

International Leadership Re-/Constructed? On the Ambivalence and Heterogeneity of Identity Discourses in European Union's Policy on Climate Change

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This article analyses European Union policy discourses on climate change from the point of view of constructions of identity. Articulated in a variety of policy-related genres, the EU rhetoric on climate change is approached here as an example of the Union's international discourse, which, contrary to that from other areas of the EU policy-making, relies strongly on international policy and discursive frameworks underlying global politics of climate change. As the article shows, the EU's peculiar international – or even global – leadership in tackling the climate change is constructed in an ambivalent way and by means of a heterogeneous discourse which runs along several vectors. While it on the one hand follows the more recent, inward-looking constructions of Europe known from the policy and political discourses of the 1990s and 2000s, it also revives some of the older discursive logics of international competition known from the earlier stages of the European integration. In its analysis, the article draws on the methodological apparatus of the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) in Critical Discourse Studies. Furthering the DHA studies of EU policy and political discourses, the article emphasises the viability of the discourse-historical methodology to the research on the recontextualisation-based constructions of EU's identity in the new and emergent types of EU international policy such as that on climate change.

Keywords: European Union, identity, policy, policy communication, climate change, discourse-historical analysis

1. Introduction

Institutional discourses of identity have now been present in European politics for almost forty years. Whilst very often based on recurrent features, arguments and claims (for extensive overview, cf. Krzyżanowski 2010, Wodak 2009), European identity discourses originating within EEC/EC/EU are, in fact, rarely homogenous while they also fall within various periods of when debating identity of Europe was articulated in different ways and, most importantly, for different reasons (cf. below). At the time of its inception in the 1970s, the European identity discourse was mainly externally-oriented and aimed at describing uniqueness of Europe by juxtaposing it with other non-European (global) political actors (mainly the USA). However, the more recent European identity discourses of the 1990s and 2000s were mainly preoccupied with inward-oriented construction of Europe and the role of its identity in forging democracy and legitimacy for the European project as its democratic character was often criticised and deemed as in constant crisis (cf. Krzyżanowski, Triandafyllidou and Wodak, 2009) or as contradictory to the often historical ideas of Europeaness in the political imaginations (cf. Stråth 2000; Stråth and Triandafyllidou 2003).

What, however, remains particularly interesting for this article is the fact that, whether externally- or internally-oriented, European identity discourses initiated within Europe's supranational project were for a very long mainly the element of Europe's 'speculative discourse' which aimed at providing meta-discursive descriptions of the aims, goals and values of EEC/EC/EU. Hence, discourses about European identity were nested in different speeches and other, mainly political communication genres which 'speculated' about the future construction of Europe, about its key values or about other aspects of constructing the Unions mainly internally-oriented identity (see below for details). That meant,

however, that despite some exceptions (cf. Muntigl, Weiss and Wodak 2000), discourse about Europe's identity has largely been absent from European policies which throughout the majority of the European integration process to date have refrained from the 'macro' oriented debates about Europe's identity and instead remained focussed on the strictly policy-relevant 'micro' issues related to paths of policy-making and -implementation. However, as this article aims to show, the arrival of the new policy areas of the EU – of which this paper focuses on the EU recent policy on climate change (hereinafter 'EUCC') as the key example (for other examples, cf. inter alia Krzyżanowski and Wodak 2010 and 2011) – the speculative/identity discourse has entered the EU policy discourse.

As this article is willing to reveal, in the situation of globalisation and the prolonged global crisis as well as increased public mistrust towards the EU, the EU policy discourse apparently cannot resort only to describing policy and implementation paths as such but must also provide relevant modes of legitimation of the policies in question. And, as will be shown below, such legitimation is now often provided by the relevant strands of the speculative/identity discourse which is increasingly being tied to policy discourses in both policy and policy-communication genres (cf. Krzyżanowski 2013) and which thus equips the changing policy discourses with necessary legitimacy frames.

Focussed on constructions of European identity in European Union's recent policy discourses on climate change, this article will analytically scrutinise the ways in which identity and related political discourses are deployed in the EU's recent and dynamic policy. The article chooses EUCC as an example of a new, internationally driven and, partially, also internationally oriented policy discourse which, though mainly concerning actions of the EU and its members, relies heavily on many global discursive and policy frames and often constitutes a response to actions (or lack thereof) undertaken elsewhere in the world.

Hence, the article looks at EUCC as an example of discourse in which, to large extent, the European Union's role as a global leader of climate change actions is constructed and in which the said leadership is viewed in a multifarious way which might eventually become equally crucial for other policy areas whose scope might be exceeding the area of the Union and its member states. As will be shown below, within the discourse of EUCC the actions of the EU are clearly constructed as not only resulting from international frameworks but also profoundly affecting, and changing, the relevant practices undertaken by other global actors in different parts of the world. For this reason, the EUCC is viewed as a very powerful instance of a policy discourse whose diffusion clearly reaches beyond the borders of the EU and has a strong potential of becoming prototypical in constructing the Union's identity and legitimacy through emphasising its role as an emergent global (policy) leader.

