Ethnography and Critical Discourse Studies

Michał Krzyżanowski

Critical Discourse Studies and Ethnography

This chapter presents a problem-oriented merger of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and ethnography. It takes stock of a number of recent developments that significantly altered both critical-analytic and ethnographic research practice. Whilst ethnography and CDA have never formed first-hand associations, the recent years have seen a number of developments that significantly altered both critical-analytic and ethnographic research as well as their orientation towards cross-disciplinary research dialogue. Those developments have not only changed ethnography and CDA internally but also opened up CDA to fieldwork and ethnography and vice versa.

Originally associated mainly with explorations of lexical and grammatical aspects of predominantly written texts, CDA has eventually developed into a broader field of research of Critical Discourse Studies or CDS. The latter, while still drawing on some of the CDA's original ideas (e.g. on the interplay of language/discourse and ideology as well as of their constitutive force in social relations), clearly reaches beyond the traditional 'schools' or 'trends' of the movement (Krzyżanowski and Forchtner 2016). Whilst, to be sure, some areas of CDA still remain devoted to the textually oriented analyses (esp. Fairclough 2009) other areas of CDA/CDS have seen the movement

towards more contextually focussed and actor-related types of analysis (for overview, see Krzyżanowski 2010).

As a result of moving towards exploring discourse from the point of view of its situatedness in respective contexts, some areas of CDA embarked on rethinking of some of its fundamental concepts such as, most notably, text and context (i.e. concepts central to practically since its beginnings in the 1980s). Having previously been treated in a limited way – mainly as a description of 'inanimate' social-political conditions or as a physical 'setting' of communicative practices – context was thus for a significant period of time approached in many areas of CDS a certain addition to textual analyses and not as part of the actual analysis in CDA (cf. Krzyżanowski 2010; Blommaert et. al. 2001; Flowerdew, this volume). This, however, has changed recently, and, in turn, allowed to scrutinise the key and traditional context-related analytical notions of CDA such as, e.g., recontextualisation (cf. Bernstein 1990, Wodak 2000; Krzyżanowski 2016) or interdiscursivity (cf. Fairclough 2001, Reisigl and Wodak 2009). It also re-emphasised the necessity to increase focus on contextual-to-textual macro-micro mediation (cf. Wodak 2006) in the analytical process.

CDS' move towards the more contextually-bound studies which relate fieldwork and ethnography to detailed analyses of 'situated' linguistic and other communicative practices has been matched by parallel developments in some other strands of research on language in/and society. We have seen, for example, a revival of the key proposals of 'ethnography of speaking' – originally initiated by Dell Hymes – and the development of the related 'linguistic ethnography' that combines "linguistic

analysis with ethnography, in order to probe the interrelationship between language and social life in more depth" (Tusting and Maybin 2007: 576). The neo-Hymesian ideas have also been crucial in Scollon and Scollon's (2003, 2004 and 2007) approach known as Mediated Discourse Analysis or 'nexus analysis' (see also Jones 2012). The latter argues for in-depth (ethnography-based) exploration of loci in which discourses and practices are seen as intersecting within limits of the contextually-conditioned 'affordances' and 'constraints' (ibid.).

On the other hand, ethnography has also recently acquired a significantly different and definitely a broader meaning which by now clearly exceeds its original denotation as just one of the key methods or techniques of anthropological research practice (cf., inter alia, Gobo 2008). This change has mainly taken place under the ever more pressing need to rethink the original remit of ethnography as initiated in, and strongly associated with, the social anthropology of Malinowski in the late 19th and early 20th century. In its classic sense, the social-anthropological ethnographic research was, namely, preoccupied with 'distant' cultures and societies, in what could often be seen as a post-colonial approach which looked at the 'other' cultures and societies as inherently 'exotic' and 'different' (especially if compared to forms of social, political and economic organisation in e.g. Europe). The original meaning of ethnography also focused on exploration of cultures and societies – i.e. of 'them' – in a rather simplified way that treated the studied groups as closed and homogeneous. In line with such approaches, ethnography in the traditional sense encompassed just the 'on-site' research 'in the field', which, however, often remained insensitive to

social, political and economic as well as historical conditions and wider contexts of development and change of the studied societies and social groups.

Recent years have brought a significant rethinking of ethnography and the broadening of its scope and its research philosophy. Ethnography has, namely, gradually "ceased to be associated with its objects of study (that is, with 'who' or 'what' is studied) and has become a designate of a certain research perspective (thus, related to a certain 'how')" (Oberhuber and Krzyżanowski 2008: 182; Krzyżanowski 2011b). Such a new perspective – now often called 'reflexive ethnography' (Davies 1999) – has been aptly described by Brewer (2000: 11) who claimed that ethnography has now become "not one particular method of data-collection but a style of research that is distinguished by its objectives, which are to understand the social *meanings* and activities of people in a given 'field' or setting" (emphasis in the original). While still largely consisting of fieldwork and related techniques as key methods of context-sensitive explorations (cf. below), ethnography has now become a designate of a complex and ordered, though not necessarily linear, research process which informs the work of researchers throughout the duration of their work (for examples, see Heller 2001; Wodak, Krzyżanowski and Forchtner 2012). Ethnography is now linking context-sensitive explorations across various social contexts where it is crucial to highlight parallels and interplays of context-specific dynamics. Ethnography hence encompasses – often interchangeably or simultaneously – political (Kubik 2009; Aronoff and Kubik 2013), organizational (Yanow 2012; Ybema 2014, Ybema et al 2009) and policy-

making analysis (Yanow 2000) as well as ethnographies of such contexts as medical settings (Galasiński 2011) or education institutions (Rogers 2011).

A crucial development in ethnography of late is also its long-awaited endorsement of *power* as one of the central components of studied social contexts and as probably the key factor fuelling the dynamics of studied forms of social, political (incl. politico-economic) and organisational change. As argued by Agar in one of the recent editions of his classic *The Professional Stranger* (see Agar 2008), the endorsement of power in ethnography was probably one of those developments that allowed it to (finally) adjust its views to the dynamics of contemporary social contexts and to the critical trends of analysis. It helped ethnography to recognise the fluidity, complexity and inherent diversity of the explored social fields – until recently often treated as 'settings' rather than 'contexts'. It also allowed for the fact that processes and phenomena studied and observed in the course of ethnographic fieldwork (e.g. individual and/or collective identifications) may have their ontology both within and beyond the studied groups and may also be motivated by dynamism of social power structures.

