agencies’ cultural profile is also based on the importance of security norms (e.g. in terms of salaries and working conditions). Typically, organisations with high security norms tend to be public administrations. Thus, as demonstrated by the quantitative analysis, the agencies were characterised by similar cultural norms to those of public administrations. More specifically, agencies were found to be run on the basis of traditional and conservative rules and regulations which aim at maintaining the status quo. Organisations with high security norms place importance on avoiding risks, conflicts or anything that might create disorder. Furthermore, the philosophy that supports the high level of security norms is consistent with the bureaucratic organisational model. Such a description is similar to the repertoire of agencies as “Community agencies” in which interviewees characterise themselves as civil servants and the agencies being under the supervision and control of the central EU institutions without really having the need to generate their own resources.

The results of the quantitative component were used as data that inform the organisational and social context in which discourses were interpreted. Yet the results of this quantitative instrument,

given its limitations, provide us with the opportunity to compare the agencies' cultural profiles to the discursive constructions of the agencies and the process of working together. This analytical exercise does not aim at confirming some kind of truth or a valid reality. Instead, given that knowledge is situational, we could derive useful insights related to the use of the particular methodology as well as to the actual content. To this end, we tried to see whether the characteristics described by the organisational cultural profile of the agencies in OCI emerged also in the discursive constructions of the interviewees. The above discussions show that the description of the agencies' culture by OCI was confirmed in some of the interpretative repertoires. Yet the discourse analysis brought to the fore further elements that could not be addressed by the quantitative tool. Nonetheless, the use of OCI tool fulfilled its scope and offered crucial information about the organisational context in which the talk of the interviewees could be understood and interpreted. In other words, the exploratory function of the OCI facilitated the interpretative function of discourse analysis.

B. Final conclusions

The study of Europe, its culture and its institutions tends to be dominated by studies that attempt to explain these phenomena by producing positivistic accounts, couched in terms of causal relations between various types of dynamics or mechanisms. Many of these approaches have, as one of their principal objectives, the aim to offer policy specific suggestions or guidelines to achieve certain normative goals. In contrast, this thesis has studied the everyday discourses that reflect the main structures through which individuals construct their realities. The individual is not treated as a passive recipient of discourses but also as an active creator of new discourse. Such an approach sees the future of Europe and its institutions as part of a broader set of discursive practices that are ultimately ideological. Based on the argument of Bellier and Wilson (2002) that European institutions are able to generate their own meaning about their roles, while also contributing to the overall construction of meaning in the European project, this thesis focused specifically on the European agencies.

In addition, the study of the everyday discourses provided a useful insight into the extent to which constructions of our world combine linguistic elements in novel ways, or whether they largely reproduce the prevailing rationalities. Thus, we were able to identify the ideologies that constrain the emergence of new discourses while also searching for new ways of talking about Europe and its institutions within the EU agencies. New ways of speaking about Europe and its institutions within the EU agencies can be seen as the seeds of novel discourses that signify a social change, since the latter can occur when individuals start speaking differently of their social world (Billig 1991). This

is not unconnected to the contention that institutions cannot be separated from the discourses they are embedded in, and rather than a formal change of institutions, what seems necessary is a change in the discursive construction of these institutions (Diez 1999). Put simply, agencies cannot escape the cleavages already dividing Europe.

Analysing the discourses in the EU agencies about the agencies themselves, as well as wider discourses on Europe, does not mean that these analyses are not policy relevant. On the contrary, the information provided by the everyday talk of the interviewees, to give just one example, can be an extremely relevant and useful resource for informing the design and creation of future agencies. In addition, the analyses could be useful for the formulation and investigation of further reflexive research questions (Parker 1994), such as whether the same discursive patterns emerge within the rest of the agencies and/or other EU organisations, in what ways the everyday discourses of the EU agencies are similar/different to the everyday discourses within national agencies, and in what ways the everyday discourses of the EU agencies are similar/different to the lay discourses of people in Europe. These are just a few examples of how the findings of this thesis could be integrated within a wider EU specific research agenda.