As the article argues, the arrival of the new character of policies of the EU – thus policies which are related to the EU and its member states but which are coordinated with international (extra-European or global) frameworks (as is the case with EUCC, cf. below) – not only prompts the renewed usage of identity discourse as a key argumentative resource but also, allowing for the strongly inter-/cross-national character of policies in question, it prompts the so-far unusual combination of identity discourses known from different stages of the European integration. Hence, as will be shown below, the current EUCC policy discourse not only strongly utilises some of the more recent patterns of European political identity discourses – such as e.g. those on European (knowledge-based) economy – but, in fact, it also eagerly revives some of the 'old' frames of European identity discourse. Such is, inter alia, the case with the revived discursive frame of global competition which, while allowing constructing the role of the European Union as a global leader in tackling climate change, resuscitates

some of the old patterns of identity discourses known from the period of 1970s when the discourse of European identity was initiated (cf. below).

The article draws on and applies the methodological apparatus of the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) in Critical Discourse Studies (for details, cf. Reisigl and Wodak 2009; Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2008) which allows relating the macro- and mezzo-level of contextualization to micro-level analyses of texts which form discourses in focus of the investigation. The analysis presented here draws on an established set of studies which apply DHA methods to the analyses of policy discourses and their socio-political ontologies (cf. Krzyżanowski and Wodak 2010 and 2011) as well as to the examination of political communication of the EU both within its institutions (cf. Krzyżanowski 2010, 2011, Wodak 2009) and in its recent Communication and Multilingualism Policies (Krzyżanowski 2008, 2009 and 2012). The study also wants to propose DHA as a method of studying EU policy discourse on climate change in a situation where there are almost no existent works on the EUCC discourses in comparison to the, e.g., well developed field of analysis of climate change narratives in the media (cf. Berglez and Olausson 2010; Boykoff 2008, Boykoff and Mansfield 2008, Carvalho 2005, Olausson 2009 and 2010; for overview, cf. Krzyżanowski 2013).

The analysis below works across two policy-relevant fields of action: on the one hand “the policy” itself and, on the other, “the policy communication” (cf. also Krzyżanowski 2013). While the former encompasses such genres as regulations and projects of regulations governing actions on EUCC and introducing EU-wide measures, the other, new field of policy communication comprises genres which support “publicisation” of EUCC policy and policy-relevant actions by explaining them to the public. The existence of both policy and policy-communication genres emphasises that, analytically, one must cope with a peculiar discursive duality between, on the one hand, discursive construction and prescription of action (within policy discourse) and of interpretations of its importance and social, political and economic salience of those actions (within policy-communication discourse).

The article opens up with a brief description of the history and development of identity-related discourses in the process of European integration as well as of the key recent discursive frames determining EU policy. This part, which serves building a point of departure for the later analyses, describes two major stages of development of the EEC/EC/EU identity discourse – in the 1970s and in the 1990s/2000s – and points to the key features of those discourses as well as the main internal/external reasons behind the change of trajectory of the identity rhetoric in the process of European integration. Dealing with the major recent policy frames of the European Union in recent years, it also points to the eminence of the, on the one hand, politically-driven discourses, and, on the other hand, the economically driven frames. After providing a contextual section depicting origins and key stages of development of the EUCC, the article moves to its central analytical section. There, after describing the empirical material and, especially, the development of new genres of ‘policy’ and ‘policy communication’, the article introduces its methodology and the central analytical categories before moving to the subsequent analysis which points to the key features and discursive constructions of identity and EU leadership in the EUCC discourse.

2. Identity and Policy Frames in European Political Discourses

Marking the beginning of European institutional discourses on identity, the EC summit in Copenhagen in 1973 witnessed a publication of the so-called “Declaration on the European Identity” (cf. European Communities, 1973) issued the then nine member states of the European Community. The declaration included ‘the nine’s’ pledge for tighter cooperation within Europe. That pledge was

issued in order to address Europe's rather problematic context – especially globally/internationally (the international turmoil caused by the World Oil Crisis; cf. Stråth, 2000) but also, in a related way, internally (earlier the same year, the European Communities had welcomed new members, including the UK, with traditional – contrasting to most of the Communities' founding states – very strong cross-Atlantic ties).

Since the international – or not solely European – motivations were behind the 1973 Declaration of the European Identity, it is not surprising that the document introduced the international, or global, references as the standard features of talking about European identity. Along such discursive dimensions, the uniqueness and unity of Europe came to be perceived as not only viable and profitable in/for the European context but also as significant internationally or globally. As the document argued:

“The Europe of the Nine is aware that, as it unites, it takes on new international obligations. European unification is not directed against anyone, nor is it inspired by a desire for power. On the contrary, the Nine are convinced that their union will benefit the whole international community since it will constitute an element of equilibrium and a basis for co-operation with all countries, whatever their size, culture or social system. The Nine intend to play an active role in world affairs” (European Communities, 1973, pt. 9).

Such and other statements were frequent in the 1970s discourse of European identity. They also point to the fact that, once started to be defined, European identity would not only need to be defined internally but also – or perhaps especially – externally or ‘internationally’. The latter would take place by means of reference – or very often, as above, the meaningful non-reference – to United States and other global entities as the non-European others. While such discursive dynamics could also eventually help construct the uniqueness of Europe or its thus enhanced international/global position, this would happen despite frequent reassurances that, in fact, the thus introduced us/them distinction does not threaten international or global relations (cf. Krzyżanowski 2010).