Indeed, the inherent multiplicity of studied social milieus has become the central object of research in ethnography of late. While originally preoccupied with 'fixed' and usually isolated social groups, ethnographers have, namely, now come increasingly to study the fluidity and complexity of examined social contexts. They have, thereby, attempted to embrace the diversity of studied spaces and have increasingly become preoccupied with contexts in which representatives of different

social groups interact and where their practices intersect. For example, in his excellent ethnographic study of urban regeneration Ocejo (2014) has argued that finding and ethnographically exploring spaces in which different people and groups interact and intersect – in his case night-bars and hang-out taverns of New York City – allows not only treating those as 'windows' to the studied social context/s but also as sites where traces of wider social and politico-economic processes (e.g. late-modern urban gentrification, rise of new inequalities, etc.) visibly come to the fore. In a similar vein, political and organisational ethnographers (see, inter alia, Bellier and Wilson, 2000b; Krzyżanowski 2011a) have long conducted ethnographies of organisations while looking at them as 'microcosms' of social, political and organisational realities and therefore as the key objects of critical exploration.

Finally, whilst changing its general perspective and becoming a certain style of research, ethnography has also broadened the scope of its techniques and methods. Those methods, which now form the very broad idea of 'fieldwork' in ethnography, range from different kinds of observations (including what is also sometimes labelled 'ethnographic observations'; Krzyżanowski and Oberhuber 2007) yet often verge at the intersection of participant and non-participant immersion (Gobo 2008). The observations are now also documented by means of not only notes but also recordings and visual imagery and also include an array of observation-supporting and supplementing techniques such as individual and group interviewing of different types of participants who are deemed to play direct or indirect role in the observed practices.

The Discourse-Ethnographic Approach (DEA)

Discourse-Ethnographic Approach (DEA) takes stock of the recent developments within ethnographic and critical-analytic research highlighted above. The key critical-analytic inspiration for the approach comes from the Discourse-Historical Approach in Critical Discourse Studies (see Krzyżanowski and Wodak 2009; Wodak 2001; Reisigl and Wodak 2009; Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2008) from which the DEA adopts a variety of principles. These include, inter alia, a *strong orientation towards problem-focused research* as well as a *devotion to analysing how discourses evolve and change over time as well as spatially* i.e. across multiple spaces and genres. Just like the DHA, the DEA is also interested in how discourses and their key elements are *recontextualised* in/across other discourses (see Bernstein 1990, for the original meaning of the term 'recontextualisation'; see also Krzyżanowski 2016) and how thus various interdiscursive connections are established.

As such, the DEA also profits from various discourse-oriented ethnographies conducted within the DHA. These range from from seminal early studies of interactions in, inter alia, medical and courtroom settings (see esp.: Wodak 1975; Wodak, Menz and Lalouschek 1990) to the discourse-ethnographic work performed by the DHA researchers in organizational and politico-organizational settings (for the most recent studies see, inter alia, Krzyżanowski and Oberhuber 2007; Wodak 2009; Krzyżanowski 2010; Wodak, Krzyżanowski and Forchtner 2012). So far, research

deploying DEA revolves mainly around problem-oriented relationships between CDA/CDS and ethnography applied to political organizational contexts (see below for examples). The key ethnographic inspirations of the DEA therefore originate within various ways of conducting political and organizational ethnographies (for recent accounts see: Aronoff and Kubik 2013; Kubik 2009; Ybema 2014; Ybema et al 2009) including as settings of policy-making and production of regulatory meanings (Wright 1994; Shore and Wright 1997; Yanow 2000).

Ethnography and CDS are analytically mobilised in the DEA as complementary general frameworks. However, their merger also penetrates deeper i.e. into mezzo- and micro- levels of analysis where triangulating between a set of stages of analytical research allows for different aspects of the ethnographic and discursive analyses to be carefully balanced. In case of the analyses presented below, such a balance is especially achieved in three stages of research (only selected aspects of which can be presented below due to limitations of space). The DEA must hence be viewed as reaching beyond the micro understanding of its major constituent parts – ethnography and CDS – as well as drawing extensively on their larger epistemological premises.

The central definition of ethnography followed in the DEA goes beyond its frequent treatment as 'the fieldwork' itself or as just a 'method' or a 'data-collection technique' (for discussion, see Hammersley, 1992). Instead, *ethnography is viewed by the DEA as a complex, situated and ordered though not necessarily linear research process* which informs exploratory work from the point of view of initial theorising

and hypothesising, through collecting data and the actual fieldwork, up to the systematic analyses of discourses and interactions and interpretation of findings (Wodak, Krzyżanowski and Forchtner 2012). On the other hand, from the point of discourse analysis, the DEA's approach rests on CDS' approach to *discourse as a social practice* and the idea that there exists "a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it" (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: 258). By the same token, the DEA also follows the more strictly discourse-historical ideas of discourses as 'historical', whereby they are viewed as "always connected to other discourses which were produced earlier as well as to those which are produced synchronically or subsequently" (Wodak 1996: 19; see also Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). Just like, the DHA, the DEA also locates discourse and discourse theory below the middle-range level of theorisation. This means that, whereas key concepts such as discourse, text or context are central for the DHA, they are the basis of discourse-oriented theory that underlies the analytical methodology. On the other hand, various social- and political-scientific theories which allow explaining and highlighting the nature of the studied social, political and organizational problems are treated as grand theories which also underpin the post-analytical interpretation of the findings of problem-oriented discourse-ethnographic research.