By way of conclusion one final note is offered with regard to the opportunities for cross-disciplinary fertilisation in the broader study of Europe and its culture as well as the more specific debates on the EU and its institutions. This thesis has sought to combine insights from distinct scientific theories with a view to identifying how these are represented in everyday discourses. This is an approach that positively lends itself to greater dialogue across some of the disciplinary divides that have emerged. Rather than being seen as dilution of intellectual rigour, such eclecticism should be welcomed. To this end, discursive psychology has provided an opportunity to focus on a wide array of scientific discourses, their resources, as well as the dilemmas on which they are structured and which they negotiate. This type of focus is not present in the wider EU studies literature in the fields of political science, sociology and law where the debate tends to be framed in exclusive terms and in isolation from other disciplinary debates. This thesis has endeavoured to show that such an eclectic approach may provide us with a better understanding of the social knowledge concerning not only the EU agencies but also Europe in general.

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APPENDIX

A1. The twenty-three Community agencies in chronological order of establishment

1. European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), [Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75 (OJ L 39 of 13/2/1975)], based in Thessaloniki (GR).
2. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND), [Council Regulation (EEC) No 1365/75 of 26/5/1975 (OJ L 139 of 30/5/1975)], based in Dublin (IRL).
3. European Environment Agency (EEA), [Council Regulation (EEC) Regulation No 1210/90 of 7/5/1990, amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 933/1999 of 29/4/1999 (OJ L 117 of 5/5/1999)], based in Copenhagen (DK).
4. European Training Foundation (ETF), [Council Regulation (EEC) No 1360/90 of 7/5/1990 (OJ L 131 of 23/5/1990), amended by Council Regulations (EC) No 2063/94 of 27/7/1994 (OJ L 216, 20/ 8/1994), (EC) 1572/98 of 17/7/1998 (OJ L 206, 23/6/1998) and (EC) No 2666/00 of 5/12/2000 (OJ L 306, 7/12/2000), and (EC) 1648/2003 of 18/6/2003], based in Turin (I).
5. European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), [Council Regulation (EEC) No 302/93 of 8/2/1993 (OJ L 36 of 12/2/1993) amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 3294/94 of 22/12/1994 (OJ L 341 of 30/12/1994)], based in Lisbon (P).
6. European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products (EMA), [Council Regulation (EEC) No 2309/93 of 22/7/1993 (OJ L 214 of 24/8/1993)], based in London (UK).
7. Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM), [Council Regulation (EC) No 40/94 of 20/12/1993 (OJ L 11 of 14/1/1994) and Council Regulation (EC) No 6/2002 of 12/12/2001 (OJ L 3 of 5/1/2002)], based in Alicante (SP).
8. European Agency for Health and Safety at Work (EU-OSHA), [Council Regulation No 2062/94 of 18/7/1994 (OJ L 216 of 20/8/1994) amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 1643/95 of 29/6/1995 (OJ L 156 of 7/7/1995)], based in Bilbao (SP).
9. Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO), [Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 of 27/7/1994 (OJ L 227 of 1/9/1994) amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 2506/95 (OJ L 258 of 28/10/1995)], based in Angers (FR).
10. Translation Centre for Bodies of the European Union (CdT), [Council Regulation (EC) No 2965/94 of 28/11/1994 (OJ L 314 of 7/12/ 1994) amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 2610/95 (OJ L 268 of 10/11/1995)], based in Luxembourg (L).
11. European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), [Council Regulation (EC) No 1035/97 of 2/6/1997 (OJ L 151 of 10/6/1997), based in Vienna (A).
12. European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR), [Council Regulation (EC) No 2454/99 of 15/11/1999 (OJ L 299 of 20/11/1999)], based in Thessaloniki (GR).
13. European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), [Council Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 (OJ L 31 of 1/2/2002)], based in Parma (I).
14. European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), [European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 (OJ L 208 of 5/8/2002)], based in Lisbon (P).
15. European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), [European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 of 15/7/2002 (OJ L 240 of 79/2002)], based in Cologne (D).
16. European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA), [European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 460/2004 of 10/3/2004 (OJ L 77 of 13/10/ 2004)], based in Heraklion (GR).
17. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), [European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 851/2004 of 21/4/2004], based in Stockholm (SWE).
18. European Railway Agency (ERA), [European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 881/2004 of 29 April 2004], based in Lille-Valenciennes (FR).