Following that first phase of the EEC/EC/EU European identity discourse, the question of identity did not play any prominent role in the European integration discourses throughout the 1980s and the majority of the 1990s when the EC/EU remained preoccupied chiefly with different aspects of economic and related cooperation within Europe. However, this situation started to change in the period of the late 1990s and early 2000s when we witness a renewed revival of European identity discourses now rooted in the increasing uncertainty of the future of the European project in the wake of its new political aims. Hence, again in a situation of both external yet mainly internal insecurity about the European project – spawned by the the raging and often disputed ‘democratic deficit’ of the EU, its forthcoming Eastward Enlargement, as well as accelerating globalisation and, last but not least, the imminent economic and Euro-zone crisis – questions about EU identity started to yet again loom large. However, contrary to the earlier stages of their development, the more recent European political identity discourses of the 1990s and 2000s to large extent ceased to emphasise the aforementioned international dimension of European identity discourse, including those pertaining to explicit/implicit focus on juxtapositions/comparisons EU vs. the USA and other ‘global players’. Instead, the ‘new’ discourse of European identity was mainly inward looking and entailed, most prominently, an intensified search for responses to such questions as: What is Europe? What are its core values? What should be its future in political terms? Those questions would now, unlike before,

be mainly considered in the ‘internal’ terms with ideas as to how to construct the identity of a changing and transforming considered from intra-European rather than international terms.

The expressions of new ‘internal’ European identity culminated in the famous Future of Europe Debate (cf. Krzyżanowski and Oberhuber, 2007) and, therein, of the so-called ‘speculative talks on Europe’ and other accounts of the ‘European soul-searching’ (cf. Weiss, 2002; Wodak and Weiss, 2004; Wodak, 2009 and 2010) all of which not only revived the interest in Europe’s (political?) identity but also positioned anew the major European identity discourses. They also gave rise to the longer process of rethinking of Europe’s identity which culminated in, inter alia, the works of the so-called ‘*Reflection Group on the Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe*’ installed by the President of the European Commission in 2004 (cf. also Krzyżanowski 2010). The said reflection group suggested that the question of European identity, which must often be posed anew, requires first and foremost considering the questions of how Europe should be constructed internally – by its people’s and institutions – rather than externally or internationally.

Such inward-looking discourse about Europe’s rediscovered political ‘self’ coincided with the development of many arguments related to the democratic character of the European Union or, more specifically, to the questions related to the crisis of the Union’s political foundations or its so-called ‘*democratic deficit*’. Those questions – realized in diversity of EU-originating and related discourses – undertook the issue of ever-more complex relation between the supranational EU system and the broadly-perceived European citizenry which still remained closed within member nation-states and, except for the EP elections, had little direct impact on the form, shape and pace of the processes of European integration. Debates about the Union’s democratic deficit (cf. inter alia Majone 1998, Follesdal and Hix 2006, Pollak 2007, Eriksen 2009, Nicolaïdis 2010) aimed to show that, as such, the EU system is not socially representative and, acting through the intermediary of nation-state level, cannot become such either. It is in the process of re-constructing Euro-polity, and finding its largely-absent legitimacy, that the identity of the European project also got reconstructed and discursively reformulated (cf. above). Thus, since the early 2000s, the EU has not only witnessed attempts to reform its institutions – and reconnect them with Europe’s citizens – but has also undergone a unique process of ‘*Soul Searching*’ (cf. Weiss 2002, Wodak and Weiss, 2004; Wodak, 2010) which undertook fundamental “questions of overall identity and legitimacy of Europe” (Weiss, 2002: 59). Such manifold processes of transformation of the EU gave rise to various new discourses and genres which, further to other forms of legitimisation, have been using various ‘moral’ or ideationally-oriented arguments for the development and justification of a (democratic) reformulation of Europe.

However, simultaneously to the development of the “democratic discourse” in the EU described above, since the mid-1990s the Union has also very strongly focussed on rethinking of the European economy, mainly from the point of view of employment, in the central focus of EU policy. At that time, Europe’s long-standing economic discourse becomes gradually reinvigorated (and indeed reinforced) with a view to find “a new collective sense of agency was needed at the highest level to drive an across-the-board agenda of systemic change and help create the conditions for a more competitive and cohesive Europe on the global stage” (Jones 2005: 247). Thus, whereas re-initiated with a Europe-internal scope, the economic discourse was brought, yet again, to the fore of the European project – and almost all of its policies – with a pronounced view to strengthen Europe’s economic position globally or internationally.

The highpoint of the development of the revived economic frame of the European project is definitely the European Union Lisbon Strategy (cf. European Council 2000) implemented in the spring of 2000 as the key document describing the economically-driven policy directions of the EU in the 2000s. The main aim of the Lisbon Strategy was to “define a new strategy to tackle the challenges of globalisation, reinforced by the enlargement of the Union, and of demography, characterised by the rapid ageing of the population” (Dion 2005: 295). In accordance with that strictly socio-economic rationale for the Strategy, the latter outlines its “new strategic goal” (European Council 2000: pt. 5) “to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”.

Often criticised (cf. Armstrong, Begg and Zeitlin 2008, Zgajewski and Hajjar 2005) and subsequently relaunched on several occasions (in 2005 and in 2010 as the ‘Europe 2020 strategy’), the Lisbon Strategy as such proved to be a failure. However, despite that, it is often pointed to as the main reason behind placing the economically-driven arguments at the forefront of many policies and policy discourses in the European Union of the 2000s. There, as is argued, the economic discourse “has become a powerful economic imaginary in the last 20 years or so and, as such, has been influential in shaping policy paradigms, strategies, and policies in and across many different fields of social practice” (Jessop 2008: 2; cf. also Fairclough and Wodak 2008).