The DEA follows some of the key principles and concepts of the DHA. Among others, these include, in particular: problem-orientation, studying various spaces and genres as well as operating within a multilevel and highly differentiated definition of context (for details, see Krzyżanowski 2011a). However, the DEA also seeks to extend their

meaning, especially while drawing on insights from other areas of CDS as well as from the wider social sciences. It recognises the fact that the key constituent elements of context require a more dynamic, agent-oriented view that would allow recognising not only the key constituent parts (levels) of the studied milieus but also their dynamic and socially-constructive character (interactions, roles of participants, changes in practices and behaviour over time, etc.). The DEA hence adds to the DHA's definition of context (Wodak 2001) insights from the socio-cognitive approach in CDS which argues that contexts are "not some kind of objective condition or direct cause, but rather (inter) subjective constructs designed and ongoingly updated in interaction by participants as members of groups and communities" (van Dijk, 2008: x).

On the other hand, the DEA also sees all social 'practices' as inherently linked and recognises discourse as the key locus of recontextualisation of those practices and the key site of reflection of their changing forms of articulation across social fields. Thereby, the DEA endorses the view that "all texts, all representations of the world and what is going on in it, however abstract, should be interpreted as representations of social practices" (van Leeuwen 2008: 5). Similarly, "as discourses are social cognitions, socially specific ways of knowing social practices, they can be, and are, used as resources for representing social practices" (ibid.: 6). Furthermore, DEA endorses the view that the way practices are structured is strongly dependent on the social fields in which they are prototypically nested (as elements of field specific-habitus; see Bourdieu 2005; Krzyżanowski 2014). Accordingly, local contexts such as organizations and institutions are seen as defining for the ways in which

practices are undertaken, often in a path-dependent way and, very often, in the course of reproduction of local customs, beliefs and norms.

DEA as a Research Process

Key Elements of Research Design in DEA

Research design in DEA usually comprises three key elements/stages:

(A) *Problem-Definition, Theorisation and Pre-Contextualisation*,

(B) *Fieldwork incl. Contextualisation*, and

(C) *Discourse-Historical Analysis*.

In stage (A) i.e. *Problem-Definition, Theorisation and Pre-Contextualisation*, the central problem of research is crystallised (along with key, relevant research questions) and its social significance is highlighted. At this stage, one also undertakes identification of key theories (incl. of grand-theoretical nature) and concepts that will inform the general conceptualisation of the problem as well as the eventual, post-analytical interpretation of findings.

Stage (B) - *Fieldwork incl. Contextualisation* – encompasses research conducted 'in the field' i.e. ethnographic observations, interviews as well as a collection of textual and other data and information. As such, the fieldwork serves several functions, the

main of which are: conducting research as such (in the course of observations), collecting data for analyses conducted later on (interviews, collection of textual data) and obtaining further information as the basis of field-based contextualisation (through observations, interviews, background information collection).

The final stage of DEA research – i.e. *Discourse-Historical Analysis* (C) – encompasses the process of final analyses of textual data (including from interviews and other forms of data collection and other genres encountered in the field) in line with key stages of DHA-driven examination (for details see Krzyżanowski 2010, see also Wodak this volume). The analyses start with the process of generic classification that helps ordering the materials according to various genres and practices as well as to provide initial lines of intertextual links between various sets of data. An entry-level (thematic) and in-depth (argumentation- or, if need be, interaction-oriented) analysis follows in order to discover further features of the analysed discourses as well as to distinguish between different textual and linguistic forms those discourses may take within various studied spaces and practices. The final aim of the analysis is to sketch interdiscursive relationships between various discourses and discovering patterns of recontextualisation across practices and genres.

Case Study/Application of DEA: Discourse-Ethnographic Analysis of Identities in the EU Institutions

In order to present how various elements of DEA research design work in practice, an illustrative case study is presented below. In order to facilitate its readability, the case study follows the key stages (A, B, C) of the research design enumerated above.

A: Problem Definition, Theorisation and Pre-Contextualisation

A.1. Problem Definition and Research Questions

The research exemplified here deals with the problem of *how identities are formed and transformed in discourses and practices of various EU institutions* and *how different forms of institutional bodies (especially the differences between short-lived and established institutions) influence the dynamism of identity construction within various spaces.*

A.2. Theorisation / Conceptualisation

While many social-theoretical and social-scientific approaches to collective or organisational as well as European identities (see Krzyżanowski 2010 for extensive overview) have been selected as a grand theoretical framing, the research presented here chooses to follow two central middle-range theoretical concepts. The first of them is that of *engrenage* (or *institutional/organisational immersion*) while the other, and closely related one, is that of *organisational culture*, with both of them originating in the field of anthropology of supranational institutions (see above).

'*Engrenage*' (in English: 'enmeshing' or 'immersion') is viewed by Abélès (2000: 35) as "an 'action trap' in which once the agents are set in a specific course of action, they find themselves obliged to take further actions which point them in a direction which they did not necessarily intend to follow". Thus, *engrenage* serves as a poignant description of how a peculiar linear culture of an institution/organisation – often including of its symbolic and discursive construction of that institution's 'constant progress' - can be (re) produced, in our case in the European Union's institutional practices.

The other driving concept – of *organisational culture* – has been proposed by Shore (2000) in his related approach to organisational anthropology in supranational political contexts (for related accounts see, e.g., Ybema, Yanow and Sabelis 2011). In Shore's view, the notion is based on, on the one hand, the critique of the concept of political and, on the other hand, of corporate culture. While the former is viewed by Shore as "a gloss to describe the sum of political attitudes, dispositions, practices and institutions created by a particular political system: the 'subjective orientation of people towards politics'" (Shore 2000: 130), the corporate culture designates "informal characteristics of a company or organisation (...)[MK: which] can be identified, isolated, abstracted and cultivated in order to promote 'organisational change'" (ibid.: 131). It is from combination of those two definitions that Shore develops his idea of institutionally-specific '*organisational culture*': as he argues a peculiar *modus vivendi* (ibid.: 132) of an institution located at the intersection of its formal and informal characteristics as well as of its objective rules and procedures

and subjective attitudes and experiences of those involved in its processual development.