19. The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union was established by Council Regulation (EC) 2007/2004/ (26.10.2004, OJ L 349/25.11.2004) European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX), based in Warsaw (POL).
20. The European Fundamental Rights Agency (EFRA) (under preparation)
21. The European GNSS Supervisory Authority (EGSA) (under preparation)
22. The Community Fisheries Control Agency (CFCA) (under preparation)
23. The European Chemicals Agency (ECA) (under preparation)

A2. The most recent classification of the European Decentralised Agencies (2003, http://www.europa.eu.int/agencies/index_en.htm).

ROLE-FUNCTION	AGENCIES
<p>1. Agencies facilitating the operation of the internal market (regulatory model, Yataganas 2001).</p> <p>These agencies exercise (quasi-) regulatory functions and render services to industrial sectors allowing them to generate income and thus guarantee their own resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EMEA (London) - OHIM (Alicante) - CPVO (Angers) - EFSA (Parma) - EMSA (Lisbon) - EASA (Cologne) - ENISA (Heraklion) - ERA (Lille)
<p>2. Monitoring Centres (monitoring model, Yataganas 2001). Their principal task is to gather and disseminate information thanks to a network of partners that they have to set up and to manage on a daily basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EEA (Copenhagen) - EMCDDA (Lisbon) - EUMC (Vienna) - ECDC (Stockholm)
<p>3. Agencies aiming to promote social dialogue at a European level (cooperation model, Yataganas 2001). These agencies are characterised by a quadripartite administrative/management board: representatives of employers and trade unions as well as Member States and the Commission representatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EUROFOUND (Dublin) - Cedefop (Thessaloniki) - EU-OSHA (Bilbao)
<p>4. Agencies which execute programmes and tasks for the European Union within their respective fields of expertise (executive model, Yataganas 2001). The agencies operate as subcontractors to the European public service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ETF (Turin) - CdT (Luxembourg) - EAR (Thessaloniki)

A3. Transcription notation

- (.) Short pause of less than one second which is too short to measure but noticeable
- (1.0) Time pause indicated in seconds
- [...] Transcript material that has been deliberately omitted from the analysis by the transcriber

[text]	Clarificatory information provided by the transcriber; it is used also to indicate laughter
text	Word(s) emphasised by the speaker usually with a louder or more intensive voice intonation
A: yes but= B: =okay	The end of the speaker's utterance runs straight into the beginning of the next utterance, indicating that there is no noticeable pause between the two speakers' turn
Wo:rd	Stretching of the preceding sound or letter. The more colons, the greater the extent of the stretching
?	Rising questioning intonation. It is rather used in its grammatical sense to indicate a question
.	Ending intonation. It is rather used in its grammatical sense to indicate an end in a sentence
(word or blank)	Unclear talk because it is either inaudible or there is doubt about its accuracy. If a phrase or a word is included in brackets then it is about a guess at what might have been said

B. The questionnaires distributed in the three agencies

<p style="text-align: center;">Questionnaire for the measurement of the organisational culture of the European Independent Agencies.</p>

Estimated average response time: 35 minutes

Deadline for handing back the questionnaire filled-in: ??/ ?? /2001

Contact Person: Vicky Triga /tel. /Room:

The present questionnaire aims to gather information regarding the organisational culture of the agency. The formal definition of the organisational culture on which the research is based is the following:

“Culture is a process of meaning making which has been developed and perpetually is being enriched by the individuals’ and groups’ values and basic assumptions that derive from their past cultural patterns and are in direct interaction with the organisation’s external environment.”

The information requested by this questionnaire is strictly confidential. For this reason all the questionnaires are kept anonymous. All the information will be used only for scientific reasons and, more particularly, within the frame of the Ph.D. thesis of the author, Vicky Triga.

The analysis of the collected data will take place after having been in all the three agencies, which are under research. The information which could allow identifying the person who filled in the questionnaire will be suppressed and all questionnaires destroyed once the information provided has been analysed statistically.

The questionnaire consists of two parts and has various types of questions. In the first part of the questionnaire, you are asked to fill in some information and, in other cases, to choose one of the response options. In several cases, you should just respond with yes or no. Wherever you find the option “other.....”, feel free to express your opinions that have not been mentioned.