3. European Union Policy on Climate Change

While to a significant degree located in between the aforementioned EU ‘democratic’ and ‘economic’ discourses of the 1990s and especially 2000s (cf. above), the EU Climate Change Policy (EUCC) relies on yet another duality. Namely, it constitutes a departure from the strictly internally-driven concerns of the EU policy and an attempt to implement, in a local context, the global climate change policy regimes which in recent years have mainly been defined by the The 1997 Kyoto Protocol to the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, cf. <http://unfccc.int>). Kyoto remains the main document spelling out percentage-based commitments of the world’s industrialized economies on cutting greenhouse-gas emissions and has for the long time (i.e. until the end of 2012) been considered the main international legal act outlining the global response of climate change in the first years of 2000s. However, despite a wide consensus on Kyoto’s implementation (including in the EU), it has, for several years now, lacked the (full) endorsement of many other global powers. Of these, the position taken up by the USA – which in fact stalled Kyoto implementation from its beginning in the early 2000s (cf. Helm 2008) – has proved to be the most notorious. As Kyoto expired at the end of 2012, the UNFCCC-COP (Conference of Partners) assemblies have in recent years been working on reaching a new global deal beyond 2012 and on working out new solutions on global deal in climate change irrespective of its opponents. Those actions remain, however, unsuccessful as no global agreement was reached at any of the recent UNFCCC-COPs including those in Copenhagen in 2009 and in Doha in 2012 (i.e. the last COP before the expiry of Kyoto in its current form) which were accompanied by large-scale international attention.

As such, the EUCC starts in the year of 2000 when the First European Climate Change Programme (ECCP I) is introduced in order to fulfil the European Union’s Kyoto commitments which entered into force in 2005. The ECCP I (cf. European Commission 2006)¹ was hence mainly a large-scale consultative process undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders including, inter alia, EU institutions, EU member states as well as representatives of different industries and anti-climate-change activist groups. The ECCP I coincided with the development of policy on the EU’s Emissions

Trading Scheme (ETS) which was proposed in 2003 and entered into force in 2005 (i.e. along with Kyoto). The ETS was the first international trading scheme which set out initially national (EU Member State) and later on centralized EU-wide allocations for the limits of greenhouse gas emissions to its large-scale producers. In fact the ETS also constituted a milestone of the Second EU Climate Change Programme (ECCP II)² which, introduced in 2005, also encompassed further actions in such areas as biofuels or taxation of (polluting) vehicles. It also related the aims of climate change policy to those of the (then still valid) Lisbon Agenda by means of coordinating measures to improve climate change actions and the issues of economic growth and job creation.

It is in the process of implementation of the ECCP II that one encounters the arrival of further major policy milestones. First, in 2007, the European Council endorses the so-called “20-20 by 2020” idea which meant that all EU member states would cut their greenhouse-gas emissions by 20% (in relation to 1990 levels) as well as increase to 20% the use of renewable energy by 2020. That idea was also at the forefront of the key CEC policy document of that period, i.e. the 2007 Green Paper on “Adapting to Climate Change” (cf. below). In the aftermath, in 2008, an EU Climate and Energy Package³ was adopted which showed ways of implementing the previous measures and coordinating them strongly with other fields such as e.g. the EU Energy Policy. The Package also added yet another idea of including the issue of cutting energy use by 20% of projected 2020 levels (thus the project is now called “20-20-20”). As was decided upon accepting the Climate and Energy Package, the 20% goals (in all three fields) could be increased to 30% by 2030 in case a global Kyoto-related (or in fact post-Kyoto) deal was reached. While beyond 2010, the EUCC remained within the framework set out by ECCP I and II as well as by the EU Climate and Energy Package (cf. above), it also showed a further alignment of climate change policy ideas to the renewed economic goals of the Union inscribed into Europe 2020 Strategy (a descendant of the aforementioned Lisbon Strategy; cf. above) which was adopted by the Union almost simultaneously⁴.

An important aspect of the EUCC is that, while it takes a generally open pro-Kyoto stance, it positions the EU’s actions and the Union’s policies and also initiates a potential competition with those who oppose the Kyoto regime. Thus, while already unusual as a policy field in terms of its global/international anchorage and framing, the EUCC additionally opens a potential competition between the EU, which often claims to be at the forefront of the countries in favour of Kyoto, and other states – most notably the USA – who are or have for the long time been against the Kyoto-related regime. This competition is additionally fuelled by the fact that, before Kyoto (i.e. between mid-1970s and late 1990s), the USA was often seen as a global leader of climate change politics (cf. Vogler and Bretherton, 2006). However, since the Kyoto debates in the late 1990s and throughout the first decade of the 2000s, the European Union appeared as a contender to take over global leadership of climate change policy by not only introducing its own EU-internal policy measures (cf. Oberthür and Roche-Kelly 2008, and below) but also by favouring to pursue the global ratification of Kyoto without the USA and a few other important states. However, since 2010 (the aftermath of the Copenhagen UNFCCC-COP in 2009), the US-EU competition started to be toned down in view of a new, clearly pro-active US administration. At the same time, new dimensions of struggle for a global deal on climate change have appeared between, on the one hand, the developed and developing countries (cf. Bodansky 2010) or between the Western countries – spearheaded by the EU – and the emergent economic powers such as Brazil, Russia, India and China (also known as BRIC).