A.3. Pre-Contextualisation

The main source here are previous ethnographic studies conducted in the EU institutional contexts. These studies, which include anthropological work on such EU contexts as the European Parliament (see Abélès, 1992 and 1993) and, in a large number of cases, the practices at the EU's supranational administration i.e. the European Commission (cf. Abélès 2000a and 2004; Abélès, Bellier and McDonald, 1993; Bellier 2000; Shore 2000) have shown extensively that identities and agencies are negotiated in the EU across a variety of contexts, and that the patterns of those negotiations are in most cases institutionally-specific. Within those studies, often based on long-term multi-layered ethnographies, the most prominent remain the works of Abélès (2000, 2004; see also Shore and Abélès, 2004), who formulates his famous claim that, in fact, as embodied in its institutions, the EU in general is a constant social as well as institutional process and thereby remains a rather elusive and virtual construct. Accordingly, many EU institutions construct their identities not only in a practice- but also discourse-based way that allows for the constant (re) definition of efficiency-driven progress yet, importantly, without a pronounced aim or goal or the clear awareness of the point of departure. As Abélès claims, in the EU institutions "everything happens as if Europe will be inventing itself every day, thereby reconfirming its permanence" (2000: 33).

Insights from the said anthropological research are supplemented by various discourse-ethnographic analyses conducted across EU institutions including in its short-lived institutional bodies (see esp. Muntigl, Weiss and Wodak 2000; Krzyżanowski 2010; Krzyżanowski and Oberhuber 2007) and in established institutions (Wodak 2009; Wodak, Krzyżanowski and Forchtner 2012). These studies have shown how to relate collection and analysis of textual data with observations of EU-institutional milieus. They have also pointed to the challenges of fieldwork in the context of immense internal complexity within, and diversity across, EU institutions as far as, inter alia, patterns of organisational behaviour, production and reproduction of meanings, or interactional behaviour in multilingual contexts are concerned. Those studies have also provided patterns of dealing with political meanings including in interviews with politicians or in policy texts often resting on various patterns of recontextualisation of wider political ideologies.

Of course, allowing for the context of research, a bulk of pre-contextualising knowledge has been obtained from a variety of studies on EU politics and institutions conducted on such topics as, e.g., complexity and reform of EU institutions (Egberg 2004, 2005; Kassim 2004, 2008), the EU's democracy and democratic deficit (e.g. Follesdal and Hix 2006; Pollak 2007; Majone 2005), EU's relationships with its member states in the context of Europeanisation (Featherstone and Radaelli 2004) or communication and democracy in the EU (Michailidou 2008; Krzyżanowski 2012, 2013).

B: Fieldwork and Contextualisation

The bulk of fieldwork incl. contextualising activities were devoted to the *reconstruction of the processes and practices involved in everyday work of the studied institutional contexts*, and to *discovering patterns and forms of their (possibly distinct) local organisational cultures*.

Among the main findings of the fieldwork were the observed differences between the organisational behaviour of representatives of long-term established institutional bodies (in our case, the European Commission) on the one hand, and the short lived institutional organisms (e.g. the 2002-03 European Convention drafting the EU Constitution) on the other. As the fieldwork revealed, the long-term institutional bodies such as the European Commission based their works on long-established patterns of organisational behaviour. Those patterns are best displayed in a variety of meetings (see Figure 1) that are usually conducted in similar spaces and are undertaken in a highly patterned, hierarchical order (e.g. chair of the meeting is usually a director or head of unit that is taking part in the meeting). The meetings are often taking place by means of videoconferences (with participants present in Brussels and other in Luxembourg offices) that often constitutes an obstacle to direct responses and more spontaneous communication.

As has become evident from the study of one of European Commissions' Directorates General (i.e. its units dealing with specific policy remits or specific areas of services), observations of meetings undertaken throughout one week, (from the top-level meeting of Directors down to the lower level meetings of various

subordinate units), showed that meanings and topics defined at the top level effectively penetrated 'down' the hierarchy throughout the week. The observations of long-established EU institutions also show that, through strict and path-dependent patterning of communication, the individual agency of officials is often constrained. They thus submit to collective (organisational) patterns of behaviour, often those dependent on the institutions in question or the more local (e.g. Directorate-specific) patterns. Importantly, the observed patterns were very stable over time and hence they were not prone to change for any unexpected reasons.

On the other hand, fieldwork at the short-term institutional bodies of the EU – such as e.g. the 2002-03 European Convention (see Krzyżanowski 2010) – have shown that their practices are certainly not uniform in nature (see Figure 2) and depend on institutional practices in which their members originate. At the same time, the institutional processes in short-lived bodies are prone to change immensely over time. Therefore, a totally different fieldwork strategy needs to be selected with fieldwork occurring at different times/phases of Convention's work. Undertaking fieldwork at different moments of development of an institutional body such as the Convention helped observe its development and change but also an immense transformation of its members' behaviour. The latter was, in most cases, dictated by political motivations and was related to the fact that the bodies that 'sent' their representatives to the Convention (EU member states' national parliaments or governments, EU institutions) wanted to have their say on the final outcome of the Convention's works i.e. the first EU constitution. Thus, the initially limited attention of Convention's members in its works and proceedings increased significantly over

time with, e.g., the plenary sessions also becoming much more lively and filled with heated exchanges. Over time, the *politics of the couloir* (i.e. the process of political dealing on the backstage; cf. Wodak 2009) clearly lost its value to be replaced by the more pronounced and clear assertions of positions and ideas held in the plenary. The observation of the short-lived bodies such as Convention also allows tracing certain origin-specific patterns of organisational behaviour. Hence, while some members (esp. national parliamentarians) were much more prone to discuss things in plenary settings, other politicians skilful in either backstage diplomacy (esp. representatives of national governments) or in internal workings of the EU (esp. representatives of permanent EU institutions) were clearly more prone to undertake backstage negotiations, often away from the spotlight of the plenary sessions.

[INSERT FIGURE 1]

Figure 1: 'Regular' Meeting of a Unit at the European Commission (2009)

[INSERT FIGURE 2]

Figure 2: 'Nexus of Practice' of the European Convention

(Source: Oberhuber and Krzyżanowski 2008).