The second part of the questionnaire contains a standardized instrument for measuring organisational culture (OCI: Organisational Culture Inventory). You will identify this part as it starts with the following question: INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO... In this section, you should only tick one of the five options that are offered for every statement, by working down the columns.

In case you face some difficulties in understanding some questions or generally you need further clarifications, do not hesitate to ask me for any additional instructions.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Questionnaire

1. Sex:

2. Age:

3. Nationality:

4. Language:

	Native Language	Main working language	Other languages
English			
French			
German			
Italian			
Spanish			
Dutch			
Swedish			
Danish			
Finnish			
Portuguese			
Greek			

5. Position:

6. Specialty/ Profession:

7. Type of worker:

- a. Permanent Official
- b. Temporary agent
- c. Auxiliary
- d. Seconded national expert
- e. Employed according to Spanish law
- f. Other...

8. Category: A, B, C, D

9. How long have you been working in the agency?

9. Is it your first job?

YES NO

If the answer is yes, go directly to 14.

11a. What was your previous job before coming to the agency?

11b. How long did you work in the previous position?

11c. Was your previous job in your home country?

YES NO

If not, where was it?

11d. Have you ever worked for other European Institutions?

YES NO

If yes, in which exactly?

When?

Starting Date.....

End Date:

12. Have you ever worked in other multinational organisations?

YES NO

13. Does your previous working experience influence:

	In a very positive way	In a positive way	Very little	In a negative way	In a very negative way
Execution of the task					
Attitude towards superiors					
Communication with colleagues					
Working methods					

14. Did all your studies take place in an institution in your home country?

YES NO

If no, where exactly: (you can only mention the country)

For how long?

15. How did you find out about the job?

(you can choose more than one answer)

- a. Media
- b. Colleagues, contacts
- c. National organisations
- d. European institutions (press, previous position)
- e. Other.....

16. Why have you chosen this job?

(you can choose more than one answer)

- a. Working abroad
- b. Specialisation/ Type of the work
- c. Practical Matters (Salary, contract)
- d. EU's philosophy and ideals (Union of European people)
- e. Status and profile of the agency
- f. Career development
- g. Other.....

17. Does the fact of working with people from other nationalities affect:

	In a very positive way	In a positive way	Very little	In a negative way	In a very negative way
Your cooperation with colleagues					
Your cooperation with superiors					
Your informal relations					
Your use of language					
Your communication with colleagues					
Your communication with superiors					
Administrative style of the agency					
Centralization of authority within your agency					

18. What are the primary criteria upon which people are selected for working in the agency?

(you can choose more than one answer)

- 1. Nationality.
- 2. Previous experience in the particular area of interest.
- 3. Previous working experience in the European Institutions.
- 4. Contacts with people in key positions in one's Member-State.
- 5. Contacts with people within the European Institutions.
- 6. Other.....

19. The fact that you are working for a European agency has it affected your beliefs concerning the European Union in general? (you should choose only one answer)

1. Yes, in a positive way, since I understood deep and substantial issues.
2. Yes, in a negative way since I originally had a more idealistic idea.
3. No, it is an agency oriented to a specific task so there is not much enlightenment about the project of European Integration.
4. No, I did not have expectations, I just learned more about the administrative system.
5. Other.....

20. Do you find that working with other Europeans makes it easy and positive or difficult and negative to do your job? (You should choose 1, 2, 3, or 4 column and then put a circle in one or more of the statements that belong in the selected column)

1. Very easy	2. Easy	3. Difficult	4. Very Difficult
1a. Similarities are more than differences. We do not act in terms of national difference.	2a. Different ways of acting depend more on different personalities than nationalities.	3a. Some people cannot really adapt to a multinational context and it reflects on their way of working and communicating with the others	4a. People in reality will never escape from their national background
1b. Everybody has worked in multinational environments or in European Institutions and thus the "esprit europeen" is put in practice.	2b. If there are cultural differences then that is part of Europe's richness.	3b. There are difficulties, mainly because of the different cultural experiences. Sometimes one can really only express oneself in one's own language.	4b. When different conceptual and behavioral systems meet, then there is often an apprehension of incongruence.
1c. Everybody is conscious of the European Union's spirit and everybody has the sense of the European identity.	2c. People are open, with good intention of cooperating and more oriented to their tasks (duties) rather than their national identity.	3c. People are among various types of interests. This may create conflict and then processes like lobbying, and centralization around common (national) patterns of action take place.	4c. Systems do not match, do not fit, giving so a set of disorder.
1d. Other.....	2d. Other.....	3d. Other.....	4d. Other.....