4. Imagining the EU Identity through the Policy Discourse on Climate Change: Analysis

4.1. Contextualisation and Description of the Empirical Material

The policy and policy-communication documents analyzed below are taken from two significant turning points in the development of EUCC, namely 2007 and 2011. Those periods are selected according to their relevance in terms of both EU-specific climate change policy developments and from the point of view of broader global trends in tackling climate change. The year of 2007 is characterized in the EU context by the start of thinking about climate change policies that would go beyond the Union's ECCPs (cf. above) as well as beyond the Kyoto provisions which would expire in 2012. Accordingly, in 2007, the EU proposes the analyzed Green Paper in the process of debating the eventual EU Climate and Energy Package (eventually adopted in 2008). At the same time, 2007 is also one of the final years of the US-American Republican administration of G.W. Bush which vehemently opposed ratification of Kyoto by the USA thus, in fact, stalling further progress on the global climate deal. Globally, the year of 2007 also marks the start of post-Kyoto negotiations, particularly in the run-up to the 2010 major UNFCCC-COP Conference in Copenhagen. On the other hand, the year of 2011 marks the further stage of development of EU-CC policy when the latter was gradually moving towards elaboration of actions to be undertaken not only beyond Kyoto (2012) but especially until 2020. This takes place in line with the EU general politico-economic provisions encapsulated in the "Europe 2020" strategy i.e. the cornerstone of EU economic policy after 2010 (cf. above). In extra-European terms, the year of 2011 also marks the highpoint of Barack Obama's first Democratic US administration which proved to be – at least officially – much more committed to a global CC deal than its Republican antecedents. The year of 2011 also means the final stage of the validity period of the Kyoto protocol which, in view of its eventual expiry in 2012 and in the absence of any concrete decisions taken at the COP in Copenhagen in 2010, would apparently fail to meet its targets.

Framed by the aforementioned context, the ensuing analysis of "policy" genres focuses on, on the one hand, the CEC Green Paper "*Adapting to climate change in Europe – options for EU action*" (European Commission 2007a), a 27-page-long document which, in line with the usual functions of green papers, was supposed to stimulate further policy-relevant debate and actions on EU-CC policy beyond 2010. The analysis of EU-CC policy genres further also includes examination of a CEC Communication entitled "*A Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050*" (European Commission 2011a). As is the case with all such communications, the analyzed 15-page text outlines a very likely policy action by describing its rationale and potential scope. On the other hand, the analysis of "policy communication genres" encompasses documents from the same periods - i.e. 2007 and 2011 - such as an info-sheet "*Combating Climate Change – The EU leads the way*" (European Commission 2007b) and a factsheet "*Climate Change*" (European Commission 2011b). Both of those documents clearly share their functions inasmuch they present policy "milestones" as well as potential (yet very positive) lines of their interpretation.

4.2. Methodology

The analysis follows the usual steps and categories of analysis developed within the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) in Critical Discourse Studies (cf. Reisigl and Wodak 2009; Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2008) and encompasses two levels i.e. of the so-called 'entry-level' and 'in-depth' analysis (cf. Krzyżanowski 2010a, for details). The general aim of the entry-level or thematic analysis (cf. 4.3, below) is to map out the contents of analyzed texts and thus to ascribe them to particular discourses to which the analyzed texts may belong. The key analytical categories of thematic analyses

are thus *'discourse topics'* which “conceptually, summarize the text, and specify its most important information” (van Dijk 1991: 113).

On the other hand, the in-depth analysis of the EUCC discourse (cf. 4.4, below) is conducted by means of analytical categories drawing in particular on the so-called *discursive strategies* – of ‘self- and other-presentation’ (Reisigl and Wodak 2001 and 2009) as well as of the ‘representation of social actors’ (van Leeuwen 2008) – which provide an array of detailed linguistic-analytical tools for examining different aspects of discursive representations of ‘us’ and ‘them’. Among those representations, the article focuses on (a) how social/political actors are referred to and which characteristics are ascribed to them discursively (strategies of ‘reference/nomination’ and ‘predication’; cf. Reisigl and Wodak 2001) and (b) how the agency of different actors is constructed and emphasised (e.g. who is presented as active or passive within strategies of ‘activation’/‘passivisation’; cf. van Leeuwen 2008). Allowing for the fact that the followed catalogue discursive strategies as proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (2001) highlights the importance of *argumentation strategies*, the article also investigates *topoi* – or argumentation schemes and their headings (cf. Plantin 2006, Krzyżanowski 2010 for details) – which help delineate which of the key recent discursive and argumentative frames are deployed in the analysed texts and what are the ways in which that discursive resource is actually used. As it is assumed, the presence of some *topoi* – e.g. the *topos of economy* – would be symptomatic for the framing of discourses by means of the general discursive and policy frames described before while of the other – e.g. the *topos of crisis*, *topos of leadership* – would help the authors emphasise the salience or critical importance of the debated issues and policies.