[INSERT FIGURE 3]

Figure 3: Communication Channels in the European Convention

(Source: Krzyżanowski and Oberhuber, 2007: 72)

The final crucial issue resulting from fieldwork pertained to observing the ways in which communication and its channels were structured. As has become evident, the ways in which communication tends to be organised in short-lived bodies such as the Convention is rarely evident to the outsiders and hence it requires a thorough process of ethnographic observations and eventual reconstruction (Krzyżanowski & Oberhuber, 2007; see Figure 3). Supplemented by a variety of additional data (gathered from members, assistants, observers, involved think tanks and analysts), the observations pointed to the fact that the communication was tightly controlled – by the so-called Convention's secretariat, obviously consisting mostly of skilful EU officials – that thus could also strongly influence the process of the Convention's overall deliberations. It hence allowed the Secretariat – and the Convention's powerful Presidium – to become the key axis controlling communication and thereby also the entire decision-making process.

C. Discourse-Historical Analysis

C.1. Generic Classification

The following text types (genres) have been used as sources of empirical data (NB: many of those texts were collected in the process of fieldwork described above):

	Established Institutions	Short-Lived Institutions

	(European Commission)	(European Convention)
Interviews	• Semi-structured interviews with key officials at the studied EC Directorates – including Directors, Heads of Units, Individual Officials	• Semi-structured interviews with Convention members, their auxiliary staff and assistants supporting Conventioneers in both EU and national contexts
Observations	• Participant observations of meetings at various levels of studied institutional hierarchies	• Non-participant observations of the plenary sessions • Participant observations of working groups
Documents	• Official documents related to policy and its implementation, • Speeches of key officials • Legal texts regulating practices at the	• Official documents including proposals and reports as well as speeches of EU and Convention officials, (during Convention) and

	European Commission • Semi-official documents concerning internal procedures and codes of conduct	final documents (e.g. Draft Constitutional Treaty) • Legal texts (e.g. EU treaties) • Semi-official and subversive documents (collected in the studied settings of Convention's works, e.g. posters, leaflets, unauthorized proposals)
External Sources	• Academic analyses of the European Commission, its multilingualism, etc. • Mass media discourse on European Institutions (esp. European Commission), its multilingualism, etc.	• Video tapes of the plenary sessions • Speeches of national politicians • Academic and e.g. think-tank analyses of EU constitutional process and institutional reform • Mass media coverage of works and proceedings

		of the European Convention

C.2. Discourse-Historical Analysis - Example: Meta-Discourses on Practice and Agency in the European Convention.

The exemplary analysis of discourses about organizational practices in the EU follows the key DHA category of '*topoi*' (for details and definitions, see Krzyżanowski 2010, Reisigl and Wodak 2009) that focus on the key argumentation schemes deployed by the speakers in their discursive accounts and interpretations of practice.

The discourses of members of the European Convention concerning their experiences of organizational practices revolve around two *topoi*: those of *a positive assessment of the European Convention* and those of *its negative assessment*.

Examples 1 and 2 (below) show how the *topos of positive assessment* was realized, in both cases in discursive accounts of representatives of the EU institutions (in the highlighted cases, Members of the European Parliament). The discourse mainly boiled down to praising the ways in which the Convention was organized but also to displaying a set of some very positive views on, e.g., how diversity of voices was in fact coped with to the benefit of the Convention as an organizational process. Whereas in the first case (Example 1) the speaker points to the thoroughness of the Convention process, in the second case (Example 2) the speaker emphasizes

(including in metaphorical ways – note the audibly emphasised economising metaphor 'to invest') that a Convention method 'proved' to be a perfect method for deliberation of views originating from as many contexts and milieus as those represented in the European Convention:

Example 1:

I expected wh-what we have got (.) I think we've been able to analyze the problems of the existing s-system a lot more thoroughly than I had expected so that's good [AD, 13-19][1]

Example 2:

It was a positive experience not only for me personally (↓) but I think it was an effort of people coming from (.) different aaa backgrounds (↑) national parliaments (↑) members of government (.) Commission (.) European Parliament (.) civil society the social partners (.) really trying to INVEST to build something in common (.) that was amazing (↑) it was not there from the start on (.) it it was built on (.) during the process and that that PROVES for to

---

me that the process is is yy is a really really good idea to to try to build on (.)

common approaches [AvL, 9-15]

Contrary to the above, the *topos of negative assessment* – practically omnipresent in discourses on practice of national parliamentarians taking part in the Convention – points to the ways in which the Convention was set up very strictly in accordance of wishes of powerful actors, in most cases the EU institutions. The realization of the topos highlighted below (see Example 3) allowed the speaker to argue that the way the Convention was set up only strengthened the position of such power players as the European Commission or the European Parliament and thus allowed their views to become prominent. It also argues that the fact that national parliamentarians are not acculturated organizationally in the EU-institutional contexts proves detrimental to their political position and fuels their inability to present, and defend, their opinions:

Example 3:

I hoped that at least to start with it would the Convention would deal with

ideas it would be free thinking (.) it would be creative (.) but instead it has yyy

degenerated rather quickly into a process of institutional bargaining (.) and I

noticed yyy that each of the existing institutions and vested interests are each

bidding fore more influence and a good example of that is the Commission's

paper today (.) which is clearly arguing for more power for the Commission

simply (.) yyy as simple as that (.) and the European Parliament also defends

its interests (.) the only (.) group that doesn't do that very well is the national

parliamentarians because we are (.) very varied we don't know each other we come from many different countries we are not an institution so we are in danger of losing out [DHA, 17-26]

As the brief analysis shows, the discrepancy of views expressed in discourses – and encompassed by respective *topoi* – dovetails with the results of ethnographic analyses undertaken during fieldwork (see above). As the discourse shows, there existed namely a huge discrepancy between members of the European Convention, especially as far as their individual/collective agency was concerned. As has been shown before, the way the Convention was set up was – as explored in the observations and related ethnographic methods – crucial to strengthening voices and agency of some (esp. those from EU institutions and powerful member states) and weakening the voices and agency of others (esp. the dispersed national parliamentarians, usually of very limited experience in the EU contexts). This, in turn, is clearly reflected in *discourses on practice that show that the way power positions were strengthened by organizational cultures and engrenage* – esp. of those skilful in EU organizational processes and deliberations – proved central to the observed organizational processes. It also shows that negotiation of power and agency, emphasized in the analysed discourses, was crucial in both discourses and practices and that their interrelated analysis is thus central to a thorough, context specific discourse-ethnographic exploration of the studied organizational milieus.