21. Are there any stereotypes regarding nationalities that circulate?
 YES NO

22. Do you think that the way in which you work and communicate in your agency could lead to a new pattern of how Europeans work together?

1. Very Much 2. Much 3. Little 4. Very little

23. Your agency belongs to the more general category of the European Institutions which is named European Independent Agencies. To what extent does the word "Independent" correspond with the everyday reality of the agency?

1. To a very great extent 2. To a big extent 3. To a small extent 4. At all

If you have not selected 1, please try to answer the following question, 23a.

23a. What are the possible reasons for the fact that the agency is less independent than it is supposed to be? (You can choose more than one answer)

1. Financial control by the European Institutions and particularly the Commission and the Parliament
2. Control over the personnel procedures by the European Commission
3. Control regarding the thematic priorities by the Member States
4. Other.....

24. One of the main general aims of the European Union's project is to bring "the Union closer to its citizens". How do you think this notion is applied in practice in the case of the independent agencies? (you can choose more than one answer)

1. By locating institutions far from Brussels and the core European institutions, thus by achieving physical decentralisation.
1. It does not apply in the agencies' case in a more specific way, because this notion accompanies all the European Union's policies, as it is one of the general aims of the integration project.
2. This notion stresses the need to bring democracy within the Community. It is very relevant with the role of the agencies.
3. It cannot be applied in practice totally. In the agencies' case, the basic aim is to provide specialisation to member states in as many as possible policy areas in order for them to be well-informed and able to improve their policies.
4. This statement derives from Monnet's vision and the attempt is to serve the European interest in some specific issues through the latest and most evolved forms of Union's administration thus, the decentralized agencies.
5. It applies in the sense that it describes the present situation where there is the need to create bodies that can satisfy the national interests at a European level because of the new demands of the market.
6. Other.....

25. The agency tries to serve many stakeholders and satisfy the interest and needs of many clients. Do you think that there are some dominant demands to which are given priority?

YES NO

If the answer is no, ignore question 25a.

25a. Who makes these dominant demands? (you can choose more than one answer)

1. Member States.
2. European Commission.
3. European Parliament.
4. Council of Europe.
5. European Union, in general.
6. The Administrative Board.
7. The networks of cooperation that have been developed by the agency pose the priority demands.
8. Specific high specialised organisations at international level.
9. The policy area, in general.
10. Other.....

INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH PEOPLE IN THIS ORGANISATION ARE EXPECTED TO:

	Not at all	To a slight extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very large extent
Point out errors					
Show concern for the needs of others					
Involve subordinates in decisions					
Resolve conflicts constructively					
Be supportive of others					
Stay on the good side of superiors					
Be a "nice guy"					
Do things for the approval of others					
"Go along" with others					
Win against others					
Work to achieve self-set goals					
Accept goals without questioning them					
Be predictable					
Never challenge superiors					
Do what is expected					
Stay detached and perfectly objective					
Oppose new ideas					
Help others to grow and develop					
Be a good listener					
Give positive rewards to others					
Agree with everyone					
Stay aware of the trends					
Make sure things they are doing are expected by others					
Always try to be right					
Be seen and noticed					
Explore alternatives before acting					
Take on challenging tasks					
Be a good follower					
Ask everybody what they think before acting					
Please those in positions of authority					
Be hard to impress					
Look for mistakes					
Oppose things indirectly					
Take time with people					
Encourage others					
Back up those with the most authority					
Set goals that please others					
Compete rather than cooperate					
Be the center of attention					
Never appear to lose					
Set moderately difficult goals					
Pursue a standard of excellence					
Work for the sense of accomplishment					
Follow orders ... even when they are wrong					
Check decision with superiors					
Question decisions made by others					
Remain distant from the situation					
Refuse to accept criticism					