4.3 Key Topics of the Analysed EUCC Policy Texts

The first of the analyzed EU policy documents, i.e. the 2007 CEC Green Paper, outlines diverse EU-internal actions on CC while emphasizing the necessity and modes of close collaboration between the EU and its Member States. The key topics of the document include: (a) Need for adapting to CC in Europe (cf. “Europe will not be spared” section, below), (b) Global aspects of CC, (c) European adaptation actions (including early action, action at the EU level as well as actions necessary at the level of Member States), (d) EU actions in such fields as, inter alia, energy, transport, health, water, marine and fisheries, (e) Adaptation in external actions as well as in climate research supported by the EU and in actions involving wider European society.

While the other analyzed policy document – i.e. the 2011 CEC Communication – has the pronounced general aim of presenting a roadmap for EU-CC policy in near and distant future (until 2050), it covers such topics as: (a) CC as one of the key challenges for the future EU policy in general, (b) Actions on transition to low-carbon economies across the EU (including the so-called ‘sectoral actions’ within e.g. power-sector, industry, transport, etc), (c) Low-carbon future as an overall economic aim of the EU, and (d) The international dimensions of the current and future EU-CC policy. While, clearly, some of those topics (e.g. the idea of sector-related action converge) resonate with the 2007 document analyzed above, other topics – especially those on e.g. international importance of EU elections (not on salience of international actions for the EU) – reflect a shift towards the agency of the EU as a global leader in CC-related actions.

On the other hand, The two analyzed EU-CC policy communication texts carry the usual aim of presenting the milestones of EU policy to the public as well as of legitimizing that policy by means of presenting facts on CC which make that policy indispensable. While the 2007 “*Combating Climate*

Change” document presents CC as such by moving onto description of different EU actions (altogether framed as an “integrated response”; European Commission 2007b: 5), the 2011 factsheet on “*Climate Change*” follows a largely similar pattern by outlining key aspects of CC which is “happening now” (European Commission 2011b: 2) as well as emphasizes the EU actions, albeit also in the more global context of e.g. the Kyoto commitments.

4.4 In-Depth Analysis of Selected Strands of the EUCC Discourse

In general terms, the arguments expressed in the majority of the first analysed policy document are framed through different realizations of a *topos of crisis* which points to the critical nature of the current climate change situation as well as to the necessity of undertaking further actions in order to avoid imminent dangers. Within such crisis-oriented framing, the role of different institutional and other actors in tackling climate change is constructed with the majority of such construction focused on EU as a central “global player” in tackling CC. However, it is vital that not the EU but those of whom it thinks in the policy discourse relation to climate change are nominalised and foregrounded in discourse (albeit in a collective way).

One such strategic move takes place by means of a reference/predication “developing countries”, which the EU is willing to help via its not only European but also globally-relevant actions. As is argued in a section of the document devoted to “Integrating adaptation into EU external actions” (5.2: 21-24),

“Climate change is a serious challenge to poverty reduction in developing countries and threatens to undo many development achievements. Poor communities in these countries depend highly on the direct use of local natural resources” (European Commission 2007a: 22).

In a following passage, the same argument is developed further when the role of such developed countries is mentioned thus portraying their limited agency. While here, a historical dimension is added, it is also interesting that the EU as such is not mentioned but in fact the aggregation of “developed countries” is used to refer to those countries which are endowed with the major responsibility to act. What is vital, the USA is not nominated or foregrounded in this context in which it is usually mentioned as the main perpetrator in global climate change (e.g. in the debates at the recent UNFCCC-COP in Copenhagen in 2009; cf. Bodansky 2010). As is argued

“Being responsible for most of the historic accumulation of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere, developed countries will need to support adaptation actions in developing countries” (European Commission 2007a: 5).

In fact, the non-mentioning of the US becomes salient in the document which later on describes those parts of the world which even have positive experiences of tackling CC that could be shared globally.

However, in mentioning different areas/states from around the world, Japan is nominalised as a country while the known opponents of the Kyoto climate change deal such as US and Australia (or the Kyoto defectors like Canada) are omitted. Yet, interestingly, their key regions (Southeast Australia or Southwest US) are deemed more important:

“Impact analysis and good adaptation practices should be exchanged between industrialised regions facing similar problems, for example, in Japan, Southeast Australia, and Southwest US. Cooperation strategies with these countries should be further elaborated” (European Commission 2007a: 23).

Here, one encounters a recontextualisation of the regional focus which is otherwise commonly used in the EU discourses on its ‘internal’ policy and its multilevel character also known as Europeanisation (cf. Featherstone and Radaelli 2003; Schmidt and Radaelli 2004). However, the mentioning of the regions – rather than countries – in an international or global dimension is indeed strategic. Namely, the fact of naming US and Australian regions as sharing the experiences of developing countries (cf. above) certainly fuels the overall competition between the EU and the US (and its CC-policy allies). As such, it presents America’s limited achievements in the field of climate change action and thus implicitly emphasising the identity-constitutive difference between pro- climate-change active EU and inactive – and in fact counteractive - US.

On the other hand, the in-depth analysis of the policy document from 2011 reveals that, contrary to its earlier antecedent, it is framed almost solely from a strictly economic point of view and by means of different realizations of the *topos of economy*. However, similarly to the 2007 document, the 2011 CEC Communication also thematises the issue of the EU’s global role in tackling CC thus emphasising the new, international identity of the European Union constructed at the back of the EUCC discourse.