Conclusions

This chapter has presented Discourse Ethnographic Approach, a combination of Critical Discourse Studies and Ethnography that takes stock of the recent developments in those research traditions. As the chapter shows, there exists an immense need for combining CDS and Ethnography in problem-oriented studies. This is particularly relevant in studies on complex social and political contexts in which power is central for the ways identities and agency are trans/formed and negotiated, often on an ongoing basis. By presenting examples of examinations driven by the proposed, integrative Discourse-Ethnographic Approach (DEA), the chapter has highlighted ways in which results of, on the one hand, extensive fieldwork and ethnography and, on the other hand, of the closely related critical analysis of discourses of (social) actors' shaping those spaces and acting therein, can be combined and closely interrelated.

Further reading:

- Agar, M. (2008). *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. 2nd Ed. London: Emerald. A classic introduction to ethnography which explains all of its key basics and now also highlights necessity of critical exploration of power in ethnographic research.
- Gobo, G. (2008). *Doing Ethnography*. London: Sage. One of the most recent comprehensive introductions to ethnography showing its internal variety as well as diversity of methods in contemporary ethnographic research practice.

- Krzyżanowski, M. (Ed.)(2011b). *Ethnography and Critical Discourse Analysis*. (Special Issue of *Critical Discourse Studies 8:4*). London: Routledge. This journal special issues highlights various possibilities of combining critical discourse studies and ethnography while researching different public and everyday contexts.

- Ocejo, R. (2014). *Upscaling Downtown: From Bowery Saloons to Cocktail Bars in New York City*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. An interesting recent study which shows how a multi-sited ethnography can be deployed in a problem oriented research.

- Wodak, R., M. Krzyżanowski, and B. Forchtner. (2012). The interplay of language ideologies and contextual cues in multilingual interactions: Language choice and code-switching in European Union institutions. *Language in Society,* 41(2), 157-186. An interesting and systematic study which shows how ethnography and language analysis can be combined within research on multilingualism and linguistic diversity in political-institutional contexts.

References:

Abélès, M. (1992). *La Vie Quotidienne au Parlement Européen*. Paris : Hachette.

Abélès, M. (1993). Political Anthropology of a Transnational Institution: the European Parliament. *French Politics and Society,* 11(1), 1-19.

Abélès, M. (2000). Virtual Europe. In: I. Bellier and T.M. Wilson (eds.). *An Anthropology of the European Union*. Oxford: Berg, pp.31-53.

Abélès, M. (2004). *Identity and Borders: And Anthropological Approach to EU Institutions*. (Twenty Frist Century Papers No. 4). Milwaukee, WI: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Abélès, M., Bellier, I. and M. McDonald. (1993). *An Anthropological Approach to the European Commission*. Brussels: The European Commission.

Agar, M. (2008). *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. 2nd Ed. London: Emerald.

Aronoff, M. and J. Kubik. (2013). *Anthropology and Political Science: A Convergent Approach.* Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Bellier, I. (2000). A Europeanised Elite? An Anthropology of European Commission Officials. *Yearbook of European Studies* 14, 135-156.

Bellier, I. (2002). European identity, Institutions and Languages in the Context of the Enlargement. *Journal of Language and Politics* 1:1, 85-114.

Bellier, I. & Wilson, T.M. (Eds.). (2000a). *An Anthropology of the European Union*. Oxford: Berg.

Bellier, I. & Wilson, T.M. (2000b). Building, Imagining and Experiencing Europe: Institutions and Identities in the European Union. In: I. Bellier & T.M. Wilson (Eds.). *An Anthropology of the European Union* (pp. 1-27). Oxford: Berg.

Bernstein, B. (1990). *The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse*. London: Routledge.

Blommaert, J., J. Collins, M. Heller, B. Rampton, S. Slembrouck, and J. Verschueren. (2001). Discourse and Critique: Part One. *Critique of Anthropology*, 21(1), 5-12.

Bourdieu, P. (2005). The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field. In R. Benson and E. Neveu (eds.) *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 29–47.

Brewer, J.D. 2000. *Ethnography*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Davies, C.A. (1999). *Reflexive Ethnography*. London: Routledge.

Egberg, M. (2004). An organisational approach to European integration: Outline of a complementary perspective. *European Journal of Political Research* 43, 199–219.

Fairclough, N. (2001). Critical Discourse Analysis as a Method in Social Scientific Research. In. R. Wodak and M. Meyer (eds.). Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis. London: Sage, pp. 121-138.

Fairclough, N. (2009). *Critical Discourse Analysis.* (Second Revised Edition). London: Pearson Education.

Fairclough, N. and R. Wodak. (1997). Critical Discourse Analysis. In: T.A. van Dijk. (Ed.). *Discourse as Social Interaction*. London: Sage, pp. 258-284.

Featherstone, K. and Radaelli, C.M. (eds.)(2004). *The Politics of Europeanization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Follesdal, A. and Hix, S. (2006). Why There is a Democratic Deficit in the EU: A Response to Majone and Moravcsik. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44 (3), 533–562.

Galasiński, D. (2011). The Patient's World: Discourse Analysis and Ethnography. *Critical Discourse Studies* 8(4), 253-265.

Gobo, G. (2008). *Doing Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Follesdal, A. and Hix, S. (2006). Why There is a Democratic Deficit in the EU: A Response to Majone and Moravcsik. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44 (3), 533–562.

Hammersley, M. (1992). *What's wrong with Ethnography? Methodological Explorations.* London: Routledge.

Heller, M. (2001). Critique and sociolinguistic analysis of discourse. *Critique of Anthropology* 21(2), 117-141.

Jones, R. (2012). *Discourse Analysis*. London: Routledge.

Kassim, H. (2004). A Historic Accomplishment? The Prodi Commission and Administrative Reform. In: D.G. Dimitrakopoulos (ed.). *The Changing European Commission*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 33-63.