	Not at all	To a slight extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very large extent
Play the role of the "loyal opposition" (being loyal to opposing opinions)					
Help others think for themselves					X
Be liked by everyone					
Out-perform their companions					
Be a "winner"					
Maintain an image of superiority					
Turn the job into a struggle					
Think ahead and plan					
Take moderate risks					
Openly show enthusiasm					
Know the business					
Willingly obey orders					
Cooperate with others					
Deal with others in a friendly, pleasant way					
Think in terms of the group's satisfaction					
Show concern for people					
Never totally lose control					
Personally take care of every detail					
Not "rock the boat" (provoke disorder)					
Avoid confrontations					
Make a good impression					
Conform					
Be tentative					
Make "popular" rather than necessary decisions					
Take few chances					
Shift responsibilities to others					
Emphasise quality over quantity					
Use good human relations skills					
Treat people as more important than things					
Share feelings and thoughts					
Demand loyalty					
Use the authority of their positions					
Appear to work long hours					
Never make a mistake					
Treat rules as more important than ideas					
Tell people different things to avoid conflict					
Accept the status quo					
Postpone things					
Keep "low profile" when things get tough					
Never be the one blamed for mistakes					
Be concerned about others' growth					
Resist conformity					
Motivate others with friendliness					
Be open, warm					
Stay on the opposite side					
Build up their own power base					

	Not at all	To a slight extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very large extent
Personally run everything					
Set unrealistically high goals					
Be precise...even it's unnecessary					
Keep on top of everything					
Always follow policies and practices					
Avoid risks					
Not get involved					
Wait for others to act first					
Be spontaneous					
Do even simple tasks well					
Communicate ideas					
Be tactful					
Act forcefully					
Play "politics" to gain influence					
Be hard, tough					
Maintain unquestioned authority					
Do things perfectly					
View work as more important than anything else					
Appear competent and independent					
Persist, endure					
Fit into the "mould" (norm)					
Push decisions upward					
Be open about self					
Enjoy their work					
Think in unique and independent ways					
Maintain their personal integrity					

C. Statistics

C1. Factor Analysis of the 120 components of the Organisational Culture Inventory in the overall sample.

Table 1. Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Achievement	1.000	.905
Dependent	1.000	.903
Self-Actualising	1.000	.938
Avoidance	1.000	.919
Opposition	1.000	.876
Conventional	1.000	.899
Perfectionist	1.000	.881
Power	1.000	.919
Affiliative	1.000	.946
Humanistic	1.000	.930
Competitive	1.000	.866
Approval	1.000	.906

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Table 2

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9,336	77,797	77,797	9,336	77,797	77,797	6,545	54,546	54,546
2	1,551	12,925	90,722	1,551	12,925	90,722	4,341	36,177	90,722
3	,256	2,133	92,855						
4	,175	1,460	94,316						
5	,134	1,114	95,429						
6	,108	,900	96,330						
7	9,414E-02	,785	97,114						
8	8,657E-02	,721	97,836						
9	7,807E-02	,651	98,486						
10	6,985E-02	,582	99,068						
11	6,423E-02	,535	99,604						
12	4,757E-02	,396	100,000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3

Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
ACHIEV1	,880	,360
DEPEN1	,935	-,169
SELF1	,827	,503
AVOID1	,884	-,370
OPPOS1	,933	-,068
CONVEN1	,912	-,260
PERFEC1	,929	-,135
POWER1	,928	-,241
AFILIAT1	,797	,557
HUMAN1	,755	,600
COMPET1	,845	-,390
APPROVA1	,935	-,179

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 2 components extracted.

Table 4

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
ACHIEV1	,489	,816
DEPEN1	,850	,425
SELF1	,361	,898
AVOID1	,930	,233
OPPOS1	,788	,504
CONVEN1	,886	,338
PERFEC1	,825	,448
POWER1	,887	,362
AFILIAT1	,305	,924
HUMAN1	,246	,932
COMPET1	,910	,194
APPROVA1	,856	,417

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Table 5

Component Transformation Matrix

Component	1	2
1	,801	,599
2	-,599	,801

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

C2. Reliability analyses of the Satisfaction and Security cultural scales

i. Satisfaction Culture

Table 6

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,888	,890	4

Table 7

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
achiev1	28,8571	6,32860	252
self1	26,7897	6,58740	252
human1	26,7698	7,91404	252
afiliat1	30,0952	8,08020	252