As is evident from the later document – of which an entire section is devoted to “The International Dimension” (pages 13-14) – while the EU is aware of its global responsibility for CC-related actions, it also is mindful of the fact that it cannot act alone. As it is argued

“The EU with little more than 10% of global emissions will not be able to tackle climate change on its own. Progress internationally is the only way to solve the problem of climate change, and the EU must continue to engage its partners” (European Commission 2011a: 13).

Hence, a clear reference is made to the fact that also the engagement of other important global players (here we have another implicature which suggests the role in fact not taken by the US; cf. above) is important further to the EU-originating actions. Importantly, while the overall argument of the passage is slightly negative in tone (note the negatively-charged “non-reference” to the US and the clearly over-emphasised EU action), the language as such is still very politically-correct by referring to other important actors as “partners”.

Importantly, when those partners of the EU as a global leader are finally nominalised, it becomes clear (in line with the deployed discursive strategies of not naming the US) that the American role in the process is not thematised. Accordingly, it is suggested that

“A number of Europe’s key partners from around the world, such as China, Brazil and Korea, are addressing these issues, first through stimulus programmes, and now more and more through concrete action plans to promote the ‘low carbon economy’. Standstill would mean losing ground in major manufacturing sectors for Europe” (European Commission 2011a: 13)

As it also becomes evident, the EU – whose identity as a global leader or at least global facilitator of climate change action thus comes to the fore – now sees China, Brazil, Korea and other emergent

economies as its key partners (partially in line with the post-Copenhagen 2010 discourse; cf. above) as well as, to some extent, as certain role models which already implement the solutions soon-to-be necessary in the European context. Though here, we encounter yet another metonymical reference to the aforementioned countries as ‘partners’, it is vital that the eventually economically-framed argument (e.g. the reference to ‘manufacturing sectors’ as well as, again, to the ‘low-carbon economy’) implicitly points to the competition between the EU and its ‘partners’. As is argued at the end of the passage, the global cooperation is not as much about tackling climate change globally as much as it is about sharing climate-change-related solutions which could be fruitful to the European economic development and should thus be introduced and implemented in the EU context.

Moving to the analysis of the two selected policy-communication texts it becomes evident that they are framed by the *topoi of crisis, of economy* as well as by the *topos of EU global leadership* which serve as key argumentative resources for constructing the arguments on EU’s actions against climate change well as the Union’s unique and world-leading role in climate-change response.

The 2007 policy-communication info-sheet *Combating Climate Change – the EU Leads the Way* argues for a global, coordinated response to climate change also calls for the EU’s role as a global leader in such a ‘response’ (*topos of EU global leadership*). It claims that:

“The EU is not starting from scratch in tackling climate change. The EU has been progressively strengthening its measures to increase energy efficiency, limit emissions from factories and cars, and encourage energy savings for a number of years” (European Commission 2007b: 10).

Importantly, as is argued, the EU has for a long time had climate change at the forefront of its agenda and has already put in place several measures which may support reduction or eradication of phenomena accelerating the climate change. Importantly, the leading role of the EU thus constructed here does not entail the competitive discourse (between the EU and the US or other “partners”, as above) but focuses on climate-change-related policies (e.g. in the field of ‘energy’). Those nominalised policies are, however, set to strategically re-emphasise Europe’s unique identity of a thoughtful leader in the (global) anti climate change action. Importantly, one encounters here construction of the EU as a leader not by taking the leading actions as much as by becoming an example to others on how to tackle CC.

However, the discourse directed against the US (and other Kyoto defectors, such as e.g. Australia) eventually comes to the fore when an argument is put forward that

“Even though the United States and Australia have not ratified the protocol and are therefore not formally contributing to the objective, the EU has gone ahead with concrete measures to achieve its emission targets, which take each member state’s level of economic and industrial development into account” (European Commission 2007b: 10).

Hence, yet again, the construction of EU’s ‘leadership’ identity is fostered by means of showing the Union’s unique commitment to policy intensification as well as integrated actions in different (policy) fields. This helps arguing that EU is committed to tackling climate change – or in fact “going ahead” in that process – by taking actions not pursued elsewhere. Importantly, unlike in the policy genres (cf. above), the US is mentioned here nominally thus providing the public (i.e. the key target group of policy-communication) with the example of who is different than the EU – or who is the EU’s identity

constitutive other – and who is not undertaking appropriate measures to tackle the climate change in global terms.

The other policy-communication text from 2011 largely follows the same logic as the aforementioned 2007 document. It hence provides a set of arguments which are rooted in, on the one hand, *topos of crisis*, and, on the other hand, in constructions of the EU-leadership oriented identity which is realized by means of overtly – if outright excessively – positive construction of the role of the EU and its anti-CC actions. In this context, a mentioning of greenhouse gases (GHGs) is also made by referring to them as one of the key reasons for CC:

“The vast majority of the world’s leading climate experts attribute this warming mainly to a build-up of greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted by human activities, in particular the burning of fossil fuels – coal, oil and gas – and the destruction of forests. Greenhouse gases are so called because they trap the sun’s heat in the atmosphere in the same way as the glass of a greenhouse” (European Commission 2011b: 2).

While such reference to GHG is a usual element of the majority of climate change discourses (cf., inter alia, analyses of relevant media analyses)⁵, the very strong emphasis on the greenhouse gases in the opening of the document seems to be intentional as it eventually allows to, yet again, re-emphasise the European Union’s unique role in tackling climate change. That role is depicted exactly by means of action-oriented reference to EU’s policy to tackle GHGs. As it is argued later on in the document,

“The world’s first and biggest international GHG emissions trading system, the EU ETS has made climate change a boardroom issue for companies by putting a price on their carbon emissions” (European Commission 2011b: 3).