Kassim, H. (2008). 'Mission impossible', but mission accomplished: the Kinnock reforms and the European Commission. *Journal of European Public Policy* 15 (5), 648–668.

Krzyżanowski, M. (2010). *The Discursive Construction of European Identities: A Multilevel Approach to Discourse and Identity in the Transforming European Union.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Krzyżanowski, M. (2011a). Political Communication, Institutional Cultures, and Linearities of Organisational Practice: A Discourse-Ethnographic Approach to Institutional Change in the European Union. *Critical Discourse Studies* 8(4), 281-296.

Krzyżanowski, M. (Ed.)(2011b). *Ethnography and Critical Discourse Analysis*. (Special Issue of *Critical Discourse Studies 8:4*). London: Routledge.

Krzyżanowski, M. (2012). (Mis)Communicating Europe?   On Deficiencies and Challenges in Political and Institutional Communication in the European Union. In: B. Kryk-Kastovsky (ed.). *Intercultural (Mis)Communication Past and Present.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, pp. 185-213.

Krzyżanowski, M. (2013). Policy, Policy Communication and Discursive Shifts: Analyzing EU Policy Discourses on Climate Change. In: P. Cap and U. Okulska (eds.) *Analyzing   Genres in Political Communication: Theory and Practice*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 101-134.

Krzyżanowski, M. (2014). Values, Imaginaries and Templates of Journalistic Practice: A Critical Discourse Analysis. *Social Semiotics* 24(3), 345-365.

Krzyżanowski, M. (2015). International Leadership Re-/Constructed? Ambivalence and Heterogeneity of Identity Discourses in European Union's Policy on Climate Change. *Journal of Language & Politics* 14(1), 110-133.

Krzyżanowski, M. (2016). Recontextualisations of Neoliberalism and the Increasingly Conceptual Nature of Discourse: Challenges for Critical Discourse Studies. *Discourse & Society* 27:3, 308-321.

Krzyżanowski, M. and Oberhuber, F. (2007). *(Un)Doing Europe: Discourses and Practices of Negotiating the EU Constitution*. Brussels: PIE-Peter Lang.

Krzyżanowski, M. and Wodak, R. (2009). *The Politics of Exclusion: Debating Migration in Austria*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Krzyżanowski, M and Forchtner B. (2016). Theories and Concepts in Critical Discourse Studies: Facing Challenges, Moving Beyond Foundations. *Discourse & Society* 27:3, 253-261.

Kubik, J. (2009). Ethnography of Politics: Foundations, Applications, Prospects. In: E. Schatz (ed.) *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 25-52.

Lazar, M. (2007). Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Articulating a Feminist Discourse Praxis. *Critical Discourse Studies* 4(2), 141-164.

Majone, G. (2005). *Dilemmas of European Integration.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Michailidou, A. (2008). Democracy and New Media in the European Union: Communication or Participation Deficit? *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 4 (4), 346-368.

Muntigl, P., Weiss, G. & Wodak, R. (2000). *European Union Discourses on Unemployment.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Oberhuber, F. and M. Krzyżanowski (2008). Discourse Analysis and Ethnography. In: R. Wodak & M. Krzyżanowski (Eds.) *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 182-203.

Ocejo, R. (2014). *Upscaling Downtown: From Bowery Saloons to Cocktail Bars in New York City*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Pollak, J. (2007). *Repräsentation ohne Demokratie. Kollidierende Modi der Repräsentation in der Europäischen Union.* Vienna: Springer..

Reisigl, M. & Wodak, R. (2009). The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). In: R. Wodak & M. Meyer (eds.). Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis. (2nd Ed.). London: Sage, pp. 87-121.

Rogers, R. (2011). *An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education*. London: Routledge.

Scollon, R. and S.W. Scollon. (2003). *Discourses in Place*. London: Routledge.

Scollon, R. and S.W. Scollon. (2004). *Nexus Analysis*. London: Routledge.

Scollon, R. and S.W. Scollon. (2007). Nexus Analysis: Refocusing Ethnography on Action. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 11:5, 608-625.

Shore, C. (2000). *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*. London: Routledge.

Shore, C. and S. Wright (eds.). (1997). *Anthropology of Policy. Critical Perspectives on Governance and Power*. London: Routledge.

Shore, C. & Abélès, M. (2004). Debating the European Union. *Anthropology Today*, 20(2), 10-14.

Tusting, K. and J. Maybin. (2007). Linguistic Ethnography and Interdisciplinarity: Opening the Discussion. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 11(5), 575-583.

van Dijk, T.A. (2008). *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse as Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wodak, R. (2000). Recontextualization and Transformation of Meanings: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Decision Making in EU-meetings about Employment. In S. Sarangi & M. Coulthard (eds.) *Discourse and Social Life*. London: Pearson Education, pp. 185-206.

Wodak, R. (1975). *Das Sprachverhalten von Angeklagten bei Gericht*, Kronberg/Ts: Scriptor.

Wodak, R. (1996). *Disorders of Discourse*. London: Longman.

Wodak, R. (2001). The Discourse-Historical Approach. In: R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Sage, pp. 63-95.

Wodak, R. (2006). Mediation between Discourse and Society: Assessing Cognitive Approaches in CDA. *Discourse Studies* 8(1): 179-190.

Wodak, R. (2009). *The Discourse of Politics in Action. Politics as Usual*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wodak, R., F. Menz and J. Lalouschek. (1990). *Alltag auf der Ambulanz*. Tübingen: Narr.

Wodak, R., M. Krzyżanowski, and B. Forchtner. (2012). The interplay of language ideologies and contextual cues in multilingual interactions: Language choice and code-switching in European Union institutions. *Language in Society,* 41(2), 157-186.

Yanow, D. (2000). *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Yanow, D. (2012). Organizational ethnography between toolbox and world-making. *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, 1(1), 31-42.

Ybema, S. (2014). The invention of transitions: History as a symbolic site for discursive struggles over organizational change. *Organization,* 21(4), 495-513.