Table 8

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	28,128	26,770	30,095	3,325	1,124	2,679	4

Table 9

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
achiev1	83,6548	426,235	,638	,413	,897
self1	85,7222	381,843	,807	,669	,840
human1	85,7421	341,993	,780	,624	,848
affiliat1	82,4167	327,375	,822	,709	,831

Table 10

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
112,5119	633,040	25,16028	4

ii. Security Culture

Table 11

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,907	,908	8

Table 12

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
compet1	24,8214	8,33295	252
approva1	29,8968	6,87837	252
avoid1	26,7579	7,50995	252
oppos1	24,5595	4,70403	252
conven1	32,1071	7,73930	252
perfec1	27,5476	6,44265	252
power1	26,6071	6,10339	252
depen1	32,1548	6,38941	252

Table 13

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	28,057	24,560	32,155	7,595	1,309	9,047	8

Table 14

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
compet1	199,6310	1313,501	,722	,624	,895
approva1	194,5556	1389,411	,745	,615	,892
avoid1	197,6944	1327,679	,794	,666	,887
oppos1	199,8929	1599,482	,524	,387	,909
conven1	192,3452	1339,574	,740	,648	,892
perfec1	196,9048	1455,457	,655	,489	,900
power1	197,8452	1424,171	,776	,630	,890
depen1	192,2976	1438,465	,701	,625	,896

Table 15

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
224,4524	1818,830	42,64775	8

C3. The plots of residuals in the sample of Ohim .

Table 16. Satisfaction culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	18.3856	36.0841	28.2421	3.5430	126
Residual	-11.2502	15.0410	9.897E-15	5.2398	126
Std. Predicted Value	-2.782	2.213	.000	1.000	126
Std. Residual	-2.041	2.729	.000	.951	126

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

Table 17. Security culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	23.0701	31.9254	27.2639	1.9441	126
Residual	-12.4772	9.8130	-1,2E-015	4.7258	126
Std. Predicted Value	-2.157	2.398	.000	1.000	126
Std. Residual	-2.510	1.974	.000	.951	126

a. Dependent Variable: Task/People/Security

C4. The plots of residuals in the sample of Cedefop

Table 18. Satisfaction culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	18.4278	38.1886	29.3239	4.5706	44
Residual	-8.8300	12.7276	-7,6E-015	4.4485	44
Std. Predicted Value	-2.384	1.940	.000	1.000	44
Std. Residual	-1.685	2.429	.000	.849	44

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

Table 19. Security Culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	20.8373	37.6925	29.2244	4.3324	44
Residual	-9.3338	7.9127	6.702E-15	3.8659	44
Std. Predicted Value	-1.936	1.955	.000	1.000	44
Std. Residual	-2.050	1.738	.000	.849	44

a. Dependent Variable: Task/People/Security

C5. The plots of residuals in the sample of EMCDDA

Table 20. Satisfaction culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	17.8975	35.0070	28.0135	4.6503	37
Residual	-7.5893	9.5035	-3,2E-015	4.2122	37
Std. Predicted Value	-2.175	1.504	.000	1.000	37
Std. Residual	-1.471	1.842	.000	.816	37

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

Table 21. Security Culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	20.5182	34.1250	28.4797	3.4590	37
Residual	-12.5624	9.4743	-7,7E-015	3.9511	37
Std. Predicted Value	-2.302	1.632	.000	1.000	37
Std. Residual	-2.596	1.958	.000	.816	37

a. Dependent Variable: Task/People/Security

C6. The plots of residuals in the overall sample of the three agencies

Table 22. Satisfaction culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	18.6078	37.9226	28.4312	3.5169	207
Residual	-11.8907	14.5291	3.570E-15	5.2444	207
Std. Predicted Value	-2.793	2.699	.000	1.000	207
Std. Residual	-2.189	2.675	.000	.965	207

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

Table 23. Security Culture

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	22.4605	34.4510	27.8979	2.4814	207
Residual	-11.7829	13.5441	-2,4E-015	4.7145	207
Std. Predicted Value	-2.191	2.641	.000	1.000	207
Std. Residual	-2.413	2.773	.000	.965	207

a. Dependent Variable: Task/People/Security