The presentation of the EU’s unique role and international leader-identity is then also framed by means of a set of general statements. As it is argued in the 2011 policy-communication document:

“Long in the forefront of international efforts to tackle climate change, the European Union is committed to becoming a highly energy-efficient, low-carbon economy. It has set itself some of the world’s most ambitious climate and energy targets for 2020 and is the first region to have passed binding legislation to ensure they are achieved” (European Commission 2011b: 3).

Here, in overall terms, we see a yet another realization of the *EU-leadership topos* which is augmented by temporal statements which claim that EU is “long in the forefront” on tackling CC. Importantly, that tackling takes place, yet again, not as much by means of undertaking globally-responsible actions as much as it is by “setting itself” the pronounced “ambitious targets” including making them legally binding. Hence, one yet again encounters the construction of the EU role by means of self-reference to the Union’s own CC actions as exemplary and central for the rest of the world.

5. Conclusions

As the analysis above suggests, the arrival of new, globally-responsive and internationally-conditioned fields of EU policy such as the Union’s policy on climate change significantly changes the trajectories of the European policy discourses. And, not only are those discourses now cutting

across the variety of genres and of the relevant fields of political action – such as the analysed ‘policy’ and ‘policy communication’ (cf. Krzyzanowski 2013) – but they are also changing the ways in which the policy regimes are constructed and expressed. One of the major such ways is now, as has been shown in the analysis, by means of constructing the European Union’s role and identity as a global leader who, in a way often distinct from other global players (often named as specific countries but often also strategically omitted), ever-more actively takes the lead in shaping global policy framework such as those related to climate change. At the macro level, such construction of the EU’s global policy identity constitutes an instance of unprecedented discursive dynamics – which might become central also with regard to other policy areas – yet on a micro level it draws extensively on strategies of ‘othering’ (juxtaposing positive ‘us’ and negative ‘them’) which have been known from many political discourses eagerly drawing on identity constructions as central resources in shaping political legitimacy.

The ways in which Europe’s – and others’ – identities are constructed in the analysed policy discourse remains highly heterogeneous and indeed ambivalent. Thus, the constructions of Europe in EUCC are drawing on the variety of discursive and identity-constructive patterns which not only align with the recent discursive frames of the European integration (such as the aforementioned ‘democratic’ or ‘economic’ discourses of the 1990s and especially 2000s) but also recontextualise patterns of identity construction known from, e.g., the 1970s characterised by the increased international/global tension. It is from those earlier, institutional discourses of European identity that, as has been shown, current policies adopt some of their key discursive elements such as, most notably, the drive towards constructing Europe’s uniqueness in climate change action (note the *topos of EU global leadership*) vis-à-vis other global players. The latter, as is often said, fail to be as advanced and committed to counteracting the climate change in the way pursued by the EU which thus appears to be a *sui generis* global leader in tackling climate change.

Crucially, while reviving some of the ‘older’ patterns of identity constructions, current policies such as the EUCC also adopt the peculiar ambivalence, which, one may say, was inscribed in internationally-oriented EEC/EC/EU identity discourse ever since its beginnings. Thus, while aiming to construct the new, international leadership of the EU in climate change policy and actions, the Union’s policy discourses not only focus on the diverse description and argumentation in favour of the EU as either long-term or emergent climate change leader. By the same token, they also include many explicit but in particular implicit references – or even meaningful non-references – to other key global players who apparently fail in climate change action. Surely, while by not naming too often the key international actors (especially the USA) who stall international climate change response, the EU policy discourses retain the politically-correct character. However, judging by the number of implicit references, they still clearly point as to who is ‘worse’ than the now allegedly leading EU in facing challenges of the climate change.

All in all, the analyses presented above point to the fact that, with the significant change in the EU policy and its acquisition of a new, internationally-conditioned character, the analyses of EU policy and political discourses should more than ever remain mindful of the role of historical recurrence of discourses in the process of discursive change (cf. inter alia Bernstein 1990, Krzyzanowski and Wodak 2008, Wodak 1996 and 2000). Thus, while analysing synchronic aspects of the EU’s policy discourse – such as the current identity constructions in the EUCC – we should also remain open to the fact that, as they stand, many of those discourses may, or will, in fact be re-using or re-contextualising discourses produced in the course of European integration before. Thus, by the same

token, one also needs to further those methodologies, which, just like the Discourse-Historical Approach in Critical Discourse Studies applied above, remain open to the diachronic change of discourses within and across different fields of (social and) political action. It is only with such methodologies that one is able to analyse the intricacies and ambivalences of the dynamic discourse of EU policy at the times when it becomes not only locally but also globally or internationally conditioned.

Notes

¹ Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eccp/first_en.htm For further details and all relevant documents concerning EU policy on climate change.

² Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eccp/second_en.htm

³ Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/index_en.htm

⁴ Cf. Oberthür and Roche-Kelly (2008) for a detailed description of key documents forming EU-CC policy.

⁵ Cf. Berglez and Olausson (2010), Boykoff (2008), Carvalho (2005), Olausson (2009 and 2010), For overview, cf., inter alia, Krzyżanowski (2013) or Olausson and Berglez (2014).

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