Ybema, S., D. Yanow, H. Wels and F. Kamsteeg (eds.) (2009). *Organizational Ethnography: Studying the Complexities of Everyday Life*. London: Sage.

Ybema, S., D. Yanow and I. Sabelis. (eds.).(2011). *Organizational Culture*. Northampton, MA: Emerald Publishing.

Figure 1: 'Regular' Meeting of a Unit at the European Commission (2009)
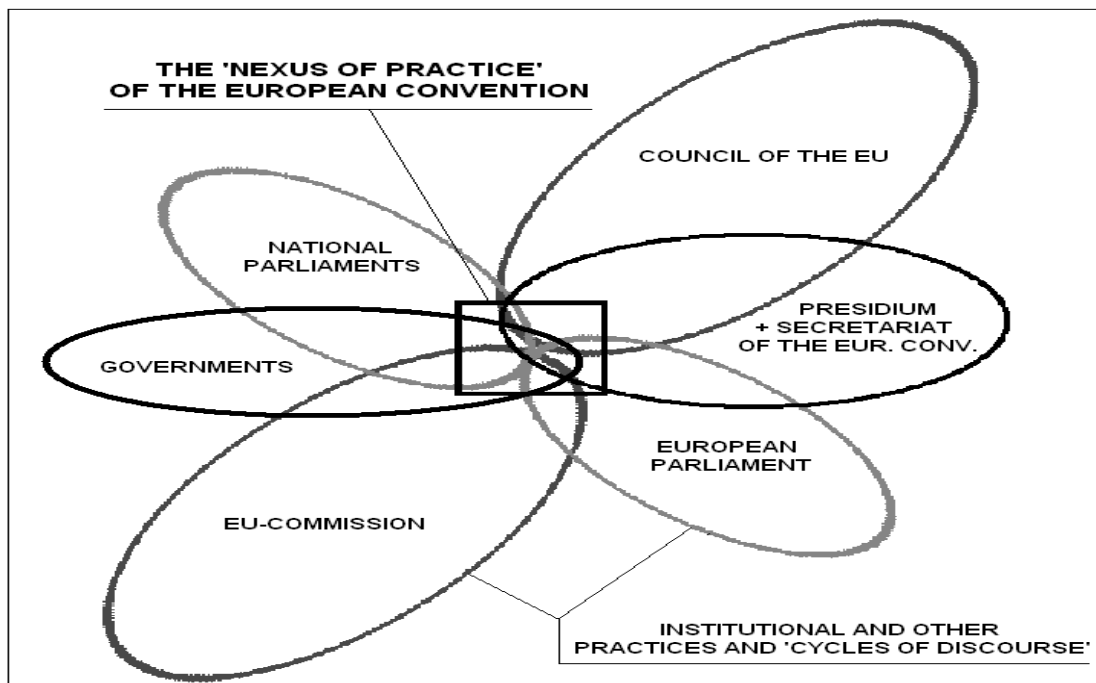

Figure 2: 'Nexus of Practice' of the European Convention

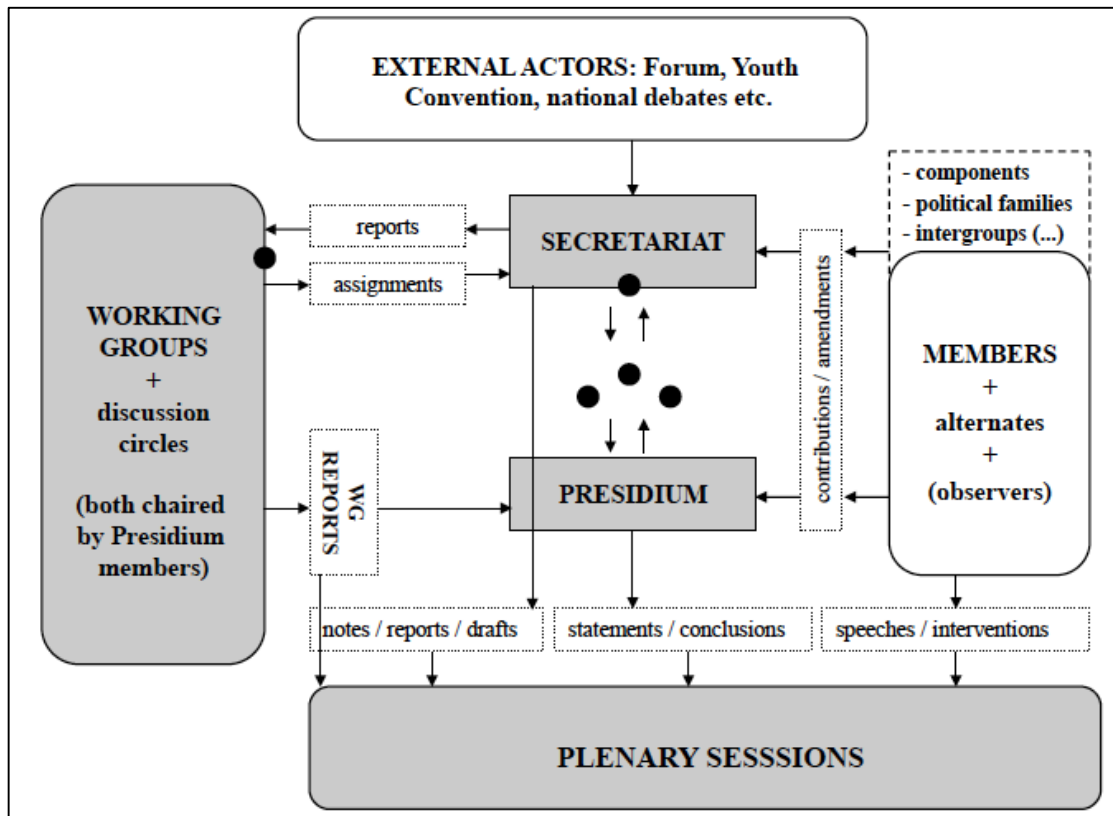*(Source: Oberhuber and Krzyżanowski 2008).*

Figure 3: Communication Channels in the European Convention

(Source: Krzyżanowski and Oberhuber, 2007: 72)